

**ACTION ON
ARMED VIOLENCE**

AOAV

**ACTION ON ARMED VIOLENCE
ANNUAL REPORT
2017**

Legal and Administrative Information

Board

Dr Marina Brillman	(joined 20 April 2017)
Ms Olivia Dix	(Co-chair)
Mr Malcolm Rodgers	
Colonel Steve Smith	
Professor Michael Spagat	(joined 20 April 2017)
Ms Quincy Whitaker	(Co-chair)

Chief Executive

Iain Overton

Principal Office

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Charity Number

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INTRODUCTION BY THE CO-CHAIRS: OLIVIA DIX AND QUINCY WHITAKER

Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) is a charity whose work on a range of issues related to the global reduction of armed violence is respected worldwide. It has become one of the outstanding research bodies in its field, despite its modest size and resources. In 2017 AOAV established itself in its new role; having ceased international programmatic work in 2016 it now focuses entirely on research and advocacy. Its work has been presented at a wide range of high level meetings, from the United Nations to the UK Houses of Parliament seeking to influence policies and address failures in implementing such, and garnered coverage in dozens of newspapers and national and international broadcast media.

In common with other organisations in the field of armed violence, fundraising continues to be a challenge, but AOAV moves forward into 2018 with a clear mandate and a stable financial situation. We are very grateful to all the donors who have continued to support our work.

Iain Overton, in his role as Executive Director, has led AOAV through its change of strategy and is moving the organisation forward with vision and flair. We thank him and his small team (Jennifer Dathan and Dr James Kearney in particular) for their dedicated and effective work over the last year. The Board appointed two new Trustees in early 2017 – Professor Michael Spagat and Dr Marina Brillman - both of whose experience reflects the change of strategy. We are grateful for the work of all Board members who give freely of their considerable expertise to support AOAV

We believe that AOAV is an important voice in advocating for a global reduction of armed violence and it is our privilege to be associated with it.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – IAIN OVERTON

IAOAV undertook significant research and advocacy in 2017. Notably, 2017 was the seventh year of the organisation's Explosive Violence Monitoring Project and, in addition to other research and advocacy, we produced a major report looking at the long-term impact of explosive violence, long after the bombs have fallen silent.

Our Explosive Violence Monitoring project is the only open-source annual report recording the global harm caused by explosive weapons and is quoted widely. It addresses both conventional/manufactured weapons and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). It also draws comparisons between those effects suffered in populated areas, and those in non-populated areas. As in previous years, our monitor had wide pick-up in the national and international media, including the Guardian, Reuters, The Daily Mail, and Al Jazeera and CNN. It was also reported in many foreign language outlets. Such reporting has helped spread our advocacy aims both nationally and internationally, enhancing AOA's reputation as well as ensuring our key messaging is heard widely.

Political commitments to refrain from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas is on the agenda at high level fora in the UN and beyond and the issue of IEDs and the harm they bring is becoming central to the disarmament debate. In addition to this focus, we also investigated deeply the UK's global arms trade and intend to publish our findings in the Autumn of 2018.

Identifying funding for work on armed violence research is always a challenge, but in 2017 major funding was generously given by both the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a long-term supporter of our work, and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, as well as smaller donations from charitable foundations and members of the public. In addition, we sit on two consortiums able to apply for funded work with the European Union (Lot 3 and Lot 12).

Our work continues.



Iain Overton
Executive Director
Action on Armed Violence

TRUSTEES' REPORT

MISSION AND APPROACH

Mission

Action on Armed Violence's (AOAV) central mission is to carry out research and advocacy in order to reduce the incidence and impact of global armed violence.

Its research and advocacy campaigns aim to strengthen international laws and standards on the availability and use of conventional and improvised weapons, to build recognition of the rights of victims and survivors of armed violence and to research, understand and act effectively on the root causes of armed violence in affected countries.

To this end, AOAV is committed to:

- *reducing civilian harm from the use of indiscriminate explosive weapons, particularly in populated areas, and securing international support and agreement to this end*
- *reducing the impact of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) on civilian populations by advocating for international action that prevents the spread and usage of such devices or their precursor materials*
- *addressing the impact of small arms and light weapons against civilian groups, with a focus on abuses by state actors, government responses to gun massacres, and the trade in illicit small arms*
- *recording the harm from explosive violence and gun violence, with an eye to pursuing the above advocacy goals.*

AOAV's advocacy and research can help it reach its goals by:

increasing awareness of the key issues in the public, private and political spheres, through the dissemination of target research, so that state parties and international bodies are made aware of the immediate and long-term human damage caused by explosive weapons in populated sectors, which affect wide areas, and the repercussions of such use on national and regional insecurity;

providing information about the international community's legal and humanitarian responsibilities in relation to tackling the use and dissemination of explosive weapons, and through articulating how existing legal and humanitarian instruments need to be created to foster a cogent, coordinated international response;

- promulgating policy recommendations and relevant research to key parties so as to strengthen existing humanitarian protection instruments and to hold governments accountable for disproportionate use of force against civilians
- fostering dialogue and disseminating research between private, military, governmental and non-governmental parties, so as to share knowledge on how best to reduce the impact of armed violence.

Research and Advocacy

The broad areas of priority for research in 2017 were: the humanitarian harm from explosive weapons; the humanitarian harm from Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and an investigation into the UK's arms trade.

This consisted of:

1. Monitoring and data collection for the Global Explosive Weapons Monitor

This is the largest piece of annual research undertaken by AOA and is widely used globally for reference. Since 2011, AOA has been recording the global impact of explosive violence as reported in English language media. In 2017:

- We published the annual Explosive Weapons Monitor 2016:
<https://aoav.org.uk/explosiveviolence/explosive-violence-monitor-2016/>
- We reported on 10 countries most impacted by explosive violence in 2016:
<https://aoav.org.uk/2016/hot-spots-places-impacted-explosive-violence/>
- We recorded incidents of explosive violence through 2017 (which we published under a 2018/9 Norwegian Foreign Affairs funding grant): <https://aoav.org.uk/2018/2017-saw-38-increase-civilian-deaths-explosive-violence-new-report-finds>)
- We compiled and published monthly data analysis updates of explosive weapon use worldwide, alongside analysis of key trends. These 12 monthly reports can be accessed on this landing page:
https://aoav.org.uk/category/latest_explosive_violence_monitor_updates
- We published 15 reports on explosive violence incidents involving manufactured explosive weapons and 33 incidents involving improvised explosive weaponry. Each of these incidents involved at least 40 people being killed or injured in an explosive violence incident. They can be seen on our updates pages (<https://aoav.org.uk/category/manufactured-explosive-weapons-news/> and <https://aoav.org.uk/category/latest-ied-news/>)
- We produced and disseminated to over 10,000 people a video summarising our 2016 explosive weapons findings: <https://aoav.org.uk/2017/video-monitoring-explosive-violence-harm-2016>
- We published and disseminated translations of the main findings in ten languages - Arabic (العربية); Dutch (Nederlands); Finnish (suomi); French (Français); German (Deutsch); Italian (Italiano); Japanese (日本語); Mandarin (中文); Russian (Русский); Spanish (Español): <https://aoav.org.uk/report-translations>
- We presented our data and findings at the following:
 - Geneva Academy UN meeting: '2017 UNSG report on IEDs', Geneva Academy, Switzerland, April 2017;
 - All Party Parliamentary Group on Explosive Threats, Houses of Parliament, London, May 2017;
 - Conference on Clearance of Improvised Explosive Devices in the Middle East, Wilton Park, UK, May 2017;
 - Permanent Mission of France side event on Improvised Explosive Devices, Geneva, June 2017;
 - Geneva Academy IED, clearance debate, Geneva Academy, Switzerland, June, 2017;
 - ICRC meeting Group of Experts meeting, CCW, Geneva, August 2017;
 - Informal consultation on IEDs, French Government Side-Event – Convention on Conventional Weapons, Geneva, August, 2017;
 - International Network on Explosive Weapons Conference, Geneva, August 2017;

- Geneva Academy's International Humanitarian Law (IHL) series, Geneva Academy, Switzerland, October 2017;
- Regional meeting on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, Maputo, Mozambique, November 2017;
- The Permanent Mission of France to the Conference on Disarmament's side event during the Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, United Nations, Geneva, November 2017;

Results:

We continued our work on recording and publishing incidents of explosive weapon use around the world and the resulting impact on civilians, with widespread engagement.

- The UN Secretary-General cited AOAV's data in both his 2017 and 2018 report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.
- AOAV data was used in United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s 2017 flagship report World Humanitarian Data and Trends
- United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) also released two 2017 publications: 'The Implications of the Reverberating Effects of Explosive Weapons Use in Populated Areas for Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals' and 'Understanding the Reverberating Effects of Explosive Weapons: A Way Forward', citing AOAV's data.
- AOAV's data was used extensively in publications by all International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW) members. For instance, a 2018 report from Save the Children and the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), 'Ensuring the Protection of Civilians in Modern Conflict', used AOAV's data to highlight the call for an urgent review of military rules of engagement and civilian protection measures – reiterating the message of the UN secretary-general.

Our findings were reported in over 50 international news outlets:

<https://aoav.org.uk/2018/aoavs-latest-data-civilian-harm-explosive-weapons-cited-news-outlets-internationally/>

2. A research report on the reverberating effects of explosive weapons

Description:

- A review of a range of the mid- and long-term reverberating effects of explosive weapon use, particularly in populated areas, on the buildings lived in and physical infrastructure, the governmental services used, the health provisions accessed and micro- and macro-economic effects.

Activities and outputs:

- We published a report called 'When the bombs fall silent' that investigated the mid- and long-term economic, social and environmental harm of explosive weapon in Sri Lanka and Lebanon.
 - Our main report can be seen here: <https://aoav.org.uk/2018/when-the-bombs-fall-silent-the-reverberating-effects-of-explosive-weapons/>
 - We also broke the report down into ten areas. These were:
 - Sri Lanka – [Health](#)
 - Sri Lanka – [Economy](#)
 - Sri Lanka – [Environment](#)
 - Sri Lanka – [Society](#)
 - Sri Lanka – [Culture](#)
 - Lebanon – [Health](#)
 - Lebanon – [Economy](#)
 - Lebanon – [Environment](#)

- Lebanon – [Society](#)
- Lebanon – [Culture](#)
- We conducted an overview of patterns and the scale of EWIPA harm across ten countries juxtaposed with social indicators (e.g. economic, health, social indexes): <https://aoav.org.uk/2018/reverberating-harm-from-explosive-violence-in-the-top-ten-worst-impacted/>
- We produced an array of supporting video, social media and infographic materials that accompanied the dissemination of our report: this can be seen on AOA's social media feeds or on this landing page: <https://aoav.org.uk/reverberating-effects-of-explosive-violence>
- We conducted a further field case analysis of the long-term impact of landmines on survivors in Mozambique: <https://aoav.org.uk/2018/facing-life-after-the-landmines-are-gone/>
- We did a desk-based analysis of the impact of explosive violence on students and education in Kashmir: <https://aoav.org.uk/2018/22347>

Results:

- We continue to disseminate our analysis of public datasets on economic and societal trends and comparisons with the levels of harm wrought by Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA), as well as two in-depth case studies. We presented our findings at a number of the events listed above at which AOA spoke.
- AOA's research on reverberating effects of the Sri Lankan conflict featured in Crisis Response Journal: <https://aoav.org.uk/2018/aoav-research-featured-in-the-crisis-response-journal>

3. A global Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) review publication.

Description:

- A Global IED Review publication using six years of data from the Explosive Weapons Monitor.

Activities and outputs:

- We published an IED analysis of data from AOA's Explosive Weapons Monitor, broken down into country, regional and global IEDs figures. This report can be seen here: <https://aoav.org.uk/2017/aoavs-improvised-explosive-device-ied-monitor>
- This report contained four analytical articles, as well as infographics and photographs. This included:
 - An overview of six years of IED data;
 - The Islamic State's Suicide Industry;
 - The evolution of Suicide Car Bombs examined; and
 - Drones and the IED threat.
- We organised a side event on the 25 October where we presented findings at the UN General Assembly First Committee.
- We also presented our report at a United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) side-event on "Countering the Threat of IEDs: Strengthening Capacities and Stabilizing Communities" in the United Nations Headquarters in New York on October 17th 2017.
- We translated our key analyses into French and Arabic (see here for more - <https://aoav.org.uk/report-translations/>)

- We disseminated both the printed and online review paper to over 10,000 key stakeholders in the counter-IED community

Results:

- We helped stimulate the debate on how best to tackle the global spread of IEDs and worked to ensure that the rights of victims are at the forefront of that debate.

4. Mapping counter-IED work

Description:

- A comprehensive and updated map of who is doing what, and where, in areas of most need when it comes to counter-IED work.

Activities and outputs:

- We updated and continued to publish an overview of who is doing what, where and how in Counter-IED work. This can be seen here: <https://aoav.org.uk/2016/counter-improvised-explosive-devices-c-ied-mapping>
- We published a wider report on 'Addressing the threat posed by IEDs: National, Regional and Global Initiatives.' This can be seen here: <https://aoav.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018-Addressing-the-threat-posed-by-IEDs.pdf>
- Online we published details on the existing capacity and resource-base for 327 frontline forces tackling IEDs in some of the worst affected countries. The most pertinent groups were listed here: <https://aoav.org.uk/2017/international/>
 - We produced an analysis of national, regional and international initiatives to address IEDs, with a focus on North Africa, the Middle East and the Sahel.
 - A detailed mapping exercise was also published to complement the report and profiles of counter-IED actors prepared. For ease this list was also broken down into International initiatives; Military C-IED units; NGOs with expertise; Police IED response units and Private Companies
 - This included listing those involved in IED search and clearance, providing counter-IED equipment, risk education and IED victim assistance
- We have disseminated our findings across social media and through emails with relevant organisations and individuals;
- We sought to act as a conduit between counter-IED actors and the wider disarmament community by engaging on a variety of levels to encourage debate on this matter;
 - We informed every group that we reviewed that we were conducting this work (327 contacts made);
 - Over 50 organisations engaged directly, filling in a questionnaire that informed the above reports;
 - We interviewed over the phone over a dozen representatives of agencies and other experts and included their comments in our findings.

Results:

- We sought to raise awareness among the counter-IED community as to who is doing what;
- We used our data to inform the IED monitor (see above);

- We published recommendations on the best next steps in order to tackle the global threat of IEDs: <https://aoav.org.uk/2017/understanding-regional-transnational-networks-facilitate-ied-use-recommendations/>.

5. Analysis of the UK's arms trade

Description:

- The undertaking of a comprehensive analysis of the UK's arms trade from the Thatcher period onwards, asking how it is that a relatively small island came to dominate the international arms manufacturing world.

Activities and outputs:

- The focus of AOAV's research was to include examination of this general 'War State' that has developed in the UK, and to link that reality back to policies developed as far back as the Wilson and Thatcher eras. Along the way, the type of war waged in the world has changed, so our exploration has also focused on the new waves of research undertaken on cyber warfare and the evolution of private military companies that we have seen develop here in the U.K. In both areas, this small island is now a world leader. This work will be published in 2018.
- Our lead researcher, Matt Kennard, placed a story on Hereford and private military companies in the Guardian newspaper and another report on Barrow in Furness and the Trident submarines in Novara Media. We believe these two reports have helped raise the issues of arms production and British 'jobs at all costs' and put it in the mainstream discourse. A further article was published in the Pulitzer Centre, outlining London's place as the world's War Showroom.
- These three articles can be seen here:
 - <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/jan/10/hereford-inside-england-unlikely-military-city-centre-global-conflict>
 - <http://novaramedia.com/2017/12/10/barrow-in-furness-the-small-town-at-the-centre-of-britains-nuclear-arsenal>
 - <https://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/london-worlds-war-showroom>

OVERVIEW OF FUTURE PLANS FOR 2018

AOAV will continue its crucial research and advocacy work that focuses on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas worldwide. AOAV's history as one of the leading voices in the UK supporting the campaign to ban landmines and cluster munitions continues to inform its advocacy work and our past informs our future in this regard.

In 2018, AOAV intends to continue to highlight the harm caused to civilians by explosive weapons, as well as to carry on research work in support of targeted explosive weapon advocacy goals, as requested of us by both State parties and by members of the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW).

This work is sub-divided into two categories: commercially manufactured weapons and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The humanitarian cost of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas is increasingly attracting international interest, and AOAV's research and statistics are leading the field in this area. These figures are regularly quoted by the UN (including the Secretary General) and significant organisations, such as the ICRC and World Customs Organisation.

The competition for funding is increasingly sharp. AOAV will safeguard its future by ensuring that it responds quickly and flexibly to opportunities as they arise, with hard-hitting, compelling bids.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Action on Armed Violence was established as a charitable trust in 2007, originally called the Landmine Action Charitable Trust. The Trust's name was changed to Action on Armed Violence in 2010. It is also a charitable company. The charity is governed under a Memorandum and Articles of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company.

Operational Decision-Making

The Board of Trustees, who are also Directors of the charitable company, is responsible for the governance of Action on Armed Violence (AOAV), especially with respect to representation and accountability. These responsibilities include: determining policy and strategy; appointing and overseeing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO); monitoring performance and finances; managing the governance process, and providing insight, guidance and wisdom. Operational management is provided by the CEO, working with the staff of the organisation.

Recruitment & Appointment of Board Members

AOAV aims to select Board members in a manner consistent with the organisation's equal opportunities policy. The procedure for recruiting and inducting board members is as follows:

- 1) Skills required by new Board members are assessed on the basis of gaps within the existing board.
- 2) Invitations are issued through the national press, existing networks and/or the website, as appropriate.
- 3) Candidates are short-listed, contacted and interviewed by the Board Chair and CEO.

Procedures for Board member recruitment, election, rotation/re-election and retirement continue to be developed.

Induction & Training of Board Members

New Board members are issued with an induction pack covering AOAV's work and key policies. They meet the CEO and staff to discuss strategy, policy and current and planned activities. All Trustees are invited to attend network and parliamentary meetings and relevant conferences (when time and funding permit).

Risk Management Statement

All procurement and administrative procedures are in place to ensure that authorisation and accountability lines are respected. AOAV's Trustees recognise their collective and individual responsibilities to assess and manage risks which may affect the company in the achievement of its objectives. Internal risks are reduced by the application of appropriate controls to ensure that financial, administrative and operational procedures are effective, thus minimising the risk of financial loss and litigation against the company. All risks are assessed according to their likelihood and potential impact on organisation, and managed accordingly.

Public Benefit

The Board of Trustees has complied with the requirements of Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 and has referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing its aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how the planned activities of the company will contribute to achieving the aims and objectives they have set.

Principal Financial Management Policies

Funds received from institutional donors are managed in line with agreed contractual arrangements. The allocation of donations from unrestricted income is decided on the basis of needs identified by AOAV Board of Trustees. Donations derived from non-institutional restricted income are allocated according to the requests of the donors.

Reserves Policy

The majority of AOAV work is funded from restricted funds. The contractual arrangements with donors cover the completion of such tasks and related financial commitments. AOAV

retains unrestricted reserves to ensure the longer-term viability of the organization and the sustainability of its programmes against short-term funding shortfalls or emergency funding requirements. The reserves balance is reviewed regularly along with the level of the organization's total incoming and outgoing funds. The Board considers current level of reserves to be adequate. The minimum amount kept in reserve is the cost of running the charity for three months, £38,340. At 31 December 2017, AOA V had £105,690 in unrestricted funds (including the reserve).

Financial Position

During 2017 Action on Armed Violence received registered income of £117,097. Our major funding source for our research work was the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with additional funding from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. The overall expenditure was over £160,946.

AOAV renewed its efforts to ensure that funds for its research activities are available on consistent basis. Our long-term relationship with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues. AOA V will continue to work closely with current and new donors to secure continuing financial support for its work.

Small Company Rules

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are also directors of AOVV for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to;

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP.
- Make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditor is unaware.
- That each trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 December 2016 was 8. The Trustees are members of the charity. The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity and are not remunerated.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees



Olivia Dix
Co-Chair

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACTION ON ARMED VIOLENCE