

The Creation of America Latina Asociacion of Threat Assessment Professionals

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The idea of an Association for Threat Assessment Professionals for Latin America started in a conversation between Dr. Maria Martinez and me during the 2018 Threat Management Conference in Anaheim, California. We both were quick to agree that it would be a meaningful project, and one of our very first challenges was to recruit other key individuals to join forces with us. We knew the makeup of the team would be critical to success and would require the initial founders to invest their own money, time, and effort into the endeavor. It took more than a year, but we ultimately added three other members—Dr. Reid Meloy, Dr. Jose Navarro, and Leonardo Ogihara. The members of our team are spread over three countries, Brazil, Mexico, and the United States, so coordinating planning meetings over the various time zones added some initial obstacles.

Public Significance Statement

The article is publicly relevant in that it articulates the worldwide growth of Associations of Threat Assessment professionals. It also describes various challenges associated with such endeavors and provides an opportunity for individuals to get involved with the effort.

Keywords: Threat Assessment Professionals, Threat, Association, Professionals, Latin America

Toward the end of 2019, we held a series of planning meetings and were able to select a name—ALATAP. ALATAP stands for America Latina Asociacion of Threat Assessment Professionals. To help us draft and file our articles of incorporation, we selected a team of lawyers based out of Mexico City, Mexico. In order to be able to submit the articles, however, we needed a physical address in Mexico. Fortunately, one of our founding members was willing to let us use his address, and that saved us from having to spend additional money.

The formation of ALATAP was announced at the 2020 ATAP Winter Conference, and in

February, we held an introductory event in Sao Paulo, Brazil. It was a full-day event for 100 participants representing 70 multinational corporations and law enforcement entities. We were pleased to have eight important presenters from different fields—law enforcement, prosecutors, health professionals, and nongovernmental organization and corporate security experts—including, among others, ATAP President Dr. Russel Palarea and Accenture Chief Security Officer Arlin Pedrick.

We anticipate being formally organized later this year, but while forming the organization is a great milestone, it is only the beginning of many other challenges that we will need to overcome in order to mature and grow. Thus, while the attorneys are doing their part, we are contemplating issues that we will soon be facing. Safety during training and conferences is at the top of our minds. We are acutely aware that

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organized criminal elements may perceive ALATAP to be something other than a benefit to the community, and we will need to be vigilant that they do not infiltrate the group. We will also be focused on more mundane issues such as organizational and financial management, membership, communications and a website, language barriers (Spanish, Portuguese, French, and English), and providing content that is regionally relevant. ALATAP is intended to reach all of Latin America and the Caribbean, so a solid understanding of local concerns is critical to communicating the relevancy of the organization.

As a first step to generating interest, we will need to do some initial education as to the purpose, function, and value of ALATAP. This will undoubtedly require many more hands on deck. Though we are not yet at the point of soliciting membership, we would certainly welcome volunteers to help get us up and off the ground. If you are interested in knowing more or participating in the startup efforts, please feel free to contact us at americalatinaatap@gmail.com. Saludos!

Received May 7, 2020
Accepted June 17, 2020 ■