The FBI's Behavioral Threat Assessment Center (BTAC), Behavioral Analysis Unit 1 (BAU-1), Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG), offers the following guidance to help gather information in preparation for a case referral or presentation to a threat assessment team:

**Threat Assessment**

Threat assessment is a fact-based method of investigation that focuses on an individual’s pattern of thinking and behavior to determine whether, and to what extent, the individual is moving toward an attack on an identified target. Effective threat management relies upon thorough, accurate, and holistic threat assessment. The type of information required for a threat assessment is often different than that which would be required to investigate a potential violation of criminal law. The information provided within this Pre-Consultation Guide provides broad categories of information potentially relevant to investigators and threat assessors. This information may be helpful for those individuals or entities (e.g. “level one teams”) contemplating a case referral or case presentation to a broader threat assessment team (e.g. “level two team”). The information presented herein is not all-inclusive nor is it a substitute for a thorough, rigorous, and well-planned investigation. The gathering of the type of information in this guide, prior to presentation to a threat assessment team, will aid in the ability to efficiently discuss cases, triage for further investigation, and develop longer-term threat management strategies. The information within this guide is based on the lessons learned from operational experience and research by the FBI’s Behavioral Threat Assessment Center (BTAC) and leverages the processes and procedures used by BTAC when consulting on threat cases.

**Information Gathering**

**A. Context:** What are the factors that are unique and specific to the person of concern, “pushing” the person of concern along the pathway to intended violence?
- Significant life stressors, trauma, loss?
- Problems with social functioning and adjustment (fixation on past acts of violence)?
- Problems with employment or education?
- Problems with parents, guardians or caretakers?
- Negative coping (e.g. addictions, self-harm, sexual stressors, suicidal behavior)?
- History of mental health challenges?
- Presence of personality difficulties?

**B. Mindset:** What are the underlying motivators and drivers, “pulling” the person of concern along the pathway to intended violence?
- Identifying with a violent extremist group, on-line or in person?
- Sense of perceived injustice, grievance, or threat?
- Attitude that justifies violence toward others?
- Social support for use of violence in support of extremist views?

**C. Capability:** Is the person of concern capable of carrying out an act of intended violence and/or is there an indication they are seeking to develop such capability? Bystander observations of subject?
- Subject’s relevant experience, skills, knowledge?
- History of violence?
- History of other criminal or antisocial behavior?
- Exposure to violence or criminality?
- Access to weapons, networks, funding, and other resources needed to commit an act?
- Organized thinking?
- Loss of stabilizing or non-violent anchors (e.g. relationships, loved ones)?

**D. Signs of imminence:** How imminent is the threat and thus how urgent is the need to mitigate?
- Planning and preparation?
• Breach, entry, or casing behavior, indicating pre-attack planning?
• Communication of intent, including leakage to bystanders?
• Rejection of non-violent options?
• Identification of a specific target(s)?
• Finishing behaviors, such as end of life planning?
• Creation or sharing of legacy token(s) or manifesto?

E. Protective factors: What are those factors preventing the person of concern from moving along the pathway to intended violence?
• Shift in ideology away from violent extremism?
• Dissatisfaction with role or unmet expectations in an extremist group?
• Competing roles and priorities?
• Physical, social, and psychological barriers to action?
• Positive social support?
• Possible to shift attitude toward positive resolution of subject’s perceived injustice?
• Personal resources (resilience)?

Target(s) and Method(s)

A. Target - Who or what the person of concern might harm:
• Relationship to the subject(s)?
• Symbolic to the grievance or ideology?
• Desirability, availability, and vulnerability of the potential target?

B. Method - How the person of concern could hurt others:
• Subject personally takes action – firearm, knife, no weapon?
• Subject may not be present – bomb, poison, arson?
• Desired level of injury?

C. Place/Time - Where and when the person of concern might act:
• Significant future events?
• Significant personal or symbolic anniversary?
• Opportunity?

Organizing the Information

The information gathered above can be used by a threat assessment team to identify data gaps, formulate a threat assessment and develop threat mitigation strategies. Oftentimes, the information gathered will be organized into the following categories to aid in that formulation by a threat assessment team:

A. Enhancers: What is driving the subject? What indicates the subject is moving from thought to action?
B. Mitigators: Who or what is keeping the subject from action?
C. Triggers/Stressors: What could happen to prompt change from a state of inaction to action?
D. Management: What needs to be maintained, enhanced, or eliminated to ensure the subject does not progress toward action? Persons who may help inform/manage moving forward?

(U) The FBI's Behavioral Threat Assessment Center (BTAC) is a national-level, multi-agency, multi-disciplinary Task Force focused on the prevention of terrorism and targeted violence through the application of behaviorally-based operational support, training and research. In this unique capacity, the BTAC provides investigative and operational support for the FBI's most complex, concerning, and complicated international and domestic terrorism investigations. In addition, the BTAC provides threat assessment and threat management support to federal, state, local, tribal and campus law enforcement partners, as well as community stakeholders, working diligently across the United States on targeted violence prevention. Significant lines of effort on targeted violence prevention include persons/adults of concern, potential active shooters, school shootings/threats, stalking and workplace violence. The BTAC's extensive and broad-ranging capabilities are enhanced through a cadre of BAU coordinators assigned to all 56 field offices across the United States.

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