



Society for Risk Analysis Forms Ad Hoc Communications Committee

The Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) Council has formed the ad hoc Communications Committee, recognizing the importance of increasing the visibility of the SRA in the scientific community as an organization committed to interdisciplinary research and practice. The Council also saw a need for coordination of the many communications functions performed by the SRA. Chaired by Kimberly Thompson, the committee includes Past President Caron Chess (who also serves as chair of the Publications Committee), President Baruch Fischhoff, President-elect Christopher Frey, the former Electronic Media Committee, the RISK newsletter staff, the Publicity and Public Policy Committees, the editor and managing editor of *Risk Analysis*, and a number of other councilors plus representation from the Secretariat.



Kimberly Thompson



Caron Chess

Thompson and Chess shared information about the beginnings and the future of the Communications Committee with SRA members.

What led to the formation of the ad hoc Communications Committee?

Chess: SRA began a visioning process last year. In the winter of 2004, I asked the Council members to each develop a summary of their vision for the Society and questions that they thought the Council should address when planning SRA's next steps. Based on these very thoughtful vision statements and insightful questions, I convened a "Planning Lite" session for the June 2004 Council meeting where we further discussed improving the use of risk analysis and the role of SRA in doing so. Many of the councilors said that SRA needed more visibility and that improved communications should play a major role.

When chairs of SRA committees prepared summaries of accomplishments in the previous year and their goals (and budgets) for the coming year, many councilors focused on communication or outreach issues. For example, Wendy Wagner, chair of the Membership Committee, proposed that SRA conduct and complete a survey of current members and members who have exited the Society to better understand their satisfaction with the Society. The ad hoc Electronic Media Committee proposed a number of initiatives to better serve members and others who use our Web site. Jack Fowle, chair of the Public Policy Committee, suggested ways to increase our policy education. Kim Thompson outlined a plan for a communi-

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See our newest column—What Do We Do?—on page 6.

President's Message

Risk Analysis: Of the People

Risk analysis studies people's interactions with their material surroundings. At times, people are the creators of risks; at times, they just bear its burdens. At times, they play both roles, as when they try to reduce personal risks. As a result, effective risk analyses must incorporate the best available social science, in addition to the best available natural science and engineering. However, this may not be an easy task. Social scientists are often missing entirely from analytical teams. When consulted, they are often unaccustomed to translating their knowledge into analysis-friendly terms. Their status may shift rapidly from being irrelevant to being late: if they can't produce the desired numbers quickly enough, then the analysts might just make something up, in order to keep social variables in the analysis.

Three recent examples might suggest the opportunities and obstacles to creating behaviorally realistic risk analyses. Each was unsatisfying, yet potentially a small step in the right direction.

Small Step 1: A couple of years ago, I got a call from a consulting firm, saying, "We've got the contract for modeling [biohazard X]. We know it depends on things like whether people notice symptoms, get vaccinations, sue for side effects, obey quarantines, believe that their loved ones are being cared for . . . Can you come here, for a day, to give us the numbers for behavior?"

It was nice to be asked. However, how could any one person know all the relevant research, represent its results, uncertainties, and controversies, in a single day, while ensuring that the model has been properly framed—and then monitor the use of those behavior estimates as the model evolves over time? I didn't think that I could, and declined. I don't know if that was a mistake. They had at least asked and I had refused to say anything, rather than saying something imperfect.

Small Step 2: Recently, I was asked about the soundness of a device for detecting a terror hazard. One of my first questions was, "How can you ensure its usability, both in terms of how well operators can use it and in terms of the social system that will respond to its stream of true and false signals?" The answer was, "We have a couple of users come in one day a week."

That was certainly better than just imagining its use. However, how could any two users know the relevant human factors science, devise valid performance standards, monitor adherence to their advice, anticipate the range of possible uses, and represent alternative approaches? Although initially dissatisfied (and, privately,

dismissive), I came to realize that having two users, raising potentially awkward questions, could refine the analysis—if someone could, then, translate their concerns into analytical terms, supplemented with research results.

Small Step 3: A few weekends ago, a colleague wrote, saying "[X] needs to know the ratio of 'worried well' to actual injured, in the event of a terror attack." It was nice that [X] didn't just make up a number or ignore the problem altogether. However, how could any one number address the range of initial conditions, represent alternative definitions of "worried well," and capture the uncertainties in the literature—while not feeding the disrespect inherent in the question, with its implication of "needlessly worried well."

Over the weekend, we assembled a small team electronically and produced a short memo, saying that the research suggests a ratio between 1.02 and 100,000. At the one extreme lie situations where the only additional casualties are the few people prone to somaticizing stress. At the other extreme lie situations where communication is so hard, or so bungled, that many people are left legitimately wondering whether they have been exposed to something that is treatable, if they get help soon—as happened in the 2001 anthrax crisis. We hoped to provide some crude guidance, while suggesting that we could do better right now, with better task specification, and even better in the future, with additional research.

Although outsiders always feel aggrieved when their work has been ignored, the path forward may require such small steps, swallowing hard and saying something consistent with the research, hoping that the next request will allow for more. We might also reflect on the cases where the tables are turned, as when social scientists assess risk perceptions, without systematically determining which facts matter most.



Baruch Fischhoff
Carnegie Mellon University

Adapted from a presentation to the National Research Council Board on Radioactive Waste Management Workshop on Risk Assessment and Decision Making under Scientific and Technical Uncertainty, 22 February 2005.

(*Communications Committee, continued from page 1*)

cation committee and proposed initial steps. All of these efforts are now underway.

What areas of communications or publications will the committee cover?

Thompson: The committee is interested in ensuring the highest-quality communications within the SRA and to the world. This committee seeks to maintain a Web site that serves its members' information needs and provides information to those with interest in the SRA and in risk analysis. The committee welcomes comments from members about the Web site and it is currently updating the policies and procedures related to Web site content. The committee is also considering further innovation for the Web site, including, for example, creating a tool that would allow members to easily search for other members who have identified themselves as subject-area experts, or possibly a searchable tool that would allow anyone looking for a risk analysis expert a way to find SRA members who have elected to be included as experts (for example, for media, attorneys, speaking opportunities).

The committee is also exploring strategies to improve the *RISK newsletter*. Finally, the committee is considering opportunities to raise the visibility of *Risk Analysis*, for example, by issuing press releases on articles and developing a media list.

What are the goals of the committee?

Thompson: The committee seeks to better coordinate SRA communications broadly, ensure the quality of the information that SRA provides on its Web site and in its newsletter, and raise the external visibility of the SRA. The Council hopes that this committee will help build a stronger and larger base of support for the SRA and that it will increase external knowledge about the SRA and its members.

How can SRA members help and become involved with the committee's work?

Thompson: The Communication Committee welcomes interested members to share any of their thoughts about the SRA's communications to the chair (kimt@hsph.harvard.edu). Anyone interested in participating in the committee's meetings (held by conference call) should contact Stephanie at the Secretariat (scross@burkinc.com) to get onto the committee email notification about the calls.

The SRA is currently preparing to conduct a survey of the membership that includes several questions related to SRA communications, and the Communication Committee strongly encourages members to take the time to respond to the survey and also contact the committee with any additional thoughts, suggestions, or concerns. 



News and Announcements

Risk Management Tools for Environmental Security, Critical Infrastructure, and Sustainability

2-5 October 2005, Venice, Italy (Tentative)

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Advanced Research Workshop (ARW) "Risk Management Tools for Environmental Security, Critical Infrastructure, and Sustainability" is scheduled for 2-5 October 2005 in Italy. This ARW will focus on the development of a "risk management toolbox" that can be used by risk managers and their staff to develop risk-management decision documents that are systematic, transparent, and rigorous to match that of the risk assessment on which they are based. Meeting participants will discuss their organization's and country's risk-analysis and risk-management tools and will participate in workgroups whose goals include a framework for the inclusion of the international risk-management tools presented at the conference. For more information, please contact Dr. D. Belluck, United States Department of Transportation, Washington, DC, United States (email: David.Belluck@fhwa.dot.gov) or Dr. Abou Ramadan, Atomic Energy Authority, Cairo, Egypt (email: ramadan58@yahoo.com). A Web site is currently under development.

International Conference on SPS Risk-Assessment Methods 9-11 August 2005

Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC

Tuskegee University, the Society for Risk Analysis, and the United States Department of Agriculture are sponsoring an International Conference on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Risk-Assessment Methods. The conference theme is "Optimizing the SPS Regulatory Toolbox." The purpose of the conference is to review various SPS risk-assessment methods by regulatory agencies and build a better toolbox.

Invited speakers from several countries, international organizations, academia, private industry, and government will share their expertise. Agenda topics include the use of SPS risk assessment in decision making, resource constraints, role of international standards, data quality, international perspectives, and legal versus scientific standards for evidence in risk assessments. The conference will provide an opportunity for risk analysts and regulators to exchange ideas and experiences with sanitary and phytosanitary risk assessment.

Register online at <http://compepid.tuskegee.edu/RiskConference/frontpage.htm>. 

2005 Society for Risk Analysis Annual Meeting 4-7 December—Orlando, Florida

H. Christopher Frey, President-elect

The call for papers for the 2005 Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) Annual Meeting is now active. Please submit your proposals for papers, sessions, and workshops by 3 June 2005 via our Web site (www.sra.org under the heading of “events”).

As SRA president-elect, I am charged with overall planning for the upcoming annual meeting. I have identified three supporting goals for this year: (1) to take advantage of our meeting location in Florida to touch upon many “local” topics that have broad implications or analogies, (2) to continue the internationalization of the Society, and (3) to encourage a more interdisciplinary orientation in the technical program.

Our location in Florida is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the breadth and importance of our field to society, including public and private stakeholders. Florida is one of many possible subthemes for the meeting.

Some Florida-relevant topics that are of wider interest include risk management at amusement parks (such as those in the Orlando area), ecological risks associated with the Everglades and the coral reef systems in South Florida, characterization and management of biothreat agents, natural disaster preparation and response (for example, hurricanes), health implications of land-use and development, health risks of recreation (for example, UV and skin cancer to injuries from water sports), hazard analysis and management for space systems (for example, NASA), and food and agriculture (for example, cattle, citrus). No doubt there are many more topics. I hope you will choose one of these or come up with your own. When submitting an abstract for a paper for the 2005 SRA Annual Meeting, feel free to use the subject category of “Other” if your topic does not clearly fit into any other category.

The internationalization of the SRA is evident in sections in Europe and Japan as well as chapters in countries such as

Australia and Russia. The Florida meeting location is particularly convenient for international members (or potential new members) in the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

International attendees may wish to propose papers on topics relevant to their countries or regions, such as drinking water and chlorination, and others. SRA will continue to provide opportunities for partial international travel support to help promote international representation at the 2005 SRA Annual Meeting.

I strongly encourage specialty groups to collaborate and cosponsor symposia that are truly interdisciplinary. For example, many risk problems (for example, benzene, mercury) cut across all specialty groups. As a Society, we should provide value-added for our stakeholders by bringing together practitioners and researchers to address difficult problems in an interdisciplinary manner.

The 25th anniversary of the SRA is also an opportunity to take a historical perspective, not only of the Society itself but on the changing role of risk analysis in societal and private decision making. What has been the evolution of accomplishments and challenges and what can we learn from this for the future? Where has risk analysis been successful? Where has it been lacking and why? What are the emerging needs for improvements in methodology or applications? Given the critiques of risk analysis that we have heard from the “loyal opposition,” as described by President Baruch Fischhoff at the 2004 SRA Annual Meeting, how should we respond as a profession?

All of the major units within SRA, including specialty groups, sections, and chapters, as well as you—the individual member (or potential new member)—have a key role in preparing for the annual meeting by encouraging members and

colleagues to submit paper, symposia, and workshop proposals. I look forward to your input and contributions.

Die-Hard Risk Analyst T-Shirt Design Contest

SRA announces its first ever T-shirt design contest. Create and submit an original design for the annual meeting T-shirt and receive recognition, admiration, accolades, and a free cocktail! Submit a pdf of your design to Lori Strong (lstrong@BurkInc.com) by the meeting abstract deadline—3 June 2005. Winner will be selected by the annual meeting Program Committee. Hint: This year’s celebration of the 25th anniversary of the founding of SRA might be an important theme!

Continuing Education Workshops

Continuing Education Workshops will take place on Sunday, 5 December, one day prior to the regular meeting sessions. Proposals are evaluated by the Conferences and Workshops Committee, independently from the Program Committee. Please specifically identify all submitted proposals as “for continuing education.” Workshops are generally ½ day (four hours) or full day (eight hours) and must be educational in nature. Workshop proposals should include a syllabus and a budget and must be submitted via the SRA Web site. “Proposal Forms” and “Budget Worksheets” (with guidance) are accessible from the SRA Web site. For complete submission instructions, visit www.sra.org. NOTE: The deadline to submit proposals for continuing education workshops is 3 June 2005.

For more information on the 2005 Society for Risk Analysis Annual Meeting, check the Society Web site at www.sra.org.

For information on calls for papers and special awards see Specialty Group reports on page 10 of this RISK newsletter.



SRA-Japan

SRA-Japan Events Planned

SRA-Japan will hold two annual events in the coming academic year (from April).

A symposium will be held on 24 June 2005 at a conference hall at the University of Tokyo. The theme of the symposium will be "Risk Management with Citizen Participation—Case of Solid Waste Disposal." We are planning to have four speakers: Dr. Masaru Tanaka (Okayama University), "Risk and Risk Management of Solid Waste and Solid Waste Disposal"; Dr. Kaoru Ishizaka (Okayama University), "Risk Communication Regarding Siting of Waste Disposal Facility"; Dr. Osamu Yamamoto (Research Institute of Environmental Science, Osaka City), "Risk

Management of Solid Waste Disposal Facility by Strategic Environmental Assessment"; and Dr. Hidetoshi Kitawaki (Toyo University), "Psychological Analysis of Citizen's Risk Perception about Final Disposal Sites for Solid Waste." We will also have a commentator, Dr. Norio Okada (Kyoto University).

The other event is the 18th Annual Meeting. This year we will have it at the Suita Campus, Osaka University, on 12 and 13 November.

Any requests for information on the events should be sent to the office of the secretary, SRA-Japan section (srajapan@soc.kansai-u.ac.jp). 



SRA-Europe

"Major Risks Challenging Publics, Scientists and Governments" SRA-E Annual Conference 2005, 12-14 September, Como, Italy

With the title "Major Risks Challenging Publics, Scientists and Governments," the next annual Society for Risk Analysis-Europe (SRA-E) conference will be held 12-14 September 2005 at the Politecnico di Milano at Como, Italy, hosted by Scira Minoni, president of SRA-E. Como, near Lombardy's capital Milano, is a historical and picturesque northern Italian town located at the southernmost point of Lake Como, one of Italy's most scenic destinations. Como can be conveniently reached by bus or train or by flying into Milano Malpensa International Airport.

The 14th Annual Conference will take a comprehensive view of risk. There will be consideration of economic aspects connected to loss estimation, the implementation of prevention measures, and juridical interpretation of cases where uncertainty is intrinsically connected to the matters at stake.

Regarding the regulation and legal aspects of risk management, the consequences of the introduction of norms regarding preventive measures and precautionary principles and the roles of stakeholders in interpreting the meaning of laws will be addressed. In creating a risk-reducing culture, preventive measures addressing natural and technological disasters will be discussed in order to meet the concerns of vulnerability reduction. The development of risk-related social studies has led to the recognition of the complexity of risk communication. Looking at risk communication from different perspectives helps us to gain insights that are relevant with regard to the relationship between the public and our own work. Addressing risk-complex environments, vulnerability has become an important parameter to be considered, to address the fragility, the capacity of a given community to respond to an environmental threat. In facing major disasters and public health in a global world, further attention is given to research reconsidering epidemiological studies at the large scale and tailoring the kind of analyses

and protection measures according to the origin of the threat. Public health requires the whole apparatus of preparing and preventing risks to develop strategies for quick response to emerging and sudden demands.



Villa Erba, Como, Italy

The conference will not only address new research topics, but will also encourage continuity by again promoting workshops and working groups as at the previous conference in Paris in 2004. The conference offers the opportunity for the launching of projects that could be funded by several countries and/or by the European Community.

Workshops and working groups are organized by an individual or by a group. If you log on to the SRA-E's Web site (www.sraeurope.org) you will find a list of the workshop topics. (The list, however, is not exhaustive and submissions on other topics related to the title are highly welcomed.) The SRA-E is looking

forward to attracting a large number of attendees to this conference. The dinner gala will be held at the Villa Erba at Como, next to the lake (see photo).

Submission of Abstracts and Papers: Authors wishing to present their work at the conference are requested to submit an abstract directly to the Conference Secretariat using the following email address: cozza@stru.polimi.it. For further information go to SRA-E's Web site (http://www.sraeurope.org/new/new_conf.html) or contact the new SRA-E secretariat directly (despite the deadline for abstract submission of 30 March, further contributions will be considered).

New SRA-E Secretariat

Mrs. Raffaella Cozza is in charge of the new SRA-E Secretariat (SRA-E Secretariat: Raffaella Cozza; Dipartimento di Ingegneria Strutturale, Politecnico di Milano: Piazza Leonardo da Vinci, 20133 Milano, Italy; phone: 39/02/23994261; fax: 39/02/23994300, email: cozza@stru.polimi.it). 



What Do We Do?

— a quarterly look at the incredibly diverse field of risk analysis —

Stefan Michalski and Rob Waller presented an intriguing poster at the 2004 Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) Annual Meeting in Palm Springs on “The Preservation Expert: A Software Tool for Risk Management of Museum Collections.” We asked them to be our first interviewees for this new column.

What are your job titles?

Michalski: I’m Senior Conservation Scientist at the Canadian Conservation Institute. We are an agency within the Department of Canadian Heritage, part of the Government of Canada (www.cci-icc.gc.ca).

Waller: I’m Chief Conservator at the Canadian Museum of Nature (www.nature.ca).

How is risk analysis a part of your job?

Michalski, Waller: Three years ago, we formed a partnership to develop the project we described in our 2004 SRA poster. We realize now that what we are attempting is called comparative risk assessment, which means we have jumped in at the deep and messy end of this business! We are building a complex model with multiple parallel risk analyses within a hierarchy of causes of damage and loss. Objects in museums might be totally lost by chance events, such as fire and theft, or they might be disfigured slowly, by hazards such as pollutants and incorrect relative humidity. So, the first thing we had to face was comparison of expected losses from ongoing processes, intermittent accidents, as well as rare, catastrophic events. We sidestepped the difficulties in valuation by considering only predicted “loss of value.” Still, as risk practitioners know, any sense of value is judgment-dependent and difficult to define and measure.

Michalski: At the same time, we are trying to build the model from the ground up. I am now working on light-damage risk analysis, one of the simplest of our risks to model as it follows a known dose-response law. I developed software to graphically depict loss when intensity, duration, and material are given. I have presented this to colleagues to solicit critiques. We are now exploring whether and how to add a predictive model of exposure, that is, should we build in a complex calculator of all light sources that would require extensive data entry from the user, or do we build easy-to-answer, generic options like “typical north room in an old house,” “purpose built gallery at 150 lux.” This is a classic value of information decision and can be evaluated as such.

Waller: We also work separately in our jobs using risk assessment. About 10 years ago I developed an assessment method at the Canadian Museum of Nature that allows us to rationally decide where to spend resources to better care for the museum’s

vast and diverse collections. I have been refining and teaching the method for over a decade, around the world. Several major museums in Canada, the USA, and Europe have adopted this method. The real advantage of the risk-analytical approach will be realized when many institutions caring for cultural property ask coherent questions of conservation research laboratories.

Michalski, Waller: In fact, now we are working together with an international agency in Rome, ICCROM (International Centre for

the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property), to provide a three-week training course in principles of risk assessment of museum collections, in Rome, June 2005 (see www.iccrom.org).

What led you to the risk analysis approach?

Michalski: Part of my job since the ’80s has been as a scientist developing exposure/damage functions for artifact materials. I was doing RA without knowing it! I have been an advisor to museums on avoiding or mitigating these damages, and I often did surveys on-site. In the early ’90s I wrote some pretty theoretical papers on possible risk assessment scales for such surveys, but when I was faced by a project to survey dozens of small military museums, and to consistently prioritize hundreds of recommendations by various surveyors, I created a quick-and-dirty set of simple rank-order risk scales. I was surprised how well they worked. Now Rob, and our project, has pushed me to become much better read about what I was doing!

Waller: In 1986 I described my occasional work as a museum conservation consultant to a golf buddy. He responded that I was doing risk management, something he had read about recently (for example, Starr, 1969 *Science* 165:1232). I realized he was right, dove into the risk literature available at the time, and have never looked back.



Stefan Michalski (left) and Rob Waller with their poster “The Preservation Expert: A Software Tool for Risk Management of Museum Collections” at the 2004 SRA Annual Meeting.

What part of your job motivates you the most?

Waller: The great potential to improve communication between those doing the daily work of heritage preservation, those making resource management decisions, and those undertaking conservation research. That will benefit all.

Michalski: I enjoy when clients with such diverse collections express gratitude for good advice. The small museum managers are often genuinely in love with their collections!

How did you decide to pursue this career?

Michalski, Waller: We both fell into heritage areas as scientists looking for interesting work!

What would you recommend to those entering the field of risk analysis interested in a job like yours?

Michalski, Waller: A succinct and convenient description of our work is in a recent article in *Conservation, The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter* (http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications/newsletters/19_1/). Currently, there are very

few such jobs worldwide. Anyone interested in our area is welcome to contact us directly.

How has membership/involvement in SRA helped you in your work?

Waller: Early in the design stage of our project, we approached SRA's then-President Robin Cantor and other, related association heads for suggestions on advisors, and they kindly pointed us to several senior members. We then arranged a meeting with those members at the 2002 SRA conference and had a very useful discussion. We have corresponded from time to time as the project developed. And the SRA conferences have been very stimulating, from modeling, to perception, to communication.

Is there anything else you would like to add ?

Michalski, Waller: We think that the heritage conservation field is rich with possibilities for extending the breadth of consideration of the risk analysis field and welcome contributions. In the meantime, we hope no one minds if we shamelessly use many tools and ideas in SRA publications and presentations! 



Member News

Roger E. Kasperson and Jeanne X. Kasperson

A new two-volume book set called *The Social Contours of Risk*, by Roger E. Kasperson and the late Jeanne X. Kasperson, has just been published.

Volume 1, *Publics, Risk Communication and the Social Amplification of Risk*, collects their fundamental work on how risks are communicated among different publics and stakeholders, including local communities, corporations, and the larger society. It analyzes the problems of lack of transparency and trust and explores how even minor effects can be amplified and distorted through media and social responses, preventing effective management.

Volume 2, *Risk Analysis, Corporations and the Globalization of Risk*, centers on the analysis and management of risk in society, in international business and multinationals, and globally. Their work clarifies the structures and processes for managing risks in the private sector and the factors that produce or impede effective decisions. Corporate culture is crucial, as they show, in determining risk management. They analyze the transfer of corporate risk management systems from industrial to developing countries and analyze how globalization is spreading and creating new kinds of risk.

The Social Contours of Risk is published by Earthscan and is available through its Web site: www.earthscan.co.uk.

Asa Boholm and Ragnar Löfstedt

Facility Siting: Risk, Power and Identity in Land Use Planning, edited by Asa Boholm and Ragnar Löfstedt, has just been published. This penetrating new edited collection examines risk, power, and identity in contests over the siting of infrastructure and industrial facilities. Going beyond nimby-ism, experts in a variety of fields bring a multiperspective analysis to case studies from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Europe and expose the political and cultural dimensions of siting conflicts. In the process they show how place attachment and no-

tions of landscape and local identity play a prominent role in resistance to "development."

Facility Siting is published by Earthscan and is available through its Web site: www.earthscan.co.uk.

Sandy Hoffmann

SRA Food/Water Safety Risk Specialty Group member Sandy Hoffmann, together with her Resources for the Future (RFF) colleague Mike Taylor, has published *Toward Safer Food: Perspectives on Risk and Priority Setting* (RFF Press 2005). The book responds to a National Academy of Sciences call for development of a more risk-based approach to food safety policy priority setting in the United States.

The book draws together leading scientists, risk analysts, and economists to assess the data and risk analysis tools needed to construct such a system. The authors' hope is that this effort can help move risk-based food safety priority setting in the United States toward an implementable reality.

Hoffmann is a fellow at RFF, a nonprofit research organization in Washington, DC, which focuses on environmental, natural resource, and public health policy. Her research aims to improve the role of economic analysis in regulatory risk analysis. She is part of a multidisciplinary team of researchers from around the United States working to develop risk analysis models that integrate economic and scientific analysis of foodborne pathogen hazards across the US food system. She works on public health-focused policy issues including food safety, the impact of environmental health policy on children, the social cost of pesticide use, and the public health burden of environmental pollution in China. Prior to joining RFF, Hoffmann was an assistant professor in the LaFollette School of Public Policy and the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. 





Chapter News

Russian Scientific Society for Risk Analysis

Valery Lesnykh, Liaison Officer of SRA-Russia, Vice-Chairman of Scientific Council



Participants of the SRA-Russia founding conference

The founding conference of the all-Russian voluntary organization “Russian Scientific Society for Risk Analysis (SRA-Russia)” was held in October 2003 in Moscow. The process of establishing the Society was several years old. In the late '90s several attempts at creating such an organization were made both in Moscow and in a number of Russia's regions. In spring 2003, a group of scientists and experts set up a working group which initiated preparation of constituent documents and creation of Society regional branches.

The main goal of the Society is to unite researchers, professionals, representatives of industry, public authorities, NGOs, and members of the general public interested in the relevant studies and use of their outcomes in the area of risk analysis, risk management, and allied disciplines for making informed decisions with a view to providing security of the population, state, and natural environment.

Society activities will include all aspects of risk in economic, political, social, R&D, natural, and technological areas involving the state, civil society, and individuals. To accomplish its goals, the Society shall engage in the following types of activity: studies and research; education, publishing; contribution to formulating government policy relative to security; holding scientific conferences, workshops; and providing scientific grants and awards.

At present the president-elect of SRA-Russia is Dr. Michail Faleev, vice president is Professor Valery Akimov, chairman of the Executive Committee is Mr. Sergey Strelko, and chairman of the Scientific Council is Corr. Member of Russian Academy of Sciences Professor Nikolay Makhutov. There are some 60 regional branches of the Society in 89 subjects of Russian Federation and about 1,000 members.

Editor-in-chief of the Society's official scientific journal, *Issues of Risk Analysis*, is Professor Andrey Bykov. The principal objective of this quarterly bilingual (Russian and English) publication is to promote formation of independent scientific discipline—risk research—in Russia.

Recently an official Internet site of the Society was created (www.sra-russia.ru—at present only in Russian) which will include official documents, information on current activities of the Society, dictionary, and bibliography in the field of risk research.

In April 2004 the Society organized the annual scientific conference “Regional Risks: Assessment and Management” and more than 300 scientists and experts from different countries participated. In April 2005 the Society held the conference “Actual Problems of Natural and Technological Safety in XXI Century.”

By action of the Council of Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) on 5 December 2004, the formation of the Russian Chapter of the Society for Risk Analysis was approved. The Russia Chapter is formally recognized as an official chapter of the Society.

Chicago Regional Chapter

Heidi Hartmann, Interim President

On 7 February 2005, Dr. Ronald Hites of Indiana University presented a seminar titled “Comparative Analysis of Persistent Organic Pollutants in Wild and Farm Raised Fish.” The seminar was held at the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region V building and had about 60 people in attendance. Hites presented his findings on the significantly elevated levels of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP) (for example, PCBs and PBDEs) in farm-raised salmon compared to wild ocean fish and the probable sources for the elevated contaminant levels. He also discussed the implications of his findings for fish consumer health risk and fish consumption advisories and the comparison of the ocean fish POP levels to Great Lakes fish POP levels.

About 30 people attended a seminar given by Mr. Fred Monette, a scientist at Argonne National Laboratory (ANL), titled “An Overview of Issues Associated with Dirty Bombs.” The seminar was held at ANL's Environmental Assessment Division in Woodridge on 15 March 2005. The talk included a brief primer on radiation and radiation-induced health effects, the history of radiological dispersal devices, a review of the types of radiation sources commonly in use today and potentially available for use in a dirty bomb, and a brief summary of the range of impacts that might be expected should a dirty bomb be used.

The Chicago Chapter succeeded in opening a new up-to-date Web site in January, thanks to the hard work of our publicity chairperson, Mr. Tom Brody of Region V EPA. The Web address is <http://www.sra.org/chicago>.

Unfortunately one of the Chicago Regional Chapter interim copresidents, Mr. EJ Dell, recently needed to step down after accepting a new position outside of the Chicago area. Thank you for all your hard work on behalf of the chapter; we will miss you.

Plans for the next few months include participation in two seminars in April (one on risks associated with nanotechnology and a half-day training session on genomics and risk assessment implications). Both will be held at EPA Region V offices; further information will soon be available on our Web site. A dinner meeting is planned for late May or early June, including a talk on children's health issues in risk assessment.

Ohio Chapter

John Lipscomb, President

The Ohio Chapter held its election for the 2005 slate of officers and the results were made official on 5 January. The executive board for 2005 comprises President John C. Lipscomb, US EPA/ORD/NCEA; President-elect Jay Zhou, TERA; Secretary Stephanie Hines, the Ohio State University; Treasurer Patricia Nance, TERA; Councilor John Snawder, NIOSH; Councilor David

Mattie, US Air Force; and Past President Andy Maier, TERA. The chapter would like to extend its gratitude not only to Past President Maier, but also to other “retiring” executive committee members Ed Pfau, John Lowe, and Kenneth Poirier.

On 10 February, the chapter held a pizza luncheon at TERA’s new offices and hosted Dr. Martha Moore, of FDA’s National Center for Toxicological Research (Jefferson, Arizona), for a seminar on The Interpretation of Genetic Toxicology Information for Health Risk Assessment.

The chapter’s annual summer colloquium will be a joint-venture meeting held with the Ohio Chapter of the Society for Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry. It will occur on 2 June at the US Environmental Protection Agency’s Andrew W. Breidenbach Environmental Research Center (Cincinnati, Ohio).

Upstate New York Chapter

Peg Coleman, Interim President, Katherine McComas, and Tim Negley, Interim Secretary

The newly formed Upstate New York Chapter began monthly planning meetings this winter. Our current members are affiliated with universities (Cornell University, SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry, Upstate Medical University), private companies (Eastman Kodak Co., Shaw Environmental Inc., Young Agency), a government organization (New York Department of Health), and independent not-for-profit organizations (New York Indoor Environmental Quality Center, Syracuse Research Corporation). Our interim officers now include Tim Negley succeeding Katherine McComas as secretary, Bill Thayer as treasurer, and Peg Coleman as president.

Our initial planning focused on organizing a full-day symposium on Monday, 13 June 2005, at the Syracuse Technology Gardens that will highlight risk analysis work already underway in Upstate New York. A diversity of topics will be discussed at the symposium, including human and environmental health risks associated with both indoor and outdoor environments. Local risk analysts will present work in outdoor environments relating to research in risk management for Upstate New York watersheds, particularly Onondaga Lake; fish advisories for local populations; spatially explicit ecological risk assessment; and perceived increased cancer risk associated with local athletic fields. Risk assessments with outdoor and indoor impacts include probabilistic modeling of nickel absorption in drinking water, microbial risk assessment for pathogens including biothreat agents, and risk assessment for lead in Syracuse children.

Opportunities for dialogue about local risk analysis work during and after the symposium will facilitate development of effective multidisciplinary collaborations, a hallmark of good risk analysis. The agenda will include time to discuss the mission and focus of the chapter, as well as plan for elections and

a fall event. The Upstate New York SRA symposium is envisioned to assist both in recruiting new members and fostering partnerships with other professional organizations with common interests, such as the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC), American Chemical Society (ACS), Society of Toxicology (SOT), American Public Health Association (APHA), American Society for Microbiology (ASM), and Air and Waste Management Association (AWMA). Future development of additional communications by the chapter is anticipated, such as a newsletter and a list-serve.

More information about the Upstate New York Chapter and the 13 June symposium in Syracuse will be available at <http://esc.syrres.com/sraupstateny>. We thank the SRA Secretariat for its support in recruiting New York state members and the SRA Council for speedy approval of our petition for local chapter status at our annual meeting in Palm Springs.

Northern California Chapter

Mark Stelljes, President

First, I need to thank our outgoing Board members, including Ed Morales, our past president, Kassandra Tzou, our secretary, and Dr. Greg Brorby, our past president. During their tenure, our membership has almost doubled and now stands at about 85. At the same time, I would like to welcome Jennifer Block as our new secretary, Dr. Raymond Neutra as our president-elect, and Dr. Alvin Greenberg as our new councilor.

We recently held our first function of the year, a dinner meeting on 15 March featuring Paul Slovic of the national SRA’s speaker bureau. The title of his talk was “Trust, Emotion, Sex, Politics, and Science: Surveying the Risk Assessment Battlefield” (www.sra.org/ncc/nccevent.htm). A hearty buffet was enjoyed by all, and the talk led to a healthy and extended discussion session on some of the psychology of risk assessment and risk management. The SRA speaker’s bureau is an excellent service provided to all chapters. A list of speakers and topics can be found on SRA’s Web site. This seminar followed our very successful winter workshop on naphthalene. The speakers addressed the recent adoption of an inhalation cancer slope factor by the state of California and potential impacts to site risk evaluations, including indoor air vapor concerns.

Future seminars for 2005 are planned for late spring and early fall. Two seminars will likely include risk aspects of toxic torts and terrorism risk assessments (including vulnerability assessments, emergency preparedness, and response for chemical and/or biological terrorist events). These topics are in part based on results of our recently conducted member survey, which also identified high levels of interest in pharmaceuticals, food risks, and the impacts of the rollback of some environmental laws on chemical-related risks.




Committees

Ad Hoc International Task Force Committee

Pertti Hakkinen, Chair

In April 2005, SRA Past President Warner North and International Task Force Committee Chair Pertti Hakkinen went to Moscow for the 10th International Scientific and Practical Conference “Vital Problems of Natural and Technological Safety Regulation in the XXI Century,” organized jointly by the Russian Scientific Society for Risk Analysis, Ministry of the Rus-

sian Federation for Civil Defense, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters, the Security Council of the Russian Federation, and the Russian Academy of Sciences. This meeting of the SRA’s new chapter in Russia included sessions on legislative and organizational mechanisms to ensure safety, economic tools of safety and risk regulation, social and ecological aspects of risk and safety regulation, and hazard assessment and risk management in the vital activities of individuals, communities, and a nation.





Specialty Groups

Risk Communication Specialty Group

www.sra.org/rcsg

Cliff Scherer, Chair

The 25th anniversary of the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) presents an abundance of opportunity to propose a wide range of papers related to risk communication. SRA President-elect Chris Frey is encouraging joint sessions between various specialty groups, and it is easy to see how papers from the Risk Communication Specialty Group could fit with a number of others. Chris has suggested a range of possible topics, including drug safety, bioterrorism, mercury, benzene, and others, as appropriate. If you have ideas for joint sessions or papers, please contact me or the other specialty group chair so we can explore a joint session.

The 25th anniversary also presents an opportunity to examine the field of risk communication. **This special call for papers addresses “The Past, Present and Future of Risk Communication.”** Proposed papers might summarize the major findings in an area of risk communication research or examine gaps and/or propose a future risk communication research agenda.

A second grouping of papers is proposed which addresses innovative directions in risk communication. The central theme of this panel will be translational research—the translation of complex risk-based research for policy makers and lay audiences. Papers proposed in this area may explore the nature of this process, propose research questions, and/or report specific research in this area.

Students are also encouraged to propose papers. Details of the student competition are in the SRA call for papers (www.sra.org).

All abstracts should be submitted through the SRA Web site. Please feel free to contact me if you want to talk about ideas for joint sessions, papers for the special call, or other ideas. Let's make this the best SRA meeting in years with excellent papers in risk communication.

Dose Response Specialty Group

www.sra.org/drsg

Ralph L. Kodell, Chair

The Dose Response Specialty Group's (DRSG) first teleseminar of 2005 was presented 1 March by Bette Meek of Health Canada. Her title was “Update on International Initiatives on Guidance for Chemical-Specific Adjustment Factors and Physiologically Based Pharmacokinetic Models in Risk Assessment.” Bette delivered the talk from Brussels while approximately two dozen participants viewed the slides she had provided in advance. A lively discussion followed the excellent presentation.

We are grateful to Greg Blumenthal for accepting an appointment as trustee-at-large of the DRSG for the remainder of 2005, to finish out the term of Chandrika Moudgal who has resigned. We thank Chandrika for her service to DRSG and welcome Greg to the Executive Committee.

Please remember that you are invited to join the DRSG's monthly teleconferences on the first Tuesday of each month, 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time. The call-in number is 513-569-7897, and the access code is 2790# (help desk 513-569-7754). In March, June, and September, our teleconferences are

devoted to teleseminars on timely dose-response topics. The other monthly teleconferences are devoted to conducting business of the DRSG, including planning activities for the SRA annual meeting. Please visit our Web site (<http://www.sra.org/drsg/>) for general information on DRSG activities.

The DRSG sponsors a student award for application toward expenses incurred in attending the SRA's annual meeting. All abstracts must be submitted for presentation at the meeting in Orlando by 3 June 2005 following normal SRA guidelines for abstract submission (www.sra.org for meeting dates, guidelines, and deadlines). On the Web site submission form, please choose “Student Merit Award in Dose Response Assessment” in addition to a subject category.

An additional submission to the DRSG should be made in the form of a one- to two-page extended abstract. The deadline for submission to the DRSG is 10 June 2005. Format and content of the abstracts are at the discretion of submitters. Please submit two copies of abstracts to Michael Zager, US EPA, Mail Drop B143-01, Research Triangle Park, NC, 27711, 919-541-0125, fax: 919-541-4284, email: zager.mike@epa.gov.

Abstracts are judged on the basis of soundness, complexity, and contribution to the field. A check and plaque are presented to the award winner and a certificate is presented to the runner-up. Registration for the annual meeting is waived for the winner. The winners are required to attend the annual meeting and present their results to receive their awards; however, extraordinary inhibiting circumstances may be considered by the Executive Committee.

Exposure Assessment Specialty Group

Katy Walker, Chair

With planning for the 2005 SRA Annual Meeting in full swing, the Exposure Assessment Specialty Group (EASG) is looking forward to hosting an exciting group of papers and symposia in Orlando. Exposure assessment remains an integral component of the risk-assessment paradigm, playing an essential role in the identification and characterization of emerging health and ecological risks. The SRA conference is an important nexus for making links between exposure assessment, toxicology, dose-response assessment, decision analysis, and other key disciplines that support risk assessment.

We want to use this opportunity to encourage you to think about possible papers and symposia for the next conference. Some areas of interest include:

- Priority setting for development of national monitoring data bases.
- Environmental exposures to pharmaceuticals.
- Occupational exposures.
- Developing a common lexicon for exposure-assessment terminology.
- Exposure assessment in food safety evaluation.
- Exposure issues arising from natural disasters.
- Emerging international issues in human and ecological exposure assessment.
- Methods for probabilistic exposure assessment.

As we have for the last two years, we plan to offer the EASG Award for the Best Student Research in Exposure Assessment. Last year, the award consisted of a \$100 cash prize, a \$500

travel award, and a complimentary SRA meeting registration and membership. This award is supported by your annual membership dues and through corporate support. If you or your company would like to sponsor the student research award or any other EASG activities, please contact us.

Anyone interested in discussing topics for presentation at the next annual meeting or in learning more about the Exposure Assessment Specialty Group can contact Chair Katy Walker at walkerkd12@comcast.net or 781-259-4490 or Chair-elect Donna Vorhees at dvorhees@menziecura.com or 781-782-6143.

Ecological Risk Assessment Specialty Group

www.neptuneandco.com/sra-erasg

Randy Ryti, Chair; Todd Bridges Chair-elect;
and Igor Linkov, Past Chair

When thinking of topics of interest for the annual meeting, it is useful to include subject areas that emphasize the interdisciplinary problems. Eradication of introduced species is clearly important to ecological risk assessments, but it is also relevant to human health risk, economics, risk perception, risk communication, and risk management. Removal of brown trout from streams in New Mexico using piscicides provides a clear example of a multidisciplinary problem. Ecological studies have shown that nonnative brown trout significantly decrease a number of stream biota including stream and terrestrial invertebrates,

native fish, and native amphibians. Consequently many ecologists and members of the public favor their removal from streams. However, some members of the public value brown trout as a food source and oppose their removal. The methods for brown trout removal are varied but the application of low-concentration, short environmental half-life piscicides such as antimycin have been advocated as the most effective method with the least long-term effects on the stream. Although many scientists support the proper use of piscicides, others disagree with applying any poison into waterways due to concerns about the nontarget organisms, including other fish and people. Clearly, eradication of introduced species would make an excellent topic for an SRA symposium by confronting the various nuances of this environmental management problem.

The ERASG is also considering other topics for the annual meeting to include a symposium on global climate change or on the psychological dimensions of this topic, everglades research on methyl mercury or phosphates, radioecology, ecological valuation/economics, coastal mangroves, and coral reefs. **Please contact Randy Ryti (rryti1@neptuneinc.org) if you have suggestions on ERASG-related workshops, symposia, or the plenary sessions for the 2005 annual meeting.**

If you have a contribution relevant to the ERASG column in the SRA quarterly RISK *newsletter* or have some information that you would like to post on the ERASG Web site please send this information to Randy Ryti (rryti1@neptuneinc.org). 



Advertisements

Director of Risk Management Position

Adventist Health System (AHS) in Winter Park, Florida, seeks a Director of Risk Management. AHS operates 39 hospitals within 10 states, totaling nearly 6,200 licensed beds. Reporting to the Vice President, Risk Management & Compliance, the Director of Risk Management is responsible for the overall management and administration of risk financing, loss-control activities, the employed physician malpractice program, the risk management information system, and the Owner Controlled Insurance Program. A relevant bachelor's degree is required. Graduate degree, CPCU/ARM certifications are preferred. The ideal candidate will have 5-10 years of experience in a risk financing role at regional or national healthcare systems or large hospitals. Candidates with experience in the insurance industry with a focus on healthcare risk financing may be considered.

For more information or to express interest, contact Porsche Schooley via email at porschesh@wittkiewer.com. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

Scientist Position

ChemRisk is a consulting firm providing state-of-the-art toxicology, industrial hygiene, epidemiology, and risk assessment services to organizations that confront public health, occupational health, and environmental challenges.

ChemRisk is seeking applicants with training in toxicology, pharmacology, the environmental sciences, risk assessment, biomedical engineering, industrial hygiene, medicine, or health physics.

This position requires a bachelor's degree in environmental or toxicological sciences. Candidates with a PhD or master's degree are preferred. Candidates with a background in consulting are especially desired. Positions are available in the offices in San Francisco, California; Boulder, Colorado; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Please send résumés to ChemRisk, 100 Spear Street, Suite 525, San Francisco, CA 94105, or email: hr@chemrisk.com, phone: 415-896-2400, fax: 415-896-2444, www.chemrisk.com.

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.

Camera-ready ads for the RISK *newsletter* are accepted at a cost of \$250 for a 3.25-inch-wide by 3-inch-high box. The height of a camera-ready ad may be increased beyond 3 inches at a cost of \$100 per inch.

The RISK *newsletter* is published four times a year. Submit advertisements to the Managing Editor, with billing instructions, by 30 December for the First Quarter issue (published early February), 30 March for the Second Quarter issue (early May), 30 June for the Third Quarter issue (early August), and 30 September for the Fourth Quarter issue (early November). Send to Mary Walchuk, Managing Editor, RISK *newsletter*, 115 Westwood Dr., Mankato, MN 56001; phone: 507-625-6142; fax: 507-625-1792; email: mwalchuk@hickorytech.net.

To place an employment ad on the Web site, fill out the online submittal form at www.sra.org/opportunities_submit.php. To place other ads on the Web site contact the SRA Webmaster at webmaster@sra.org. Ads placed on the Web site will usually appear several days after receipt. For additional information see the Web site at http://www.sra.org/policy_website.php.



RISK *newsletter* is published by the Society for Risk Analysis

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Deadline for RISK *newsletter* Submissions

Information to be included in the **Third Quarter 2005 SRA RISK *newsletter***, to be mailed early 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; email: mwalchuk@hickorytech.net) no later than **20 June**.



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 socio-economic 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 bylaws 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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