

Final Report on Threat Assessment Teams in Virginia Institutions of Higher Education: Survey of Practices (2013–2014)



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 Virginia General Assembly passed legislation (§23-9.2:10)¹ requiring each public institution of higher education (IHE) to establish a violence prevention committee (VPC) and a threat assessment team (TAT). These groups/committees were charged with preventing violence on campus by assessing and intervening when individuals exhibit behavior which may pose a threat to the safety of the campus community.

Following the 2012 tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, then-Governor McDonnell signed Executive Order 56 establishing the Governor's Task Force on School and Campus Safety. In September 2013 the Task Force issued 61 recommendations. One of these recommendations, PS-10, was that the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) conduct a study to assess campus threat assessment teams:

Mandatory Study of College Threat Assessment Teams – DCJS, in conjunction with DBHDS², will conduct a study to determine compliance with the 2008 legislation and evaluate the nature and quality of threat assessment teams in Virginia colleges and universities. Recommendations will be made to the General Assembly on needed improvements. Universities will be required to participate in this study.³

In response to this directive, the DCJS Criminal Justice Research Center and the DCJS Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) did the following:

- Established an informal advisory committee for guidance;
- Conducted a review of literature on current best practices in campus threat assessment;
- Presented preliminary plans for the study to the Virginia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (VACLEA) to gain input from campus police chiefs and public safety department directors; and
- Conducted an online survey of both public and private IHEs in Virginia to examine compliance with the requirements of §23-9.2:10.

It is important to note that the purposes of this study were to examine compliance with the *Code* requirement that public institutions establish TATs, and to evaluate the nature and quality of the TATs. The study was *not* designed to address the broader question of whether the presence of TATs leads to a reduction in campus violence. An attempt to answer this question would require a separate, more elaborate study.

The majority of the quantitative data presented in this report are based on data obtained through the DCJS online survey. The survey data are based on a survey of 68 institutions regarding TATs during the 2013-2014 academic year. Forty-seven of the 68 institutions surveyed responded, for a response rate of 69%.

¹ Effective October 2016, §23-9.2:10 was renumbered as §23.1-805. The original *Code* references are maintained in this report.

² Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

³ The requirement that universities participate in the study was removed from PS-10 prior to DCJS beginning this study.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Of the 32 responding *public* institutions (15 four-year institutions and 17 community colleges), 100% had a threat assessment team as directed by §23-9.2:10. Additionally, 73% of the responding private institutions had a threat assessment team, even without a legislative mandate.
- All (100%) responding four-year public institutions and community colleges had a committee charged with the education and prevention of violence on campus (i.e., violence prevention committee or VPC) as directed by §23-9.2:10. Nearly three quarters of responding private institutions (73%) had a VPC, despite having no requirement by *Code*.
- The majority of the public institutions' VPCs (about 70%) and TATs (about 75%) have the types of representation (student affairs, law enforcement, counseling services, etc.) on the committees required by §23-9.2:10. Community colleges appear slightly less likely than four-year public institutions to have all the required representation, but this may be due to overlapping or duplicate functions performed by the same person on the committees.
- The majority of institutions indicated that they provide guidance on recognizing threatening behavior to faculty (96%) and staff (96%). Institutions were slightly less likely to provide guidance on recognizing threatening behavior to students (87%).
- Private institutions were considerably less likely to have their VPC's mission statement (55%), team membership (64%), and team leadership (64%) published and made available to the campus community, compared to public institutions (84%, 97%, and 97%, respectively).
- Regarding intervention strategies, institutional policies are most likely to include disciplinary conduct review, interim suspension, and voluntary referral for mental health services (all over 80%). Policies were least likely to include involuntary hospitalization (51%) or medical separation (45%), particularly for community colleges.
- Faculty (80%) and law enforcement/public safety (77%) were the most frequently cited sources of referrals to TATs.
- 18% of institutions reported always using at least one assessment tool during their threat assessment process.
- Almost two-thirds (64%) of the institutions reported having between five and 10 TAT members. The average number of team members was eight, the minimum was five members, and the maximum was 16 members.
- The largest percentage of TATs were chaired by a student affairs representative (41%) followed by a law enforcement/public safety representative (27%).
- Over half (55%) of TATs scheduled meetings on an "as needed" basis. Only 22% of teams met on a weekly basis.
- Only seven four-year public institutions, one community college, and one private institution reported having a budget allocated specifically for threat assessment.
- 80% of four-year public institutions indicated that they have a mechanism for monitoring social media, as opposed to 47% of community colleges and 47% of private institutions.

- 91% of institutions reported that their TAT assessed one or more threat cases during the 2013-2014 academic year. Four institutions reported no threat assessment cases during this period. A total of 1,217 threat assessment cases were reported.
- The numbers of threat assessment cases reviewed during the 2013-2014 academic year varied greatly between institutions, as did the risk levels assigned to these cases by the institutions. This suggests that there are differences between institutions in how they define and report threats, and in how they assess their risk levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) should continue to provide Virginia IHEs with training, technical assistance and other information about the effective use of threat assessment teams. The operation and use of TATs is still an emerging field and it is necessary to keep up with and disseminate information on current research and best practices in the field.
- The VCSCS should continue to maintain contact with VACLEA to identify issues and respond to issues regarding the operation and use of TATs.
- The VCSCS should periodically collect and analyze statewide threat assessment case data from TATs to help identify emerging issues and trends concerning the numbers and types of threat assessments performed by TATs.
- Higher education administrators may wish to examine whether it is appropriate for all colleges and universities to provide a specific budget for TAT operations.
- The VCSCS and higher education administrators may wish to further examine the reasons why there are differences in compliance between Virginia's community colleges and public four-year IHEs with certain aspects of the legislative requirements for TATs.
- The VCSCS should conduct qualitative research on how TATs function in Virginia's IHEs to better understand why there is so much variability in the numbers of threat assessment cases reported by different institutions, and so much variability in the risk levels assigned to these cases.

INTRODUCTION

IMPETUS FOR STUDY

In the aftermath of the 2007 shootings at Virginia Tech, the 2008 General Assembly passed legislation mandating campus threat assessment teams (TATs) in Virginia public institutions of higher education (IHEs) (§23-9.2:10). The tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012 prompted the signing of Executive Order 56 establishing the 2013 Governor’s Task Force on School and Campus Safety. The Task Force examined the need to further study and evaluate the implementation of the 2008 legislative mandate. At the recommendation of the Task Force’s public safety workgroup, the General Assembly charged the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) with conducting a study evaluating compliance with the 2008 legislation and the nature and quality of TATs in Virginia IHEs:

Recommendation Number PS-10:

Mandatory Study of College Threat Assessment Teams – DCJS, in conjunction with DBHDS⁴, will conduct a study to determine compliance with the 2008 legislation and evaluate the nature and quality of threat assessment teams in Virginia colleges and universities. Recommendations will be made to the General Assembly on needed improvements. Universities will be required to participate in this study.⁵

ABOUT THREAT ASSESMENT TEAMS

A Threat Assessment and Management Team...is a multidisciplinary team that is responsible for the careful and contextual identification and evaluation of behaviors that raise concern and that may precede violent activity on campus. The early identification of these “red flags” enables colleges and universities to prudently take the appropriate precautionary steps to prevent targeted violence from occurring. In addition, it also ensures that persons in need – whether they be students, faculty, staff, or other members of the community – are directed to the appropriate support mechanism on campus.⁶

After the deaths of 14 students (including both perpetrators) and one teacher at Columbine High School in 1999, studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) and the U.S. Secret Service (2002); and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (2000) recommended the threat assessment approach to prevent violence in K-12 schools. Following the tragedies at Virginia Tech (2007) and Northern Illinois University (2008), support for threat assessment teams in higher education was solidified by study recommendations in numerous federal, state and professional organizations (e.g., International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, 2008; National Association of Attorneys General, 2007; Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007; *a more complete list is provided in [Appendix 4](#)*). Yet

⁴ Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

⁵ The requirement that universities participate in the study was removed from PS-10 prior to DCJS beginning this study.

⁶ Deisinger, G., Randazzo, M., O’Neill, D., & Savage, J. (2008). The handbook for campus threat assessment and management teams. Stoneham, MA: Applied Risk Management. p.5.

only three states – Virginia, Illinois and Connecticut – have mandated threat assessment teams in their public and/or private institutions of higher education.

THE 2008 THREAT ASSESSMENT MANDATE

Legislation passed in 2008 mandated that Virginia public IHEs establish threat assessment teams and specified some of the duties and responsibilities of these teams. Since the original 2008 legislation, the General Assembly has amended the mandate several times to add additional requirements and tools. Because DCJS received the directive to study compliance with the legislation in 2014, the DCJS study examined compliance with terms of the original 2008 legislation as well as the additional language added through 2014.

The §23-9.2:10 mandate language is shown below. Note that paragraphs A, B, and C of §23-9.2:10 mandate that colleges or universities also establish violence prevention committees, which are to develop policies for the threat assessment team. Because the violence prevention committees are necessary to meet the threat assessment team mandate, the DCJS study also examined each institution's compliance with the violence prevention committee mandate.⁷

§23-9.2:10. Violence prevention committee; threat assessment team.

- A. Each public college or university shall have in place policies and procedures for the prevention of violence on campus, including assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the campus community.
- B. The board of visitors or other governing body of each public institution of higher education shall determine a committee structure on campus of individuals charged with education and prevention of violence on campus. Each committee shall include representatives from student affairs, law enforcement, human resources, counseling services, residence life, and other constituencies as needed. Such committee shall also consult with legal counsel as needed. Once formed, each committee shall develop a clear statement of: (i) mission, (ii) membership, and (iii) leadership. Such statement shall be published and available to the campus community.
- C. Each committee shall be charged with: (i) providing guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a physical threat to the community; (ii) identifying members of the campus community to whom threatening behavior should be reported; (iii) establishing policies and procedures that outline circumstances under which all faculty and staff are to report behavior that may represent a physical threat to the community, consistent with state and federal law; and (iv) establishing policies and procedures for the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat, appropriate means of intervention with such individuals, and sufficient means of action, including interim suspension, referrals to community services boards or health care

⁷ 2015 legislation (§23.1-806) required IHEs to establish a review committee to review reports of sexual violence, and stated that these committees could serve as TAT in some circumstances. This occurred after the study survey, and these committees are not addressed in this report.

providers for evaluation or treatment, medical separation to resolve potential physical threats, or notification of family members or guardians, or both, unless such notification would prove harmful to the individual in question, consistent with state and federal law.

- D. The board of visitors or other governing body of each public institution of higher education shall establish a specific threat assessment team that shall include members from law enforcement, mental health professionals, representatives of student affairs and human resources, and, if available, college or university counsel. Such team shall implement the assessment, intervention and action policies set forth by the committee pursuant to subsection C.
- E. Each threat assessment team shall establish relationships or utilize existing relationships with local and state law-enforcement agencies as well as mental health agencies to expedite assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior may present a threat to safety. Upon a preliminary determination that an individual poses a threat of violence to self or others, or exhibits significantly disruptive behavior or need for assistance, a threat assessment team may obtain criminal history record information, as provided in §§19.2-389 and 19.2-389.1, and health records, as provided in §32.1-127.1:03. No member of a threat assessment team shall redisclose any criminal history record information or health information obtained pursuant to this section or otherwise use any record of an individual beyond the purpose for which such disclosure was made to the threat assessment team.

2008, cc. 450, 533; 2010, cc. 456, 524; 2013, c. 710; 2014, cc. 793, 799.

It is important to note that the purpose of this study was to examine compliance with the *Code* requirement that institutions establish TATs and to evaluate the nature and quality of the TATs. The study was *not* designed to address the broader question of whether the presence of TATs leads to a reduction in campus violence. An attempt to answer this question would require a separate, more elaborate study.

STUDY PROCESS

INFORMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To help guide the study, DCJS established an informal advisory committee including representatives from the Virginia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (VACLEA), the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), and the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV). These committee members provided input from individuals and organizations which conduct threat assessments and have “real-world” experience with the types of threats faced by IHEs.

The Advisory Committee provided assistance with study issues including: Defining overall issues the study must address, institutions of higher education to examine in the study, and development of a survey of these institutions for data collection. A list of the Advisory Committee members is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

THREAT ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

In March 2014, DCJS hosted the statewide Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) Threat Assessment Conference in Richmond, Virginia. The conference was attended by participants representing K-12 schools and IHEs. Attendees included educational administrators, faculty and staff, police and security department personnel, mental health and community service board members. This was one of the largest gatherings of educators and school/campus security members in Virginia.

The conference included presentations by national experts in threat assessment and issues related to threat assessment. These presentations included national experts on current threat assessment research, representatives from the U.S. DOE, the FBI, the U.S. Capitol Police, and major private threat assessment consultants.

During the conference, DCJS presented information on the planned threat assessment study, solicited questions and comments from the general audience, and conferred with threat assessment experts. All of this was done to gather information to guide and improve the planning for the DCJS threat assessment study.

VACLEA CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

In June 2014, DCJS staff attended the statewide VACLEA Summer Conference in Virginia Beach and made a presentation to inform VACLEA members of the study and solicit input on the study. This provided another opportunity for police and security department officials from many different campus settings to provide input on the study.

SURVEY OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION (Described in the next section)

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

In late January 2015, pre-notification emails regarding the upcoming campus threat assessment survey were sent to 68 of Virginia’s public and private non-profit IHEs; specifically, to each institution’s police chief/security director and the President/Dean. A letter from DCJS Director Francine C. Ecker was included to explain the purpose of the survey and the importance of participation in the survey (a copy of the letter is provided in [Appendix 2](#)).

The survey was launched in February 2015, when emails were sent to the same individuals with instructions for completing the survey and a link to the on-line survey site.

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY

This study targeted two-year and four-year (including graduate program IHEs), public and private non-profit institutions of higher education in Virginia. This includes the institutions that comprise the Virginia Community College System. The study excluded for-profit institutions, institutions operating primarily online, vocational-technical, and career colleges.

Although §23-9.2:10 requires only *public* IHEs to establish TATs, the VCSCS recommended that major *private* IHEs in Virginia be included in the survey. Various private IHEs have established such teams, and it was considered useful to determine which major private institutions have such teams and how these teams operate. The survey invitation sent to these institutions informed them that they are not required to maintain TATs or to participate in the DCJS survey, but that their participation in the survey would contribute to a better understanding of campus safety issues in Virginia.

Based on these criteria, DCJS used data from SCHEV to identify 68 IHEs in Virginia to include in the study. These included 39 public non-profit institutions (23 community colleges, 15 four-year institutions, and one two-year institution) and 29 private four-year institutions.

In all of the survey findings discussed in this report, three different categories of institutions of higher education are used. The institution types are defined as follows:

1. “**Four-Year Public Institution**” refers to public, non-profit IHEs authorized primarily to award Bachelor (or higher) degrees, such as a college or university. Examples of these are the College of William and Mary (including Richard Bland College), George Mason University, and University of Virginia.
2. “**Community College**” refers to IHEs that are part of the VCCS and are authorized to award Associate degrees. Examples of these are Danville Community College, Germanna Community College, and Northern Virginia Community College.
3. “**Private Institution**” refers to independent, non-profit IHEs. Examples of these are Bluefield College, Hampton University, and University of Richmond.

Table 1	
<i>Institutions Receiving Survey Request (Targeted Institutions)</i>	
<i>FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS</i>	
Christopher Newport University	Richard Bland College of William & Mary ^a
College of William & Mary	University of Mary Washington
George Mason University	University of Virginia
James Madison University	University of Virginia's College at Wise
Longwood University	Virginia Commonwealth University
Norfolk State University	Virginia Military Institute
Old Dominion University	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Radford University	Virginia State University
<i>COMMUNITY COLLEGES</i>	
Blue Ridge Community College	Patrick Henry Community College
Central Virginia Community College	Paul D. Camp Community College
Dabney S. Lancaster Community College	Piedmont Virginia Community College
Danville Community College	Rappahannock Community College
Eastern Shore Community College	Southside Virginia Community College
Germanna Community College	Southwest Virginia Community College
J Sargeant Reynolds Community College	Thomas Nelson Community College
John Tyler Community College	Tidewater Community College
Lord Fairfax Community College	Virginia Highlands Community College
Mountain Empire Community College	Virginia Western Community College
New River Community College	Wytheville Community College
Northern Virginia Community College	
<i>PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS</i>	
Appalachian College of Pharmacy	Mary Baldwin College
Appalachian School of Law	Marymount University
Averett University	Randolph College
Bluefield College	Randolph-Macon College
Bridgewater College	Regent University
Eastern Mennonite University	Roanoke College
Eastern Virginia Medical School ^b	Shenandoah University
Emory & Henry College	Southern Virginia University
Ferrum College	Sweet Briar College
Hampden-Sydney College	University of Richmond
Hampton University	Virginia Intermont College
Hollins University	Virginia Union University
Jefferson College of Health Sciences	Virginia Wesleyan College
Liberty University	Washington & Lee University
Lynchburg College	

^a Richard Bland College of William & Mary is a two-year junior/transfer-oriented public institution. DCJS has included it for purposes of analysis with the four-year public institutions because it has student residence facilities (unlike VCCS institutions).

^b Eastern Virginia Medical School has been categorized as a hybrid institution type per the 2008 General Assembly, receiving some general public fund support. DCJS has included it with the private institutions for purposes of analysis.

For analysis purposes, data from the public community colleges were examined separately from four-year public institutions. Both are public institutions, but community college demographics and physical characteristics are often markedly different from their four-year counterparts, and this impacts their approach to public safety concerns on their campuses. It is important to point out that both are held to the requirements of §23-9.2:10, as they both are classified a “public college or university.”

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION RESPONDING TO SURVEY

A total of 68 IHEs were invited to participate in the survey. Of these, 47 responded, for an overall response rate of 69%. **Table 2** shows the breakdown of respondents by institution type. About 95% of the four-year public institutions, 75% of the community colleges, and 50% of the private institutions responded to the survey.

Institution Type	Targeted Institutions <i>n</i>	Responding Institutions <i>n</i>	Response Rate %
4-Year Public	16	15	94%
Community College	23	17	74%
Private	29	15	52%
All Institutions	68	47	69%

Table 3 provides information on the sizes of the student populations at the 47 responding institutions. Almost two-thirds of the 47 institutions had a student population size of less than 5,000. Among the institutions with less than 5,000 students, 34% had an enrollment of 2,000 to 4,999, followed by under 2,000 (30%).

Enrollment Size	Responding Institutions <i>n</i>	Responding Institutions %
0 to 1,999	14	30%
2,000 to 4,999	16	34%
5,000 to 8,999	6	13%
9,000 to 11,999	3	6%
12,000 to 19,999	-- ^a	--
20,000 and above	8	17%
Total	47	100%

Note. Enrollment data were obtained from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), 2014 Fall Headcount Enrollment.

^aNo institutions were found for the 12,000 to 19,000 enrollment category.

PRESENTATION OF SURVEY FINDINGS

Recommendation PS-10 of the Governor’s School and Campus Safety Task Force was that DCJS conduct a “mandatory study of college threat assessment teams...to determine compliance with the 2008 legislation” requiring that Virginia’s IHEs establish such teams, and to “evaluate the nature and quality” of these teams.

Although the PS-10 language was limited to a study of TATs, DCJS realized that the TATs could not be adequately assessed without also gathering information about campus violence prevention committees (VPCs). The 2008 §23-9.2:10 language requiring each institution to establish a TAT *also* requires each institution to establish a VPC, which is responsible for establishing policies guiding the work of the threat assessment team. Therefore the DCJS survey asked institutions to provide information about both their VPCs and their TATs.

Four broad types of survey findings are presented in the remainder of this report. The first section of findings concern compliance with *Code* mandates regarding campus violence prevention committees. The second section of findings concern compliance with *Code* mandates regarding campus threat assessment teams. The third section of findings concerns other aspects of threat assessment committees which were considered important to provide a better understanding of issues related to the nature and quality of these teams. The fourth section of findings describes data reported concerning the numbers of threat assessment cases conducted by institutions, and the risk levels they assigned to these cases.

Survey findings are not presented for individual named institutions. Instead, the findings are reported in aggregate form for the different types of institutions.

SURVEY FINDINGS: VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEES

This section of the report describes the survey findings concerning VPCs at institutions of higher education in Virginia (hereinafter referred to as “institutions” or “IHE’s”), which are mandated by §23-9.2:10. Each requirement of §23-9.2:10 concerning VPCs is listed below, followed by a discussion of the survey findings relevant to that requirement.

§23-9.2:10(A): “Each public college or university shall have in place policies and procedures for the prevention of violence on campus, including assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the campus community.”

To address this *Code* requirement, the survey asked institutions whether or not they had written formal policies and/or procedures regarding the assessment of individuals and actions taken to resolve threats. This question was asked of all 47 respondents regardless of whether or not they indicated that they had a VPC, because some institutions may not have a VPC, but still have formal policies for assessing threatening individuals. It is important to note that some institutions may take certain actions, but have no formal policy in place. We address actions taken without formal policy/procedure later in the report.

As seen in **Table 4**, 93% of four-year public institutions and 94% of community colleges indicated that they have written policies and/or procedures for the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat to the campus community. Only one public and one community college indicated that it does not have such written policies/procedures. Additionally, 80% of the private institutions indicated that they have such written policies/procedures. As previously noted, private institutions are not required by *Code* to have written policies and/or procedures for assessing potentially threatening individuals.

Table 4		
<i>Institutions with Written Policy/Procedure for the Assessment of Threatening Individuals by Institution Type</i>		
Institution Type	Number of Institutions	Percent of Institutions
4-Year Public	14	93%
Community College	16	94%
Private	12	80%
All Institutions	42	89%

Note. n = 47

§23-9.2:10(B): “The board of visitors or other governing body of each institution of higher education shall determine a committee structure on campus of individuals charged with education and prevention of violence on campus.”

Table 5 shows the presence of VPCs by institution type. Among the 47 responding institutions, 91% (43) had a VPC. All responding four-year public institutions (15) and community colleges (17) had a VPC as required by *Code*. Among private institutions, 73% (11) had a VPC, even though the *Code* requirement does not apply to private institutions.

Table 5 <i>Institutions with Violence Prevention Committee by Institution Type</i>		
Institution Type	Number of Institutions	Percent of Institutions
4-Year Public	15	100%
Community College	17	100%
Private	11	73%
All Institutions	43	91%

Note. n = 47

§23-9.2:10(B): “Each committee shall include representatives from student affairs, law enforcement, human resources, counseling services, residence life, and other constituencies as needed. Such committee shall also consult with legal counsel as needed.”

Table 6 shows that, most – but not all – of the VPCs have the type of member representation required by *Code*. Although VPCs at public institutions are required to have representation from student affairs, only 93% of four-year public institution VPCs and 88% of community college VPCs indicated that they have a student affairs representative.

Similarly, only 93% of four-year public institution VPCs and 88% of the community college VPCs indicated they have a law enforcement/public safety or a human resources representative, as required by *Code*. Slightly more than one-half (53%) of public institution VPCs reported having the required residence life representative. Community colleges indicated that the requirement for a residence life representative was not applicable to their institutions because community colleges do not have student residence facilities on their campuses.

Only about one-third of institutions indicated that their VPC includes legal counsel, but legal counsel is not a *Code* requirement; *Code* only states that the VPC should consult with legal counsel as required.

Although not all public and community college VPCs reported having every single type of representation required by *Code*, it may be that overlapping responsibilities of VPC members from “student affairs”, “student health/counseling services” and “residence life” may provide more coverage than is indicated by the figures in **Table 6**. For example, at some institutions, the “residence life” representation may be covered by the “student affairs” representative.

Table 6
Violence Prevention Committee Membership by Department and Institution Type

Agency/Department	All Institutions (n = 43)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 17)		Private (n = 11)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Student Affairs	40	93%	14	93%	15	88%	11	100%
Law Enforcement/Public Safety	39	91%	14	93%	15	88%	10	91%
Human Resources	36	84%	14	93%	15	88%	7	63%
Student Health/Counseling	32	74%	14	93%	10	59%	8	73%
Legal Counsel	14	33%	7	47%	2	12%	5	45%
Residence Life	13	30%	8	53%	0 ^a	0%	5	45%

Note. Respondents were asked to select all agencies/departments represented on their VPC that apply.

^aResidence Life is not applicable to 17 community colleges because community colleges in Virginia do not have student residence facilities on their campuses.

§23-9.2:10(B): *Once formed, each committee shall develop a clear statement of: (i) mission, (ii) membership, and (iii) leadership. Such statement shall be published and available to the campus community.”*

As seen in **Table 7**, most – but not all – of the VPCs indicated that they have the statement of mission, membership, and leadership required by *Code*. Additionally, most indicated that these have been published and are available to the campus community.

All (100%) of the four-year public and 71% of the community college VPCs reported having a mission statement that has been published and made available to the campus community. Seventy-three percent of the private institutions with a VPC reported having a mission statement, although only 55% reported publishing it to the campus community.

Ninety-three percent of the public institution VPCs reported that the VPCs membership and leadership was published and available to the campus community. All (100%) of community colleges reported that their VPC’s membership was published and available to the campus community, and 88% of their VPCs reported that the VPC’s leadership was published and available to the campus community.

Table 7
Violence Prevention Committee – Statements are Made Public and Available by Institution Type

Agency/Department	All Institutions (n = 43)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 17)		Private (n = 11)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
VPC has mission statement	35	81%	15	100%	12	71%	8	73%
Mission published/available	33	77%	15	100%	12	71%	6	55%
Membership published/available	38	88%	14	93%	17	100%	7	64%
VPC has established leadership	41	95%	15	100%	16	94%	10	91%
Leadership published/available	36	84%	14	93%	15	88%	7	64%

Note. Responses from 43 institutions with a VPC.

§23-9.2:10(C): Each committee shall be charged with: (i) providing guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a physical threat to the community...

As seen in **Table 8**, the majority of institutions indicated that they provide guidance on recognizing threatening behavior to students, faculty, and staff. All (100%) four-year public institutions and community colleges indicated that they provide guidance to both faculty and staff, and all but three public institutions reported providing guidance to students.

Table 8
Institutions Providing Guidance on Recognizing Threats to Faculty, Staff, and Students by Institution Type

Provides guidance to:	All Institutions (n = 47)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 17)		Private (n = 15)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Faculty	45	96%	15	100%	17	100%	13	87%
Staff	45	96%	15	100%	17	100%	13	87%
Students	41	87%	14	93%	14	82%	13	87%

Note. n = 47. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.

§23-9.2:10(C): Each committee shall be charged with: ...(ii) identifying members of the campus community to whom threatening behavior should be reported ...

As seen in **Table 9**, 45 of the 47 institutions (96%) reported identifying members of the campus community to whom threats should be reported. This included 100% of public institutions and 94% of community colleges.

Table 9
Institutions that Identify to Whom to Report Threats by Institution Type

Institution Type	Number of Institutions	Percent of Institutions
4-Year Public	15	100%
Community College	16	94%
Private	14	93%
All Institutions	45	96%

Note. n = 47

§23-9.2:10(C): Each committee shall be charged with:...(iv) establishing policies and procedures for the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat, appropriate means of intervention with such individuals, and sufficient means of action, including interim suspension, referrals to community services boards or health care providers for evaluation or treatment, medical separation to resolve potential physical threats, or notification of family members or guardians, or both, unless such notification would prove harmful to the individual in question, consistent with state and federal law...

To assess how the VPCs are complying with the *Code* requirement for providing “appropriate means of intervention” and “sufficient means of action” when presented with individuals whose behavior may present a threat, DCJS consulted with threat assessment experts to identify what means should be included in the survey (in addition to the examples listed in the *Code* section above). As a result, the survey asked institutions to indicate whether they employed the means of intervention and action shown in **Table 10**.

Note that the types of interventions presented in the survey and in **Table 10** (and in tables 11 and 18) do not include law enforcement interventions such as arrest. Such interventions were not included because law enforcement interventions are not included in the types of interventions listed in §23-9.2:10(C) above.

Among four-year public institutions, the most frequently reported intervention strategies used included disciplinary conduct review and directly communicating with the threatening individual (both used by 93% of institutions), interim suspension and voluntary referral for mental health treatment/counseling (both used by 87% of institutions), and notifying the family of the threatening individual (used by 80% of institutions). The least reported strategy reported by these institutions was medical separation, reported by only 60% of the institutions.

Among community colleges, the most frequently reported intervention strategies used included disciplinary conduct review and interim suspension (both used by 94% of institutions), directly communicating with the threatening individual (used by 88%) and voluntary referral for mental health treatment/counseling (used by 82%). Community colleges were much less likely than four-year institutions to report using involuntary hospitalization for evaluation and/or treatment or using medical separation or notification of the family.

Private institutions were generally less likely than public institutions to report using any of the strategies listed above. The intervention strategies most frequently used by private institutions were interim suspension and voluntary referral for mental health treatment/counseling (both reported by 80% of

institutions) and disciplinary conduct review and voluntary referral for mental health treatment/counseling (both reported by 73% of institutions).

Others strategies listed but not shown in **Table 10** included: banned from campus, dismissal/suspension, and denial/revocation of admission.

Table 10
*Intervention Strategies For Individual Presenting Threatening Behavior
Included in Institution Policy by Institution Type*

Intervention Strategy	All Institutions (n = 47)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 17)		Private (n = 15)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Disciplinary conduct review	41	87%	14	93%	16	94%	11	73%
Interim suspension	41	87%	13	87%	16	94%	12	80%
Direct communication	40	85%	14	93%	15	88%	11	73%
Voluntary referral –MH ^a treatment	39	83%	13	87%	14	82%	12	80%
Mandated MH assessment	32	68%	11	73%	13	76%	8	53%
Notify family	29	62%	12	80%	8	47%	9	60%
Involuntary hospitalization	24	51%	11	73%	6	35%	7	47%
Medical separation	21	45%	9	60%	5	29%	7	47%

Note. n = 47. Institutions were asked to select all that apply.

^aMH = mental health.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEES

§23-9.2:10(A): “Each public college or university shall have in place policies and procedures for the prevention of violence on campus...”

- 93% of four-year public institutions (14 of 15) had policies and procedures for preventing violence on campus
- 94% of community colleges (16 of 17) had policies and procedures for preventing violence on campus
- 80% of private institutions (12 of 15) had policies and procedures for preventing violence on campus

§23-9.2:10(B): “...each institution of higher education shall determine a committee structure on campus of individuals charged with education and prevention of violence on campus.”

- 100% of four-year public institutions (15 of 15) had a violence prevention committee
- 100% of community colleges (17 of 17) had a violence prevention committee
- 73% of private institutions (11 of 15) had a violence prevention committee

§23-9.2:10(B): “Each committee shall include representatives from student affairs, law enforcement, human resources, counseling services, residence life...”

- Student affairs was represented on the committee at 93% of four-year public institutions, 88% of community colleges, and 100% of private institutions
- Law enforcement was represented on the committee at 93% of four-year public institutions, 88% of community colleges, and 91% of private institutions
- Human resources was represented on the committee at 93% of four-year public institutions, 88% of community colleges, and 63% of private institutions
- Counseling services was represented on the committee at 93% of four-year public institutions, 59% of community colleges, and 73% of private institutions
- Residence life was represented on the committee at 53% of four-year public institutions, 0% of community colleges, and 45% of private institutions

As previously noted, community colleges do not contain student residence facilities, and residence life representation may be included by representatives from other groups, such as student affairs.

§23-9.2:10(B): “...each committee shall develop a clear statement of: (i) mission, (ii) membership, and (iii) leadership. Such statement shall be published and available to the campus community.”

- A committee statement of mission was developed and published by 100% of four-year public institutions, 71% of community colleges, and 73% of private institutions
- A committee statement of membership was developed and published by 93% of four-year public institutions, 100% of community colleges, and 64% of private institutions
- A committee statement of leadership was developed and published by 93% of four-year public institutions, 88% of community colleges, and 64% of private institutions

§23-9.2:10(C): “Each committee shall be charged with: (i) providing guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may present a physical threat...”

- The committee provided guidance to faculty at 100% of four-year public institutions, 100% of community colleges, and 87% of private institutions

- The committee provided guidance to staff at 100% of four-year public institutions, 100% of community colleges, and 87% of private institutions
- The committee provided guidance to students at 93% of four-year public institutions, 82% of community colleges, and 87% of private institutions

§23-9.2:10(C): Each committee shall be charged with: “...(ii) identifying members of the campus community to whom threatening behavior should be reported ...”

- The committee identified to whom threatening behavior should be reported at 100% of four-year public institutions, 94% of community colleges, and 93% of private institutions

§23-9.2:10(C): Each committee shall be charged with: “...(iv) establishing policies and procedures for the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat, appropriate means of intervention with such individuals, and sufficient means of action...”

All of the institutions reported some type(s) of intervention or action that is taken when an individual has been identified as a potential threat to the institution. The following types were most frequently reported:

- Four-year public institutions most frequently reported the following interventions and actions: disciplinary conduct review (93%), direct communication with threatening individual (93%), interim suspension (87%), voluntary referral to mental health treatment/counseling (87%) and notifying the family of the threatening individual (80%)
- Community colleges most frequently reported the following interventions and actions: disciplinary conduct review (94%), interim suspension (94%), direct communication with threatening individual (88%), voluntary referral to mental health treatment/counseling (82%) and mandated psychological assessment (76%)
- Private institutions most frequently reported the following interventions and actions: interim suspension (80%), voluntary referral to mental health treatment/counseling (80%), disciplinary conduct review (73%), and direct communication with threatening individual (73%)

SURVEY FINDINGS: THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

This section of the report describes the survey findings concerning college and university threat assessment teams, which are mandated by §23-9.2:10. A threat assessment team (TAT) is a multidisciplinary team responsible for the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat to the campus community. Although there is no standard definition of a TAT, generally such teams are multidisciplinary, bringing together campus professionals responsible for safety and behavioral management (e.g., campus safety, law enforcement, mental health, human resources, and student affairs personnel).

Each requirement in §23-9.2:10 concerning threat assessment teams is listed in this section of the report, followed by a discussion of the survey findings relevant to that requirement.

It should be noted that the number of institutions included in the tables in this section does not always equal the total number of institutions that responded to the survey (15 four-year public institutions, 17 community colleges, and 15 private institutions). This is because two of the 46 institutions with a TAT reported team structures that differed from the three typical TAT structures (i.e., one team that assesses students only; one team that assesses students/faculty/staff; or two separate teams: one that assesses students and one that assesses faculty/staff). The data reported by these two institutions could not be accommodated in the analysis.

§23-9.2:10(D): “The board of visitors or other governing body of each public institution of higher education shall establish a specific threat assessment team...”

The survey asked each institution if it had established a threat assessment team per §23-9.2:10. Responses are shown in **Table 11**.

All 15 of the four-year public and all 17 of the community colleges reported having a threat assessment team, i.e., 100% compliance with *Code* mandate. Most private institutions (14 out of 15; 93%) reported having a TAT, even though the *Code* requirement does not apply to private institutions.

Institution Type	Number of Institutions	Percent of Institutions
4-Year Public	15	100%
Community College	17	100%
Private	14	93%
All Institutions	46	98%

Note. n = 47.

Threat Assessment Team Structure

Institutions may structure their TATs in a variety of ways to serve their needs. For example, some teams assess only threats from students, while other teams are designed to assess threats from students as well as threats from campus faculty or staff. Therefore, the survey asked institutions to indicate which type of TAT structure it has in place, using the three most common TAT structures and asking which of the three most closely resembles their TAT structure. Responses are shown in **Table 12**.

Of the 46 institutions with a TAT, the majority reported having one team that assesses students, faculty and staff. Three four-year public institutions reported having two teams – one to assess threats from students, and another to assess threats from campus faculty or staff.

TAT Structure	All Institutions (n = 46)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 17)		Private (n = 14)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
One team: students only	3	7%	0	0%	1	6%	2	14%
One team: students, faculty, staff	38	83%	12	80%	15	88%	11	79%
Two Teams: one students, one faculty/staff	3	7%	3	20%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	2	4%	0	0%	1	6%	1	7%

Note. Responses from 46 institutions with a TAT.

§23-9.2:10(D): “...threat assessment team...shall include members from law enforcement, mental health professionals, representatives of student affairs and human resources, and, if available, college or university counsel.”

The survey asked each institution to provide information about the core membership/representation of its team. Results are shown in **Table 13**.

Because colleges and universities have different organizational structures, the survey also included other types of campus offices/departments which might fulfill the *Code* requirement, but not match the organizational name cited in *Code*. For example, the academic provost or academic dean could fulfill the *Code* requirement for representation by the dean of students or student affairs, or finance and administration could fulfill the *Code* requirement for human resources.

Across all institutions, the most commonly noted TAT representatives were law enforcement/public safety (95%), student affairs (93%), and student health/counseling (80%). Over two-thirds of respondents (68%) noted representation from human resources. Only 32% of TATs had representation from legal counsel; however, the total number of institutions that had legal counsel available (but not as a standing committee member) is unknown.

Table 13
Threat Assessment Team Membership by Department and Institution Type

Agency/Department	All Institutions (n = 44)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 16)		Private (n = 13)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Law Enforcement/Public Safety	42	95%	15	100%	15	94%	12	92%
Student Affairs	41	93%	14	93%	14	88%	13	100%
Human Resources	30	68%	10	67%	14	88%	6	46%
Student Health/Counseling	35	80%	14	93%	10	59%	11	79%
Legal Counsel	14	32%	7	47%	2	12%	5	45%
Residence Life	13	30%	8	53%	0	0%	5	38%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with a typical TAT structure (see TAT Structure section); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded; Respondents were asked to select all agencies/departments represented on their TAT that apply.

§23-9.2:10(E): “Each threat assessment team shall establish relationships or utilize existing relationships with local and state law enforcement agencies as well as mental health agencies to expedite assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior may present a threat to safety.”

As seen in **Table 14**, all respondents (100%) reported having and/or utilizing existing relationships with local and state law enforcement agencies as well as mental health agencies; however, the type of relationships varied.

When asked about the type of relationship with local law enforcement agencies, the majority of institutions indicated an informal relationship with a local police department (62%) and/or local sheriff’s office (60%). A majority of institutions also indicated they had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Virginia State Police (51%).

When asked about the type of relationship with mental health agencies, the largest number of institutions indicated they had an informal relationship with their local Community Services Board (47%) and/or local mental health agency (62%).

Table 14
Relationships with Law Enforcement and Mental Health Agencies

Institutions that have relationship with:	Number	Percent
Local/state law enforcement agencies	47	100%
Local mental health agencies	47	100%

§23-9.2:10(D): “...threat assessment team...shall implement the assessment, intervention and action policies set forth by the [violence prevention] committee pursuant to subsection C.”

The survey asked each TAT to indicate the mechanisms and practices it uses to implement the required assessment, intervention and action policies established by its institution’s violence prevention committee. Specifically, it asked each team to describe the following:

- How the TAT receives reports/referrals about potentially threatening behavior
- What sources provide referrals about potentially threatening behavior to the TAT
- What intervention strategies the TAT uses when it receives a report of a potential threat
- What intervention strategies the TAT takes to protect victims of threats
- Whether the TAT uses a risk assessment instrument to assess reported threats

Findings regarding these assessments, intervention and action policies are presented in **Tables 15 and 16**.

Reporting and Referrals to the Threat Assessment Team

As seen in **Table 15**, overall, direct report (95%) and email (91%) were the most commonly cited reporting methods used by campus TATs. These reporting methods were the most common type used by all types of institutions. At least one-half of all institution types also stated that they receive reports through a hotline/telephone or an online report form. Paper reporting forms were used by only 32% of the institutions.

Table 15
Reporting Methods Used by Threat Assessment Teams by Institution Type

Reporting Method	All Institutions (n = 44)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 16)		Private (n = 13)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Direct report	42	95%	14	93%	15	94%	13	100%
Email	40	91%	14	93%	14	88%	12	92%
Hotline/phone	28	64%	12	80%	8	50%	8	62%
Online report forms	28	64%	9	60%	10	63%	9	69%
Outreach activities by TAT	15	34%	9	60%	3	19%	3	23%
Paper report forms	14	32%	6	40%	6	38%	2	15%
Other	8	18%	3	20%	4	25%	1	8%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with one of the three typical TAT structures (see TAT Structure section); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded. Percentages can add up to more than 100% because institutions may report using more than one referral method.

As seen in **Table 16**, faculty (80%) and law enforcement/security (77%) were the most *common* sources of referrals to TATs. This was the case for both four-year institutions and community colleges. Private institutions also cited faculty (85%) as their most common referral sources, although at these institutions housing/residence advisor (62%) was cited as frequently as law enforcement/security safety (62%).

Others referral sources reported but not shown in **Table 16** included: daily police/security reports, police calls, resident life reports, and other violence prevention committees/teams (e.g., Care Team, Behavioral Assessment Team).

Table 16
Threat Assessment Referral Sources by Institution Type

Agency/Department	All Institutions (n = 44)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 16)		Private (n = 13)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Faculty	35	80%	12	80%	12	75%	11	85%
Law Enforcement/Security	34	77%	13	87%	13	81%	8	62%
Student Affairs	27	61%	11	73%	6	38%	6	46%
Administrator or Dean	18	41%	6	40%	6	38%	6	46%
Housing/Resident Advisor	18	41%	10	67%	0	0%	8	62%
Students	17	39%	6	40%	5	31%	6	46%
Student Health/Counseling	16	36%	8	53%	4	25%	4	31%
Academic Advisor/Advising	14	32%	6	40%	2	13%	6	46%
Human Resources	13	30%	9	60%	2	13%	2	15%
Parents	5	11%	3	20%	0	0%	2	15%
External sources	4	9%	4	27%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	6	14%	2	13%	1	6%	0	0%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with one of the three typical TAT structures (see TAT Structure section); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded. Percentages can add up to more than 100% because institutions could report more than one referral source. Numbers in table may include multiple sources reporting the same threat (ex. – a student reports a threat to a faculty member, who in turn reports the threat to the TAT).

Threat Assessment Team Name

The survey asked institutions with a TAT to indicate what name is used to denote the team. Of the 44 institutions, 31 (71%) indicated that their team is designated as “Treat Assessment Team.” Four institutions (9%) called their TAT a “Behavioral Intervention Team” and nine institutions (20%) responded that they used some other name for their TAT. These included “Behavioral Assessment Team”, “Care Team”, “Behavioral Assistance Team”, and “Campus Assessment and Intervention Team”.

Methods of Intervention and Prevention Used by Threat Assessment Teams

Threat assessment teams have various forms of intervention available when they encounter a potentially threatening individual. The survey asked institutions to indicate which intervention methods they most frequently use.

Note that these findings are different from the previously discussed question regarding the means of intervention that are mandated in policy by §23-9.2:10(C) (iv) (see report p. 18 and 19). Rather, these

data reflect what means of intervention TATs report they are actually using instead of just what is in institution policy. Findings are presented in **Table 17**.

Overall, more than 90% of institutions reported using (for an individual presenting threatening behavior) the four intervention strategies of disciplinary conduct review, interim suspension, direct communication, and voluntary referral to mental health treatment. Three quarters of the listed intervention strategies were used by 85% of public institutions or higher.

Table 17
Intervention Strategies for Individual Presenting Threatening Behavior
Used by Threat Assessment Teams by Institution Type

Intervention Strategy	All Institutions (n = 44)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 16)		Private (n = 13)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Disciplinary conduct review	40	91%	14	93%	16	94%	11	73%
Interim suspension	40	91%	13	87%	16	94%	12	80%
Direct communication	40	91%	14	93%	15	88%	11	73%
Voluntary referral –MH ^a treatment	40	91%	13	87%	14	82%	12	80%
Mandated MH assessment	32	73%	11	73%	13	76%	8	53%
Involuntary hospitalization	31	70%	11	73%	6	35%	7	47%
Notify family	30	68%	12	80%	8	47%	9	60%
Medical separation	24	55%	9	60%	5	29%	7	47%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with one of the three typical TAT structures (see TAT Structure section); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded. Percentages can add up to more than 100% because institutions could report more than one source.

^a MH = mental health

Information on implementation of the violence prevention committee’s requirements concerning providing guidance on recognizing threatening behavior, to whom threatening behavior should be reported and when, assessment practices, and interventions and actions are also reported in the previous section on violence prevention committees.

Protective Efforts for Victims

As seen in **Table 18**, nearly all TATs (98%) reported coaching victims on personal safety approaches. A majority of TATs modify security and access to victims (89%) and (when necessary) will move victims to a more secure environment (77%). Less than half (45%) indicated that they had cases in which they had granted victims administrative leave to minimize risk.

Table 18
Protective Efforts for Victims by Institution Type

Protective Strategy for Victim	All Institutions (n = 44)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 16)		Private (n = 13)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Coaching victim on personal safety approaches	43	98%	15	100%	15	94%	13	100%
Modifying security and access to victim	39	89%	14	93%	13	81%	12	92%
Moving the victim to more secure environment	34	77%	14	93%	10	63%	10	77%
Administrative leave to minimize exposure	20	45%	10	67%	4	25%	6	46%
Other	6	14%	2	13%	2	13%	1	8%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with one of the three typical TAT structures (see TAT Structure section); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded. Respondents were asked to select all that apply.

Risk Assessment Instruments

Only 18% of institutions with a TAT reported always using one or more formal or structured risk/threat assessment tools during their assessment process. Forty-one percent of institutions said they did not use a risk assessment instrument, while another 41% indicated that they sometimes used one. This raises a question regarding consistency in how institutions perform threat assessments. Additional study may be useful to examine the assessment processes used by the 41% of TATs that do not use a formalized or structured assessment instrument.

Table 19
Threat Assessment Team Use of Risk Assessment Instruments by Institution Type

	All Institutions (n = 44)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 16)		Private (n = 13)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
No	18	41%	6	40%	6	38%	6	46%
Yes – sometimes	18	41%	4	27%	10	63%	4	31%
Yes – always	8	18%	5	33%	0	0%	3	23%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with one of the three typical TAT structures (see TAT Structure section); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded. Columns may not total 100% due to rounding.

Other Aspects of Threat Assessment Team Composition and Operations

In addition to asking about how the TATs are complying with the requirements of §23-9.2:10, the survey asked about other aspects of the TATs that campus safety experts advised are important to the functioning of a TAT. These aspects include:

- Threat assessment team size
- Threat assessment team leadership
- Threat assessment team member training
- Threat assessment team meeting frequency
- Threat assessment records/documentation
- Budget for threat assessment teams
- Monitoring social media

Findings regarding these aspects are described in the following sections.

Threat Assessment Team Size

The survey asked institutions to indicate of the size of their threat assessment team membership. Responses are shown in **Table 20**.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of the institutions reported having from five to 10 TAT members, while 18% reported having fewer than five members. Sixteen percent reported having 11 to 15 members. Only one TAT reported having more than 15 members.

Institution Type	Number of Institutions	Percent of Institutions
Less than 5 members	8	18%
5 – 10 members	28	64%
11 – 15 members	7	16%
16 – 20 members	1	2%
All Institutions	44	100%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with one of the three typical TAT structures (see TAT Structure section); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded.

Threat Assessment Team Leadership

The survey asked institutions what campus departments/offices chair their threat assessment teams. Responses are shown in **Table 21**.

Two-thirds or more (68%) of all institutions reported having a representative from either student affairs (41%) or law enforcement/security (27%) as the chair for their TAT.

Table 21
Threat Assessment Team Leadership by Agency/Department by Institution Type

Agency/Department	All Institutions (n = 44)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 16)		Private (n = 13)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Student Affairs	18	41%	5	33%	6	38%	7	54%
Law Enforcement/Security	12	27%	5	33%	4	25%	3	23%
Two departments co-chair	3	7%	2	13%	0	0%	1	8%
Academic Affairs	2	5%	0	0%	2	13%	0	0%
Legal Counsel	2	5%	0	0%	0	0%	2	15%
Finance and Administration	2	5%	1	7%	1	6%	0	0%
Emergency Planning/Prepare	2	5%	1	7%	1	6%	0	0%
Human Resources	1	2%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%
Student or Mental Health/Counseling	1	2%	0	0%	1	6%	0	0%
Executive Vice President	1	2%	0	0%	1	6%	0	0%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with one of the three typical TAT structures (see TAT Structure section); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded. Columns may not total 100% due to rounding.

Threat Assessment Team Training

The survey asked TATs if basic threat assessment training is required of their team members. Findings are presented in **Table 22**.

Overall, 55% of institutions reported that all of their TAT members are required to attend basic threat assessment training. Such training was required for all TAT members by 73% of four-year public institutions, 56% of community colleges, and 31% of private institutions. Twenty percent of the institutions reported that training was required for some – but not all – TAT members. One-quarter of the institutions reported that threat assessment training was not required for TAT members, with 62% of these being private institutions.

Table 22
Threat Assessment Team Training Requirement by Institution Type

Agency/Department	All Institutions (n = 44)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 16)		Private (n = 13)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes – for all members	24	55%	11	73%	9	56%	4	31%
Yes – for some	9	20%	3	20%	5	31%	1	8%
No	11	25%	1	7%	2	13%	8	62%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with a typical TAT structure (see TAT Structure section); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded. Columns may not total 100% due to rounding.

Threat Assessment Team Meeting Frequency

The survey asked institutions how often their threat assessment teams hold meetings. Findings are presented in **Table 23**.

Overall, TATs met most frequently on an as-needed basis (55%), with community colleges and private institutions more likely to do so (63% and 77% respectively) than four-year public institutions (27%). Four-year public institutions most frequently reported having weekly TAT meetings (40%), compared to 23% for private institutions and 6% for community colleges.

Table 23
Threat Assessment Team Meeting Frequency by Institution Type

Frequency	All Institutions (n = 44)		4-Year Public (n = 15)		Community College (n = 16)		Private (n = 13)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
As-needed	24	55%	4	27%	10	63%	10	77%
Weekly	10	23%	6	40%	1	6%	3	23%
Twice Monthly	4	9%	2	13%	2	13%	0	0%
Monthly	4	9%	1	7%	3	19%	0	0%
Other	2	5%	2	13%	0	0%	0	0%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with a typical TAT structure (see section on TAT Structure); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded; Columns may not total 100% due to rounding.

Threat Assessment Records/Documentation

The survey asked threat assessment teams if they maintain records on the cases that they assess, and, if so, what types of records are maintained.

All (100%) of the responding institutions reported keeping records on cases they assessed. Nearly all (91%) of the institutions maintained their TAT records in a centralized database or location. All of the public institutions maintained their TAT records in a centralized database or location.

Threat Assessment Budget

The survey asked threat assessment teams if their institutions have allocated a budget for the team. Survey findings are shown in **Table 24**.

Only nine of 44 institutions (20%) reported having a budget for their TAT, with seven of the nine being four-year public institutions. Slightly less than half (47%) of the four-year public institutions reported that their threat assessment teams has a budget allocated; 53% reported that their institution does not provide a budget. Only one community college and one private institution indicated having a budget for their TAT.

Table 24
Threat Assessment Teams with a Budget by Institution Type

Institution Type	Number of Institutions	Percent of Institutions
4-Year Public	7	47%
Community College	1	6%
Private	1	8%
All Institutions	9	20%

Note. Responses from 44 institutions with a typical TAT structure (see section on TAT Structure); two institutions with unique TAT structures were excluded.

Monitoring Threats on Social Media

As seen in **Table 25**, more than three-quarters (80%) of four-year public institutions indicated that they have a mechanism for monitoring social media for potential threats. Slightly less than one-half of community colleges (47%) and private institutions (47%) reported monitoring social media for threats.

Table 25
Institutions Monitoring Social Media by Institution Type

Institution Type	Number of Institutions	Percent of Institutions
4-Year Public	12	80%
Community College	8	47%
Private	7	47%
All Institutions	27	57%

Note. Responses from all 47 responding institutions.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

§23-9.2:10(D): “The board of visitors or other governing body of each public institution of higher education shall establish a specific threat assessment team...”

- 100% of four-year public institutions reported having a threat assessment team (TAT)
- 100% of community colleges reported having a TAT
- 93% of private institutions reported having a TAT

§23-9.2:10(D): “...threat assessment team...shall include members from law enforcement, mental health professionals, representatives of student affairs and human resources, and, if available, college or university counsel.”

- Law enforcement/public safety departments were represented on 95% of all institutions’ TATs (100% of four-year public institutions, 94% of community colleges, and 92% of private institutions)
- Mental health professionals were represented on 80% of all institutions’ TATs (93% of four-year public institutions, 59% of community colleges, and 79% of private institutions)
- Student affairs was represented on 93% of all institutions’ TATs (93% of four-year public institutions, 88% of community colleges, and 100% of private institutions)
- Human resources was represented on 68% of all institutions’ TATs (67% of four-year public institutions, 88% of community colleges, and 46% of private institutions)
- Only 32% of all institutions’ TATs had representation from legal counsel

§23-9.2:10(E): “Each threat assessment team shall establish relationships or utilize existing relationships with local and state law enforcement agencies as well as mental health agencies to expedite assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior may present a threat to safety.”

- 100% of institutions’ TATs (regardless of institution type) had established relationships/utilized existing relationships with a law enforcement agency and with a mental health services provider

How the threat assessment team receives reports/referrals about potentially threatening behavior:

- Overall, direct report (95%) and email (91%) were the most frequently cited reporting methods used by campus TATs. These reporting methods were the most common type used by all types of institutions
- One-half or more of all institution types also stated that they receive reports through a hotline/telephone or an online report form
- Overall, paper reporting forms were used by 32% of the institutions

What sources provide referrals about potentially threatening behavior to the threat assessment team:

- Faculty (80%) and law enforcement/security (77%) were the most frequently cited sources of referrals to TATs. This was the case both four-year and community colleges. Private institutions also cited faculty (85%) as their most common referral sources

What intervention strategies the threat assessment team takes to protect victims of threats:

- 98% of all institutions’ TATs reported coaching victims on personal safety approaches (100% of four-year public institutions, 94% of community colleges, and 100% of private institutions)

- 89% of all institutions' TATs reported modifying security and access to victims (93% of four-year public institutions, 81% of community colleges, and 92% of private institutions)
- 77% of all institutions' TATs will move victims to a more secure environment when necessary (93% of four-year public institutions, 63% of community colleges, and 77% of private institutions)
- Less than half of institutions' TATs (45%) indicated that they had cases in which they had granted victims administrative leave to minimize risk

Whether the threat assessment team uses a risk assessment instrument to assess reported threats:

- Only 18% of institutions with a TAT reported always using one or more risk assessment tools during their assessment process (33% of four-year public institutions, 0% of community colleges, and 23% of private institutions)
- 41% of institutions indicated that they sometimes used a risk assessment instrument (27% of four-year public institutions, 63% of community colleges, and 31% of private institutions)
- 41% of institutions with a TAT said they did not use a risk assessment instrument (40% of four-year public institutions, 38% of community colleges, and 46% of private institutions)

Threat assessment team size:

- The majority of TATs (64%) reported a team size of from five to 10 members
- The average TAT size was eight members
- The maximum TAT size was 16 members
- The minimum TAT size was three members

Threat assessment team leadership:

- A student affairs representative chaired 41% of all institutions' TATs
- A law enforcement/public safety representative chaired 27% of all institutions' TATs

Threat assessment team member training:

- Overall, 55% of institutions reported that all of their TAT members are required to attend basic threat assessment training (73% of four-year public institutions, 56% of community colleges, and 31% of private institutions)
- 20% of all institutions reported that training was required for only some TAT members

Threat assessment team meeting frequency:

- Overall, TATs met most frequently on an as-needed basis (55%), with community colleges and private institutions more likely to do so (63% and 77% respectively) than four-year public institutions (27%). Four-year public institutions most frequently reported having weekly TAT meetings (40%), compared to 23% for private institutions and 6% for community colleges.

Threat assessment records/documentation:

- All (100%) of the responding institutions reported keeping records on cases they assessed. Nearly all (91%) of the institutions maintained their TAT records in a centralized database or location. All of the public institutions maintained their TAT records in a centralized database or location.

Budget for threat assessment teams:

- Only nine of 44 institutions (20%) reported having a budget for their TAT, with seven of the nine being four-year public institutions. Slightly less than half (47%) of the four-year public institutions reported that their threat assessment teams has a budget allocated; 53% reported that their institution does not provide a budget. Only one community college and one private institution indicated having a budget for their TAT.

Monitoring threats on social media:

- More than three-quarters (80%) of four-year public institutions indicated that they have a mechanism for monitoring social media for potential threats. Slightly less than one-half of community colleges (47%) and private institutions (47%) reported monitoring social media for threats.

SURVEY FINDINGS: THREAT ASSESSMENT CASE INFORMATION

As part of this study, the DCJS survey asked each institution to provide basic information about the number of threat assessment cases examined by its threat assessment team, and the risk levels assigned to these cases. The survey did not ask for specific details about individual cases or case outcomes, but asked the basic questions:

- How many new threat assessment cases were screened by your TAT during the 2013-2014 academic year?
- How many threat assessment cases were initially screened in the *previous* academic year and were carried over into the 2013-2014 academic year?
- How many of the new threat assessment cases screened during the 2013-2014 academic year were judged by the TAT to be extreme risk, high risk, moderate risk, low risk, or no risk cases?

DCJS's analysis of the responses to this portion of the survey produced more questions than answers about how Virginia's institutions of higher education are conducting threat assessments. The responses describing how many threat assessment cases were screened, and the risk levels assigned to these cases, varied so much among institutions that the data were deemed unsuitable for any meaningful interpretation.

In this section DCJS provides a brief description of the data reported. This information is not intended to provide a meaningful understanding of how many threats are being reported, or of how seriously they are being classified on risk. Instead, it is presented to illustrate evidence suggesting that different institutions may be using varying interpretations of what constitutes a threat and when threats should come to the attention of their threat assessment teams. Then potential reasons why the data may have been reported as it was, and what these data suggest for better methods to examine threat assessment case data are discussed.

Number of Threat Assessment Cases Reported

Of the 47 institutions responding to the survey, 43 provided information about the number of cases assessed by their threat assessment team(s). Of these 43 institutions, 39 (91%) reported that their TAT assessed one or more threat cases during the 2013-2014 academic year, and four (9%) institutions reported no threat assessment cases during this period. A total of 1,217 threat assessment cases were reported. The numbers of cases screened by these 39 institutions were categorized and counted as shown in **Table 26**.

Table 26
Threat Assessment Cases Screened During the 2013–2014 Academic Year
(By Institutions Reporting at Least One Threat Assessment Case)

Number of Cases Screened	Number of Institutions (n = 39)	Percent of Institutions	Cumulative Percent
1 – 5 cases	21	54%	54%
6 – 10 cases	3	8%	62%
11 – 20 cases	6	15%	77%
21 – 30 cases	3	8%	85%
31 – 40 cases	2	5%	90%
41 – 79 cases	0	0%	90%
80 – 90 cases	2	5%	95%
91 – 212 cases	0	0%	95%
213 cases	1	3%	98%
500 cases	1	3%	100%

Note. Cases above are only new screened cases referred to the TAT in the 2013-2014 academic year. Although the survey also collected data on numbers of cases screened in the previous year and carried over into 2013-2014, the reporting was considered unreliable and was excluded from further analysis. Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

As seen in **Table 26**, most of the 39 institutions which screened at least one case during the academic year reported only a small number of cases. More than half (54%) reported five or fewer cases, and 62% reported screening 10 or fewer cases. Seventy-seven percent of the institutions (30 of 39) reported screening 20 or fewer cases.

In contrast to these small numbers of cases, one institution reported that its TAT screened 500 cases during the academic year, and another reported that its TAT had screened 213 cases. In other words, the number of threat assessment cases reported screened by these 39 institutions in a single academic year ranged from one case to 500 cases.

One obvious factor that could contribute to such a large range of TAT cases reported is the range in the size of the institution's student population/enrollment. These institutions' enrollment size varied from small private colleges with less than 1,000 students to large public universities with more than 30,000 students. It would generally be expected that institutions with small student populations would report fewer cases than institutions with very large student populations.

However, the analysis found marked variations in numbers of cases reported that are unrelated to student population size. For example, among the three four-year institutions with more than 30,000 students, one institution reported 500 cases, one reported 88 cases, and one reported only 20 cases. On the other hand, one institution with an enrollment of only about 1,500 students reported 213 cases, while another institution with a student population of almost 4,400 reported only three cases.

Table 27 illustrates these variations in reporting. For comparison purposes, the numbers of TAT cases reported by institutions with different student enrollment sizes are expressed as a ratio of the number of TAT cases reported per 1,000 enrolled students. Both public and private institutions are included.

Individual institution names are not used; institutions are designated as Institution A, Institution B, etc.) Community colleges, which are primarily commuter (as opposed to residential) institutions are excluded.

Table 27
Variations in Number / Ratio of TAT Cases Reported by Institutions

Institution Enrollment Size	Institution	Number of TAT Cases Reported	Cases Reported/1,000 Students Enrolled
30,000 + students	Institution A	500	16.0
	Institution B	88	2.8
	Institution C	20	0.6
20,000 – 29,999 students	Institution D	40	1.7
	Institution E	14	0.7
5,000 – 9,999 students*	Institution F	13	1.5
	Institution G	3	0.6
	Institution H	1	0.1
2,500 – 4,999 students	Institution I	82	21.7
	Institution J	12	2.9
	Institution K	3	0.7
Less than 2,500 Students	Institution L	213	146.8
	Institution M	29	13.9
	Institution N	3	2.7

*No four-year institutions reported student enrollments between 11,000 and 19,999 students.

Some of the variation in the ratio of TAT cases to student population would occur by chance alone, and others would occur because some institutions, for whatever reasons, may have a greater proportion of students who genuinely exhibit behaviors that appear threatening.

However, the variations seen in Table 27 suggest that other factors are influencing how many TAT cases are being reported by different institutions. This seems especially likely given that very large institutions with roughly the same number of students can report between 20 and 500 TAT cases (0.6 to 16.0 cases per 1,000 students), and much smaller institutions with roughly the same number of students can report between three and 213 TAT cases (2.7 to 146.8 cases per 1,000 students). This may be due to factors such as differences in how institutions are defining and identifying threat cases, the effectiveness of their threat reporting process, the dissemination of information regarding when to and how report a threat to the TAT, and the overall institutional culture regarding threat assessment. Additional research would be needed to determine the specific reasons for these variations among institutions.

Priority Assigned to Threat Assessment Cases Reported

The survey also asked the 39 institutions that reported threat assessment cases to provide information on how seriously these threats were judged to be at their intake/initial assessment. To assist institutions in responding to this question, respondents were provided with the following threat assessment rating scale, taken from “The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams” (Deisinger et al., 2008, p.142):

- **Priority 1 (Extreme Risk):** Appears to pose a clear/immediate threat of violence or self-harm and requires immediate containment. Needs law enforcement notification, target protection, and case management plan.
- **Priority 2 (High Risk):** Appears to pose a threat of violence or self-harm but lacks immediacy or access to target. Requires active monitoring and case management plan.
- **Priority 3 (Moderate Risk):** Does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm, but exhibits significantly disruptive behaviors and/or need for assistance. Requires active monitoring, case management plan, and appropriate referrals.
- **Priority 4 (Low Risk):** Does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, but may exhibit some disruptive behavior and/or need for assistance. Requires passive monitoring. Utilize case management and referrals as appropriate.
- **Priority 5 (No Identified Risk):** Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm nor is there evidence of disruption to community. No case management or monitoring required.

Of the 1,217 screened threat assessment cases reported for the 2013-2014 academic year, priority levels were provided for 1,163 cases.

As seen in **Table 28**, most of the 1,163 cases were prioritized as no risk or low risk. Seventeen percent of the cases (195) were prioritized as “no identified risk” and 53% (620) were prioritized as “low risk.” A combined 70% of the cases (815) were thus considered as no risk or low risk. Eighteen percent (203) of the cases were prioritized as “moderate risk.”

Only 12% (145) of the 1,163 cases were prioritized as either high or extreme risk – with 9% (109) of these prioritized as “high risk” and 3% (36) prioritized as “extreme risk.”

Table 28			
<i>Priority Level of Cases Screened by TATs</i>			
Priority/Threat Level	Number of Cases (n = 1,163)	Percent of Cases	Collapsed # and Percent of Cases
Priority 5 (No Identified Risk)	195	17%	8,151/70%
Priority 4 (Low Risk)	620	53%	
Priority 3 (Moderate Risk)	203	18%	203/18%
Priority 2 (High Risk)	109	9%	1,451/12%
Priority 1 (Extreme Risk)	36	3%	

As was the case with the data reported on numbers of threat assessment cases conducted, a clear interpretation of the data on priority levels is not possible due to the variability between institutions in the reporting. This variability is illustrated in **Table 29**, which provides data from the same 39 institutions included in **Table 27**. For ease of presentation, in **Table 29**, no risk and low risk cases are combined into a single category, and high risk and extreme risk cases are combined into a single category.

Table 29
Variations in Priorities Assigned to TAT Cases Reported by Institutions

Institution Enrollment Size	Institution	High/Extreme Risk	Moderate Risk	No/Low Risk
30,000 + students	Institution A	20%	50%	30%
	Institution B	48%	24%	28%
	Institution C	0%	4%	96%
20,000 – 29,999 students	Institution D	7%	29%	64%
	Institution E	21%	42%	37%
5,000 – 9,999 students*	Institution F	100%	0%	0%
	Institution G	67%	33%	0%
	Institution H	0%	62%	38%
2,500 – 4,999 students	Institution I	0%	33%	67%
	Institution J	25%	42%	33%
	Institution K	5%	15%	80%
Less than 2,500 Students	Institution L	40%	60%	0%
	Institution M	0%	0%	100%
	Institution N	17%	26%	56%

*No four-year institutions reported student enrollments between 11,000 and 19,999 students. Please note that some percentages are based on a very small number of cases.

Although overall 70% of the threat assessment cases were prioritized as no risk or low risk, and 12% as high risk or extreme risk, there was marked variation in how individual institutions prioritized their cases. For example, Institution C, with 30,000+ students, prioritized 96% of its cases as no risk or low risk, and none of its cases as high or extreme risk. On the other hand, the similar-sized Institution B prioritized only 28% of its cases as no risk or low risk and nearly half (48%) of its cases as high or extreme risk. Large variations between institutions were also seen in the priorities assigned by TATs operating in institutions with smaller numbers of enrolled students. Some of this variation may be due to the small numbers of cases reported by some institutions (i.e., Institutions H, K and N). However, this variation suggests that institutions differ in how they define and identify threat cases, in the criteria they use to assign priority risk levels to cases, or a combination of both.

Summary

Understanding how threat assessment teams throughout Virginia are identifying, counting and prioritizing threats is critical for determining: a) how well threat assessment teams are working as a means of reducing violence at institutions of higher learning, and b) identifying actions that can be taken to improve the operations and effectiveness of these teams. Virginia has enacted legislation mandating the use of threat assessment teams, and the DCJS Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety is charged with continuously updating and disseminating information to Virginia colleges and universities on best practices in threat assessment. To accomplish this, there needs to be a better understanding of what these teams are doing and how they are doing it.

The findings of this survey strongly suggest that there are differences in the way that threats are identified and prioritized by threat assessment teams; that these differences contribute to the variations seen in the

reporting from these teams; and that these differences are not detectable using the type of survey developed for this study.

Because campus threat assessment is a relatively new and evolving practice that has yet to be “standardized”, various factors can be postulated that could contribute to the observed variations in what institutions reported. Possible factors might include:

- Differences in how institutions (and individual reporters) determine what types and/or degrees of behaviors rise to the level of a “threat” to be reported to the TAT. Do some institutions/reporters see a certain behavior as a clear, reportable indicator of threat, whereas others see the same behavior as merely a nonthreatening nuisance that does not merit reporting?
- Differences in how clearly and effectively institutions disseminate information about what types and/or degrees of behaviors rise to the level of a “threat” to be reported to the TAT. Dissemination of information is vital to assure that individuals understand what types of behaviors need to be reported to the TAT and how to go about making this report.
- Differences in the processes institutions establish for making such reports. For example, are the processes for reporting threats better disseminated, specified, and easier to follow in some institutions than in others?
- Differences in how TATs respond to initial reports of potential threats. For example, might some TATs dismiss some initial reports as not serious enough to even be counted as a reported threat, where as other TATs might report it as a threat to be assessed, even if the assessment determines that it is not a credible threat?
- Differences between institutions in terms of the “culture” pertaining to reporting threats? For example, is reporting threats seen an important duty, which will likely result in action being taken, or does the culture see reporting as “snitching” or unlikely to produce any action?
- Whether or not, and to what degree, institutions monitor social media to detect possible threats.

This suggests that more qualitative, rather than quantitative, information is needed about how TATs now function in institutions. Knowing *how many* threats are being counted and reported cannot help that much unless we know *what* is, and is not, being counted and reported. Knowing how many threats are prioritized as “no risk” versus “extreme risk” cannot help that much unless we know how consistently, or not, different institutions are defining levels of risk.

This type of qualitative information cannot be obtained by sending surveys to institutions. The detailed, nuanced information needed would better be gathered through interviews or focus groups designed to understand what objective and subjective criteria TATs at different institutions are using to determine what behaviors or indicators are deemed a “threat” that should be reported or assessed, how this information is disseminated to the campus community, and how the seriousness of the reported cases should be prioritized. Although Virginia law mandates the statewide use of TATs and specifies certain characteristics of these teams, the day-to-day operations of these teams will always be somewhat driven by how the mandate is interpreted and operationalized by individual institutions.

DCJS is now developing a methodology to collect the type of qualitative data that may help to improve our understanding of how threat assessment is being conducted by TATs at Virginia institutions of higher learning.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine whether public institutions of higher education across the Commonwealth are complying with the §23-9.2:10 mandate to establish threat assessment teams, and to present some basic measures concerning the nature and quality of these teams. It was not designed to assess whether the presence of TATs leads to a reduction in campus violence, which would require another more complex study.

The findings indicate that most colleges and universities are complying with the mandate. In some cases fewer than 100% of institutions reported complying with certain aspects of §23-9.2:10. It appears that this may occur because the broad requirements of §23-9.2:10 may not be appropriate for every public institution. For example, a community college without residence facilities will not have a residence life representative on its TAT, or a small college without its own law enforcement personnel may not have a law enforcement representative on its TAT.

Questions for Further Study

The findings do raise some questions about threat assessment teams that were beyond the scope of this study. For example:

- How much variation is there between institutions in how a “threat” is initially recognized and reported?
- Are there things that could be done to make this more consistent across institutions? Should these things be done, or is it better to allow campuses to tailor these to their circumstances?
- What processes do teams use to conduct a threat assessment (e.g., risk assessment instrument, some other systematic process for structured professional judgement)?
- Is it reasonable that some campuses report no TAT cases?

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) should continue to provide Virginia IHEs with training, technical assistance and other information about the effective use of threat assessment teams. The operation and use of TATs is still an emerging field and it is necessary to keep up with and disseminate information on current research and best practices in the field.
- The VCSCS should continue to maintain contact with the Virginia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (VACLEA) to identify emerging issues regarding the operation and use of threat assessment teams.
- The VCSCS should periodically collect and analyze statewide threat assessment case data from TATs to help identify emerging issues and trends concerning the numbers and types of threat assessments performed by TATs.

- Higher education administrators may wish to examine whether it is appropriate for institutions to provide a specific budget for TAT operations.
- Higher education administrators may wish to further examine the reasons why there are differences in compliance between Virginia's community colleges and public four-year institutions of higher education with certain aspects of the legislative requirements for TATs.
- The VCSCS should conduct qualitative research on how TATs function in Virginia institutions to gain a better understanding of why there is so much variability in the number of threat assessment cases reported by different institutions, and so much variability in the priority/risk levels they assign to these cases.

APPENDIX 1: ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Craig L. Branch

*Chief of Police,
Germanna Community College Police Department
President,
Virginia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators*

Gene Deisinger, Ph.D.

*Managing Partner,
SIGMA Threat Management Associates*

David M. McCoy

*Associate Vice President of Public Safety & Chief of Police,
University of Richmond*

Kirsten A. Nelson

*Director of Communications & Government Relations,
State Council of Higher Education for Virginia*

Mary T. Savage

*Emergency Preparedness and Safety Manager,
Virginia Community College System*

Dana G. Schrad

*Executive Director,
Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police
Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation
Virginia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators*

APPENDIX 2: DCJS DIRECTOR'S LETTER



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Criminal Justice Services

Francine C. Ecker
Director

1100 Bank Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 786-4000
TDD (804) 386-8732

January 20, 2015

Dear Campus Presidents, Campus Police Chiefs/Security Department Heads, and Campus Threat Assessment Team Chairs:

Following the 2007 tragedy at Virginia Tech, the 2008 General Assembly passed legislation mandating campus threat assessment teams in Virginia's public colleges and universities (§ 23-9.2:10). Last year, the General Assembly directed the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to study and report on the nature and quality of these threat assessment teams.

I am writing to request your help in this important project. As part of the study, our Center for School and Campus Safety will survey 68 campuses to collect data about their threat assessment teams. Based on our analysis of this data, we will make recommendations to the General Assembly. We would greatly appreciate your assistance in providing information for your institution.

The goal of this survey is not to assess the effectiveness of threat assessment teams, because it is difficult to definitively conclude these teams *prevented* an event on campus. Rather, the goal is to measure *how* the threat assessment teams are being implemented. An advisory committee of representatives from each institution type (four-year public, community colleges, and four-year private) assisted us in developing the survey.

We recognize that institutions may hesitate to share information about threat assessments for fear of receiving negative attention. Please be assured that we will maintain the confidentiality of the institutions and police/security departments that respond to the survey. The data we collect will only be used in statistical summaries and reported in aggregate; no data will be reported that is tied to a named institution or police/security department.

Your participation in the survey is not mandated. However, the greater the participation, the better our survey data can provide an accurate picture of the nature and quality of campus threat assessment teams across Virginia. That, in turn, will help us craft more meaningful recommendations to submit to the legislature.

On or about February 1, we will send your institution's Chief of Police/Director of Security an email containing the survey link and password. The Chief of Police/Director of Security may designate an individual to complete the survey as he/she wishes.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Marc Dawkins by phone at 804-225-3431 or by email at marc.dawkins@dcjs.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francine C. Ecker".

Francine C. Ecker
Director

Criminal Justice Service Board • Committee on Training • Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice
Advisory Committee to Court Appointed Special Advocate and Children's Justice Act Programs
Private Security Services Advisory Board • Criminal Justice Information Systems Committee

www.dcjs.virginia.gov

APPENDIX 3: SURVEY QUESTIONS

2015 Campus Threat Assessment Survey

Introduction:

Welcome to the Campus Threat Assessment Team (TAT) Survey. This is a secure, web-based survey conducted by the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS), a division of the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). The information you provide in this survey will remain confidential. The survey data will be reported only in aggregate form or in a manner that does not identify information about an individual person or institution. This survey will make reference to *Code of Virginia* §23-9.2:10 throughout. Links will be provided to the full code section whenever it is referenced.

Instructions:

When answering the following survey questions, base your responses on the conditions in your institution during the period of August 1, 2013 through July 31, 2014. Please answer the following questions as accurately as possible.

If you need to go back to review a question, do not use the back arrow on the browser. Use the "Back" button at the bottom of the survey page to avoid returning to the beginning of the survey.

Saving the survey:

If you need to temporarily stop working on the survey before you have completed it and want to save your work, follow these instructions:

- Click on the "save and exit" button at the bottom of the survey page.
- Next, you will see a "survey progress saved" dialogue box. Copy and save the URL link shown in the box. (You will use this link later when you wish to resume the survey.)
- Do not use the email "send reminder" function. It is not consistently reliable.
- Close the window.
- When you are ready to resume work on the survey, copy the URL link that you saved and paste it into your browser window and hit "enter". This should take you back to the page of the survey where you have left off.

Should you have any questions or experience technical problems with the survey, contact Marc Dawkins at the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, 804.225.3431/marc.dawkins@dcjs.virginia.gov or Donna Michaelis at 804.371.6506/ donna.michaelis@dcjs.virginia.gov.

We would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this very important undertaking!

I. IDENTIFICATION

*If we have any questions about your survey responses, we would like to be able to contact you. Please provide us with your contact information. *The information you provide in this survey will remain confidential. The survey data will be reported only in aggregate form or in a manner that does not identify information about an individual person or institution.*

1. Please enter your full name.
2. Please enter your title.
3. Please enter your department.

4. Please enter the institution you represent.
5. Please enter your email address.

II. VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Code of Virginia §23-9.2:10: Each public college or university shall have in place policies and procedures for the prevention of violence on campus...each public institution of higher education shall determine a committee structure on campus of individuals charged with education and prevention of violence on campus.

6. Does your institution have written policies and/or procedures in place for the prevention of violence on campus?
Yes
No
7. Does your institution have a committee structure of individuals charged with the education and prevention of violence on campus as defined by *Code of Virginia §23-9.2:10* guidelines?
Yes
No

(If 7 = yes)

- 7a. What department(s)/office(s) serve on your institution's violence prevention committee? *(select all that apply)*
Academic Affairs/Provost
Human Resources
Legal Counsel
Police/Security/Public Safety
Resident Life/Housing Office
Student Affairs/Dean of Students
Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
University President
Other: (please specify)

- 7b. Has the membership of your institution's violence prevention committee been published and made available to the campus community?
Yes
No

- 7c. Does your institution's violence prevention committee have established leadership?
Yes
No

(If 7c = yes)

- 7c-1. Has the leadership of your institution's violence prevention committee been published and made available to the campus community?
Yes
No

- 7d. Does your institution's violence prevention committee have a mission statement?
Yes
No

(If 7d = yes)

FINAL REPORT ON THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS IN VIRGINIA INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- 7d-1. Has the mission statement of your institution’s violence prevention committee been published and made available to the campus community?
 Yes
 No

III. POLICY ON ASSESSMENT/INTERVENTION

8. Does your institution have a written policies and/or procedures for the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat to the campus community?
 Yes
 No

(If 8 = yes)

- 8a. What means of intervention are included in your institution’s policy regarding individuals whose behavior may present a threat to the campus community? (select all that apply)
- Disciplinary conduct review
 - Interim suspension
 - Involuntary hospitalization for evaluation and/or treatment
 - Mandated psychological assessment
 - Medical separation
 - Notify family
 - TAT member directly communicates with the individual
 - Voluntary referral for mental health treatment/counseling
 - None
 - Other: (describe)

9. What type of relationships does your institution have with outside/local/state agencies in order to expedite assessment and intervention with threatening individuals? (for each of the agencies listed below, please select the type of relationship you have with them: contract, MOU, informal, no relationship, or other)

	Contract	Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU)	Informal relationship	No relationship	Other
Community Services Board (CSB)					
Emergency Medical Services (EMS)					
Local hospital/medical center					
Local mental health agency					
Local police department					
Local sheriff’s office					
Virginia State Police					

(If 9 = Other)

- 9a. You answered “other” in question 9. Please describe the “other” type of relationship(s) you have with outside/local/state agencies in order to expedite assessment and intervention with threatening individuals.

IV. IDENTIFYING/REPORTING THREATS

10. Does your institution provide guidance (to students, faculty, and/or to staff) on recognizing behavior that may represent a threat to the campus community?

Provide guidance?	Yes	No
To students		
To faculty		
To staff		

11. Does your institution clearly specify to whom threatening behavior should be reported?

- Yes
- No

12. Does your institution have a mechanism(s) for routinely monitoring social media for potential threats?

- Yes
- No

V. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

*A **threat assessment team (TAT)** is a multidisciplinary team responsible for the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat to the campus community. Teams are also responsible for the appropriate means of intervention with such individuals, and sufficient means of action to resolve potential threats (Code of Virginia § 23-9.2:10).*

13. Does your institution have a threat assessment team (TAT) as defined by Code of Virginia § 23-9.2:10 guidelines?

- Yes
- No

(If 13 = yes)

13a. Which statement best describes the structure of your institution’s TAT(s)? *(choose one)*

- One team that assesses students only
- One team that assesses students and faculty/staff
- Two teams: One that assesses students and one that assesses faculty/staff
- Other: (describe)

***Message: You responded “other” to Q13a. We will follow up with you for a phone interview in the near future to get more information on the structure of your institution’s TAT.**

(If 13a = one team that assesses students only)
 You responded that your institution has one TAT that assesses only students that might present a threat. Please answer the following questions with your student TAT in mind.

(If 13a = one team that assesses both students and faculty/staff)
 You responded that your institution has one TAT that assesses both students and faculty/staff that might present a threat. Please answer the following questions with your student/faculty/staff TAT in mind.

(If 13a = one team that assesses students only or one team that assesses both students and faculty/staff)

VI. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: DESCRIPTION

13a-1. What is the name given to your institution's TAT? *(choose one)*

- Assessment and Care Team
- Behavioral Assessment Team
- Behavioral Intervention Team
- Campus Assessment Team
- Student of Concern Team
- Threat Assessment Management Team
- Threat Assessment Team
- Other: (please specify)

13a-2. How many CORE/PRIMARY members are on your institution's TAT? *(enter number)*

13a-3. What department(s)/office(s) serve as CORE/PRIMARY members of your institution's TAT? *(select all that apply)*

- Academic Affairs/Provost
- Human Resources
- Legal Counsel
- Police/Security/Public Safety
- Residence Life/Housing
- Student Affairs/Dean of Students
- Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
- University President
- Other: (please specify)

13a-4. What department/office chairs your institution's TAT? *(select one)*

- Academic Affairs/Provost
- Human Resources
- Legal Counsel
- Police/Security/Public Safety
- Residence Life/Housing
- Student Affairs/Dean of Students
- Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
- University President
- Two departments co-chair the TAT
- Other: (please specify)

**(If 13a-4 = Two departments co-chair the TAT)*

13a-4.1. You responded that your institution's TAT is co-chaired. Please enter the departments/offices that co-chair your TAT.

13a-5. How many AD HOC/SECONDARY members are on your institution's TAT? *(select one)*

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- Other: (please specify)

**(If 13a-5 ≠ None)*

13a-5.1 What department(s)/office(s) serve as AD HOC/SECONDARY members on your institution's TAT? *(select all that apply)*

- Athletics
- Graduate/Professional schools
- International Student Programs
- Legal Counsel
- Media Relations/Communications
- Religious Life/Chaplain
- Other: (please specify)

VII. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: OPERATIONS

13a-6. How long has your institution had a TAT that assesses those whose behavior may present a threat? *(select one)*

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to less than one year
- 1 year to less than 3 years
- 3 years to less than 5 year
- 5 years or more

13a-7. How often does your institution's TAT meet for regular staffing of cases? *(select one)*

- As needed
- Weekly
- Twice monthly
- Monthly
- Other: (please specify)

13a-8. Has your institution allocated a budget for your TAT?

- Yes
- No

13a-9. Does your TAT use risk assessment instrument(s) to assist in the assessment process?

- Yes – always
- Yes – sometimes
- No

(If 13a-9 = yes-always or yes-sometimes)

**There are various types of risk assessment tools available for use by campus TATs to assist in the threat assessment process. Some of the more common ones are listed below. Please note this is only a partial list and is not meant to endorse any particular instrument.*

13a-9.1. Which risk assessment instrument(s) does your institution's TAT use? *(select all that apply)*

- Assessment of Dangerousness
- Cawood/White Assessment Grid
- Classification of Violence Risk (COVR)
- MOSAIC
- Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA)
- Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG)
- Other: (please specify)

13a-10. How does your institution's TAT receive referrals/reports regarding threatening behavior? (*select all that apply*)

- Direct report to TAT member
- Email
- Hotline/phone
- Liaison or outreach activities conducted by TAT member(s)
- Online incident reporting platform (e.g., TIPS)
- Paper reporting form
- Other: (please describe)

13a-11. Who are your TAT's most common referral sources? (*select all that apply*)

- Academic Advisor/Advising Office
- Administrator or Dean
- External sources
- Faculty
- Human Resources
- Parents
- Police/Security/Public Safety
- Resident Advisor/Housing
- Student Affairs
- Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
- Students
- Other: (please specify)

13a-12. What means of intervention does your TAT use for an individual whose behavior may present a threat? (*select all that apply*)

- Disciplinary conduct review
- Interim suspension
- Involuntary hospitalization for evaluation and/or treatment
- Mandated psychological assessment
- Medical separation
- Notify family
- TAT member directly communicates with the individual
- Voluntary referral for mental health treatment/counseling
- None
- Other: (describe)

13a-13. What protective efforts does your TAT use for victims/potential victims? (*select all that apply*)

- Administrative leave for victim to minimize exposure to potential danger
- Coaching victim on personal safety approaches (e.g., being aware of their environment, varying routes of travel)
- Modifying security and access to victim
- Moving the victim to more secure environment
- None
- Other (describe)

VIII. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: ASSESSMENTS

*Please review the definitions above in order to most accurately answer the following questions about your cases.

“ACTIVE CASES” are cases that were screened or triaged by your institution’s TAT in the years **prior** to the August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014 academic year, and are engaged in ongoing case management. In other words, they are cases that have been carried over from previous years.

“SCREENED CASES” are cases that were **initially assessed** or triaged during the August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014 academic year. These would be considered **new** cases for the August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014 academic year.

13a-14. How many **active cases** did your institution’s TAT have during the period of August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014? (enter number)

13a-15. How many cases were screened by your institution’s TAT during the period of August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014? (enter number)

(If 13a-15 > 0)

In the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) recommended book “The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams”, Deisinger and Randazzo et. al. offer a sample rating scale to assist in the threat assessment process:

- **PRIORITY 1 (Extreme Risk):** Appears to pose a clear/immediate threat of violence or self-harm and requires immediate containment. Needs law enforcement notification, target protection, and case management plan.
- **PRIORITY 2 (High Risk):** Appears to pose a threat of violence or self-harm but lacks immediacy or access to target. Requires active monitoring and case management plan.
- **PRIORITY 3 (Moderate Risk):** Does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm, but exhibits significantly disruptive behaviors and/or need for assistance. Requires active monitoring, case management plan, and appropriate referrals.
- **PRIORITY 4 (Low Risk):** Does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, but may exhibit some disruptive behavior and/or need for assistance. Requires passive monitoring. Utilize case management and referrals as appropriate.
- **PRIORITY 5 (No Identified Risk):** Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm nor is there evidence of disruption to community. No case management or monitoring required.

***We are trying to establish an understanding of the types of threats that campus TATs encounter during an academic year. Please review the scale above and match your cases to the Priority Level shown (1-5) based on the description provided.**

(If 13a-15 > 0)

13a-15.1 Of the cases screened by your institution’s TAT during the period of August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014, what were the priority levels of the cases **AT INTAKE OR INITIAL ASSESSMENT?** (Provide the number of cases assessed and determined to be at intake or initial assessment for EACH priority level. If you had no cases for a particular threat level, please enter 0. The sum of cases at all priority levels should equal the number you provided in question 13a-15.)

Threat Level at Intake or Initial Assessment	# of cases
Priority 1	
Priority 2	
Priority 3	
Priority 4	
Priority 5	

IX. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: TRAINING

13a-16. Do members of your institution’s TAT attend threat assessment training?

- Yes
- No

13a-17. Is basic threat assessment team training a requirement for your institution’s TAT members?

- Yes – for all members
- Yes – for some members
- No

X. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: RECORDS/DOCUMENTATION

13a -18. Does your institution’s TAT keep records on cases assessed?

- Yes
- No

(If 13a-18 = yes)

13a-18.1. What types of records are kept? *(select all that apply)*

- Electronic database (e.g., Awareity, Maxient, RiskAware)
- Meeting minutes
- Microsoft Access, Excel, or similar office software
- Notes (personal/informal)
- Other: (please specify)

13a-18.2. Are these records available in a centralized database or location?

- Yes
- No

(If 13a = two teams: One that assesses students and one that assesses faculty/staff)

You responded that your institution has two TATs – one that assesses only students that might present a threat and one that assesses only faculty/staff that might present a threat. You will be presented with questions about both of these teams. First, you will be asked questions about your student TAT. Following that, you will be asked questions about your faculty/staff TAT.

The following questions are about your institution’s threat assessment team that assesses only STUDENTS that might present a threat:

VI. STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: DESCRIPTION

13b-1. What is the name given to your institution's student TAT? (*choose one*)

- Assessment and Care Team
- Behavioral Assessment Team
- Behavioral Intervention Team
- Campus Assessment Team
- Student of Concern Team
- Threat Assessment Management Team
- Threat Assessment Team
- Other: (please specify)

13b-2. How many CORE/PRIMARY members are on your institution's student TAT? (*enter number*)

13b-3. What department(s)/office(s) serve as CORE/PRIMARY members of your institution's student TAT? (*select all that apply*)

- Academic Affairs/Provost
- Human Resources
- Legal Counsel
- Police/Security/Public Safety
- Residence Life/Housing
- Student Affairs/Dean of Students
- Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
- University President
- Other: (please specify)

13b-4. What department/office chairs your institution's student TAT? (*select one*)

- Academic Affairs/Provost
- Human Resources
- Legal Counsel
- Police/Security/Public Safety
- Residence Life/Housing
- Student Affairs/Dean of Students
- Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
- University President
- Two departments co-chair the TAT
- Other: (please specify)

**(If 13b-4 = Two departments co-chair the TAT)*

13b-4.1. You responded that your institution's student TAT is co-chaired. Please enter the departments/offices that co-chair your student TAT.

13b-5. How many AD HOC/SECONDARY members are on your institution's student TAT? (*select one*)

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- Other: (please specify)

**(If 13b-5 ≠ None)*

13b-5.1 What department(s)/office(s) serve as AD HOC/SECONDARY members on your institution's student TAT? *(select all that apply)*

- Athletics
- Graduate/Professional schools
- International Student Programs
- Legal Counsel
- Media Relations
- Religious Life/Chaplain
- Other: (please specify)

VII. STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: OPERATIONS

13b-6. How long has your institution had a student TAT that assesses those students whose behavior may present a threat? *(select one)*

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to less than one year
- 1 year to less than 3 years
- 3 years to less than 5 years
- 5 years or more

13b-7. How often does your institution's student TAT meet for regular staffing of cases? *(select one)*

- As-needed
- Weekly
- Twice monthly
- Monthly
- Other: (please specify)

13b-8. Has your institution allocated a budget for your student TAT?

- Yes
- No

13b-9. Does your institution's student TAT use risk assessment instrument(s) to assist in the assessment process?

- Yes – always
- Yes – sometimes
- No

(If 13b-9 = yes-always or yes-sometimes)

**There are various types of risk assessment tools available for use by campus TATs to assist in the threat assessment process. Some of the more common ones are listed below. Please note this is only a partial list and is not meant to endorse any particular instrument.*

13b-9.1. Which risk assessment instrument(s) does your institution's student TAT use? *(select all that apply)*

- Assessment of Dangerousness
- Cawood/White Assessment Grid
- Classification of Violence Risk (COVR)
- MOSAIC
- Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA)

Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG)
Workplace Assessment of Violence Risk 21 (WAVR-21)
Other: (please specify)

13b-10. How does your institution's student TAT receive referrals/reports regarding threatening behavior? *(select all that apply)*

Direct report to TAT member
Email
Hotline/phone
Liaison or outreach activities conducted by TAT member(s)
Online incident reporting platform (e.g., TIPS)
Paper reporting form
Other (please describe)

13b-11. Who are your student TAT's most common referral sources? *(select all that apply)*

Academic Advisor/Advising Office
Administrator or Dean
External sources
Faculty
Human Resources
Parents
Police/Security/Public Safety
Resident Advisor/Housing
Student Affairs
Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
Students
Other: (please specify)

13b-12. What means of intervention does your student TAT use for an individual whose behavior may present a threat? *(select all that apply)*

Disciplinary conduct review
Interim suspension
Involuntary hospitalization for evaluation and/or treatment
Mandated psychological assessment
Medical separation
Notify family
TAT member directly communicates with the individual
Voluntary referral for mental health treatment/counseling
None
Other: (describe)

13b-13. What protective efforts does your student TAT use for victims/potential victims? *(select all that apply)*

Administrative leave for victim to minimize exposure to potential danger
Coaching victim on personal safety approaches (e.g., being aware of their environment, varying routes of travel)
Modifying security and access to victim
Moving the victim to more secure environment
None
Other: (describe)

VIII. STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: ASSESSMENTS

***Please review the definitions above in order to most accurately answer the following questions about your cases.**

“ACTIVE CASES” are cases that were screened or triaged by your institution’s TAT in the years **prior** to the August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014 academic year, and are engaged in ongoing case management. In other words, they are cases that have been carried over from previous years.

“SCREENED CASES” are cases that were **initially assessed** or triaged during the August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014 academic year. These would be considered **new** cases for the August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014 academic year.

13b-14. How many **ACTIVE CASES** did your institution’s student TAT have during the period of August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014? (Enter number. If you did not have any active cases, please enter 0.)

13b-15. How many cases were **SCREENED** by your institution’s student TAT during the period of August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014? (Enter number. If you did not screen any cases, please enter 0.)

In the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) recommended book “The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams”, Deisinger and Randazzo et. al. offer a sample rating scale to assist in the threat assessment process:

- **PRIORITY 1 (Extreme Risk):** Appears to pose a clear/immediate threat of violence or self-harm and requires immediate containment. Needs law enforcement notification, target protection, and case management plan.
- **PRIORITY 2 (High Risk):** Appears to pose a threat of violence or self-harm but lacks immediacy or access to target. Requires active monitoring and case management plan.
- **PRIORITY 3 (Moderate Risk):** Does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm, but exhibits significantly disruptive behaviors and/or need for assistance. Requires active monitoring, case management plan, and appropriate referrals.
- **PRIORITY 4 (Low Risk):** Does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, but may exhibit some disruptive behavior and/or need for assistance. Requires passive monitoring. Utilize case management and referrals as appropriate.
- **PRIORITY 5 (No Identified Risk):** Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm nor is there evidence of disruption to community. No case management or monitoring required.

***We are trying to establish an understanding of the types of threats that campus TATs encounter during an academic year. Please review the scale above and match your cases to the Priority Level shown (1-5) based on the description provided.**

(If 13b-15 > 0)

13b-15.1 Of the cases screened by your institution’s student TAT during the period of August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014, what were the priority levels of the cases **AT INTAKE OR INITIAL ASSESSMENT?** (Provide the number of cases assessed and determined to be at intake or initial assessment for EACH priority level. If you had no cases for a particular threat level, please enter 0. The sum of cases at all priority levels should equal the number you provided in question 13b-15.)

Threat Level at Intake or Initial Assessment	# of cases
Priority 1	
Priority 2	
Priority 3	
Priority 4	
Priority 5	

IX. STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: TRAINING

13b-16. Do members of your institution’s student TAT attend threat assessment training?

- Yes
- No

13b-17. Is basic threat assessment team training a requirement for your institution’s student TAT members?

- Yes – for all members
- Yes – for some members
- No

X. STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: RECORDS/DOCUMENTATION

13b-18. Does your institution’s student TAT keep records on cases assessed?

- Yes
- No

(If 13b-18 = yes)

13b-18.1. What types of records are kept? *(select all that apply)*

- Electronic database (e.g., Awareity, Maxient, RiskAware)
- Meeting minutes
- Microsoft Access, Excel, or similar office software
- Notes (personal/informal)
- Other: (please specify)

13b-18.2. Are these records available in a centralized database or location?

- Yes
- No

The following questions are about your institution’s TAT that assesses only FACULTY/STAFF that might present a threat:

VI. FACULTY/STAFF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: DESCRIPTION

13c-1. What is the name given to your institution’s faculty/staff TAT? *(select one)*

- Assessment and Care Team
- Behavioral Assessment Team
- Behavioral Intervention Team
- Campus Assessment Team
- Threat Assessment Management Team
- Threat Assessment Team
- Other: (please specify)

13c-2. How many CORE/PRIMARY members are on your institution's faculty/staff TAT? (*enter number*)

13c-3. What department(s)/office(s) serve as CORE/PRIMARY members of your institution's faculty/staff TAT? (*select all that apply*)

Academic Affairs/Provost
Human Resources
Legal Counsel
Police/Security/Public Safety
Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
University President
Other: (please specify)

13c-4. What department/office chairs your institution's faculty/staff TAT? (*select one*)

Academic Affairs/Provost
Human Resources
Legal Counsel
Police/Security/Public Safety
Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
University President
Two departments co-chair the TAT
Other: (please specify)

**(If 13c-4 = Two departments co-chair the TAT)*

9a-4.1. You responded that your institution's faculty/staff TAT is co-chaired. Please enter the departments/offices that co-chair your faculty/staff TAT.

13c-5. How many AD HOC/SECONDARY members are on your institution's faculty/staff TAT? (*select one*)

None
1
2
3
Other: (please specify)

**(If 13c-5 ≠ None)*

13c-5.1 What department(s)/office(s) serve as AD HOC/SECONDARY members on your institution's faculty/staff TAT? (*select all that apply*)

Athletics
Graduate/Professional schools
International Student Programs
Legal Counsel
Media Relations/Communications
Religious Life/Chaplain
Other: (please specify)

VII. FACULTY/STAFF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: OPERATIONS

13c-6. How long has your institution had a faculty/staff TAT that assesses those whose behavior may present a threat? *(select one)*

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to less than one year
- 1 year to less than 3 years
- 3 years to less than 5 years
- 5 years or more

13c-7. How often does your institution's faculty/staff TAT meet for regular staffing of cases? *(select one)*

- As needed
- Weekly
- Twice monthly
- Monthly
- Other: (please specify)

13c-8. Has your institution allocated a budget for your faculty/staff TAT?

- Yes
- No

13c-9. Does your faculty/staff TAT use risk assessment instrument(s) to assist in the assessment process?

- Yes – always
- Yes – sometimes
- No

(If 13c-9 = yes-always or yes-sometimes)

**There are various types of risk assessment tools available for use by campus TATs to assist in the threat assessment process. Some of the more common ones are listed below. Please note this is only a partial list and is not meant to endorse any particular instrument.*

13c-9.1. Which risk assessment instrument(s) does your institution's faculty/staff TAT use? *(select all that apply)*

- Assessment of Dangerousness
- Cawood/White Assessment Grid
- Classification of Violence Risk (COVR)
- MOSAIC
- Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA)
- Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG)
- Workplace Assessment of Violence Risk 21 (WAVR-21)
- Other: (please specify)

13c-10. How does your institution's faculty/staff TAT receive referrals/reports regarding threatening behavior? *(select all that apply)*

- Direct report to TAT member
- Email
- Hotline/phone
- Liaison or outreach activities conducted by TAT member(s)
- Online incident reporting platform (e.g., TIPS)

Paper reporting form
Other (please describe)

13c-11. Who are your faculty/staff TAT's most common referral sources? *(select all that apply)*

Academic Advisor/Advising Office
Administrator or Dean
External sources
Faculty
Human Resources
Police/Security/Public Safety
Resident Advisor/Housing
Student Health/Mental Health/Counseling Center
Students
Other: (please specify)

13c-12. What means of intervention does your faculty/staff TAT use for a faculty or staff member whose behavior may present a threat? *(select all that apply)*

Disciplinary conduct review
Interim suspension
Involuntary hospitalization for evaluation and/or treatment
Mandated psychological assessment
Medical separation
Notify family
TAT member directly communicates with the individual
Voluntary referral for mental health treatment/counseling
None
Other: (describe)

13c-13. What protective efforts does your faculty/staff TAT use for victims/potential victims? *(select all that apply)*

Administrative leave for victim to minimize exposure to potential danger
Coaching victim on personal safety approaches (e.g., being aware of their environment, varying routes of travel)
Modifying security and access to victim
Moving the victim to more secure environment
None
Other (describe)

VIII. FACULTY/STAFF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: ASSESSMENTS

***Please review the definitions/explanations below in order to most accurately answer the next sequence of questions about your cases.**

"ACTIVE CASES" are cases that were screened or triaged by your institution's TAT in the years **prior** to the August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014 academic year, and are engaged in ongoing case management. In other words, they are cases that have been carried over from previous years.

"SCREENED CASES" are cases that were **initially assessed** or triaged during the August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014 academic year. These would be considered **new** cases for the August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014 academic year.

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13c-14. How many **active cases** did your institution’s faculty/staff TAT have during the period of August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014? (Enter number. If you did not have any active cases, please enter 0.)

13c-15. How many cases **were screened** by your institution’s faculty/staff TAT during the period of August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014? (Enter number. If you did not have any screened cases, please enter 0.)

(If 13c-15 > 0)

In the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) recommended book “The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams”, Deisinger and Randazzo et. al. offer a sample rating scale to assist in the threat assessment process:

- **PRIORITY 1 (Extreme Risk):** Appears to pose a clear/immediate threat of violence or self-harm and requires immediate containment. Needs law enforcement notification, target protection, and case management plan.
- **PRIORITY 2 (High Risk):** Appears to pose a threat of violence or self-harm but lacks immediacy or access to target. Requires active monitoring and case management plan.
- **PRIORITY 3 (Moderate Risk):** Does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm, but exhibits significantly disruptive behaviors and/or need for assistance. Requires active monitoring, case management plan, and appropriate referrals.
- **PRIORITY 4 (Low Risk):** Does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, but may exhibit some disruptive behavior and/or need for assistance. Requires passive monitoring. Utilize case management and referrals as appropriate.
- **PRIORITY 5 (No Identified Risk):** Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm nor is there evidence of disruption to community. No case management or monitoring required.

***We are trying to establish an understanding of the types of threats that campus TATs encounter during an academic year. Please review the scale above and match your cases to the Priority Level shown (1-5) based on the description provided.**

(If 13c-15 > 0)

13c-15.1. Of the cases screened by your institution’s faculty/staff TAT during the period of August 1, 2013 – July 31, 2014, what were the priority levels of the cases **AT INTAKE OR INITIAL ASSESSMENT?**

(Provide the number of cases assessed and determined to be at intake or initial assessment for EACH priority level. If you had no cases for a particular threat level, please enter 0. The sum of cases at all priority levels should equal the number you provided in question 13c-15.)

Threat Level at Intake or Initial Assessment	# of cases
Priority 1	
Priority 2	
Priority 3	
Priority 4	
Priority 5	

IX. FACULTY/STAFF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: TRAINING

13c-16. Do members of your institution's faculty/staff TAT attend threat assessment training?

- Yes
- No

13c-17. Is basic threat assessment team training a requirement for your institution's faculty/staff TAT members?

- Yes – for all members
- Yes – for some members
- No

X. FACULTY/STAFF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM: RECORDS/DOCUMENTATION

13c-18. Does your institution's faculty/staff TAT keep records on cases assessed?

- Yes
- No

(If 13c-18 = yes)

13c-18.1. What types of records are kept? *(select all that apply)*

- Electronic database (e.g., Awareity, Maxient, RiskAware)
- Meeting minutes
- Microsoft Access, Excel, or similar office software
- Notes (personal/informal)
- Other: (please specify)

13c-18.2. Are these records available in a centralized database or location?

- Yes
- No

14. What are the biggest challenges you see for your institution's TAT(s) moving forward?

This concludes the survey. Thank you for your participation!

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