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Message from the President

The last week of June was a hectic one but also very rewarding. On Tuesday, I had the pleasure of taking part in the Program Committee's planning for the upcoming Annual Meeting (AM) in New Orleans. So many interesting abstracts, symposia and roundtables, covering all types of methodological topics and application areas of risk analysis. For sure, this will be a top conference.

Wednesday was the SRA Council meeting. The Council meets in-person twice a year – in June, and in December in relation to the AM. In addition, Council calls are organized with intervals of one to two months. Good discussions were had, and some important decisions made.

SRA Africa is now formally established as a Regional Organization (RO). This represents a milestone in the history of SRA. More information will follow later.

We will evaluate the governance structure of SRA. The basic question is how we can improve efficiency and better meet the challenges that we now face and will face in coming years. Membership numbers have decreased over the last decade; our scope is increasingly global, and the competition is strong from other areas and disciplines. SRA has a number of committees and groups, with a high rate of leadership turnover. Alignment is difficult; management of change is difficult – both critical functions to successfully run an organization like SRA.

As mentioned in previous President's Messages, we are working on developing an SRA Strategic Plan. A preliminary overall structure of this plan has now been established, with three main areas highlighted:

- a. Enhancing the risk analysis science and profession
- b. Influencing and strengthening the impact globally
- c. Expanding organizational capacity

The evaluation of the governance structure is an action belonging to the c) category. The draft Strategic Plan will soon be sent out for comments and feedback; be on the lookout for information on the SRA website and in the Newsletter.

The Council also opened the door for a new type of project support. The details will be developed in the coming months, but the basic idea is that SRA would like to support projects that contribute effectively to meeting the SRA visions and strategic goals – like those mentioned in a) to c) above. The current 'New Initiatives', which have rather strict criteria for acceptance, will be replaced by 'Strategic Initiatives', which allow broader categories of projects to be supported. What matters is that they can be linked to the strategic plan and have a significant effect on the goals specified there. A fixed budget is allocated for the support.

On Wednesday evening, I traveled to Michigan for a workshop on excellence in risk analysis. See the summary elsewhere in this Newsletter. It was a great event, with a lot of enthusiasm for SRA and risk analysis. It was a wonderful way of closing the semester; now I'm sitting on the plane writing this message, going home to Norway. Yes, SRA is indeed alive.

Best regards,



Terje Aven

SRA podcast series

"LET'S TALK RISK" IS AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ONLINE & DOWNLOAD

Let's Talk Risk with the Society for Risk Analysis, the world's leading authority on risk science and its applications, helps bring clarity to the world of risk, uncertainty, and ambiguity. Visit www.sra.org for more information on the topics discussed in these episodes and for more studies found in Risk Analysis: An International Journal.

Episodes available for download:

Ep. 1: [The Uncertainty Component](#)

Ep. 2: [We've Been Underestimating Climate Change](#)

Ep. 3: [The Preservation of a Culture](#)

Ep. 4: [Clearing House at the EPA: An Attack on Science](#)

Ep. 5: [Infrastructure Management: Communities Can Profit From Disaster](#)

Ep. 6: [Boundaries in Risk Analysis: What's In and What's Out?](#)

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Past Issues

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Ep. 9 (NEW!): [A Paradigm Shift in Injury Risk Reduction](#)



Aus-NZ Conference 2018

September 25-28, 2018 in Sydney, Australia

The theme of this year's conference is "Risk Prisms: Exploring the Multifaceted Nature of Risk." In the field of optics, a prism is a transparent object with at least two angled sides that break up white light into its constituent colours (1). In the same way that a single beam of light is in reality made up of different colours, the systems-based approach to risk analysis proposes that risk is likewise composed of different elements. These individual elements in turn are combined into a range of subsets, each associated with a range of different probabilities (2, 3).

While the rapid growth of risk research across multiple fields over the past few decades has successfully produced a large and rich body of literature, it has also resulted in diverse but disconnected perspectives on risk (4-6). This is because different disciplines have undertaken independent investigations into the nature of risk and its measurement. While discipline-specific lenses are certainly important in obtaining a deep understanding of risk, this is akin to passing a beam of light through individual panes of glass: that is, passing light through a single pane of glass does not refract it into its constituent colours. Therefore, observing light as it passes through different individual lenses effectively deprives scholars of the opportunity to gain rich insights into its multifaceted nature.

It is proposed that the way to creatively and insightfully extend the boundaries of the field is for scholars from different disciplines to collaboratively work together to act as a prism for risk. An important characteristic of prisms is that at least two of its surfaces need to be angled in order to have refractive capability. Therefore, 'refracting' risk requires at least two different disciplines offering at least two different angles or perspectives of the same risk. Indeed, bringing together more than two disciplines can potentially offer even richer insights into the complexity of risk.

[Early-bird registration ends July 30, 2018](#)

SRA Member Spotlight: Robert Goble, Ph.D., research professor at Clark University, SRA Fellow.

Much of Goble's recent work has concerned ways of coping with uncertainty. This involves highly uncertain contexts such as extreme risks and systemic risks. It also involves thinking about management strategies like adaptive management, keeping analyses up to date, and vigilance. His presentation at the 2017 Annual Meeting reflected a concern with the boundaries of risk assessments: what is included; what is left out. His other recent



effort has been on relating risk perspectives to development issues and he is working on a project on climate information services that support agriculture in Africa.

Each month the SRA newsletter will feature one of its members and their work in the spotlight section. If you would like to nominate a member, please email [Melanie Preve](#).

Save the Date!

Upcoming Webinars

*An additional email will be sent to all members
with a registration link*

Core Subjects of Risk Analysis Series

August 2: *Risk Communication & Risk
Perception with John Besley*

September 5: *Solving Real Risk
Problems & Issues with Willy Røed*

October 3: *Risk, Causation and Decision
with Tony Cox*

November 7: *Inclusive Governance of
Risk: The Incorporation of Stakeholders
in Risk Management with Ortwin Renn*

Other Webinars

October 24: *Writing Guidelines for Risk
Management: Lessons and Questions
from 3 Examples*

If you or your specialty group has an idea for a webinar or is interested in hosting, please contact [Scott Dotson](#). All of our past webinars are available [here](#) for members.

SLC Webinar: Introduction to SR and Their Application in Preclinical Research and Chemical Risk Assessment

September 11, 11am ET

Katya Tsaïoun, PhD, director, Evidence-Based Toxicology Collaboration, Johns Hopkins Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing, Bloomberg School of Public Health, will introduce the History and Main Principles of Systematic Review. Kristina Thayer, PhD, US EPA, National Center for Environmental Assessment, will present on Systematic Review in Support of Chemical Risk Assessment at US EPA.

For more information, and to register, [click here](#).

**Are you a member of another
organization that could benefit from
co-sponsoring an event with SRA?**
For more information, and to apply for co-
sponsorship, [click here](#).



On June 29-30, a group of SRA members met at the Crystal Mountain Resort in Michigan for a workshop aimed at discussing a number of issues for the future development of risk analysis and Society for Risk Analysis. It was an event full of enthusiasm, and rich in ideas and plans on how to advance SRA and the related science and profession. In more specific terms, the aim of the workshop was to stimulate the rise of future strong leaders in risk analysis and SRA by discussing how to build excellence in professional settings as well as for personal development.

The conclusions from the workshop can be summarized by the following three points:

1. SRA needs to take a stronger role as a 'knowledge organisation' by providing guidance and communicate 'state-of-the-art' knowledge on risk analysis - both theories and practices. Risk analysis education needs to be given much more focus.
2. Measures are needed to legitimize risk analysis as a science and increase its status in society.
3. An improved brand recognition with trademark and tagline is needed for SRA.

[Read more.](#)

Each month the Communications Committee selects an article from the journal for further media coverage. Last month's selected article featured a new study on the prevalence of distracted driving.

Majority of Drivers Don't Believe Texting While Driving is Dangerous

People who text while driving are six times more likely to be involved in a car crash. To combat this problem, more and more states are adopting driving laws that require people to use hands-free devices in the car. Yet a new study shows that many drivers are still willing to take the risk, as 'fear of missing out' and separation anxiety keep them from abiding by the law. The study, published in *Risk Analysis: An International Journal*, reveals that many drivers don't perceive texting and driving to be dangerous in certain driving scenarios.

In the U.S., mobile phone usage has been a factor in one quarter of all car collisions. However, actual crash risks vary based on the type of task being performed and the extent of its cognitive and physical demands on the driver. Talking on a mobile device increases crash risk by 2.2 times whereas texting increases risk by 6.1 times.

Observational studies have found that as many as 18 percent of drivers in high-income countries, and up to 31 percent in low- and middle-income countries, use their mobile devices while on the road, contributing to significantly reduced road safety. Despite laws prohibiting such behavior, mobile phone use while driving is expected to increase. [Read more.](#)

Call for Abstracts: Risk Science & Decision Science for Children and Teenagers

Helping tomorrow's citizens making decisions about risk.

Lorentz Center, Leiden University, October 8-12, 2018

We invite the submission of abstracts (max. 400 words) to take part in a one-week seminar on risk educations for children and teenagers. We particularly welcome applications from young scholars from master to post-doctoral levels. Successful applicants may be eligible for financial support. The abstract should convey information about research on risk that the applicant has carried out, as well as relevance or potential for the education of young children and teenagers.

Send your abstracts to [Frederic Boudier](#). Deadline: September 1, 2018

[Click here](#) to view the preliminary program.

If you haven't renewed your SRA membership for 2018, please take a moment and renew [online](#).

Are you a regular contributor to an online publication or blog?
We want to help share your content! If you contribute to a publication, please email [Melanie Preve](mailto:Melanie.Preve) and we'll be sure to share your pieces on SRA's social media channels.



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