



Netherlands Institute for the Study  
of Crime and Law Enforcement

Dr. George Mohler,  
Dr. Martin Short,  
Mr. Sean Malinowski,  
Mr. Mark Johnson,  
Dr. George Tita  
Dr. Andrea Bertozzi,  
Dr. Jeff Brantingham

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Subject: Replication of predictive policing study

Date: October 18, 2016

Dear Dr. Mohler, Dr. Short, mr. Malinowski, mr. Johnson, Dr. Tita, Dr. Bertozzi, and Dr. Brantingham,

We would like to ask for your assistance in the organization of a replication of your Predpol evaluation study published in the Journal of the American Statistical Association.

Why do we aim to replicate your work? Although replication lies at the heart of the scientific method, replication research does not always get the funding, exposure, and academic credit it deserves. To stimulate replication research, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) has issued a call for proposals, asking researchers to propose replications of cornerstone research. Cornerstone research is research that has proven to be important for science and for society. Your evaluation of predictive policing easily meets that criterion. It is hard to come up with another recent study that has had as many implications for crime prevention and law enforcement.

Our aim is not to implement a predictive policing experiment in The Netherlands but to re-analyze the data you collected in Los Angeles and Kent, and reevaluate the impact and effectiveness of the PredPol trials. As part of the evaluation of proposals, NWO asks us to verify in advance that we can get access to the information (data, study protocols, code) that is needed to conduct the replication study. This is why we are seeking your help.

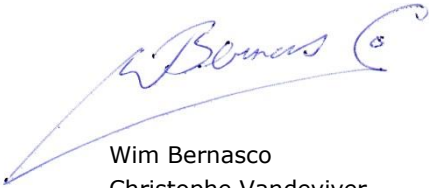
Specifically, we would like to hear from you under which conditions it would be possible for us to get access to the data, protocols, code and other relevant documentation used in your Predpol evaluation study. In specifying conditions, please include any legal (e.g., contracts), technical (e.g., data encryption), practical and financial requirements. We are prepared to do everything we can to make this replication study possible, and if strictly necessary we are prepared to conduct the study on-site in the USA.

For obvious and understandable reasons, any initiative at replication might be perceived by the original researchers as an expression of doubt, lack of trust in the study's findings, or attempt to discredit the product or intervention being evaluated. We are all only human. We emphasize, however, that we are completely nonpartisan regarding the outcomes of the replication. We have no financial or reputational stakes whatsoever in predictive policing, neither in Predpol nor in any other of the various predictive policing tools that are currently

being developed. Our only interest is to learn from replicating an important and impressive study and to be able to publish the results of this replication in a reputable scientific journal. Replication of your findings by independent researchers from another continent will strengthen the evidence base of PredPol implementations in Los Angeles, Kent and elsewhere.

We hope you endorse the importance of an independent replication of your work for science and for law enforcement, and hope that you will do everything you can to help us realize it. We look forward to your reaction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W. Bernasco', with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Wim Bernasco  
Christophe Vandeviver  
Catrien Bijleveld

Encls.

- NWO Call for Proposals Replication Studies
- Single-page Vitae of Bernasco, Vandeviver and Bijleveld