

## GAP CONFERENCE

JANUARY 10 &amp; 11TH, 2019

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, IRELAND

The GAP module and game is at the cutting edge of State of the Art in the domains of training for peacekeeping, curriculum development, soft skills, assessment, game design and soft skills standardization.

We invite academic/research/policy papers from researchers from academic institutions, international organizations, training institutes for militaries, police and civilian humanitarian workers, policy institutes, and game designers, in each of the domains to share relevant research, network and brainstorm for future innovative collaboration such as GAP.

The Conference will also host demonstrations of the GAP game, and special events to bring together key personnel in this area. More information about the project is available at: [www.gap-project.eu](http://www.gap-project.eu).

## CALL FOR PAPERS

**July 31st, 2018:** Abstract submission (400 words) to:

[GamingforPeace@tcd.ie](mailto:GamingforPeace@tcd.ie)

**September 1st, 2018:** Notification of accepted authors

**September 30th, 2018:** Full programme available.

**November 30th, 2018:** Close of registration at:

[www.gap-project.eu/conferences](http://www.gap-project.eu/conferences)

**2019:** A selection of presentations at the conference will be invited to submit full papers for publication in an edited book volume after the conference.

## KEY TOPICS

- training for peacekeeping
- curriculum development
- soft skills
- assessment
- serious games design
- soft skills standardisation
- training for military, police, NGOs
- peace education

## EVALUATING THE CURRENT GAME VERSION

Between 20th and 22nd March end-users from various GAP consortium members participated to activities to evaluate the current version of the GAP game primarily in terms of the interaction design aspects of the human-machine interface (HMI).

A total of eight evaluation sessions were conducted using a methodology that is user-centred and involves the end-user as a co-evaluator of the system, where it is the technology that is being evaluated, not the performance of the player. These sessions in-

volved having the users play the game and carried out a set of prescribed tasks associated with the functionality and structure of the game, and report on their immediate experience in the moment of interaction. Game play involved working through scenes depicting scenarios that including cultural differences, and how to manage them within the military base, as well as more tactical situations on patrol.

The methodology known as cooperative evaluation is a technique for evaluating prototypes at various

level of development and gathers data based on the interaction experience of users in real-time. While the user plays the game and executes the prescribed tasks they are asked to "think aloud" or provide a running commentary on what they are seeing, hearing, perceiving, understanding, including obstacles they encounter. The thinking aloud technique is particularly useful for identifying not only the good and bad features of the game but also the user's rationale for. It helps us to access

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*A player's view of the GAP game*

*"A well-designed system will be optimally intuitive to the user..."*

the user's "mental model", that is the person's own mental representation and understanding of what they perceive during the gameplay and what they expected and anticipated.

The process of design is concerned with matching a user's mental model – how they understand the world, including their use of language, categories, distinctions and meanings, as well as how they feel about these – with the designer's mental

model – their understanding of what the user and functional requirements are and how best they should be implemented.

The system image is the system as presented through the HMI, as it appears phenomenally to the user and behind which there is the actual system. Interaction design seeks to minimise the gap or gulf between the different mental models (user's and designer's) and also those mental models and the system image.

A well-designed system will

be optimally intuitive to the user, requiring minimal training or requirement to learn specific instructions or code. While most game users have at least a basic familiarity with gaming in general or at the very least familiarity with computer with graphical user interfaces, the GAP game design seeks to exploit that familiarity to structure the user's experience of game play and general computer interaction.

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*Workshop at GAP mid-term Conference in September 2017*





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Cooperative evaluation using thinking-aloud allows us to pinpoint where and why discrepancies between the mental model of the user and the system image break down. It also allows us an insight into how these problems can be improved upon and these are being reported back to Haunted Planets Studios for future refinement and development of the system.

As a secondary concern for these sessions, and to be explored in more depth from task 5.5 through task 5.9, is the user's impressions of and reactions to the content of the game including the char-

acters, dialogue (script), scenarios, scenery, graphics and audio aspects. The quality of the game from both an immersion/engagement point of view is intimately linked to its quality as a learning tool and the achievement of learning outcomes, and all are dependent on the interaction design of the HMI.

The initial emerging results indicate that the end-users, who have in most cases not been yet on deployment, report that what the game has potentially to offer in more complete form is of significant value and can be an important component of

pre-deployment training.

Useful feedback was gained in terms of how various interaction elements can be improved to make the game's narrative more understandable and the content more relatable in terms of tactical situations encountered and the potential for learning new skills. It was found to be engaging, enjoyable and the general feeling of users is that they look forward to having the opportunity to see more and continue the narrative course they followed within these trials.

*Michael Cooke, National University of Ireland Maynooth*

*"...general feeling of users is that they look forward to having the opportunity to see more..."*

#### GAP ILLUSTRATOR JEN PATTISON PRESENTED

*Maria, one of the main characters in the game by Jen Pattison*



*"I have particularly enjoyed this contract as it's an opportunity..."*

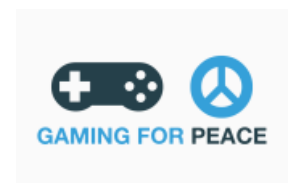
There is a lot involved in creating the GAP game, from conducting the interviews and choosing situations from them to use, writing the storylines, coding, consulting with end-users, preparing the learning objectives, evaluation and more. However, the

first sight for the player is the game art and we are delighted to introduce the artist the Haunted Planet Studios commissioned for the project. Jen Pattison is an illustrator and a game artist based in Scotland with lots of experience and a versatile style. Jen says she likes the

experience working on the GAP project:

*"I have particularly enjoyed this contract as it's an opportunity to draw a range of diverse characters and to make something that has a*

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*Characters from the game by Jen Pattison*

*"Visually, the GAP game will be composed of largely static 2D graphics..."*

*positive, real-world impact. I have also learned some interesting details about the differences in culture, rules, uniforms etc. between various countries' peacekeeping services, while researching the visual design, but I also found the story and interactions of the game itself very educational. Previous titles that I have worked on have been in an entirely invented setting, such as fantasy or sci-fi games so a unique aspect of this job is the attention to detail required to maintain authenticity in the appearance of characters, clothing and environments, and working with feedback from*

*those with real life experience to that end."*

Visually, the GAP game will be composed of largely static 2D graphics, and will have a foreground and a background. The background will display the current scene or location, and may have three or more layers for parallax scrolling, if the scene can be scrolled. With parallax scrolling, background images move slower than foreground images when the camera pans, creating an illusion of depth in a 2D scene and adding to the player's sense of immersion.

imposed over the background. The foreground will also contain an area in which to display the game's narrative text, which will often take the form of a dialogue between two characters.

The art style will be semi-realistic and painterly with characters reasonably realistic with slightly exaggerated features. The characters will be visually colourful. This choice of style is intended to be visually appealing to the audience, including those not highly familiar with games

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The foreground will contain character portraits super-



*A bazaar by Jen Pattison*



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and allow character expressions to be identified with more ease than a fully representational visual style.

Jen pays attention to detail and we are making sure that the art reflects reality in the Middle East. Similarly to consultations that we

held with end-users who had experience on mission for writing the story, we have people living in Middle Eastern countries checking if everything looks believable, including clothes and hairstyles on characters, as well as colours and details on buildings and objects.

*Justyna Pyz, Trinity College Dublin*

*"Jen pays attention to detail and we are making sure that the art reflects reality..."*



*The mayor's office by Jen Pattison*

#### MAJOR GENERAL MICHAEL BEARY – KEY SPEAKER FOR THE GAP CONFERENCE

Our confirmed speaker for the January 2019 GAP Conference is Major General Michael Beary, who was appointed Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

in May 2016 by Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon, and assumed command of UNIFIL in July 2016.

Major General Beary holds a Bachelor of Science, a Master of Business Studies and a

Master of Science in National Security Strategy. He is a graduate of the Command and Staff School of the Irish Defence Forces, and of the National War College at the National Defence University in Washington, D.C.

Beary has a distinguished military career since being commissioned as an officer in the Irish Army Infantry Corps in 1975. He was Senior Instructor at the Command and Staff School, Military College and after being promoted to Colonel, was made Director of Defence Forces Training with responsibility for education and training policy, and the development of doctrine for liaison with external education and training agencies. In November 2013, he was

*"Beary has a distinguished military career since being commissioned as an officer in the Irish Army..."*



*Major General Michael Beary*

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promoted to Brigadier general, and appointed General Officer commanding the 2nd Brigade.

Beary has a lot of peacekeeping experience, spending 10 years on overseas appointments. He has served on three deployments to Southern Lebanon (1982, 1989, 1994) with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeeping mission, he served in Kuwait and Baghdad, Iraq as part of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) and in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR)]

In 2003, Beary completed a four-month tour of duty as Liaison

Team Leader with the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) HQ in Afghanistan

Beary served for three years with the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) Intelligence Division in Brussels while seconded to the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union. He provided intelligence planning expertise in this role for EU military operations and civilian missions. From 2011 to 2013, he commanded the European Union military training mission in Somalia.

Beary made headlines in August 2017, when the Trump administration's Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, launched an

unprecedented personal attack on a United Nations general, accusing Beary of being "blind" to a "massive flow of illegal weapons" to Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon. Beary responded by saying "if there was a large cache of weapons, we would know about it" and that if anyone had information to the contrary, that they should provide it to the UN. Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres gave his full backing to Beary, as did the Irish government. The US or Israel did not provide any evidence to back up the claims.

Born in 1956, he is married and has three children.

*Justyna Pyz, Trinity College Dublin*

<http://gap-project.eu/>



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## GAP Consortium

