

## **The Fifty-Eighth Annual Seminar of the American Polygraph Association** (New Orleans, Louisiana, August 26–30, 2024)

The fifty-eighth annual seminar of the American Polygraph Association took place from 26th to 30th August in New Orleans, Louisiana, hosted at the New Orleans Hilton Riverside Hotel.

The seminar brought together over 700 polygraph experts from around the globe, primarily from the United States and Latin America, but also attracting specialists from nearly all continents. Among European nations, the largest delegations came from Ukraine, the Czech Republic, and Poland. The growing representation from Latin America has effectively made Spanish the second language of the seminar alongside English, as the polygraph enjoys significant popularity in the region, with numerous American polygraph training schools accredited by the American Polygraph Association having set up branches across Latin America.

As per tradition, the seminar marked a change in the presidency of the American Polygraph Association. The President-Elect assumes the presidency while the outgoing President transitions to the role of Past-President and remains involved in the association's leadership. This year, Chip Morgan took on the role of President, succeeding Donnie W. Dutton.

As every year, the seminar featured a wide range of presentations covering topics from the fundamentals of polygraph examinations—including best practices in

pre-employment screening—to psychology, interrogation tactics, and strictly polygraph-related methods.

One highlight was an in-depth discussion of a new screening technique, the Single-Issue Screening Test (SIST). According to presenter Pat O’Burke, this method boasts a high diagnostic accuracy of over ninety percent, placing it on par with diagnostic tests such as the Utah Zone Comparison Test and the Federal Zone Comparison Test.

Another topic of debate concerned the merit of re-certifying polygraph experts, a practice that requires specialists to renew their certification periodically. Representatives from the National Centres for Credibility Assessment in the US and Canada raised this issue. Currently, if an expert completes an accredited basic course, pays annual fees, and attends a certified training programme of at least thirty hours every two years, their certification is automatically renewed. However, the presenters argued that ongoing advancements in science and updates to standards render the current certification process insufficient. They proposed periodic re-certification every few years, with a doubling of required training hours between certifications. This issue is also pertinent in Poland, extending beyond polygraph experts to court experts more generally.

A particularly engaging presentation, *To Node or Not to Node: Comparing Human and Automated Scoring of Pneumograph and Plethysmograph Data*, was delivered by Canadian experts Kristine Smith and Yolanda Romanic. They addressed diagnostic characteristics in the Pneumograph (Pneumo) and Plethysmograph (PLE) channels, noting the issue of reaction latency in the PLE channel.

Also noteworthy was *Why Innocent People Fail & Why Guilty People Pass*, presented by Donald Krapohl and Russ Warner, which examined the causes of false positives and false negatives in polygraph results. The presentation also explored correlations between polygraph channels and their alignment with deception criteria.

A significant highlight was the presentation of the *EyeDetect+* device, an ocular graph that records eye movements and pupil response, which could serve as an additional channel for polygraph testing. According to its creators, *EyeDetect+* provides high diagnostic validity and reliability, ranging from eighty-nine to ninety-one percent. Notably, this device and its deception detection technology were first featured in *European Polygraph* in 2016.

The next annual APA seminar is scheduled to be held in San Diego, California.

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