

# STANAG 6001

**testing conference**

**7- 9 July 2009 Zagreb, Croatia**

**conference program**



**Croatian Defense Academy**  
**PETAR ZRINSKI**



Dear conference participants,

This is what we wrote in the initial invitation:

*“Croatian testing team is organizing a **STANAG 6001 testing mini conference from 7-9 July in Zagreb, Croatia**. The event is supported by Croatian Defense Academy "Petar Zrinski" and the Croatian MOD which, we are glad to say, has identified our field of work as an area worth investing in.*

***The conference is focusing on the issues of standardization, moderation and validation of STANAG 6001 tests**, with emphasis put on sharing/dissemination of knowledge and best practice.*

*We hope the event will be a forum in which STANAG testing teams have a chance to discuss the burning issues in testing and exchange knowledge.*

*We also consider this an opportunity to strengthen old and establish new contacts and form the basis for other initiatives for future cooperation.”*

And now, eight months later, here we are in Zagreb. This meeting of practitioners for practitioners wouldn't have been possible without the support of all of you, especially the ones who are contributing with their presentations, workshops and reports. Thank you for accepting the invitation and thank you for coming.

Finally, just as a reminder of what such events are all about, here is the excerpt from the Code of Ethics prepared by the International Language Testing Association (ILTA):

**„Principle 5: Language testers shall continue to develop their professional knowledge, sharing this knowledge with colleagues and other language professionals.**

- *Continued learning and advancing one's knowledge are fundamental to the professional role; failure to do so constitutes a disservice to test takers.*
- *Language testers shall make use of the various methods of continuing education that are available to them. These may involve participation in continuing language testing programmes and professional conferences, and the regular reading of relevant professional publications.*
- *Language testers shall take the opportunity to interact with colleagues and other relevant language professionals as an important means of developing their professional knowledge.*
- *Language testers shall share new knowledge with colleagues by publication in recognized professional journals or at meetings.*
- *Language testers shall be expected to contribute to the education and professional development of language testers in training and to the drawing up of guidelines for the core requirements of that training.*
- *Language testers shall be prepared to contribute to the education of students in the WIDER language professions.*

*ILTA Code of Ethics“*

Wishing us all fruitful and enjoyable conference,

Croatian STANAG 6001 team  
Natalija Andraković Kostanjevac  
Martina Alerić  
Suzana Čečuk  
Tamara Kramarić Maras

Zagreb, July 2009

# MONDAY, July 6

	PARTICIPANTS
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Alma Cenkej</b>, Albania</li><li>2. <b>Monika Myrto</b>, Albania</li><li>3. <b>Maj Dražen Malešević</b>, Bosnia and Herzegovina</li><li>4. <b>Capt Jasmin Sofić</b>, Bosnia and Herzegovina</li><li>5. <b>Martina Alerić</b>, Croatia</li><li>6. <b>Jasna Poljak</b>, Croatia</li><li>7. <b>Mirna Ambruš</b>, Croatia</li><li>8. <b>Natalija Andraković Kostanjevac</b>, Croatia</li><li>9. <b>Irena Brzica</b>, Croatia</li><li>10. <b>Suzana Čečuk</b>, Croatia</li><li>11. <b>Sanja Fulgosi</b>, Croatia (National center for external evaluation)</li><li>12. <b>Davor Vodopija</b>, Croatia</li><li>13. <b>Milena Prošić</b>, Croatia</li><li>14. <b>Kristina Vinovrški Pentek</b>, Croatia</li><li>15. <b>Marijana Vučić Pečnik</b>, Croatia</li><li>16. <b>Tamara Kramarić Maras</b>, Croatia</li><li>17. <b>Zrinka Jelaska</b>, Croatia (Zagreb University)</li><li>18. <b>Ulla Gudnason</b>, Denmark</li><li>19. <b>Ülle Türk</b>, Estonia</li><li>20. <b>Tamuna Shavlakadze</b>, Georgia</li><li>21. <b>Mary Jo Dibiase</b>, Italy</li><li>22. <b>Capt Francesco Gratton</b>, Italy</li><li>23. <b>Angela Ruth Logue</b>, Italy</li><li>24. <b>Younes Alamin</b>, Libya</li><li>25. <b>LTC Khalifa Almabruk</b>, Libya</li><li>26. <b>Biljana Popovska</b>, Macedonia</li><li>27. <b>Ibrahim Ghanwi</b>, Slovakia</li><li>28. <b>Mike Adubato</b>, SHAPE/NATO</li><li>29. <b>Branka Petek</b>, Slovenia</li><li>30. <b>Mihaela Ruby Korelec</b>, Slovenia</li><li>31. <b>Peggy Garza</b>, USA</li></ol>
<b>20:00 – 21:30</b>	Welcome reception (Building 41, check the map on the last page)

## TUESDAY, July 7

08:45	HOUSEKEEPING
9:00-9:20	<b>Opening; Group photograph;</b>
9:20-9:30	BREAK
9:30-11:00	<b>Introduction and ID posters</b>
11:00-11:15	BREAK
11:15-12:00	<b>Michael Adubato THE USE OF ENGLISH AT SHAPE</b>
12:00-13:00	<b>Monika Myrto, Alma Cenkaj SHORTCOMINGS OF ITEM MODERATION</b>
13:00-14:30	LUNCH
14:30-15:30	<b>ITEM MODERATION 1</b>
15:30-15:45	BREAK
15:45-16:30	<b>ITEM MODERATION 2</b>
17:30-18:30	DINNER
19:00-21:00	GUIDED TOUR OF ZAGREB

## WEDNESDAY, July 8

08:45-09:00	HOUSEKEEPING
09:00-10:00	<b>Ibrahim Ghanwi</b> <b>DETERMINING ITEM DIFFICULTY IN A TEST</b>
10:00-10:15	BREAK
10:15-11:15	<b>Ulla Gudnason</b> <b>STANDARD SETTING</b>
11:15-11:30	BREAK
11:30-12:30	<b>Branka Petek</b> <b>TESTING MADE EASIER BY USING SPSS</b>
12:30-13:00	<b>Discussion: ISSUES IN PRE-TESTING</b>
13:00-14:00	LUNCH

15:00-22:30	TRIP TO HRVATSKO ZAGORJE – TRAKOŠČAN CASTLE
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## THURSDAY, July 9

08:45	HOUSEKEEPING
9:00-10:00	<b>Tamara Kramarić Maras, Suzana Čečuk</b> <b>ASSESSING BORDERLINE CASES IN WRITING</b>
10:00-10:15	BREAK
10:15-11:15	<b>Ülle Türk</b> <b>EALTA MILSIG</b>
11:15-11:30	BREAK
11:30-12:30	<b>CAPT Francesco Gratton</b> <b>MILITARY TOPICS IN STANAG 6001</b>
12:30-14:00	LUNCH
14:00-15:00	<b>Peggy Garza</b> <b>ADVANCED LANGUAGE TESTING SEMINAR</b>
15:00-15:15	BREAK
15:15-15:45	<b>Tamara Kramarić Maras, Suzana Čečuk</b> <b>BAT - CROATIAN EXPERIENCE</b>
15:45-16:15	BREAK
16:15-17:30	<b>CONFERENCE OUTCOMES</b> <b>FUTURE COOPERATION</b> <b>FUTURE MEETINGS</b>
19:00-21:00	END-OF-CONFERENCE DINNER

# ABSTRACTS

TUESDAY, July 7

**Michael Aduato**

## **THE USE OF ENGLISH AT SHAPE**

11:15-12:00

The goal of many NATO member countries' officers and non-commissioned officers is to go as far as possible in their military careers, including perfecting their English language skills in order to qualify for an assignment at the Allied Commander Operations headquarters – SHAPE, in Belgium. In order to successfully accomplish this, these military members must possess a pre-stated level of English proficiency in accordance with STANAG 6001. The question has always been however, "is the language profile too high or too low for this position." This briefing will discuss this question and provide insight into the true language requirements at SHAPE as seen by the testing office and those who have to deal with the language on a day-to-day basis - the NATO officers and NCOs.

**Monika Myrto, Alma Cenkaj**

## **SHORTCOMINGS OF ITEM MODERATION**

12:00-13:00

Consistent production of perfect test items is virtually impossible therefore item moderation is a key stage in test writing. Since it is a very broad topic this presentation will be a succinct overview of one of the issues concerning it, namely the shortcomings. We will be looking at the advantages (remedy and improvement of items, successful modification, etc.) and disadvantages (miscalculations, time and resource consumption, etc.) that this stage poses.

## **ITEM MODERATION 1 and 2**

14:30-15:30 (1)

15:45-16:30 (2)

Item writers follow item writing guidelines and test specifications when creating items. Then, the draft items are moderated by colleagues. The refined items are pre-tested and then again moderated on the basis of pretesting results and statistical analysis.

The focus of our item moderation sessions is the procedure for review, revision and editing of items in the stage of item development when the draft items are moderated by other item writers.

There are different ready-made lists of moderation questions/prompts (more or less detailed ones) we can refer to. The question is how we apply them in practice.

The purpose of the item moderation sessions is to standardize moderation procedure when draft items are reviewed before the item is pre-tested. We expect to agree on the key points we should



address in this phase of moderation. Through practical moderation of the items provided by participant teams we will check if we share mutual understanding about these points. The sessions should help to make the existing bilateral/multilateral moderation meetings more efficient and to encourage establishing more cooperation in this field.

## WEDNESDAY, July 8

**Ibrahim Ghanwi**  
**DETERMINING ITEM DIFFICULTY IN A TEST**  
09:00-10:00  
Creating a group of masters is a burning issue in testing teams, because if we do not determine the master groups for the different STANAG levels we can't be sure about the item difficulty and by this we are not fair in evaluating our candidates. In my presentation I will give you some of the examples about how we determine item difficulty in a test and about how we determine range of the scores for different levels in a multi-level testing.

**Ulla Gudnason**  
**STANDARD SETTING**  
10:15-11:15  
Standard setting and finding cut scores can be a daunting task in small testing institutions. We haven't got thousands of students for pretesting and hence have difficulties getting enough statistical material to validate our results.  
Methods based on expert judges and small groups of test takers might be a way out of this conundrum.  
As an example of how this can be done, the process used to find cut off scores for the BAT test will be described, and we might even try a little Angoff'ing of our own.

**Branka Petek**  
**TESTING MADE EASIER BY USING SPSS**  
11:30-12:30  
SPSS computer software can help testers in dealing with Classical Test Theory. The presentation will concentrate on how to use the software in a fast and efficient way to analyse the objective task types for testing Reading and Listening. The presenter will try to answer the question how to get from item-writing to a reasonably reliable final version of the test. The participants will get information on how to write tasks to enable entering data, what should a piloting population be like, how to enter the data, how to recode data, how to perform basic CTT analyses and how to interpret the results.

**Discussion: ISSUES IN PRE-TESTING**  
12:30-13:00  
Just to mention a few: What should a sending/host STANAG team do to prepare pre-testing? How to collect useful qualitative/quantitative feedback? How to provide for the conditions that would reflect real testing situation (e.g. control group motivation)?

# THURSDAY, July 9

9:00-10:00

**Tamara Kramarić Maras, Suzana Čečuk**  
**ASSESSING BORDERLINE CASES IN WRITING**

The purpose of our workshop is to show an example of a writing test difficult to rate. We will assess it together, identifying the difficult areas. We would also like to share what we have learned from this and the procedure we have established in rating difficult cases.

10:15-11:15

**Ülle Türk**  
**EALTA MILSIG**

The presentation will share the results of a pilot study carried out with the participation of 6 nations over a period of a year. The aim of the study was to select a number of sample scripts written in response to a variety of prompts and demonstrating English language proficiency at STANAG levels 1-4. It was hoped that the standardised scripts could later be used as benchmark performances in training assessors and standardising writing assessments across nations as well as exemplifications of typical, weak and strong writing performances at the above levels. The presentation will discuss the process of standardisation, the problems encountered and lessons learnt and will propose some steps to be taken to continue the process reaching out to more member states of NATO.

11:30-12:30

**CAPT Francesco Gratton**  
**MILITARY TOPICS IN STANAG 6001**

In order to reach standardization within and across nations, it is paramount that there be a common understanding of how test scores reflect the construct based on the descriptors of STANAG 6001 ed. 2. The selection of professional topics in STANAG-based tests is often guided by what the test developers feel will appeal to this very peculiar test population. But, how can we be certain that test performance is not affected by prior knowledge of these professional topics thus affecting - whether negatively or positively - test scores and therefore, the inferences made on them? This is especially true in level three items where texts usually deal with professional issues. This is also the level often required for specific posts abroad.

A simple research was conducted to investigate the effect of prior topic knowledge using two proficiency tests in use at the Italian Army Language School. Each test was firstly analyzed in terms of military content and then administered to a small sample. Quantitative and qualitative research methods were applied to study if military topics were affecting test scores.

14:00-15:00

**Peggy Garza**  
**ADVANCED LANGUAGE TESTING SEMINAR**

A new seminar under development, which is the follow-on to the Language Testing Seminar, is the Advanced Language Testing Seminar (ALTS). The ALTS includes four modules: Productive Skills, Receptive Skills, Test Analysis, and Managerial/Administrative Issues. This presentation will give a preview of the ALTS, the learning objectives, and a selection of the ALTS activities.

15:15-15:45

**Tamara Kramarić Maras, Suzana Čečuk**  
**BAT – CROATIAN EXPERIENCE**

Croatia administered BAT from June 15 to July 3. We would like to share our experience in administering it and provide some tips and practical advice on how to be more efficient for those who may be involved in it in the future.

16:15-17:30

**CONFERENCE OUTCOMES**  
**FUTURE COOPERATION**  
**FUTURE MEETINGS**

**Croatian Defense Academy "Detar Zrinski"  
Ilica 256 b, Zagreb, Croatia**

