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Message from the President

For the risk analysis field and science to develop and support knowledge generation on medical issues, climate change, engineering problems etc., risk analysis research is important. There is a huge variety in the types of such research. See for example the recent issues of our *Risk Analysis* journal. Perhaps the most common type is empirical research based on the so-called 'scientific method' – used to produce knowledge about the 'world'. Knowledge is gained through observations and hypotheses, and theories and models are developed to predict and assess what will happen and why. Statistical inference provides the common framework for carrying out this type of studies. A lot of risk analysis research is built on this framework, linked to various applications.

If you study the papers in *Risk Analysis*, you will also find many of a different form: what we can call conceptual papers. I would like to draw attention to these as many, both academics and practitioners, are not so familiar with this category of research. Yes, some even question whether these papers constitute original research. I have read many reviewer reports, stating that the work considered just reflects personal views and is, hence, not research. However, even a personal story, reported in 'I form', can be excellent research, adding new knowledge to the knowledge discipline. This is the criterion – adding new knowledge to the relevant knowledge discipline – and there are many ways of obtaining such knowledge. This knowledge is built on data, information, testing, theories, modelling and argumentation. The argumentation is of special importance. The argumentation for what is high quality risk analysis and what is not represents core elements of the knowledge base of the risk analysis field and science. The strength of the argumentation does not depend on whether the author uses the 'I form' or not, although journals may prefer a less personalistic style.

Applied risk analysis as discussed above produces risk knowledge in the form of justified statements or beliefs, for example related to global warming. Conceptual research in risk analysis is different – it produces knowledge related to concepts, theories, principles, approaches and methods (for short referred to as 'concepts' in the following), to understand, assess, characterize, communicate, manage and govern risk. This type of research includes elements such as identification, revision, delineation, summarisation, differentiation, integration, advocating and refuting. For example, the work may provide arguments to justify the use of a specific concept and rebut others. The research is based on logic, creativity, comparative reasoning, divergent thinking, integrative thinking, etc. and has, to a varying degree, an empirical basis. The quality of conceptual research is evaluated in the same way as other types of research: by reference to aspects such as originality, solidness, relevancy and usefulness.

Think about the development of the SRA Glossary (sra.org/resources). Its basic structure for understanding risk can be viewed as a result of integrative thinking. There are a number of different definitions of risk, a fact which can be said to create tension. However, integrative thinking stimulates the search for perspectives that extend beyond these definitions – it uses the opposing ideas, to reach a new level of understanding. The work provides a foundation for improved risk analysis terminology in all types of applications.

I consider risk analysis research to be very exciting. It has an important role in supporting other sciences, but there is also a generic risk analysis research part which aims at improving concepts as such, as discussed above. Your contribution either in applied or generic risk analysis research is welcomed, to further develop the field and science of risk analysis. For further information about our journal *Risk Analysis*, please consult <http://sra.org/sra-journal>.

Best regards,



Terje Aven



The Society for Risk Analysis invites your abstracts for presentations at the Fifth World Congress on Risk in Cape Town, South Africa, May 6-8, 2019.

The Fifth World Congress on Risk will focus on “Development and Resilience” and aims to stimulate dialogue and education on risk issues of worldwide interest. SRA welcomes contributions on any topic related to risk assessment, risk characterization, risk perception, risk communication, risk management, risk governance, and policy relating to risk, in the context of risks of concern to individuals, to public and private sector organizations, and to society at a local, regional, national, or global level.

SRA is particularly interested in receiving submissions from outstanding researchers doing work in risk analysis from Africa, Asia, Oceania, Middle East or Latin America and will aim to support their travel to present at the World Congress. The organizing committee welcomes proposals for a variety of session formats: poster-platform presentation, oral presentation and symposium presentation.

[Click here for complete submission guidelines and to submit your abstract.](#)

Abstracts are due by July 6, 2018 at midnight EST.

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?](#)

Ep. 7: [Power Systems Resilience: Can We Rely on Renewables?](#)

SRA Europe Iberian Chapter Meeting

September 6-7, 2018 at Centro Cultural San Clemente

Abstract submissions for poster-platform presentations must be written in English & include the following information:

- Presentation title (Max. 20 words)
- Author(s), affiliation(s) (including country, city and postcode for each) & email(s)
- Presenting author
- Abstract (Max. 350 words)
- Keywords (Max. 5)

Submission deadline: June 20

To register and submit your abstract,
email sra.europe.iberia@gmail.com



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.

[Abstracts Submission Deadline: June 30, 2018](#)
Early-bird Registration: July 1-30, 2018

2018 SRA Council Elections: Call for Nominations

The SRA invites nominations for the positions of:

- SRA President-Elect
- SRA Secretary
- Councilor (three openings)

Please send nominations to [James H. Lambert](#), [Brett Burk](#) and [Jill Drupa](#).
Nomination deadline: **June 21, 2018**.

SRA Member Spotlight: Akihiro Tokai, Dr. Eng, professor in the graduate school of engineering at Osaka University, recipient of the 2017 SRA Distinguished Achievement Award.

Akihiro has been working on the practical application of risk assessment for high priority socio-environmental hazard for management such as industrial supply chain, especially chemical industry and environmental infrastructure systems. His research has been focused on building advices to regulatory sectors based on risk assessment in connection with Japanese chemical management policy.



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*

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*

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

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

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.

Health & Environmental
Sciences Institute (HESI)
Microbiome Workshop
June 25-26, Alexandria, VA

The Gut Microbiome: Markers of
Human Health, Drug Efficacy and
Xenobiotic Toxicity

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

Registration deadline: June 19

**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](#).

Each month the Communications Committee selects an article from the journal for further media coverage. One of last month's selected article featured a new study on the recent rise of lung disease in coal miners.

Are Health Regulations Enough? Lung Disease on the Rise in Mine Workers

While on-the-job fatalities due to injuries and accidents have steadily decreased in nearly every industry in the U.S., the burden of debilitating lung disease in the coal mining industry has sharply increased within the last decade. A new study published in *Risk Analysis: An International Journal* examines whether compliance with health regulations at mines across the country was sufficient to decrease instances of lung

disease.

Increases in lung diseases associated with coal mining have been documented by numerous independent data sources including The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) administered Coal Workers' Health Surveillance Program, mortality data from deceased miners, federal black lung compensation and state compensation disability claims and the national transplant registry.

One strategy currently employed to prevent lung disease in mines is compliance with Mine Safety and Health Administration's (MSHA) requirements. MSHA outlines numerous rules and regulations for sampling, emission limits, medical surveillance, dust monitoring, tests for gases and air flow, etc. However, there are limited resources available to help mines determine how much to invest in each potential prevention activity. Given recent increases in dust-induced lung diseases in coal mines, research is needed to help inform resource allocation. [Read More.](#)

Each month the Communications Committee selects an article from the journal for further media coverage. One of last month's selected article featured a new study on the safety of self driving vehicles.

Survey Says: Self Driving Cars Should Reduce Traffic Fatalities by At Least 75 Percent to Stay on the Roads

The race is on for companies to present their driverless cars to the public, but recent collisions involving autonomous vehicles developed by Uber Technologies Inc. and Tesla Inc. have led consumers to questions whether these vehicles can alleviate traffic issues and increase safety. A new study published in *Risk Analysis* examined the question "How safe is safe enough for self-driving vehicles (SDVs)?"

To answer this question, researchers employed an expressed-preference approach – a method that has not previously been employed in this setting – to determine the socially acceptable risk of SDVs. The results showed that the public will not accept this new technology unless it is shown to be safer, approximately four to five times as safe as human-driven vehicles (HDVs). Despite the conveniences SDVs would bring to individuals, such as the ability to watch a movie, read a book, sleep or surf the internet, the public will be much less likely to accept, or even tolerate, SDVs if they have the same risk level as human driving. As suggested by previous studies, an individual increases his or her demand for safety when that safety is entrusted to an external factor, such as an automated vehicle.

One of the major motivations behind the development of SDVs is to improve road safety. Human error is

believed to cause 94 percent of all traffic crashes in the U.S., and 75 percent in the U.K. While SDVs have the potential to significantly reduce these types of crashes, they also introduce several new road risks, including accidents caused by cyber-attacks. Creating perfectly safe SDVs is both technologically and economically infeasible, but policies can require that the risk of having them on the road be as low as technically achievable. [Read More.](#)

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](#) and we'll be sure to share your pieces on SRA's social media channels.



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