



# RISK newsletter

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## Elevating Science at EPA

David Clarke, American Chemistry Council

As members of the risk assessment community well know, often the scientific data needed to conduct sound risk assessments is unavailable, forcing analysts to resort to nonscientific factors, such as default assumptions. In other cases, the science is extensive—as in the case of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) revised chloroform risk assessment—but politics intervene and set aside conclusions that are strong enough they can be characterized as a scientific consensus. Both situations may be somewhat alleviated if H.R. 64, a bill sponsored by Rep. Vernon Ehlers (R-MI), wins passage this Congress.

H.R. 64, “A Proposal to Strengthen Science at the Environmental Protection Agency,” draws its inspiration from a National Research Council (NRC) report published last year: *Strengthening Science at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Research Management and Peer Review Practices*. Independent experts convened by NRC deliberated extensively on how to ensure scientific leadership and talent at the Agency and decided, among other things, that a new position of “Deputy Administrator for Science and Technology” should be established at EPA. In making that recommendation, the NRC panel explicitly strengthened its 1995 proposal to designate the head of EPA’s Office of Research & Development as the Agency’s chief scientific and technical officer. NRC said that earlier recommendation is “insufficient” and suggested that a higher-level position is needed to provide a science official “both the authority and the responsibility for agency-wide scientific performance.” Congressman Ehlers adopted this recommendation, and almost all others made in the report, in H.R. 64.

On 29 March 2001, the House Science Committee, subcommittee on environment, technology, and standards (which Ehlers chairs), held a hearing on H.R. 64. At the hearing, Ehlers urged the Bush Administration to seize the opportunity to strengthen science at EPA “while we’re at the beginning of the Administration.” But so far EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman has declined to endorse the legislation, commenting that the Agency is reviewing its current scientific resources before deciding whether H.R. 64 is supportable.

Others, however, are already raising their hands in support. EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) Executive Committee Chair Dr. William Glaze, of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, (offering “personal testimony” rather than an SAB position) spoke out in favor of the legislation. Glaze suggested that H.R. 64 “would pave the way for the Agency to prepare itself to handle the difficult problems that face us in the future and to take advantage of new science that is unfolding in areas such as genomics.” Joining Glaze was Dr. Raymond Loehr of the University of Texas at Austin. Speaking on behalf of the NRC committee that prepared the *Strengthening Science* report, Loehr underscored the need for a Deputy Administrator for Science at EPA, commenting, “The importance of science in EPA decision making should be no less than that afforded to legal considerations.” But Mr. Rick Blum, a policy analyst for the activist group OMB Watch, raised questions about possible adverse impacts of H.R. 64 on existing EPA programs, such as the Office of Environmental Information, and cautioned, “H.R. 64 may create structural barriers for EPA to adequately protect human health and the environment.” Blum raised concerns that

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The Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) is an interdisciplinary professional society devoted to risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication.

SRA was founded in 1981 by a group of individuals representing many different disciplines who recognized the need for an interdisciplinary society, with international scope, to address emerging issues in risk analysis, management, and policy. Through its meetings and publications, it fosters a dialogue on health, ecological, and engineering risks and natural hazards, and their socioeconomic dimensions. SRA is committed to research and education in risk-related fields and to the recruitment of students into those fields. It is governed by by-laws and is directed by a 15-member elected Council.

The Society has helped develop the field of risk analysis and has improved its credibility and viability as well.

Members of SRA include professionals from a wide range of institutions, including federal, state, and local governments, small and large industries, private and public academic institutions, not-for-profit organizations, law firms, and consulting groups. Those professionals include statisticians, engineers, safety officers, policy analysts, economists, lawyers, environmental and occupational health scientists, natural and physical scientists, environmental scientists, public administrators, and social, behavioral, and decision scientists.

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**Web Site**  
[www.sra.org](http://www.sra.org)

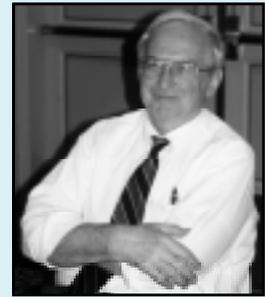
## President's Message

The government is well into the first year of the new administration and risk-related events have been notable:

- Withdrawal of the proposed Occupational Safety and Health Administration ergonomics regulation reflecting the decades-old debate between costs and benefits
- Withdrawal of the proposed regulation on allowable concentrations of arsenic in water, while indicating a lowering will be necessary but expressing doubt about the scientific basis for the proposed limit
- Agreement that additional controls on SO<sub>x</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, and mercury will be necessary but that limits on CO<sub>2</sub> should not be made part of such reductions
- Notifying other participants that the Kyoto Protocol proposal essentially is no longer viable, while expressing agreement that global warming is a problem that must be addressed
- How to control the spread of mad-cow and foot-and-mouth outbreaks
- Issues relating to stem-cell research

All are topics for which risk analysis can be a significant aid in identifying and clarifying options and illuminating possible decisions. I hope the Administration and the Congress take advantage of the many Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) members in and outside of government to assist in addressing these difficult issues. In that vein, it was heartening to see that the Administration has announced the intention to nominate John Graham to head the Office of Management and Budget Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. John, a former SRA president and longtime contributor to SRA activities, has for many years directed the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis. He will bring to this important office his energy and in-depth knowledge of risk analysis.

*John J. Whedone*



*(EPA, continued from page 1)*

the proposed Deputy Administrator position might send "unintended signals" that science-based decisions should receive "prime weight" in EPA decisions and "that the lack of scientific certainty requires inaction."

Yet, EPA's science advisors are among the lucid voices articulating the finite role science plays in regulatory decisions. On 6 March 2001, SAB's Executive Committee issued a draft commentary on "Improving Science-Based Environmental Stakeholder Processes." SAB embarked on its project out of concern that EPA was extensively using new "innovative" programs that rely heavily on stakeholder involvement and science might not be adequately integrated in these new processes. But SAB, citing studies by Resources for the Future, Resolve, and others, concluded, "Properly conducted, stakeholder processes can be valuable in supporting high-quality science-based environmental decisions." SAB's draft also notes: "While all good environmental decisions must be based in a careful consideration of the relevant science, science alone is not sufficient. Equally important are value judgments."

Strengthening science doesn't mean weakening values. But, by the same token, values alone aren't enough and possess their own limitations. EPA may want to "protect the environment," but without fully considering the relevant science, it may not even understand the problem it is trying to solve. H.R. 64 seeks to strengthen science at EPA and thereby to strengthen EPA's decision-making capabilities. That's a value we ought to be able to hold in common.

—The American Chemistry Council also generally supports the Strengthening Science report.



## Risk Education Resources

### Should We Be Certified?

#### The Uncertain Role of SRA in Risk Education for Professionals

*Tim McDaniels*

As the chair of the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) Education Committee, I often get inquiries seeking advice about professional-development programs on risk-related topics, particularly from SRA members outside the United States. The situation is different in the United States than elsewhere, because in the United States a number of universities and research institutions have built up summer institutes and related teaching programs that offer an array of specialized courses for professionals on specific risk issues. Finding such courses is much tougher outside the United States.

I sometimes get inquiries about whether the SRA itself offers courses on risk issues. Callers are usually seeking courses suitable for professionals who want to build their qualifications and knowledge base in risk issues. They are often seeking official certificate programs. These inquiries are in part spurred by the knowledge that other risk-related societies, such as RIMS (Risk and Insurance Managers Society) and the IAIA (International Association for Internal Auditors), offer extensive professional training and certification programs. Their members are required to take such courses if they want to maintain advanced professional credentials from those societies. In other words, the societies themselves have become the major source of professional training and for certifying who qualifies as a professional in those fields.

Learning about how other societies tackle this issue led me to think about whether we should consider professional training and certification within SRA. In the remainder of this column, I'll outline what I have gleaned from discussions regarding professional training and certification with many SRA members, with people in other risk societies, and with other professionals.

Professional training and certification could take many forms. At one extreme, we could imagine a situation like doctors or lawyers: they must receive certification from independent boards before they can call themselves professionals in the field. They must also complete certain amounts of professional education courses to maintain their licenses. At the other extreme, one could imagine that SRA would cosponsor various sets of courses, as it does now at the annual meetings. Once participants finish one or more of the courses, they could receive a stylish "certificate" saying they completed the courses.

The real issue is this: does the SRA want to get into deciding and certifying, through a combination of tests, educational qualifications, and experience, who is qualified to call them-

selves a professional in some aspect of risk analysis? This is a weighty question. Answering it in a responsible way requires careful thought about our mission and organizational objectives, as well as the nature of our membership.

My view is that the diversity of the fields in risk analysis and the diversity of roles filled by members of our Society in their various employment contexts make it problematic to consider professional certification in the form of licensing as a reasonable option for our Society. In other words, the range of risk-related fields (for example, ecological risk analysis, human health dose response risk analysis, technological risk analysis, risk management, risk communication, law, policy analysis, citizen involvement, and so forth) means that we have too many

diverse subspecialties in our field for certification to be viable. If our Society were more homogenous, like the toxicologists, or the insurance risk managers, or the internal auditors, certification in the form of licensing might be a reasonable step.

But does some other form of certification make sense? Suppose the SRA were to develop model curricula for professional-development courses in some of the many subfields of our Society. Then when people took one of these courses, they could benefit from a milder form of certification. That is,

they could simply get a certificate saying they have taken a class that is "SRA approved." This approach would help people sort out which courses are good ones. At least that would be the rationale.

Even this approach to certification has many problems. Who is going to inspect the course outline for a new professional-development course offered somewhere to see if it agrees with our view of a model curriculum? Who is going to develop the model curriculum anyway? Who and where are the models we aspire to emulate?

One could, in the end, see even mild forms of certification for professional courses to be a kind of barrier to entry for new courses. Clearly, SRA does not want to foster barriers to professional training. After all, it is in the interest of the SRA to encourage as much professional training as institutions want to offer and the demand will support. We don't face a problem with "substandard" professional training, but rather a lack of it, particularly outside the United States.

It seems that even this watered-down version of certification poses problems for a diverse and relatively small Society like ours. All in all, I don't think SRA should pursue professional certification for our members or for professional training courses. I'm sure there are other views out there. Comments are welcome, to [timcd@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:timcd@interchange.ubc.ca). ◆◆◆

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# Risk Analysis in an Interconnected World

**Society for Risk Analysis 2001 Annual Meeting  
2-5 December 2001, Westin Seattle, Seattle, Washington**

The Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) 2001 Annual Meeting will be held 2-5 December, with the theme "Risk Analysis in an Interconnected World." Topics to be highlighted include the emergence of computer viruses, bio-terrorism, climate variability, contagious diseases, and systemic risks in air transportation, as well as the usual range of topics.

The meeting will be held at the Westin Seattle in Seattle, Washington. Steep hills. Lush greenery. Glimpses of sparkling water everywhere—Puget Sound, bays, lakes, rivers, canals. And snow-capped Mount Rainier in the distance suddenly emerging from its mantle of clouds. A visitor soon learns why Seattle is known as "The Emerald City."

The Westin Seattle is located midtown within walking distance of famous Pike Place Market and the "original" Nordstrom. The hotel has 865 guest rooms and amenities that include sauna, indoor swimming pool, health club, and in-room coffee.

## Poster Sessions

Poster sessions will be grouped by subject and presented either in larger groups, with author attendance during meeting breaks, or in smaller groups as poster-platform sessions. The latter include three-minute descriptions by authors at the start of each session, facilitated by a session chair assigned by the Program Committee.

## Oral Presentations

Oral presentations will be grouped by subject and assigned a session chair by the Program Committee. Each oral presentation will take 15 minutes, followed by 5 minutes for audience questions and comments. Speakers will be required by session chairs to adhere to time limits.

## Symposia

Symposia address a particular subject of interest through a multidisciplinary format. Symposia proposals are submitted as such and are not organized by the Program Committee. Generally, symposia follow the same format as the oral presentations and should be limited to one 1½-hour session to the extent possible. Preference will be given by the Program Committee to symposium proposals that truly reflect several risk-related disciplines.

## \*\*\*\* NEW THIS YEAR—BEST PAPER COMPETITION \*\*\*\*

SRA invites presenters to submit a 5-10 page extended outline by 31 July in any one of the program topic areas to compete for Best Paper Awards. (The "normal" abstract must have been submitted by 11 May.) The extended outlines will be reviewed by the Program Committee, and a select number of these authors will be invited to submit a full paper by 16 October for the competition. The best papers will receive recognition at the meeting and possible publication in the Journal, *Risk Analysis*. Additional information about the Best Paper Competition is on the SRA Web site ([www.sra.org](http://www.sra.org)).

## Workshops

Workshops will take place Sunday, 2 December, one day prior to the regular meeting sessions. Workshops are generally ½ day (four hours) or full day (eight hours) and are educational in nature.

## Exhibits '01

There will be an exhibition of risk- and exposure-related products and services at the Annual Meeting. Companies or individuals may exhibit computer software, data bases, or other products. For further information on exhibiting, contact Lori Strong or Sue Burk (phone: 703-790-1745, fax: 703-790-2672).

## Book Exhibit

The meeting will once again include a combined book exhibit. For \$50 per title, books will be displayed and each attendee will be provided information through our list of publications. The list will include prices, any discounts that may be offered, and ordering information. For more information or book reservation forms, contact Lori Strong (phone: 703-790-1745, fax: 703-790-2672).

## Preliminary Program

Preliminary programs will be mailed to members of the Society, as well as to those nonmembers whose abstracts have been accepted. Final programs will be available at the meeting in December. Preregistration and hotel reservation materials will be mailed as part of the preliminary program.

## Questions?

Program Chair: Robin Cantor, phone: 202-466-4422, fax: 202-466-4487, e-mail: [robin\\_cantor@lecg.com](mailto:robin_cantor@lecg.com)

SRA Secretariat: phone: 703-790-1745, fax: 703-790-2672, e-mail: [SRA@BurkInc.com](mailto:SRA@BurkInc.com)



## SRA-Europe

### Risk-Related Strategic Decision Making in European Agrobiotechnology Companies

Joyce Tait, SRA-E President

A major risk-related research project, funded by the European Commission Fourth Framework Programme (837,000 euros) has recently been completed. Titled *Policy Influences on Technology for Agriculture: Chemicals, Biotechnology and Seeds* (PITA), it involved research partners in the United Kingdom, France, Netherlands, Spain, and Denmark.

The project looked at the extent to which technological innovation in the agrochemicals, biotechnology, and seeds industries can deliver more socially and environmentally sustainable farming systems and improve the quality of life, and how company innovation strategies are influenced by the policy environment.

An integrated analysis of the European policy environment, including public concerns about pesticides and genetically modified (GM) crops, set the framework for in-depth interviews with senior managers in European-based multinational agrochemical and seed companies, along with representative small- and medium-sized companies.

Results of particular interest to risk analysts include:

- (1) interactions among policies designed to promote innovation, to regulate the risks of pesticides and GM crops, and to reform the Common Agricultural Policy,
- (2) an analysis, from the companies' perspective, of the complex array of risk issues faced in developing new pesticides and GM crops, including financial, technical, regulatory, policy, and market uncertainty and, particularly in Europe, public opposition to their products, and
- (3) an analysis of product development strategies to ensure company viability despite uncertainty in so many areas and product lead times of 15 to 20 years.

The research coincided with a period of rapid restructuring of the industries as well as periods of crisis and rapid evolution in the policy, regulatory, and public arenas. The traditional evolutionary patterns in the agrochemicals and seeds industries are being overtaken by a new agrobiotechnology trajectory,

bringing together the two sectors with their different traditions, cultures, knowledge bases, profit margins, and regulatory regimes.

Selected reports from this project can be found on [www.ed.ac.uk/rcss/supra/](http://www.ed.ac.uk/rcss/supra/) and the full set is available on <http://technology.open.ac.uk/cts/mprojects.htm#biotechnology>.

### 11th Annual Conference Society for Risk Analysis-Europe

"New Risk Frontiers for a New Europe," the 11th Annual Conference of the Society for Risk Analysis-Europe (SRA-E), will be held in Lisbon, Portugal, on 23-27 May 2001. The Conference is sponsored by SRA-E and will be held at Belém Cultural Center, which is a new cultural center near the Tagus River and the Belém area where the famous Tower and the Jeronimos monastery are located. You can even choose any hotel in Lisbon or in the Estoril area since it can be reached by train or tram.

Please visit our Web site at <http://www.sraeurope.com> for the Conference program. The program will include a reception and welcome, an opening session, paper sessions, poster sessions, lunches, and closure with the general SRA-E assembly.

Preliminary session topics include Climate and International Risk, Economic and Insurance Risk, Environmental Health Risks, Health Risk Assessment, Industrial Risk and Emergency Control, Hospital Risks, National and Municipality Risk Management, Transportation Risk, Risk Assessment Methods, EMF, Experts and Risk Evaluation, Organizational Risk, Risk Perception, Genetically Modified Foods, Risk Communication, Trust, Living after Disasters, Risk Decision Making in Industry, and Radioactive and Non-Radioactive Health Nuclear Risks.

The Conference dinner will be on 25 May. The registration form and hotel information are on the Web site and a message will be sent to all members with that information. The inscription costs will be Members: 365 euros, Nonmembers: 465 euros, and Students: 250 euros. ♦♦♦

### Call for Nominations for SRA Officers

The Society for Risk Analysis Nominating Committee invites nominations for the following offices in the Society's 2001 elections:

#### President-elect Secretary Treasurer-elect Three Councilors

The Secretary serves for two years.

The Treasurer-elect serves for one year. This is a new configuration of the Treasurer position: the person elected will serve one year as Treasurer-elect, two years as Treasurer, and one year as Past Treasurer.

Councilors serve for three years and are ineligible for reelection until one year has elapsed following the completion of their terms.

Please submit nominations with a brief paragraph supporting each by **2 July 2001** to the Chair of the Nominating Committee: Gail Charnley, HealthRisk Strategies, 826 A St. SE, Washington, DC 20003; phone: 202-543-2408; fax: 202-543-3019; e-mail: [healthrisk@aol.com](mailto:healthrisk@aol.com).



## Committees

### Conferences and Workshops Committee

*Scott Ferson, Chair*

Proposals for continuing education workshops held in conjunction with the upcoming Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) Annual Meeting in Seattle will be due this May. Instructions for making proposals can be found on-line at SRA's Web site at <http://www.sra.org/events.htm>.

Upcoming conferences and workshops include:

- 7-8 May 2001, Chicago, Illinois, Effectively Communicating Health Risks from Fish Contaminants ([www.fishrisk.com](http://www.fishrisk.com))
- 14-18 May 2001, Argonne, Illinois, Environmental Risks & the Global Community: Strategies for Meeting the Challenges (<http://eco-informa.ead.anl.gov>)
- 23-27 May 2001, Lisbon, Portugal, New Risk Frontiers for a New Europe ([www.sraeurope.com](http://www.sraeurope.com))
- 4-6 June 2001, Charlottesville, Virginia, Short Course on Risk Assessment and Management ([haimes@virginia.edu](mailto:haimes@virginia.edu))
- 18-19 June 2001, Washington, D.C., Current Issues in Risk Analysis ([SRA@BurkInc.com](mailto:SRA@BurkInc.com))
- September 2001 (tentative date), Las Cruces, New Mexico, Risk Analysis for Invasive Species ([mpowell@oce.usda.gov](mailto:mpowell@oce.usda.gov))
- 2-5 December 2001, Seattle, Washington, SRA Annual Meeting (<http://www.sra.org/events.htm#annual>)
- February 2002 (tentative date), Egypt, Comparative Risk Assessment and Environmental Management ([linkov.igor@adlittle.com](mailto:linkov.igor@adlittle.com))

Also upcoming are a specialized conference on "adverse" effects and a workshop on philosophy and calculation in the face of scientific uncertainty.

### Publications/Electronic Media Interface Committee

*Jim Butler, Webmaster*

Use of the SRA Web site continues to increase at an impressive rate. The site received a total of 162,000 visits in 2000, an increase of 80 percent over the previous year. (The best measure of site usage is probably the number of separate "visits" as opposed to individual "hits" for every page and graphic viewed.) The most frequently visited pages on the site include Journal, Opportunities, Risk-Related Sites, Risk Science, and Events. Recent improvements to the site include an on-line submission form for quickly posting employment opportunities and an on-line database for more efficient processing of submitted abstracts and symposium proposals. Planning has begun for redesigning the site to improve navigation and update the appearance of the site.

### Meet SRA's Webmaster

Dr. James Butler, SRA's Webmaster, is an environmental systems engineer and project manager at Argonne National Laboratory. He was previously assistant director of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Science & Research. His research and consulting interests include developing integrated approaches for assessing human health risks from multipathway chemical exposures and evaluating cumulative risks from multiple exposure sources. He is an expert on human health risk assessment, having served on numerous U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) peer-review panels. He is currently serving as principal investigator of an EPA-funded study of cumulative risks in the Chicago metropolitan area. Butler is also on the adjunct faculty of the Illinois Institute of Technology, where he has developed and teaches courses on risk assessment, risk management, and environmental management. He is a graduate of Colgate University and received his master's and doctorate in environmental health sciences from New York University.



Butler's interest in technology for environmental information management and communication date back to the early days of the World Wide Web. He was newsletter editor for the International Society of Exposure Analysis (ISEA) for several years. After reading about the World Wide Web and the Mosaic browser from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, he thought this would be a great way to reach a broader audience. So he read up on HTML and started posting the ISEA newsletter on the Web in 1995 (still there at <http://www.iseaweb.org/newsletter/newsletters.html>). That proved successful, so a committee was formed and he helped establish the ISEA Web site, for which he served as Webmaster for a few years. As an SRA member, he volunteered for the Publications/Electronic Media Interface Committee to assist Steve Brown in developing the SRA Web site. He is also currently Web site manager for the U.S. Department of Energy Center for Risk Excellence (<http://riskcenter.doe.gov>).

### Public Policy Committee

*Jack Fowle, Cochair*

The SRA Public Policy Committee has recently cosponsored two luncheon briefings with the American Chemical Society's Risk Education Project in Washington, D.C. The first, held on 22 January 2001, was titled "Attracting Scientists to Government." It drew a crowd of 77 people, including 25 Congressional staffers, 16 staffers from the Executive Branch, and 4 reporters. The second, held on 28 March 2001, was titled "Strong Science, Smart Decisions." Seventy-four people attended this briefing, including 20 Congressional staffers, 14 staffers from the Executive Branch, and 1 reporter.

The SRA Public Policy Committee, the American Chemical Society, and several other societies also cosponsored a science and engineering town-hall meeting with Congressman Frank Pallone, of New Jersey's 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, on 23 February 2001 in Keyport, New Jersey, to allow the scientific and

engineering community to discuss environmental issues such as water quality, MtBE (methyl tertiary-butyl ether), and Superfund, as well as other environmental and science issues that may be considered in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress.

### Attracting Scientists to Government

The key message from this briefing was that finding the right people to serve in a new Administration is a challenging and important task and that there are particular barriers to recruiting scientists and engineers for senior government positions. In this session speakers from the National Research Council, the Brookings Institution, and the Heritage Foundation explored the challenges in securing appointees for critical government science and engineering positions.

Mr. Erich Bloch, President and Principal of the Washington Advisory Group and past Director of the National Science Foundation from 1984 until 1990, moderated the session. He began by noting that this was an opportune briefing, occurring as it did on the first day of the new Bush Administration, especially since there is no new nominee to direct the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). There are many opportunities for

science as the economy has blossomed over the past 20 years under the guidance of Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. Further, the tools available for science have improved dramatically, largely because of the tremendous blossoming of the technology industry. Further, the budgets for the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health have grown dramatically.

There are challenges too as these budget increases have placed greater demands on scientists and managers. The job market is tight and government service does not have a sterling reputation. The problem of attracting top-notch scientists to government service differs for various positions and employee classes of federal service, which include both politically appointed (Presidential and excepted service) and competitive (career civil service) positions. The political appointments last for the duration of an Administration. Employment for career civil servants continues across Administrations. The problem also differs for scientists who are active, mid-career compared to those who are beginning or at the end of their careers.

Bloch noted the questions to be considered: How attractive is government service? What are the barriers? What can be done to lower the barriers? What can Congress do to help? He then introduced the first speaker, Dr. Mary Goode, President of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences (AAAS), Dean of the College of Information Science and Systems at the University of Arkansas in Little Rock, and past Under Secretary for Technology for the Technology Administration in the Department of Commerce (DOC), a Presidentially appointed position. In addition to her role as Under Secretary at DOC, Goode chaired the National Science and Technology Council's (NSTC) Committee on Technology Innovation and served on the NSTC Committee on National Security. Recently she served on the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy, has studied the Presidential appointment process, and prepared

the NAS' "Science and Technology in the National Interest."

The report's major findings were (1) there is not a timely appointment of an Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, (2) there is not a timely nomination for the head of OSTP, (3) Congressional confirmation of the nominees needs to be done more quickly, (4) there needs to be a pool of candidates for Presidential appointees, especially from under-represented sectors (for example, industry as most appointees are from academia), and (5) the appointment process is slow—(a) from 90 percent in less than four months to 45 percent in less than four months, (b) many top-level science and technology (S&T) executives already have high security clearances, and (c) the White House appointment tracking system is slow and inconsistent; candidates don't get timely status reports and the whole process gets a bad reputation.

The report's recommendations are (1) to initiate the appointment process for key S&T people early, (2) to increase the breadth and depth of the pool of candidates by reducing the financial and vocational obstacles to government service, (3) to use one financial form for the executive and legislative branch clearances—including stocks and stock options, and (4) to accelerate the approval process for all nominees in S&T positions.

The second speaker was Carol Plowfield, Associate Director of the Presidential Appointee Initiative. Funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, the project serves as a nonpartisan resource center for the nominees of the current Administration. It seeks pragmatic, fundamental reform of the presidential appointment process to reduce barriers to public service for future nominees. She said the premise for this Brookings Institution project is that public service should be an honor, not a struggle. The Institution is a resource to nominees for this Administration and has prepared the *Survivor's Guide for Presidential Nominees* which is available for free on the Brookings Institution Web site ([www.brook.edu](http://www.brook.edu)). The book can also be ordered at no cost from the Brookings Institution. The premise of its advice is to "reveal unto others before others reveal unto you." Linda Chavez, who withdrew as nominee for Secretary of Commerce before the guide was published, would have benefitted from this guidance.

The Brookings Institution project focuses on long-term and short-term reform. The fact that the Heritage Foundation and Brookings Institution are collaborating on this effort shows that attracting excellent scientists to key administration positions is a real problem. A survey of political appointees led to the effort. It showed that people agree to serve, despite the difficulties, because they think it will help their career through the contacts they will make, because it will increase future earning power and create a rise in their careers due to increased influence, and because they can make a positive impact in their appointed job. However, the survey also showed that the appointment process is the biggest barrier to agreeing to serve as a political appointee. People who have gone through the process found it confusing, embarrassing, and unfair.

The blame lies at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. Suggestions to improve the process focus on ways to simplify the process and to increase the pay for the jobs. The biggest barrier to service is helping people return to their previous jobs.

. . . the premise for this Brookings Institution project is that public service should be an honor, not a struggle.

Momentum has been created to reform and improve the process. The Presidential Transition Act of 2000, introduced by Senators Thompson and Lieberman in the Senate and Congressman Horn in the House, calls for the establishment of an Office of Ethics and for general ethics reform. Executive Order (EO) 17136, signed by the President on 27 November 2000, helps with the transition, and the President revoked EO 12834, which placed a one-year ban on post-employment lobbying. Future help in attracting key scientists and engineers could come from establishing a position in the White House to help with transition and appointment efforts. Currently there is no single-career employee who continues across Administrations in the White House. Congress could also help by streamlining the appointment forms and limiting the time taken to approve or disapprove appointees.

The last speaker was Edward Hudgins of the Cato Institute, who is Director of Cato's Regulatory Studies. He served as Senior Economist for the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress and is former editor of Cato's *Regulation* magazine. In addition, he was both deputy director for economic policy studies and director of the Center for International Economic Growth at the Heritage Foundation.

Dr. Hudgins took a contrary view to the other speakers and said that the focus really should be on what mix of skills is needed to ensure appropriate S&T appointees. Knowledge is power and the thinking of one's profession tends to carry over to public policy. For instance, thinking that people can be engineered led to the welfare state in the belief that social sciences can be applied like the hard sciences. In some cases it is useful to have people with science and engineering backgrounds serve in positions where scientists and engineers have traditionally served, but in other cases it is not necessary, for instance the head of the Federal Aviation Administration. The air traffic control system currently uses mainframe computers powered by vacuum tubes, controllers leave shifts without replacements, and planes do not use global positioning systems. Someone who understands business is needed for this position to privatize the air traffic control system. The political process can politicize and corrupt scientists so a main focus should be on depoliticizing the system.

### Strong Science, Smart Decisions

The key message in this briefing was that smart decisions based on sound science should be the basis of regulation and public policy. A recent report of the National Research Council (NRC) makes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) a case study of an agency which employs good science but still could improve. This briefing explored the ways science informs policy, the role of peer review, and the impact of having a deputy science director as proposed in the National Academies' NRC report *Strengthening Science at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Research Management and Peer Review Practices*. (See cover story.)

Dr. Jack Fowle, Cochair of the SRA Public Policy Committee, introduced the session. Dr. Gail Charnley, founding member of the SRA Public Policy Committee and Past President of SRA, moderated the session, noting that risk assessment is

important but that other information is also needed for effective decisions. The struggle is to seek the right balance between science and values. Some worry that introducing values into decision making can skew the outcome. Others worry that science already tyrannizes the decision-making process.

The first speaker was Congressman Vernon Ehlers (R-MI)

who wrote a science policy statement for the House of Representatives three years ago at the request of House Speaker Newt Gingrich. He put a tremendous amount of work into "Unlocking the Future" since the last federal science policy statement

was written by Vanevar Bush in 1945. He called for substantial and stable funding for science and said that science should infuse regulations and legislation from the bottom up. That's why he introduced H.R. 64, "To provide for the establishment of the position of Deputy Administrator for Science and Technology of the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other purposes," to establish a Deputy Administrator for Science at EPA and to change the tenure of the Assistant Administrator for Research and Development at EPA to a six-year fixed term.

Mr. Ehlers noted that EPA was nervous about this and Governor Whitman is not ready to support the legislation, but she is not opposed either. He noted that he was having a hearing the next day and a mark up shortly afterwards. The bill draws on the recommendations from the NRC *Strengthening Science* report.

Dr. Norine Noonan of the EOP Group, Inc., and former Assistant Administrator for Research and Development at EPA, noted that science is a critical component of credible decisions at EPA. It informs and provides a foundation for EPA's policies and decisions but it does not drive those decisions. The Office of Research and Development (ORD) is the principle research arm of EPA and supports the unique mission of the Agency, which is something no other organization can do. The quality of ORD's research is ensured through the process of peer review. ORD uses external standing scientific advisory bodies (for example, the Science Advisory Board) and separately constituted scientific peer-review panels. ORD disseminates its work through the peer-reviewed literature.

ORD sets its research priorities through an open transparent process that centers around teams of ORD, program and regional office staff that work together with the senior leadership of ORD and the Agency to maintain a balanced portfolio of core research and problem-driven research. ORD involves its clients directly in planning and prioritizing research to ensure the relevance of the programs. Noonan stressed that EPA and ORD also do what no other research agency, and hardly any other federal agency, does and that is to clearly identify the financial and human resources for every bit of its research by goal, objective, and subobjective, based on the Agency's Strategic Plan based on commitments made to meet the provisions of the Government Performance and Results Act.

F. Henry "Hank" Habicht, Chief Executive Officer of Global Environment and Technology Foundation and past Deputy Administrator of EPA under Administrator William K. Reilly, noted that he has been out of Washington, D.C., for the past eight years and that while many of the issues are the same as when he was with the Agency, they are more ripe and ready for

The struggle is to seek the right balance between science and values.

significant action than they were 8 or 10 years ago. He noted the proliferation of reports about the environment, science policy, and the future of EPA that have been issued recently. In each one science plays a fundamental role. He called for science to be involved at each stage of the regulatory process. It takes years to reach decisions on major regulatory issues and he notes that science drops off along the way. As a nonscientist he didn't need 12-hour briefings to fill him in on all the details so he could second-guess the assessment, but he needed clear answers to a few key questions such as what the uncertainties are, if this has been peer reviewed, and what we need to know next. He called for clarity and honesty about what we know and what we don't know in communicating scientific information. He observed that we need to focus on the structure and institutions at EPA. The biggest problem we have in environmental protection is turf, within EPA, between EPA and other agencies, and between the federal, private, and academic sectors. Right now EPA does not have as much stature with other agencies because it is a regulatory agency. While he would not take any position on the proposals in H.R. 64, he did note that raising the profile of science at EPA would give EPA more status with the federal science agencies. Thus, the substance of H.R. 64 is important for Congress to take up because EPA needs to do a better job of reaching out and engaging Congress and others. The Ehlers Bill contains the seeds of important collaboration between EPA and Congress.

The last speaker was Dr. Raymond Loehr, the Hussein M. Alharthy Centennial Chair in the Environmental and Water Resources Engineering Program at the University of Texas at Austin and a member of the NRC panel that produced the *Strengthening Science at the Environmental Protection Agency: Research Management and Peer Review Practices Report*. Loehr noted that the report was the final report in a series of reports prepared by two independent expert committees convened by the NRC in response to a request from Congress and related requests from EPA: (1) Committee on Research Opportunities and Priorities for EPA which produced an interim report in 1996 and *Building a Foundation for Sound Environmental Decisions* in 1997 and (2) Committee on Research and Peer Review in EPA which produced an interim report in 1995 and *Strengthening Science at the Environmental Protection Agency: Research Management and Peer Review Practices* in 2000.

Loehr reviewed the charges to the committees, the challenges facing the Agency and others in protecting the environment, and the key recommendations from the reports. He noted the many positive changes to strengthen the scientific knowledge base at EPA, including strategic research planning, multiyear research planning, core- and problem-driven research, increased core program, consolidation of research laboratories and centers, research grants, centers and fellowship programs, national program directors for key programs, agency-wide science inventory, and agency-wide peer-review practices. He also noted that more can be done and stated the themes in the report to strengthen science at EPA: (1) Scientific leadership and talent—(a) establish a Deputy Administrator for Science and Technology, (b) convert the position of Assistant Administrator for ORD (AA-ORD) to a statutory term appointment of six years, (c) seek ways to give research managers a high degree of flex-

The importance of science in EPA decision making should have the same importance as legal considerations.

ibility and accountability, (d) create the equivalent of endowed academic research chairs in the ORD national laboratories, and (e) continue to place high priority on the ORD graduate fellowship and postdoctoral programs; (2) Research continuity and balance—(a) continue steadily on the course set in the 1995 reorganization of ORD, (b) continue and expand ORD's new multiyear planning approaches for both problem-driven and core research areas, and (c) maintain approximately an even balance between problem-driven research and core research; (3) Research partnerships and outreach—(a) develop and implement a proactive, structured, and visible strategy for stimulating, acquiring, and applying the results of research conducted or sponsored by other federal and state agencies, universities, and industry in this country and abroad, (b) develop additional mechanisms to promote and facilitate research interactions among STAR (Science to Achieve Results) grantees and ORD research staff, and (c) increase efforts to actively disseminate ORD's research products, to explain their significance, and to assist others inside and outside in applying them; (4) Research accountability—(a) improve the documentation and transparency

of the decision-making processes used by ORD for setting research and technical-assistance priorities, making intramural and extramural assignments and allocating funds and (b) expand on the recently initiated Agency-wide science inventory by documenting and publishing a comprehensive and detailed inventory of all scientific activities being conducted by offices throughout EPA; and (5) Scientific peer review—(a) more strictly separate the management of the development of a work product from the management of the peer review of that work product and (b) ensure greater independence of peer reviews from actual control or the potential appearance of control by program managers throughout the Agency.

Loehr elaborated on the value of the new position of Deputy Administrator for Science, noting that it would separate the management of the research program (AA-ORD) from managing the responsibility to ensure that the best scientific and engineering knowledge is used for EPA regulatory decisions (Deputy Administrator for Science and Technology). The importance of science in EPA decision making should have the same importance as legal considerations. The Deputy Administrator for Science would serve as the principle Science Advisor to the Administrator. He/she would (1) have authority and responsibility for agency-wide scientific performance, (2) obtain and assure the use of the best science in support of the EPA mission, (3) identify scientific uncertainties and conflicting evidence relevant to EPA regulatory and policy decisions, and (4) ensure that the scientific and technical information underlying each EPA regulatory decision is valid, appropriately characterized in terms of scientific uncertainty and cross-media issues, and appropriately applied.

He also noted that the conversion of the term of the Assistant Administrator for Research and Development would be an improvement because under the present political appointment model the typical tenure for the AA-ORD has been two to three years. A six-year term would increase stability and longer-term strategic leadership in ORD and allow the maintenance of a vigorous core and problem-driven research program in EPA. ♦♦♦



## Specialty Groups

### Dose-Response Specialty Group

*Paul Schlosser, President*

On Tuesday, 3 April, the Dose-Response Specialty Group (DRSG) held its first teleforum for 2001. Bette Meek, Head of the Priority Substances Section of Health Canada, presented "Compound-Specific Adjustment Factors (CSAFs): An International Initiative" (with the assistance of electronic slides that had been distributed ahead of time). She described a collaborative effort to develop guidance for risk assessors to determine the adequacy of compound-specific data as a basis for replacing default uncertainty factors. The specific goals were to clarify the framework for developing CSAFs, considering both the pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic aspects of the factors for interspecies differences for human variability, and to develop a better understanding of how much data is required to replace default values. This guidance is expected to encourage development of appropriate data and facilitate their incorporation into dose-response assessment. Specific examples were used to illustrate the approach. A large number of DRSG members participated in the conference call and there was a lively discussion on the details and appropriate implementation of CSAFs.

The DRSG holds teleconference meetings the first Tuesday of each month from 3:30-4:30 p.m. (EST). Most meetings focus on planning for the SRA Annual Meeting and other Specialty Group activities. But three times a year teleforums like the one described above are held, with a member or guest speaker presenting a topic for discussion. These provide opportunities for DRSG members to keep up on the science of dose-response characterization in risk assessment and presenters can use this forum as a sounding board for new ideas. The call-in number is 202-260-7280, access code 0577#. All are welcome to participate. Contact Paul Schlosser at [schlosser@ciit.org](mailto:schlosser@ciit.org) if you would like to be added to our e-mail list, with announcements of upcoming events, or if you have a topic you would like to present at one of our teleforums.

### Ecological Risk Assessment Specialty Group

*Bruce Hope, Chair*

The Ecological Risk Assessment Specialty Group (ERASG) is planning a number of activities for the SRA Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington, 2-5 December 2001. We hope to sponsor two workshops, as many as 13 platform sessions, and one poster session, all devoted to ecological risk assessment-related topics.

Two half-day workshops are currently planned: Practical Applications of Bayesian Methods in ERA, organized by Bob Fares (Risk Management Initiatives, Inc.) and John Toll (Parametrix) and Ecological Risk Assessment in Arid Ecosystems (Jim Markwiese and Randy Ryti, Neptune and Co.).

Thirteen platform sessions are currently on the drawing board: Practical Aspects of Performing ERAs (session chair: Bill Alsop, AMEC), Soil Screening Level Development Methods (Brad Sample, CH2M Hill), Integrating ERAs and Economic Analysis (Randy Bruins, EPA/NCEA), ERA of Biotechnology Products (Bob Frederick, EPA/NCEA), Emerging Issues in ERA (Bill van der Schalie, EPA/USACEHR), ERA and Salmon Recovery (Anne Fairbrother, Parametrix), ERA for Shoreline Development (Sue MacMillan, Maul, Foster & Alongi), Integration of ERA & Natural Resource Damage Assessments (Gordon Robilliard (ENTRIX), ERA for Mining Sites (Marc Cameron,

Keystone Environmental), ERA for Management of Large-Scale Systems (Wayne Landis, Western Washington University), Considering Atypical Endpoints in ERA (Will Gala, Chevron Research & Technology Co.), Sediment ERA Case Studies (Alyce Fritz, NOAA/Seattle; Bruce Duncan, U.S. EPA/Region 10), and Public Perception of Environmental Risk (Bill Williams, Kennedy Jenks Consultants).

A poster session will be available to accommodate additional ERA-oriented abstracts. We may also be able to offer a panelist-style "career symposium," where representatives from five different sectors (government, industry, consulting, academia, and people beginning their careers) will discuss ERA career strategies and engage in a dialogue with audience members. There will also be an ERASG business meeting, followed by a Section mixer. Unsolicited abstracts for platform and poster sessions in the above categories were due to the SRA Program Committee by early May; check the SRA Web site at [www.sra.org](http://www.sra.org) for latest dates and requirements. Those who would like to become more involved in our plans for Seattle 2001 are encouraged to contact Bruce Hope by phone (503-799-9662) or via e-mail ([bkhope@hotmail.com](mailto:bkhope@hotmail.com)).

### Risk Communication Specialty Group

*Ann Bostrom, Chair*

The Risk Communication Specialty Group (RCSG) met on 4 December 2000 at SRA's Annual Meeting in Arlington, Virginia, after a lively and extremely well-attended joint mixer with the Dose-Response group. The year's student risk communication paper award was presented by ExxonMobil's Steve Lewis to doctoral student Felicia Wu, of Carnegie Mellon University, for her paper on *The Cryptosporidium Risk: What People Know and What They Need to Know*. Congratulations, Felicia! The student competition was one of two special calls RCSG had issued for the meetings, the second of which was a call for a special issue of *Risk Analysis*, to be edited by Ragnar Löfstedt (immediate past Chair, RCSG) and Ann Bostrom (Chair, RCSG). Papers for the special issue are now under review. Both calls attracted new risk communication researchers to SRA and contributed to a strong risk communication track at the meetings. Sessions were held on trust, mass media, mental models, food risk communication, and the West Nile Virus, among other topics. Risk communication sessions were very well attended. Cliff Scherer (on the RCSG Executive Committee) also led a successful workshop prior to the meeting on "The Search Conference: Engaging the Community in Decision Making."

As was announced in the last issue of *RISK newsletter*, the RCSG has a list-server which any of you who are interested in risk communication are encouraged to join. Please see the last *newsletter* for details. The group is developing a new Web site, which should be in place in the next month or two. If you'd like to contribute to this effort, please contact RCSG Chair-elect Katherine McComas ([mccomas@wam.umd.edu](mailto:mccomas@wam.umd.edu)), who was elected by acclamation at the RCSG meeting, or Chair Ann Bostrom ([ann.bostrom@pubpolicy.gatech.edu](mailto:ann.bostrom@pubpolicy.gatech.edu)).

We encourage all of you who are risk perception and communication researchers to submit symposia and papers for presentation in Seattle, where the RCSG plans to have a joint mixer with the Risk Science & Law group. Please encourage your students to submit to our student competition, too! ♦♦♦



## Chapter News

### Chicago Regional Chapter

Margaret MacDonell

#### Environmental Risk Colloquium

The Chicago Regional Chapter of the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) cohosted an all-day environmental risk colloquium 29 March with Argonne National Laboratory (ANL) and the Department of Energy (DOE) Center for Risk Excellence (CRE). The aim of the colloquium was to share creative approaches for addressing a range of environmental issues and to offer new insights that could be used to strengthen their individual projects. Participants were asked to identify key challenges from both the science-methodology and policy-implementation perspectives and to make recommendations for dealing with them more effectively.

A special guest presentation was made by Dr. Ivan Holoubek, who was visiting ANL from the Czech Republic. Holoubek is a professor of environmental chemistry and Director of the Research Centre for Chemistry and Ecotoxicology at Masaryk University in Brno. He is a member of many international scientific organizations, including the United Nations Environment Program/Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) protocol team and United Nations/Economic Commission for Europe POPs and emission inventory task forces. Additional invited presenters included Dr. Igor Linkov of Menzie-Cura & Associates and Drs. Ken Morgan and Leo Newland of Texas Christian University (and Eco-Informa Foundation). Also contributing were scientists from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5, URS Corporation (Chicago), ANL, and DOE CRE.

The program consisted of technical presentations and group discussions on related risk analysis issues, recommended strategies for improvement, and opportunities for collaboration. The presentations and discussions included (1) Risk in the DOE Cleanup Program: Can We Do Better? (Dr. Alvin Young, DOE-CRE, Director), (2) Megacities and Regional Atmospheric Transport: Mexico City—a Case Study (Dr. Jeff Gaffney, ANL Environmental Research Division, Senior Chemist), (3) Carbon Sequestration: Fungi, Fermi, and the Land-Management Future (Dr. Mike Miller, ANL Environmental Research Division), (4) Group Discussion, Theme 1: Cleanup, Transboundary Transport, and Targeted Land Stewardship, (5) IDRIS: an Expert System Approach for Ecological Risk Assessment (Dr.

Ivan Holoubek, RECETOX-TOCOEN Director, Czech Republic), (6) Wetlands Assessment and Management (Bob Van Lonkhuyzen, ANL Environmental Assessment Division), (7) An Interactive Risk Communication Distance Learning Tool (Dr. Tom Brody, EPA Region 5, Office of Information Services, Chicago, Illinois), (8) Group Discussion, Theme 2: Hazard Identification, Resource Protection, and Communication, (9) Spatially Explicit Ecological Risk Assessments: Case Studies (Dr. Igor Linkov, Menzie-Cura & Associates, Chelmsford, Massachusetts), (10) Greening the Government Through EMS (Environmental Management System) (Peter Tong, URS Corporation, Chicago, Illinois), (11) Remote Sensing and GIS Methods for Monitoring Nonpoint Source Pollution: Implications for Planning, Monitoring, and Fund Allocation (Drs. Ken Morgan and Leo Newland, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas), and (12) Group Discussion, Theme 3: Monitoring, Spatial Assessment, and Management Processes.

The meeting closed with a review of key technical points, recommendations for improvements and partnerships, and commitments for further information sharing among the group. Discussions will be captured in a summary that will be distributed to Chicago Regional Chapter members and made available on the Chapter's Web site. The intent of this summary is to serve as a planning resource for ongoing and new programs, with an emphasis on collaboration among colloquium participants and the broader SRA family.

The format of this colloquium—technical presentations combined with group discussions aimed at improving partnerships and solutions—was also intended as a pilot for an international conference to be held 14-18 May at Argonne National Laboratory (see <http://eco-informa.ead.anl.gov>). The Eco-Informa 2001 conference is the sixth in a series that has been hosted by Eco-Informa Foundation (five times in Germany and once in Florida). The upcoming meeting is cohosted by the DOE CRE and ANL and also sponsored by the SRA.

The title of the Eco-Informa conference is *Environmental Risks and the Global Community: Strategies for Meeting the Challenges*. The aim is to share approaches for solving a wide variety of current risk problems—from the energy crisis to food safety and the transboundary transport of persistent toxic substances. Scientists, policy makers, communicators, and educators from more than 20 countries will discuss ways to improve how we assess and address environmental risks.



Several participants join Dr. Ivan Holoubek, guest scientist from the Czech Republic (far left).

Meeting participants enjoy a lighter moment with Dr. Igor Linkov (standing).  
Front right: Dr. Ivan Holoubek  
Front left: Dr. Alvin Young



## Research Triangle Chapter

*Paul Schlosser, President*

Somewhat belatedly, the new Research Triangle Chapter of the Society for Risk Analysis (RTC-SRA) officers for 2001 are President-elect R. Woodrow Setzer, Jr. (EPA), Treasurer Jeffrey J. Hayward (North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources), and Councilor Elaina M. Kenyon (EPA). These join our continuing officers: Past President Bob G. Hetes (EPA), President Paul M. Schlosser (CIIT Centers for Health Research), Secretary Justin Teegarden (ICF Consulting), and Councilor Shawn Sager (ARCADIS Geraghty & Miller).

Our first seminar of 2001, "3MRA: Integrated Multimedia, Multiple Exposure Pathway, Multiple Receptor Risk Assessment Model," was held on 6 March and presented by Keith Little and Terry Pierson of the Research Triangle Institute (RTI). This national scale model is part of an effort of the EPA to identify wastes currently listed as hazardous that could be eligible for exemption from hazardous waste management requirements. The overall model is being developed as a team effort under the EPA Office of Research and Development. The modules discussed, which are being written at RTI, evaluate risks that may occur from the long-term, multimedia release of a chemical from waste management facilities typically expected to handle exempted waste.

Initial planning has begun for a two-day symposium, to be held in early fall, with the tentative title "Human and Ecological Risks Resulting from Human Impacts on North Carolina Watersheds." Details of upcoming events and information on joining our Chapter can be found via our Web site: <http://www.rtc-sra.org>. Contact Paul Schlosser at [schlosser@ciit.org](mailto:schlosser@ciit.org) if you would like to be added to our e-mail list or are otherwise interested in joining Research Triangle Chapter activities.

## Northern California Chapter

*Michele Emerson, Secretary*

The Northern California Chapter of SRA held its annual spring meeting 8 March 2001 featuring three presentations on "Indoor Air Quality Evaluations—Bioaerosols." The meeting was very successful with over 40 participants from industry, government, academia, and consulting.

Dr. Janet Macher, an air pollution research specialist with the California Department of Health Services, Environmental Health Laboratory Branch, discussed "Prevalence of Fungi in the Buildings of the USEPA Building Assessment Survey and Evaluation (BASE) Study." Dr. Macher studies engineering measures to control airborne infectious and hypersensitivity diseases, evaluates methods to collect and identify airborne biological material, and participates in investigations of building-related illness outbreaks in the state of California.

Dr. Sandra McNeel, a research scientist specializing in environmental toxicology with the California Department of Health Services, Environmental Health Investigations Branch, presented "What Do We Know About the Health Effects of Indoor Bioaerosols?" Her research has included community health effects from unintentional industrial chemical releases, environmental sources of arsenic and mercury, and bioaerosols associated with green-waste composting.

Dr. Ron Block, a principal and environmental toxicologist with Block Environmental Services (BES) and Laboratory Director of the BES Bioassay Laboratory Division, spoke on "Practical Considerations: A Consultant's Perspective." Dr.

Block's work has included numerous investigations of bioaerosols at both residential and commercial properties, litigation support, and evaluation of worker compensation claims. He has more than 15 years of experience in indoor air quality investigations.

## Southern California Chapter

*Mohan Balagopalan, Secretary*

The Southern California Chapter of the Society for Risk Analysis (SCSRA) held a dinner meeting 14 March 2001 with the topic "Development and Application of the Risk Assessment Process." Effective 1 January 2000, new California Department of Education statutes require the Department of Toxic Substances Control of the California Environmental Protection Agency to review environmental assessments for proposed new school sites and/or school expansion projects. Debbie Oudiz, Senior Toxicologist at the Human and Ecological Risk Division of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (Sacramento), provided an overview of how the Preliminary Endangerment Assessment process is being applied to these projects.

The Fourteenth Annual Workshop of the SCSRA will be held 17 May 2001 at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and is being cohosted by three UCLA groups: The Institute of the Environment, the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health, and the Center for Environmental Risk Reduction and the California Air Resources Board. With the theme "Risk Management for a Changing World," the main sessions will be Aerospace Risk, Risk Management, Air Toxics, and a student poster session.

## New England Chapter

*Harlee Strauss, President*

This spring, the New England Chapter of the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA-NE) devoted its March, April, and May sessions to asthma-related topics. Asthma and the environment is a hot topic these days, and for good reason. To quote from the recent Pew Environmental Health Commission Report titled *Attack Asthma: Why America Needs a Public Health Defense System to Battle Environmental Threats* (<http://www.pewtrusts.com/>): "What is asthma? It is a chronic disease characterized by inflammation of the airways and lungs, causing attacks characterized by wheezing and shortness of breath. While we do not know what causes the development of asthma, the environment plays a role. Environmental factors, such as poor indoor and outdoor air quality, increase asthma's severity.

"Overall, the number of people with asthma in America jumped by 75 percent between 1980 and 1994, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Among those under four years old, it mushroomed by 160 percent. In 1995 alone, asthma caused 1.8 million emergency room visits and 10 million missed school days, making it the number one reason for school absenteeism."

There is a huge role here for risk assessment professionals, both those who work at the basic science level and those who work on site-specific projects (for example, hazardous waste sites, air quality programs, etc).

Some examples of basic science include (1) Hazard identification: There is much work to be done to determine the bad environmental actors in asthma (both the initiation of the dis-

ease asthma and the provocation of a specific attack), (2) Dose response: How does dose or exposure relate to the intensity of the disease, and how much do individual population members vary in their response?, and (3) Exposure assessment: How can we measure exposure, especially in real time, as the asthma attacks are probably a response to acute exposures?

For environmental professionals working on site-specific projects, some questions include (1) Problem formulation: Are we taking a broad enough perspective in looking at indoor air quality (IAQ) problems, especially from the point of view of susceptible populations exposed to multiple sources?, (2) Hazard identification: Are we looking for the right chemicals in our indoor air quality surveys?, and (3) Risk Communication and Risk Management: How do we communicate risk and information on exposure reduction to affected communities, including school children and residents of inner-city areas?

The speakers in this seminar series began to address some of these issues. On 14 March Dr. David Brown of NESCAUM and Environment & Human Health, Inc. (EHHI) and Norman Anderson, MSPH, of the American Lung Association of Maine led off the series. They gave an overview of data on the increasing prevalence of asthma (and in which populations) and the role that environmental chemicals and particulates likely play. Brown discussed some of the research he and others have conducted in Connecticut, including a survey of the prevalence of asthma among school-age children ([www.ehhi.org](http://www.ehhi.org)) and exposure to particulates on diesel-powered school buses. Anderson talked about his preliminary work on correlations between asthma prevalence and a variety of health and environmental indicators. He talked about some of the datasets available to him in Maine and how he is using them (see [www.maine.org](http://www.maine.org) to preview some examples).

On 11 April Mary Beth Smuts, Ph.D., of Region I, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), spoke about hazard identification in a talk on Occupational Asthmagens. Just as occupational exposures have signaled the hazard due to environmental exposures for carcinogenic chemicals (for example, benzene, vinyl chloride, TCE), so too should occupational exposure signal which chemicals are asthmagens in environmental

situations. Among other things, Smuts talked about matching the robust database of occupational asthmagens, listing numerous chemicals, to published databases on indoor and outdoor monitoring and modeled air pollutants. At least 20 percent of the Clean Air Act's Urban Air Toxic Pollutants are on the list of occupational asthmagens and are commonly present in the outdoor air. Within the indoor environments, these chemical asthmagens are present in a variety of locations: residences, schools, offices, and hospitals.

Ellie Goldberg, MEd., Educator and Educational Rights Specialist, talked about asthma and IAQ in schools from her perspective as a children's advocate. Her point of view of the problem is more encompassing than usually taken by risk assessors. Among other things, her talk addressed the issue of problem formulation and hazard identification in a comprehensive way that will make sense to the school community.

On 9 May John J. Vandenberg, Ph.D., National Research Program Director for Particulate Matter, EPA Office of Research & Development, talked about the health effects of airborne particulate matter and research directions at EPA. Dr. Vandenberg is a national SRA Councilor and was in Boston courtesy of the SRA national speakers program.

Jennifer Charles of Charles Consulting and Jodi Sugarman-Brozan of Alternatives for Community and Environment talked about "Time Relevant Communication of Ozone and Particulate Air Pollution Data: A Pilot Project to Raise Public Awareness and Promote Exposure Reduction." This project, which targets inner-city neighborhoods of Roxbury, has been funded by EPA's EMPACT (Environmental Monitoring for Public Access and Community Tracking) program for the last several years. The project included the demonstration of reliable real-time environmental monitors for fine particulates, ozone, and black carbon soot, along with a suitable data management and archiving system. However, the focus of the presentations was effective, innovative, and timely ways of communicating information from these monitors to members of the affected communities. Charles is the project manager and Sugarman-Brozan has a leadership role in communicating information about air quality and its health effects to the Roxbury community. ♦♦♦



## Journal Notes

### New Electronic Submissions and Review System is On-Line

*Elizabeth L. Anderson, Editor-in-Chief*

After much fanfare, the electronic submissions and review system for *Risk Analysis: An International Journal*, called Manuscript Central, is on-line. This system allows authors to submit manuscripts electronically and allows reviewers to access the manuscripts over the Internet and post their reviews on the site. Several papers have already been added to the system. The site can be accessed at <http://riskanalysis.manuscriptcentral.com/>. Also, instructions for submitting a manuscript to the new system can be found at the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) Web site and on the back cover of the Journal.

The new system is designed to significantly reduce the time between submission of a manuscript and a publication decision by the Editor-in-Chief. The system also saves a lot of paper and postage costs, as virtually all correspondence between authors and editors and editors and reviewers is via e-mail.

The system will even send automatic reminders to reviewers who are late. A more complete description of how the system works is in the Fourth Quarter 2000 RISK newsletter.

As with any new technology, there is the potential for unforeseen problems and complications. However, the Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, and Area Editors are committed to making this system work efficiently and improving the review process for all involved. We have developed a good working relationship with ScholarOne, the software developer, to work through any problems. We will use this column to discuss problems with the system and solutions to these problems. If you have questions about the system or would like to report any problems, please call the Managing Editor, Dr. Richard Reiss of Sciences International, Inc., in Alexandria, Virginia, at 703-684-0123, or e-mail Dr. Reiss at [rreiss@sciences.com](mailto:rreiss@sciences.com).

I feel this step is important to our Journal. As always, please let me know your suggestions for any improvements. ♦♦♦



## Member News

### Richard Schwing

Richard Schwing will give a presentation to the Caribbean Academy of Sciences (CAS) on 13 June 2001 on the general topic of risk analysis. A subgroup of the CAS will also attend a two-day class on risk assessment and risk management on 14 and 15 June. The meeting will take place in Georgetown, Guyana. The official language for the CAS is English.

The organizing committee in Guyana, as a Member of the British Commonwealth, has connections with an organization similar in some ways to the SRA, the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), according to Schwing. This group, like SRA, started in 1980 with the need to draw together folks who practiced environmental assessment, social impact assessment, and technology assessment. Though it started in the United States, it is much more global in that the annual meetings occur in a different nation each year.

"Before serving as an officer in SRA, I served the IAIA as president in 1984-85," Schwing said. "Since then, I was unable to keep up with the international nature of IAIA and have been inactive except for the fact that IAIA folks in Guyana have asked me to provide this talk and the two-day course. This will be quite an adventure for me. I have never been near the equator nor have I been in a place where the GDP is about 1/10 that of the United States. Matching a risk analysis/risk management course to their needs is a challenge and a fair amount of work. As background, I am using Partha Dasgupta's address on the 45th Anniversary of Resources for the Future."

### Paul Slovic, James Flynn, Howard Kunreuther, Joanne Linnerooth-Bayer, Ragnar Löfstedt

Earthscan Publications Ltd. announces three new publications in the risk field.

*Risk, Media and Stigma: Understanding Public Challenges to Modern Science and Technology*, edited by Paul Slovic, James Flynn, and Howard Kunreuther, presents the most current and comprehensive examination of how and why stigma occurs and what the appropriate responses to it should be to inform the public and reduce undesirable impacts.

*Transboundary Risk Management*, edited by Joanne Linnerooth-Bayer, Ragnar E. Löfstedt, and Gunnar Sjöstedt, contains numerous case studies of transboundary risks and

analysis of the issues raised. The subject areas include nuclear power plants, genetically modified crops, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, air pollution, dams, risk communications, public participation, and international negotiation.

*The Perception of Risk*, by Paul Slovic, examines the gap between expert views of risk and public perceptions. Ordered chronologically, it allows the reader to see the evolution of our understanding of such perceptions from early studies identifying public misconceptions of risk to recent work that recognizes the importance and legitimacy of equity, trust, power, and other value-laden issues underlying public concern. More information is available at <http://www.earthscan.co.uk>.

### Daniel M. Byrd III and C. Richard Cothorn

*Introduction to Risk Analysis: A Systematic Approach to Science-Based Decision Making*, edited by Daniel M. Byrd III and C. Richard Cothorn, provides readers with a comprehensive, integrated guide to developing a complete environmental risk analysis for regulated substances and processes. The book features the policies of regulatory agencies concerned with health, safety, and environmental risks. Visit <http://www.govinst.com>.

### Yacov Y. Haimes

*Risk, Modeling, Assessment, and Management* was written by Yacov Y. Haimes and published by John Wiley & Sons (<http://www.wiley.com>). Drawing on Dr. Haimes' experience in the practice of risk-based decision making in government and industry, and building on results from numerous management-based projects, this new text integrates the art and science of risk analysis.

### Rao Kolluru

The Japanese edition of *Risk Assessment and Management Handbook*, edited and coauthored by Rao Kolluru, was sold out and a second edition is being printed. Many SRA members, including Vincent Covelto and Steve Bartell, contributed to the handbook. Professor Saburo Ikeda of Tsukuba University played a key role in its Japanese translation.

Kolluru's newest epic, *River of a Thousand Tales*, is just now unveiled and can be obtained from any book store, including Amazon.com. ♦ ♦ ♦

## Abstracts from 2000 Society for Risk Analysis Annual Meeting Now On-Line at RiskWorld

Abstracts of the papers presented at the 2000 meeting of the Society for Risk Analysis, held in Arlington, Virginia, 3-6 December, are now on-line at RiskWorld. With the theme "Applications of Risk Analysis in Industry and Government," the meeting covered environmental assessments, safety analyses, and legal and social science contributions. To view the abstracts, go to <http://www.riskworld.com/> and select "Abstracts Library" in the list of RiskWorld departments on the left.

### Faces of the SRA



Roger Kasperson and John Ahearne



The Secretariat Crew

**Society for Risk Analysis  
2000 Annual Meeting  
3-6 December  
Crystal Gateway Marriott  
Arlington, Virginia**



Saburo Ikeda



Jose Manuel Palma



New Members Breakfast



Social Time



Meeting Speaker John Moore



Poster Session





## News and Announcements

### EPA Forum on Managing Contaminated Sediments at Hazardous Waste Sites

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Forum on Managing Contaminated Sediments at Hazardous Waste Sites will be held 30 May-1 June 2001 at the Hilton Old Town in Alexandria, Virginia.

This forum will facilitate an open exchange of information and viewpoints concerning cleanup of contaminated sediments. Panelists and participants will discuss the key science and policy issues for making the most appropriate site-specific risk management decisions that are consistent with current federal laws and regulations.

Specifically, the forum will seek to accomplish the following objectives: (1) provide a forum for all stakeholders to express their opinions on EPA program policies and guidance that address sediment remediation, (2) identify the key site information and data that should be collected and evaluated in order to make informed site-specific cleanup decisions, and (3) identify issues that need to be resolved, additional data that needs to be gathered and evaluated, and research that needs to be performed and share information and lessons learned as a result of managing contaminated sediment.

Speakers will be drawn from a wide range of constituencies, including nongovernmental organizations, academia, state government, and the federal government. Panel discussions will promote a useful exchange of ideas and viewpoints, and poster presentations will present a wide variety of information on contaminated sediments and sites. Topics will include community involvement issues and concerns, site characterization, effects on human health and ecological resources, and remedy effectiveness.

For more information, contact Lisa Mahoney (mahoneyli@saic.com).

### American College of Toxicology 22nd Annual Meeting

The American College of Toxicology will hold its 22nd Annual Meeting 4-7 November 2001 at the Renaissance Washington D.C. Hotel. For more information—phone: 301-571-1840, fax: 301-571-1852, e-mail: ekagan@actox.org.

### Risk Communication Bibliography Explaining Risks to the Public

A new annotated bibliography is available to health professionals and health communication researchers that identifies nearly 400 printed sources of information on the communication of risks for disease, particularly cancer.

The bibliography may be accessed at the National Cancer Institute Web site (<http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/riskcommbib>). The bibliography includes research reports, theoretical discussions, case histories, instructional manuals, dissertations, and reviews that concern how best to communicate the nature and magnitude of health hazards to lay people. While designed to assist those involved in communicating risk information about cancer, citations in the bibliography are not limited to cancer topics because lessons learned from other domains are often also relevant to cancer. Also cited are print materials that pertain to people's perception of risk because learning how people think may lead to the improvement of messages about health and safety problems. Records are coded by some of the following criteria: publication type, focus, communicator, audience role, gender and ethnicity, setting, and other categories. Contact: Dianne Needham, needhamd@nih.gov, Health Communication and Informatics Research Branch, Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences, National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health. ◆◆◆

### SRA Call for Award Nominations

The Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) Awards Committee invites nominations for the following 2001 awards:

The **SRA Distinguished Achievement Award** honors any person for extraordinary achievement in science or public policy relating to risk analysis.

The **SRA Outstanding Service Award** honors SRA members for extraordinary service to the Society.

The **Outstanding Risk Practitioner Award** honors individuals who have made substantial contributions to the field of risk analysis through work in the public or private sectors. The 2001 award will be for the private sector.

The **Chauncey Starr Award** honors individuals under the age of 40 who have made exceptional contributions to the field of risk analysis.

The **Fellow of the Society for Risk Analysis Award** recognizes and honors up to one percent of the Society's membership whose professional records are marked by significant contributions to any disciplines served by the Society and may be evidenced by one or more of the following: (1) Recognized, original research, application, or invention, (2) Technical, scientific, or policy analysis leadership in an enterprise of significant scope that involves risk analysis in a substantial way, (3) Superior teaching or contributions to improve education and to promote the use of risk analysis that are widely recognized by peers and students, or (4) Service to or constructive activity within the Society of such a quality, nature, or duration as to be a visible contributor to the advancement of the Society.

Nominees for Fellow must have been SRA members for at least five years and must now be members in good standing.

Please submit nominations and a brief paragraph supporting each by **1 August 2001** to Ann Landis at the SRA Secretariat (1313 Dolley Madison Blvd., Suite 402, McLean, VA 22101; fax: 703-790-2672; e-mail: ALandis@BurkInc.com) and to Yacov Y. Haimes, Awards Committee Chair (Center for Risk Management of Engineering Systems, P.O. Box 400736, 112 Olsson Hall, Charlottesville, VA 22904; fax: 804-924-3803; e-mail: haimes@virginia.edu).



## Advertisements

### Microbiologist—Permanent Position

A permanent, full-time position is available at the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Agricultural Research Service (USDA/ARS), Russell Research Center in Athens, Georgia, to conduct data analysis leading to hazard identification and source determination for *Campylobacter* (and other enteropathogens) exposure in commercial poultry operations. The incumbent supports the research mission by identifying data needs required to assess the risk of public exposure to *Campylobacter* transmitted during production of poultry. Incumbent has responsibility to define the parameters needed to describe the contributions within poultry production which are responsible for the environmental and husbandry factors affecting such transmission. The research objectives are to (1) assess field-derived data pertaining to *Campylobacter* isolation from various sources and (2) present these data so that a quantitative risk assessment model explaining transmission can be applied to the data. For further information on how to apply, visit [www.ars.usda.gov/afm2/divisions/hrd/vacancy/resjobs/X1S-1090.HTM](http://www.ars.usda.gov/afm2/divisions/hrd/vacancy/resjobs/X1S-1090.HTM), or contact Genell Powers at 706-546-3029. For consideration, application materials should be received by 1 June 2001. USDA is an equal opportunity employer.

### Short Course on Risk Assessment and Management

The Center for Risk Management of Engineering Systems of the University of Virginia presents a short course on Risk Assessment and Management on 4-6 June 2001 in Charlottesville, Virginia. Instructors are Yacov Y. Haimes and Stan Kaplan.

The \$600 registration fee (\$500 for members of the Society for Risk Analysis and \$300 for qualifying students) includes one copy of the book *Risk Modeling, Assessment, and Management*, by Y.Y. Haimes, Wiley & Sons, New York, 1998, and notes.

For more information contact Dr. Yacov Y. Haimes, Center for Risk Management of Engineering Systems, P.O. Box 400736, 112 Olsson Hall, Charlottesville, VA 22904; phone: 804-924-3803; fax: 804-924-0865; e-mail: [haimes@virginia.edu](mailto:haimes@virginia.edu).



FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
OFFICE OF POLICY, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION  
POLICY ANALYSIS AND FORMULATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

DIRECTOR, TECHNICAL ANALYSIS STAFF (Supervisory Biological Scientist, Supervisory Veterinary Medical Officer, or Supervisory Physical Scientist, GS-401/701/1301-15)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is seeking an enthusiastic, creative, open-minded individual to serve as the Director of the Technical Analysis Staff within the Office of Policy, Program Development and Evaluation. The Staff's role is to work collaboratively with its Agency counterpart, the Office of Public Health and Science, and other scientists to develop performance standards to be met by the regulated industry, ensuring that production of meat, poultry, and egg products meet food safety objectives.

This midlevel management position requires a very strong scientific background, with emphasis in risk management. The Director is responsible for providing key leadership, formulating and coordinating national policies, and providing functional and technical direction in the administration of Staff activities. The incumbent must have demonstrated ability in developing risk management policies and programs and be able to efficiently and effectively utilize new and existing resources in a manner which instills public trust, while also accomplishing the FSIS mission.

For more information regarding this position, please contact Brian Wedding at 202-720-0883 or visit our Web site at [www.foodsafetyjobs.net](http://www.foodsafetyjobs.net).

The USDA, FSIS is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### RISK newsletter and SRA Web Site Advertising Policy

Books, software, courses, and events may be advertised in the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) RISK newsletter or on the SRA Web site at a cost of \$250 for up to 150 words. There is a charge of \$100 for each additional 50 words.

Ads may be placed both in the RISK newsletter and on the Web site for \$375 for 150 words and \$100 for each additional 50 words.

Employment opportunity ads (up to 200 words) are placed free of charge in the RISK newsletter and on the SRA Web site. Members of SRA may place, at no charge, an advertisement seeking employment for themselves as a benefit of SRA membership.

The RISK newsletter is published four times a year. Submit advertisements to the Managing Editor, with billing instructions, by 15 January for the First Quarter issue (mailed mid-February), 15 April for the Second Quarter issue (mid-May), 15 July for the Third Quarter issue (mid-August), and 15 October for the Fourth Quarter issue (mid-November). Send to Mary Walchuk, Managing Editor, RISK newsletter, 115 Westwood Dr., Mankato, MN 56001; phone: 507-625-6142; fax: 507-625-1792; e-mail: [mwalchuk@hickorytech.net](mailto:mwalchuk@hickorytech.net).

To place an employment ad on the Web site, fill out the on-line submittal form at [www.sra.org/opptys.htm](http://www.sra.org/opptys.htm). To place other ads on the Web site contact the SRA Webmaster at [webmaster@sra.org](mailto:webmaster@sra.org). Ads placed on the Web site will usually appear several days after receipt. For additional information see the Web site at [www.sra.org/policy.htm#events](http://www.sra.org/policy.htm#events).

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## Paper or Electronic?

The Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) Council has been discussing whether the RISK newsletter should be converted to an electronic format, with members receiving an e-mail notice of when the latest issue will appear on the SRA Web site. The membership now has a choice: Paper or Electronic? Please let the Secretariat know if you would prefer to receive your newsletter only on the Internet (contact Brett Burk, BBurk@BurkInc.com) and your name will be removed from the snail mailing list. If you would like to continue receiving a paper copy of the newsletter, do nothing and your name will remain on the snail mailing list. For now, all members will receive a notice of when the latest issue is on the Internet.

Should we go to an electronic-only RISK newsletter? If you have an opinion on the subject, please contact Mary Walchuk, RISK newsletter Managing Editor, 115 Westwood Dr., Mankato, MN 56001; fax: 507-625-1792; e-mail: mwalchuk@hickorytech.net, and let us know what you think. ♦♦♦

## Deadline for RISK newsletter Submissions

Information to be included in the **Third Quarter 2001 SRA RISK newsletter**, to be mailed mid-August, should be sent to Mary Walchuk, RISK newsletter Managing Editor (115 Westwood Dr., Mankato, MN 56001; phone: 507-625-6142; fax: 507-625-1792; e-mail: mwalchuk@hickorytech.net) no later than **5 July**.

**Society for Risk Analysis Web Site**  
**www.sra.org**

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