



RISK newsletter

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Society for Risk Analysis Welcomes New Officers



President
Caron Chess



President-elect
Baruch Fischhoff



Secretary
Michael Dourson



Treasurer-elect
Pamela Williams

Thank you to officers who finished their terms in 2003 for their service to the Society for Risk Analysis:
Past President Robin Cantor, Past Treasurer Richard Belzer, and Councilors Charles Haas, Steven Lewis, and Peter Wiedemann

“Bridging Risk Divides” Baltimore 7-10 December

More information
on the 2003 Annual Meeting in
this RISK newsletter and on the
SRA Web site at www.sra.org



Councilor
Jan Gutteling



Councilor
George Gray



Councilor
Rachel Davidson

Remarks of Caron Chess Incoming Society for Risk Analysis President

I want to start out correcting a misimpression of who I am. I am *not* a risk communicator. Many of the members from the United States know the adage: “Those who can, *do*. Those who can’t, *teach*.” In my case this is amended to “Those who can’t, teach, conduct research, and kibbitz.” When I look to SRA leadership for eloquence matched with insight, I turn to Bernie Goldstein.



Incoming President Chess presents appreciation plaque to outgoing President Goldstein.

SRA is different from other professional societies because of its richness—and I don’t mean our bank accounts. We have members from different disciplines, professions, and countries. Members are based in industry and business, consulting, government, academia, and nonprofits. But there is significant room for improvement.

First, this is a sea of largely white faces. SRA has worked to change that and we will continue to do so. Paul Locke, whom you may remember as our plenary speaker from Monday, has links with the environmental justice community. We are turning to him to explore how to increase our demographic diversity. He would welcome input. (Please contact him at plocke@tfah.org if you have ideas or want to lend a hand.)

Second, we want to engage more junior members, including graduate students who go on to make SRA their home. Students, we hope you will remember who fed you at this meeting. (Note: This year Felicia

Wu and Cristina McLaughlin hosted a graduate student breakfast.)

Third, we want to increase our geographic reach, particularly in the so-called developing world. We thank the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, which supported travel costs to the annual meeting for some of these participants. (Note: Warner North also provided support for some Eastern European participants. In addition, a significant amount of the president’s budget for the annual meeting goes to travel funding for international and student participants.)

Jonathan Wiener, who won the Chauncey Starr Award this year, and Robin Cantor, the past president of SRA who co-chaired the World Congress, are convening what is, in essence, a scoping group, largely electronic, that will use the Web and email to explore how SRA can expand its international scope without becoming an “imperial power.” To do so, they will be contacting a number of you to serve as E-network contacts for ideas, concerns, and opinions from various parts of the world. SRA will also be looking for ways that the Society can sponsor sessions or workshops or otherwise contribute risk analysis expertise to events, such as conferences, hosted by other organizations with established programs in the developing world. (Contact Jonathan at wieners@law.duke.edu.)

Most important is to use our diversity to a greater extent than we do currently.

In particular, I want to push SRA to apply its diverse expertise to emerging risk issues. For example, we all know nanotechnology is a major issue. SRA needs to provide a forum for timely discussion of how risk frameworks apply to nanotechnology and other new challenges.

Because we are a diverse Society that includes a wide range of opinions, we should not take positions on issues and risk alienating members.



World Congress Cochair Robin Cantor explains her ideas for a scoping group.



Graduate student breakfast

However, even though SRA does not take policy positions, we can foster *dialogue* on policy, including policy related to new challenges. To this end, I will be proposing a new section on the Web for pilot research and op-ed pieces. They will undergo peer review to sort out constructive, informed pieces from what Tim McDaniels (an editor of the journal) calls “polemical screeds.” I want to build on, not threaten, the success and stature of our journal, yet I want a process that allows for quicker turnaround on short perspective pieces. I welcome your ideas.



Tim McDaniels talks about “polemical screeds” to SRA members.

As we move forward, we need to approach these issues with humility and openness. Risk analysis is not a cure for all of the ills which confront us. SRA not only provides venues for congratulating ourselves on our achievements—we also must critically examine our weaknesses and vigorously debate controversial risk issues.

I invite you to join me in doing this.

P.S. My favorite innovation of the 2003 Annual Meeting was Rick Belzer’s creation of a cult of Die-Hard Risk Analysts, who got T-shirts (designed by his daughter) for attending the Wednesday afternoon sessions. The lottery for free registration was also his free-market approach to increasing the participation in these sessions. It worked. We gave out 100 T-shirts and are making more for the additional 60 Die-Hard Risk Analysts who earned them.



Veronique Hauschild, Paul Weathersby, Brandolyn Thran, Joleen Johnson, and Abby Willmott show off their Die-Hard Risk Analyst T-shirts.



Steve Lewis turns in his name tag in the drawing for free meeting registration.



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 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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2003 Society for Risk Analysis Award Winners

Distinguished Achievement Award Michael Greenberg

“The American Public’s Waning Interest in Environmental Protection”

Public support in the United States for environmental protection is at a low point. For example, in March 2003, 47 percent of the US public would give priority to environmental protection over jobs and economic growth, down from a peak of over 70 percent. That change is symptomatic of the fact that Americans across the board are less concerned about air quality, water quality, and hazardous waste than they have been. Global warming and acid rain are figuratively getting the cold shoulder, with far less than a majority considering them an important priority.

What explains this change? First, the economy began to cool off in early 2001. Second, the 9/11 attacks have shifted people’s priorities to jobs and fear of attack. We’ve seen low points before, for example, during the early 1980s recession. My prediction is that concern about environmental protection will bounce back, assuming the issues of economy and security become less distressing, because surveys show that the public remains distressed about the long-term condition of the environment; people are not optimistic about environmental quality.

The bounce back I anticipate is less assured than it would have been 10 to 15 years ago. During the 1970s, the strongest supporters of environmental protection were youth. They saw films, congressional testimony, and numerous stories about the evils of pollution. But 30 years later it is the people who were youths during the late 1970s who are the major supporters and those most concerned about environmental protection. There clearly is a

cohort effect in the data. The exuberant vanguard is no longer out front leading a charge to Washington, state capitals, and corporate board rooms.

People who are poor generally are less supportive than their European heritage counterparts. Even after controlling for income, however, there is an ethnic/racial difference in concern and support for environmental protection. The fact that, in general, Asian and perhaps to a lesser extent Latino Americans are less concerned poses a huge concern for the Society for Risk Analysis. European Americans are a shrinking proportion of the national population; non-Europeans are expected to reach a majority by 2050 and, if immigration rates continue, they will be a majority sooner.

We need to work through our organizations and on our own to engage the public, especially the public that is young and not of European heritage. We need to be thinking about creating summer internships in our organizations, going to speak at our local schools, citizen clubs, and religious organizations, and working to make sure that what we do and care about does not continue to slip down the list of priorities. As some of you know SRA, with the help of ExxonMobil, has begun an effort to educate school teachers about risk analysis. Please figure out ways of contributing to this Society’s efforts and other ways of making a very distracted public aware of the important things you and this Society do.

The complete text of Greenberg’s talk can be found on the SRA Web site at www.sra.org/docs/greenberg_talk_2003.doc.



Outstanding Service Award



Richard Belzer

Outstanding Risk Practitioner Award



Charles Menzie

Chauncey Starr Award



Jonathan Wiener

Fellows of the Society for Risk Analysis



Resha Putzrath



Mitchell Small



Nick Pidgeon



Special Award for Service to SRA

Bernie Goldstein presenting Paul Deisler and Dick Schwing with their special awards for service to the Society for Risk Analysis given in appreciation for their hard work in writing a history of the Society.

Travel Awards



(left to right): Valentina Fomenko (Oregon State University), Abani Pradhan (University of Arkansas), and Jennison Kipp (The Pennsylvania State University).

Also receiving Travel Awards were Abou Ramadan, Rosana Moraes, Javier Urbina-Soria, Nicolas Bronfman, Andrea Rother, Eugene Levner, Konstantyn Atoyev, Alexandre Grebenkov, Frederic Boudier, Madhusudan Acharyya, Holly Longstaff, Stephanie Gower, Mariko Nishizawa, Jeff Masuda, Daniel Galland, Naum Borodyanskiy, Fernando Perez Rodriguez, Miguel Franca Doria, Ai Sakamoto, Jamie Wardman, Shawn G. Donaldson, Nicholas Linacre, Rosemary Castorina, Christine Brittle, Terry Flynn, Anthony Leiserowitz, Robyn Wilson, Caryn Klaff, Dolores Severtson, Yunwei Hu, Jacqueline MacDonald, George Kalchev, and Nancy Judd.

Best Paper Awards



(front, left to right): Christina Drew (with Elaine Faustman), *Translating Children's Environmental Health Risk Research: A Visual Prototype for Integrating Project Data and Underlying Risk Frameworks*; Felicia Wu, *Mycotoxin Risk Assessment for the Purpose of Setting International Standards*; Sara Eggers (with Baruch Fischhoff), *A Defensible Claim? Behaviorally Realistic Evaluation Standards*. (back, left to right): Ellen Peters, *An Emotion-Based Model of Risk Perception and Stigma Susceptibility: Cognitive Appraisals of Emotion, Affective Reactivity, Worldviews, and Risk Perceptions in the Generation of Technological Stigma*; Tony Cox (with Douglas Popken), *Bayesian Monte Carlo Uncertainty Analysis of Human Health Risks from Animal Antimicrobial Use in a Dynamic Model of Emerging Resistance*; Jeff Masuda (with T.D. Garvin), *Putting Place in Risk or Risk in Place? The Social Amplification of Risk in a Rural Context*; and Best Paper Awards Chair Ken Florig.



SRA 2003 Annual Meeting

“Risk, Science, and Regulation: Bridging the Divide”

The Monday Plenary Session—“Risk, Science, and Regulation: Bridging the Divide”—moderated by Gail Charnley (HealthRisk Strategies) included Keynote Speaker Paul Gilman, PhD (Assistant Administrator, Office of Research and Development, Science Advisor, US Environmental Protection Agency) and Respondents Bernie Goldstein (University of Pittsburgh), Leslie Hushka (ExxonMobil Chemical Company), and Paul Locke (Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health).

“Risk, Science, and Regulation: Bridging the Divide”

Paul Gilman

In risk assessment, we attempt to elucidate the connection between exposure of some stressor to its potential adverse outcome in humans (for example, disease). As a leader in the development of risk assessment approaches for regulatory decision making, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) uses to its fullest extent the relevant and available chemical- and/or site-specific data and information in characterizing risk. In addition, we encourage the development of the specific data necessary to more accurately assess potential risks, including mode-of-action data.

In many instances, there are data gaps in the underlying science and we must use default assumptions to bridge the gap in order to complete the assessment in a timely manner. Taking into account the uncertainty and variability of the data, information, and methodologies available to EPA, we tend to make science and science policy judgments to ensure we do not underestimate risk.



We must continually look for opportunities to increase our certainty and confidence in the defaults and assumptions we use, that is, encourage the derivation of more data-derived defaults.

EPA has taken the lead in developing policies and guidances for the conduct of risk assessment (for example, Risk Assessment Guidelines for different endpoints, Risk Characterization Policy, Peer Review Handbook). Further, EPA is working on many efforts to improve our risk assessment practice and build up the body of credible science for use in assessments and the derivation of default assumptions. Efforts including activities such as research in the Office of Research and Development, the updating of the Cancer Risk Assessment Guidelines, EPA's Computational Toxicology initiative, improvements to the Integrated Risk Information System, and constant vigilance to peer review all contribute to increased understanding and use of sound science in informing regulations.

“Bridging International Divides: Does the Developing World Need Risk Analysis?”

The Tuesday Plenary Session—“Bridging International Divides: Does the Developing World Need Risk Analysis?”—was presented by Moderator Christopher Schonwalder (Senior Environmental Health Advisor to the Director, Fogarty International Center, National Institutes of Health) and Panelists Rosana Moraes, PhD (Golder Associates Brazil, Rio de Janeiro), Jamal Hisham Hashim, PhD (Professor of Environmental Health at the Department of Community Health, Faculty of Medicine at the National University of Malaysia), and Kuku Voyi, PhD (Associate Professor, School of Health Systems and Public Health University of Pretoria).

Introduction

Christopher Schonwalder

Risk analysis really is where the rubber meets the road and the ultimate goal is risk management. Why support risk analysis in the developing world? (1) Because you can get some good science and very good information through associations and collaborations with the developing world. (2) It is good foreign policy to help countries in the developing world by training them to set standards.



Further sessions were held during the rest of the meeting to discuss SRA's role in supporting risk analysis in the developing world and SRA members were asked to participate and share information concerning SRA's role.

“Improving Decision Making Based Upon Risk Assessment in South America: Lessons Learned from Two Recent Projects”

Rosana Moraes

Science is an essential foundation for effective environmental assessment, but we must recognize that it is only one element in the decision-making process. Despite our efforts to develop new tools for risk assessment, they alone will not solve environmental problems in developing countries, even if these tools are well adapted to the conditions of these countries. Problems will remain as long as existing environmental regulations are not implemented, institutional issues are disregarded, and decision



makers are not aware of the applicability of tools such as risk assessment.

During this talk the major difficulties regarding project planning, data collection, implementation of the study, as well as the interaction with stakeholders and risk managers which were faced during two large environmental risk assessment projects—one in Brazil and another in Bolivia—were presented. Based on the experiences gathered during those studies, the panelists and audience were invited to think about and discuss how to improve the decision making based on risk assessment, not only in South America, but in other developing regions.

“Risk Analysis in Prioritizing Health Issues in Developing Countries”

Jamal Hisham Hashim

There are similarities and differences between the developed and developing countries in the approach that should be used in the practice of risk analysis. In both worlds, risk analysis



is a useful methodology for assessing existing and future environmental and health hazards. It can also be an effective tool for assisting countries in making sound decisions on setting standards, guidelines, and allowable exposures to environmental hazards. However, inherent differences between the two worlds in terms of science, politics, and societal value systems must be strategically addressed. There is a communication gap between the scientific

community and the policy makers in both worlds, and risk analysis can be used as a bridging tool between the two. This gap is however more apparent in the developing world where policy makers are normally the dominant decision makers.

It is critical that when we conduct risk analysis in the developing world, we should not lose sight of the most important sociopolitical issues, namely poverty, low education, poor health, government inefficiency, human rights abuse, and exploitation of labor. Risk analysis must help improve on these issues and not cause more problems than it intends to solve.

Developing countries undoubtedly need risk analysis, especially when their pace of development is sometimes more

rapid than what was experienced in the developed countries. However, simpler but more comprehensive tools are needed because expertise is limited, and a broader social concern is at stake than merely environmental protection. There are many ways by which risk analysts from the developed countries can assist, but they first need to understand the sociopolitical scenarios in the developing countries. Lastly, it should be emphasized that developing countries are a heterogeneous grouping and stereotyping them would be a mistake.

“Crossing Boundaries in Human Health Risk Assessment for Southern Africa”

Kuku Voyi

The development in Southern Africa varies greatly among countries. It is important for state and nongovernment agencies to work together across Southern African Development Community (SADC) to ensure that health issues are central to development. Currently South Africa does have health risk assessment in some countries, however, there is little focus on health risk. The South African Department of Health is drafting environmental health impact assessment guidelines which will be used in conjunction with the Environmental Impact Assessment guidelines.

A question to ask is can the standards and guidelines of developed countries be adapted to the local needs of these developing countries without training and guidance to the users?

It is necessary to consider who needs the training and what type of training should be given (it will not be one size fits all), who should develop the training, who determines the suitability of the skills, where the training is going to take place (if people are trained outside of SADC they should be required to then return to build capacity and apply their knowledge to the benefit of the region). In addition, what are the funding sources and what institutions will participate in the program.

The proposed model for risk assessment presented in this talk would include collaboration, joint funding, use of the best practices in the developing world, and a Web site as a center of information for all those involved in the assessment.



Call for Nominations for 2004 SRA Council

The Society for Risk Analysis Nominations Committee invites nominations for the following offices in the Society's elections for 2004:

President-elect

Three Councilors

Active members may submit in writing to the Nominations Committee the name and proposed office for any qualified nominee. Additionally, any active member may submit a petition for nomination for inclusion on the next annual Ballot. Such petitions must include the written support of at least 25 other active members for the nominee to be listed on the Ballot.

Please submit nominations by **3 May 2004** to Secretariat, Society for Risk Analysis, 1313 Dolley Madison Blvd., Suite 402, McLean, VA 22102; phone: 703-790-1745; fax: 703-790-2672; email: SRA@BurkInc.com.

“Building Bridges to the Future: Lessons Learned from Anthrax, 2001”

The Wednesday Plenary Session—“Building Bridges to the Future: Lessons Learned from Anthrax, 2001”—was presented by Moderator Caron Chess (2004 SRA President) and Panelists Thomas Day (Vice President Engineering, US Postal Service), Monica Schoch-Spana (Senior Fellow, Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center), and Ivan Walks (CEO, Ivan Walks & Associates).



Introduction

Caron Chess

This plenary session presents not only information about lessons learned about anthrax—discussion and study of the anthrax event also provides lessons to risk analysts in dealing with many risk events that have tremendous uncertainty.

“USPS Response to Anthrax Events”

Thomas Day

In September and October 2001, seven letters (four known and three suspect) postmarked out of Trenton, New Jersey, resulted in 22 fully confirmed cases of anthrax infection, including five deaths.



When the US Postal Service (USPS) realized this was not only an event with specific targets, but that a postal service facility also became contaminated, it started an employee personal protection program with the help of an expert panel with knowledge and experience of postal systems and processes and knowledge of specific agents and threats.

The overall strategy of the USPS if there is a threat to the system is to detect it (biohazard detection system), contain it (ventilation/filtration system), neutralize it (decontamination), and offer a level of deterrence to discourage further attacks.

In order to continue to protect postal employees and customers and safeguard the mail from future attacks, the USPS will use many technologies working together to provide near real-time detection at the entry unit; limit potential exposure to employees; ensure that mail does not leave the facility, eliminating cross-facility contamination; implement a controlled shutdown of the facility; and reduce the decontamination effort needed.

“Responding to Bioterrorism in the Information Age: Public Reflections on Anthrax”

Monica Schoch-Spana

Findings of a national study to advise government and public health leaders on the communication requirements of bioterrorism response, based upon experiences during the 2001 anthrax attacks and challenges anticipated during a smallpox attack, were discussed. Twenty-three focus groups were conducted July 2002 to June 2003 among three priority subject groups: (1) official responders (for example, local political leaders, health officials, emergency managers, safety officials, phy-

sicians, nurses, journalists, Red Cross), (2) people potentially at increased risk of anthrax exposure (for example, mail handlers, congressional staff, media organization staff, others in anthrax epicenters), and (3) grassroots leaders from a broad variety of organizations and neighborhoods. Research sites were selected for their proximity to or distance from the 2001 terrorist events and to represent diverse regions of the country as well as cities of varying size and density.

Key findings include (1) **Communication in the information age:** Modern outbreaks involve a diffuse public without immediate epidemiological or physical involvement. We must deal with this contemporary condition of epidemics through effective communications. (2) **Uncertainty amidst expectations of scientific precision:** Public expectations of instantaneous knowledge by government experts regarding the scope and nature of a public health crisis and possible solutions are high; we need to recalibrate. (3) **Public health in a world of have and have not:** Bioterrorist crises map onto existing social and economic fault lines (for example, race/ethnicity, labor/management).



“Lessons Learned”

Ivan Walks

There is a big difference between telling people what you know and what you tell people to do. How do you get to a point where you communicate that?

There are divides present that need to be crossed: social/economic, historic, cultural, health status, health history, and health literacy. The challenge is in communication and credibility—you must have **credible** folks giving a **clear** message to get **everyone** to respond.



Among the many lessons learned from the anthrax attacks are (1) you need a subject-matter expert available, (2) you need to be a listener as well as a teacher at all times, (3) the job you have to do is more important than you the individual, (4) most of the folks who show up for treatment aren't physically injured—we have to look at psychological aspects also, and (5) relationships made in time of crisis can help a lot post-crisis, for example, in dealing with immunizing school children, obesity, and asthma.

When you are in an unfamiliar situation and don't have all the facts, you need “imaginative leadership” to develop creative solutions. As risk communicators, we must be able to tell people what we know and what we don't know and when we will know more. We need to continue to be honest with people.

Making Interdisciplinary Collaborations Work

Society for Risk Analysis Roundtable, 10 December 2003, Discussion led by Ann Fisher and Mitchell Small

Most health, safety, cultural, and economic risk problems now require an interdisciplinary framing and approach to develop effective solutions. Few organizations are equipped to assemble and manage the diverse teams needed to accomplish the interdisciplinary collaboration that is essential for effective research, policy analysis, and implementation of decisions for these problems. More than 20 participants—from industry, government, and academic sectors and representing several countries—discussed the need for help in improving their interdisciplinary capabilities at the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) 2003 Annual Meeting, raising questions and sharing conceptual insights as well as practical experience.

Participants stressed communication as key to effective interdisciplinary collaboration. This includes being proactive in talking with others (rather than waiting for them to contact you), being open to other perspectives (that is, having respect for one another's disciplinary assumptions such as what constitutes a desired or baseline state, as well as differing disciplinary standards for judging credibility), and LISTENING.

A common understanding of goals can help in identifying potential collaborators and initiating working relationships. This common understanding covers several questions: (1) What basic problem/issue/topic is being addressed? (2) What hypotheses are to be tested; what analytical methods are to be used? (3) What main (interdisciplinary) products (for example, a process, a number, a report, a decision) are we to produce? and (4) How will we measure progress toward desired outcomes; how will we know when we've accomplished our goals?

Interdisciplinary collaboration requires shared definitions of key terms—learning to speak the same language so that jargon does not get in the way of progress. Definitions tend to be more helpful when their development keeps in mind the needs of the intended audience(s). Interdisciplinary efforts must demonstrate their importance and saliency to this audience as part of the crucial step of problem framing. For instance, the development of a policy for food protection should consider the full range of technical, economic, and behavioral factors that affect contamination during production, packaging, and use; the economic incentives for producers, retailers, and consumers; and the psychological and perceptual factors that affect consumer choice in product selection and preparation. With this framing, an interdisciplinary approach by a team of food safety scientists, economists, and human behavioral scientists not only makes sense, but is essential for effective problem assessment and policy development.

Participants suggested alternative approaches to the collaboration process. One (bottom-up) model assigns responsibility to a “worker bee” (for example, a graduate student or junior staffer) as the “do-er” for the “chiefs” who represent different disciplinary expertise; this person goes to each expert as needed to accomplish shared goals. The “worker bee” provides the daily glue that integrates their input and feedback so that relatively few meetings are needed among the full set of disciplinary expertise. Another (top-down) model relies more on a team leader/manager who identifies the responsibilities of each person or discipline in terms of the type of analysis needed, the format and timing for output from each

disciplinary group so that it will be useful as input to another group, and interim goals and timing of progress reports to the larger team (and to audiences). This approach typically relies on regular team meetings with presentations that demonstrate progress and stimulate new ideas. Either approach involves communication among the team members so that adjustments can be made early, enabling efficient progress toward the shared goals. Of course, elements of both models can be combined, depending on the organizational structure and available skills and personalities. Participants noted that decision makers sometimes fail to use interdisciplinary research and analysis output; building consensus about the value of interdisciplinary collaboration often occurs in small steps. In turn, these steps can lead to changes in the way the collaboration occurs and in how results are presented—what might be called “adaptive collaboration.”

Interdisciplinary collaborations face challenges when commercial interests preclude the sharing of some types of information, or when cultural differences cause different concerns across team members in addition to their disciplinary differences. One participant worried about implementing safe practices at amusement parks, when the employees and customers speak a wide range of languages and when a particular safe practice would be straightforward for some cultures but offensive for others. In another example, concerns about the risk of growth hormones in chickens may have much less relevance in a poor country having few chickens for its hungry population than in a richer country with ample poultry supplies. For some examples, teaming a local person with a (nonlocal) expert has overcome misunderstandings caused by cultural differences.

Additional challenges arise because many organizations lack reward structures for those who work effectively across disciplines. Universities, for example, emphasize disciplinary publications for promotion and tenure decisions; this gives interdisciplinary collaborations a high opportunity cost for a junior faculty member. A role for professional societies such as SRA is to promote interdisciplinary collaborations, perhaps by offering annual prizes for the best interdisciplinary presentation and article. Such concrete incentives will make it easier for tenure and review officials (and supervisors in other organizations) to recognize the importance of interdisciplinary collaborations.

Building effective interdisciplinary collaborations can be time consuming and difficult, but their output often is genuinely science in the service of society. Once established, an interdisciplinary team's members tend to discover productive collaborations beyond the initial motivating task. Sustaining interdisciplinary networks can be extremely valuable. Particular teams might change because of the need for different disciplinary skills as the questions change in response to answers from earlier collaborations or as society's (and the organization's) needs evolve. However, a sustained interdisciplinary network often can tap additional expertise as needed and can “ramp up” much faster than starting from scratch. Those with experience in such collaborations have the satisfaction of seeing how the research or policy analysis goes beyond multidisciplinary and becomes genuinely interdisciplinary—often with results that address crucial societal needs.



Regulatory Risk Review

In the Balance

David P. Clarke

The US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new Administrator, Governor Mike Leavitt of Utah, will seek solutions to environmental controversies in what he calls "the productive middle." Guided by a philosophy dubbed "Enlibra" (from the Latin "move toward balance"), Leavitt will strive to make environmental progress through such principles as flexibility, partnership and collaboration, national standards and neighborhood solutions, markets instead of mandates, and other seemingly sound and commonsensical approaches, including "science for facts, process for priorities." But environmental policy today can at times resemble a cross between a quagmire and a minefield—a muddy place indeed—where one person's progress is another person's travesty. Thus, finding a productive middle may be easier to ask for than to receive.

In concept, however, there's a lot in Enlibra for everybody interested in serious environmental solutions (it's worth noting that the principles are bipartisan, coauthored by Leavitt and Democratic Governor John Kitzhaber of Oregon). Risk assessors most certainly should understand that Leavitt's philosophy of separating "subjective choices from objective data" resembles the "analytic-deliberative process" described in the 1996 National Research Council report *Understanding Risk: Informing Decisions in a Democratic Society*, which a number of Society for Risk Analysis members were involved in developing, including the Society's new president, Caron Chess.

Decrying the fractious, polarizing polemics that typify so many debates over complex environmental issues, the Enlibra approach suggests: "A much better approach is to reach agreement on the underlying facts as well as the range of uncertainty surrounding the issue before framing the choices." This should be music to the ears of risk assessors. Additionally, "A public, balanced and inclusive collaborative process should be used, with a range of respected scientists and peer-reviewed science. If agreement on scientific facts cannot be reached, decision-makers must evaluate the differing information and

make the difficult policy choices." I imagine the risk assessors in the audience, like aficionados listening to Italian opera, applauding and shouting, "Bravo!"

Of course, that's the way it's supposed to be now. Yet, as good as it sounds, environmental policy makers all too frequently must slog through the muck, pelted by rhetorical tomatoes and dissenting hoots. It turns out you can lead the public to water, but you can't make it drink, especially if you say it's potable but they perceive it to be poison. "Nay!" they shout. (Or is it neigh?) Clearly, Enlibra's power to frame a productive middle hangs in the balance.

EPA's massive "risk review" will be relevant to Leavitt's quest for productive middle. Last February, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued its annual draft report on the costs and benefits of federal regulations. In the *Federal Register* notice making the draft available, OMB asked for public comment

... environmental policy today can at times resemble a cross between a quagmire and a minefield ...

on some risk-related issues, especially on whether current risk assessments are overly precautionous.

EPA's risk policies and practices received some major criticisms, particularly from the regulated community whose basic concern is that EPA risk assessments are overly conservative and bear little relation to reality. In response, the Agency's Science Advisor, Dr. Paul Gilman, initiated a major review of the current status of EPA risk assessments. With some 70 Agency staff responding to specific criticisms and evaluating what is true and false about current Agency practice, the risk-review document reportedly exceeds 200 pages. Originally due out for public review in December, the draft may not see broad daylight until March 2004, or later.

As a new year begins—the 34th since EPA was established with such enthusiasm in 1970—one can only hope that EPA's risk review will provide a solid foundation for Enlibra's goals of sorting facts from policy choices. Productive, rather than polarized (and paralyzed), is the right goal for environmental policy, as difficult as it sometimes might be to get there.

Special Call for Papers in Risk Communication

The Risk Communication Specialty Group (RCSG) will host two Competitive Paper Panels at next year's Society for Risk Analysis Annual Meeting in Palm Springs. These panels will be scheduled in time slots that do not conflict with other risk communication or risk perception panels on Monday and Tuesday morning. The objective of these panels will be to showcase high-impact, cutting-edge developments in risk communication and related disciplines. Authors wishing to compete for one of the eight time slots in these panels will need to submit abstracts to SRA (in the regular manner) by the conference submission deadline. In addition to submitting an abstract, however, authors will also need to submit completed papers for peer review by the conference submission deadline to Dr. Joseph Arvai, the current Chair of the RCSG (c/o School of Natural Resources, The Ohio State University, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH 43210). Papers selected by the peer-review committee will be awarded time slots in the Competitive Paper Panels. Note that submitting papers for this special call does not preclude authors from also submitting their manuscripts to other competitions within SRA.



Specialty Groups

Risk Communication Specialty Group

Joseph Arvai, Chair, with assistance from Felicia Wu and Christine Brittle

The 2003 SRA Annual Meeting in Baltimore marked the end of a productive year within the Risk Communication Specialty Group (RCSG). Over the past year, our members have been involved in a wide variety of interdisciplinary research projects—in areas such as organizational behavior, the decision sciences, and stakeholder engagement—that serve to further develop the theoretical underpinnings of our science. Over the same time period, other members of the RCSG have worked diligently in the arena of practice to design and implement thoughtful and creative risk communication efforts in a variety of often-challenging contexts.

Perhaps the best sign of the group's intellectual and practical growth, however, can be witnessed in the work of students affiliated with the specialty group. Besides enrolling in courses that focus on risk communication (examples from several institutions are available online at the RCSG Web site at <http://www.sra.org/rcsg/>), the quality of student-directed research has been nothing short of excellent. To recognize exemplary student work, ExxonMobil and the RCSG again sponsored the 7th Annual Student Paper Competition. After an open call for papers in the spring, all submissions were blind reviewed by a panel of distinguished judges (not affiliated with ExxonMobil). Harkening back to the first year of the competition, two students shared the award for Best Student Paper: Erika Waters of Rutgers University (for her paper titled *Using Graphical Displays to Improve Comprehension of Risk Tradeoffs*) and Robyn Wilson of The Ohio State University (for her paper titled *Improving Environmental Risk Management: Striking a Balance Between Affect and Analysis in Decision-Making*) will both receive plaques and a cheque for \$500 from ExxonMobil and the RCSG in recognition of their fine work. Anthony Leiserowitz of the University of Oregon was the runner-up for this year's award (for his paper titled *Affective Imagery and Risk Perceptions of Global Climate Change*); he receives a one-year subscription to *The Journal of Risk Research*. The RCSG would like to acknowledge the work of all the students who submitted papers this year. Also, thanks to this year's Award and Judging Committee: Bob Griffin (chair), Katherine McComas, Lois Levitan, Bob O'Connor, Donnaly Pompper, Susanna Hornig Priest, Cliff Scherer, Felicia Wu, and Eunho Yeo. Finally, special thanks to Steve Lewis who will be retiring from ExxonMobil this year. Steve's efforts have been instrumental to the continued success of the Student Paper Com-



Steve Lewis with Best Student Paper Award winners Erika Waters (center) and Robyn Wilson.

petition and the specialty group as a whole; his hard work has not gone unnoticed.

Plans for an international risk communication Summit Meeting in 2005 were also announced at this year's annual meeting. This meeting will be the first of its kind since the risk communication community met 10 years ago in Annapolis, Maryland. The goal of the summit will be to engage members of the risk communication community in a thoughtful discussion about emerging themes in risk communication research and practice. Several possible venues for the summit have been suggested, including locations in North America and Europe. A refereed call for papers (to also be published in a special issue of the *Journal of Risk Research*) will be made later in 2004.

Finally, some congratulations and thanks are in order: Congratulations to Cliff Scherer (vice-chair) and Ragnar Löfstedt and Cindy Jardine (incoming Executive Committee members) who were elected to their posts in 2003. We send sincere thanks to both our outgoing chair, Bob O'Connor, who was instrumental in the level of success the RCSG achieved this year, and RCSG-alum Caron Chess for her efforts as SRA president.

Dose Response Specialty Group

Gary L. Foureman, President

The Dose Response Specialty Group (DRSG) and Ecological Risk Assessment Specialty Group held a joint mixer at the 2003 Annual Meeting Tuesday evening, 9 December. Attendance was excellent and the discussions lively as members from the two groups explored similarities and differences in their respective areas of expertise, one-on-one, while partaking of some most tasty Maryland crab dip. The format of discussion and mixing, *vice* having a formal speaker, seemed to work quite well.

Although the DRSG had covered and concluded most business at its traditional breakfast this same morning, a few items remained to be attended to at the mixer, including announcing results of the December elections for the open officerships within DRSG and the Student Award winner. Ralph Kodell (NCTR/US FDA) was announced as president-elect, Michael Zager (US EPA/ORD/ NHEERL) as incoming vice-president, and Chandrika Moudgal (US EPA/ORD/NCEA) as incoming trustee-at-large. Outgoing officers Justin Teeguarden (vice-president) and Lynne Haber (trustee) were applauded for their service to the DRSG; Secretary/Treasurer Peter McClure was acknowledged and encouraged in his coming second year at this post. Past President John Lipscomb received an award for his diligent and most excellent service through this past year in the role of president. The Student Award winner, selected by the DRSG executive committee from among five submissions, was Dr. James Yiin, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health in Cincinnati, Ohio, for his submission on "Exposure to Diesel Exhaust and Risk of Lung Cancer in the Trucking Industry." Yiin also received recognition at the Monday presentation of his work.

The DRSG endorsed the following sessions, all of which were well attended: "Computational Methods and Modeling"; "Integrating Epidemiological Data in Risk Assessment, Parts 1 & 2" (along with the Food/Water Safety Risk Specialty Group); "PBPK Models: Parameters, Distributions and Pre-

dictions"; and "Inhaled Agents: Approaches and Applications." Also, DRSG's Jim Wilson chaired a roundtable discussion on "Estimating Response at Low Dose."

If you would like to develop a topic as a workshop, symposium, or roundtable discussion for the next annual meeting (5-8 December 2004) in Palm Springs, California, please contact Gary Foureman (foureman@epa.gov) or one of the other above-named officers. For more information on the overall activities of the DRSG you may visit the SRA Web site (<http://www.sra.org>) and follow the links from Chapters and Sections to the DRSG Web site.

The DRSG holds teleconference calls 3:30 to 4:30 (EDT) on the first Tuesday of each month and hosts quarterly teleseminars on dose response-related topics of interest. Newcomers are most welcome at the dial-in number of 202-275-0166, code 0577#.

Economics and Benefits Analysis Specialty Group

Cristina McLaughlin, Chair

At the December 2003 SRA Annual Meeting in Baltimore, keeping with the theme of building bridges across disciplines, the Economics and Benefits Analysis Specialty Group sponsored several symposia and two half-day workshops. The symposia and sessions included (a) integrating risk and economics, (b) the economics of natural systems, (c) genetically modified crops, and (d) evaluating risk trade-offs.

The group sponsored workshops ("Elementary Economics for Non Economist Risk Assessors" and "Public Choice, Risk Analysis and the Development of Regulations") on Sunday—prior to the annual meeting—which were a great success. The Economics and Benefits Analysis Specialty Group held its business meeting—chaired by Scott Farrow—during which we elected new officers and brainstormed for plans for the coming year. Cristina McLaughlin was elected chair and Curtis Haymore was elected vice-chair for the coming year. Some of the suggestions made included the following: (1) consider a student award for best paper, (2) develop a symposium on uncertainty and benefits analysis, and (3) encourage a broader call for papers in other professional outlets. We ask those who are interested in getting more involved this year to contact either Cristina McLaughlin (cristina.mclaughlin@cfsan.fda.gov) or Curtis Haymore (chaymore@cadmusgroup.com).

Exposure Assessment Specialty Group

Susan Flack, Chair

At the December 2003 SRA Annual Meeting in Baltimore, the Exposure Assessment Specialty Group (EASG) endorsed several symposia and individual presentations, including the Voluntary Children's Chemical Evaluation Program Pilot-Integrative Exposure Evaluations; Expert Judgment in Characterizing Uncertainties for Quantitative Risk Assessment; Regulatory Processes, Peer Review, and Validation; Probabilistic Methods to Assess Worker Exposure to Agricultural Pesticides; Bioavailability/Uptake for Human or Ecological Exposures; Inhalation-Related Exposures; 2-Dimensional Monte-Carlo Models; and Value of Information Techniques. Our special thanks to Lee Salamone, Katy Walker, Kim Thompson, Rick Reiss, Jacqueline Patterson, Yvette Lowney, Haluk Ozkaynak, Elizabeth Julien, and Paul Price for organizing these symposia.

The EASG also held a business meeting/mixer on Monday evening, 8 December. Thanks to the Renaissance catering staff for the delicious Maryland crab dip. It was unanimously voted the best appetizer of the meeting. The agenda for the meeting included a mixer, followed by presentation of the student research award, and concluded with the annual business meeting. Items discussed at the business meeting included new annual dues of \$10 for EASG membership, future sponsorship of the student research award, and nominations for chair-elect and webmaster for the EASG Web site.

The first annual EASG Best Student Research in Exposure Assessment Award was presented to Stephanie Gower of the University of Waterloo for her poster titled "Development of the PEARLS Model and Monte Carlo Simulation to Predict Internal Exposure to PM (10-2.5) and PM 2.5 in Toronto." The award consisted of a \$100 cash prize, a \$500 travel award, and a complementary meeting registration and 2004 membership in the Society for Risk Analysis. Two runners-up were also selected, Fumie Yokota for her oral presentation titled "Optimal Stopping Strategy for Tiered Chemical Testing: A Value of Information Approach" and Hsin-I Lin for her poster platform presentation titled "A Probabilistic Approach to Estimate Human Exposure and Health Risks from Fish Consumption."



EASG Chair Susan Flack (left) and award winner Stephanie Gower.

Our special thanks to Caron Chess and the Society for sponsoring the EASG Best Student Research Award this year. Annual membership dues for the EASG were initiated in 2003 and are intended to fund the student research award in future years. We invite all current EASG members to show their support of the specialty group by continuing to participate as a paid member. If you or your company would like to sponsor the EASG in general or specific EASG activities, such as the student research award, please contact Susan Flack (sflack@chemrisk.com).

For more information on the EASG or its activities, please contact Susan Flack at sflack@chemrisk.com or 415-896-2400 x1013.

Ecological Risk Assessment Specialty Group Biannual Report 2002-2003

Igor Linkov, Past Chair

Summary

The Ecological Risk Assessment Specialty Group (ERASG) focuses on the ecological impact of environmental stressors and is open to all members of the Society for Risk Analysis. Group membership includes about 80 members with interests in ecological modeling, economic valuation of ecological resources, and population-level risk assessment methods.

Major accomplishments in 2002-2003 include:

- Establishing formal officer election procedure and tenure
- Creation of the Web site (<http://www.neptuneandco.com/sra-erasg/>)
- Building a financial base (we have achieved a three-fold increase in net assets)
- Establishing a best student paper award

- Supporting multiple symposia and sessions during SRA annual meetings as well as external workshops
- Conducting joint seminars and sessions with SRA-New England and SETAC

Formalization of Group Officer Elections

To maintain continuity of leadership in the specialty group, a sequence of chair-elect, chair, and past chair was started. Group chairs will serve a term of two years, beginning at the end of the annual business meeting that follows the election and continuing through the second annual business meeting that follows the chair taking office. During the first year of his/her tenure, the chair will organize group activities in close collaboration with the past chair. During the second year, the chair-elect will take the place of the past chair in working with the group chair.

Establishment of Best Student Paper Award

In 2003, we were unable to make the award due to a delayed response from SRA on the ERASG financial status. Starting in 2004, the ERASG will award a \$500 travel award and a \$100 cash award, including a conference fee waiver, to the author of the best student research paper on the topic of ecological risk assessment that is presented at the SRA annual meeting. Students whose abstracts have been accepted will be notified in July and must submit a three- to five-page extended abstract to the ERASG to be considered for the best student paper award. A select number of authors of extended abstracts will be asked to submit a paper to the ERASG by 15 October for final consideration. Abstracts and papers will be blind reviewed by a panel of judges. A prize may not be awarded if the papers received are not of sufficient quality. If circumstances prevent attendance at the annual meeting, the author should arrange for the paper to be presented by someone else.

Continuing Education Workshops at the Annual Meetings

- “Bayesian Analysis and Applications in Risk Assessment” (full-day, Baltimore, 2003)
- “Introduction to Bayesian Techniques in Risk Assessment” (half-day, New Orleans, 2002)
- “Advanced Bayesian Techniques in Risk Assessment” (half-day, New Orleans, 2002)

Symposia at the Annual Meetings

- “Structured and Dependable Decision-Making Processes for Reuse of Contaminated and Disturbed Sites” (Baltimore, 2003, half-day, Chairs: I. Linkov and T. Bridges; prepared in collaboration with SETAC)
- “The Role of Risk Analysis in Environmental Security & Emergency Response in the Mediterranean Region” (Baltimore, 2003, 90 minutes, Chairs: B. Morel and A. Ramadan)
- “Ecological Soil Screening Levels (Eco-SSLs)” (New Orleans, 2003, half-day, Chair: Ron Checkai)
- “Risk Analysis for Invasive Species” (New Orleans, 2002, Mark Powell)

Sessions at the Annual Meetings

Baltimore, 2003

- “Bioavailability/Uptake for Human or Ecological Receptors”
- “Risk Assessment for Sediments - Model Uncertainties”
- “New Methods in Ecological Risk Assessment”
- “Modeling Approaches in Ecological Risk Assessment”
- “Bioavailability/Uptake for Human or Ecological Receptors” (cosponsored with the Exposure Assessment Specialty Group)
- Poster Session

New Orleans, 2002

- “Ecological Risk Assessment and Management”
- “Modeling at Different Spatial Scales in Risk Assessment”
- “Chemical Bioavailability from Environmental Media and Uptake by Biota”
- “Probabilistic Modeling”
- Poster Session

Activities Jointly Sponsored by ERASG and SRA-New England

- SRA-NE October Seminar (8 October 2003), “The Spatially Explicit Exposure Module (SEEM): An Expanded Landscape for Wildlife Exposure Assessment Tools,” Charles A. Menzie, Menzie-Cura and Associates, Chelmsford, Massachusetts; “Using Landscape Analysis to Estimate Exposure—Estimating PCB Concentrations in Floodplain Soils Using Habitat Constrained Spatial Weighting,” John P. Lortie, President, Woodlot Alternatives, Topsham, Maine
- Special Seminar in Boston (July 2003), “Fecal Leakage: Modeling *Campylobacter* in Chicken Processing Using Probabilistic Inversion,” by Dr. Roger Cooke of Delft University (Netherlands)
- Special Seminar in Boston (13 January 2003). Gordon Butte and Sarah Thorne of Decision Partners spoke on “Improving Ecological and Environmental Management Effectiveness with Strategic Risk Communication.” Thomas Gloria of ICF Consulting presented a lecture on “A Taxonomy of Life Cycle Impact Categories: Focus on Ecological Risk.”
- Special Seminar in Boston (25 July 2002). Lawrence A. Kapustka, PhD, President and Senior Ecotoxicologist, of Ecological Planning and Toxicology, Inc., Corvallis, Oregon, presented a talk titled “Ecological Risk Assessments in Terrestrial Systems: Discussion of Habitat Characterization and Food Webs” and Igor Linkov, PhD, Senior Risk Assessor, ICF Consulting, Inc., Lexington, Massachusetts, presented a talk titled “Spatially Explicit Risk-Based Approaches for Assessing Environmental Value and Reuse Options at Contaminated Sites.”

Activities Jointly Sponsored by ERASG and SETAC

- Symposia on “Structured and Dependable Decision-Making Processes for Reuse of Contaminated and Disturbed Sites” (Baltimore, 2003, half-day, Chairs: I. Linkov and T. Bridges; prepared in collaboration with SETAC)
- Session on “Spatially Explicit Risk Assessment: Blending Landscape Ecology with the Ecological Risk Process” at the World Congress on Risk in Brussels, June 2003

Other Events

- 2003 joint mixer and business meeting with the Dose Response Specialty Group
- 2003 ERASG poster at 2003 SETAC Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas
- ERASG and SRA cosponsored a NATO Advanced Study Institute on “Strategic Management of Marine Ecosystems” 1-11 October 2003 in Sophia Antipolis (Nice-Cannes area), France.
- ERASG and SRA supported a NATO Advanced Research Workshop on “Comparative Risk Assessment and Environmental Decision Making,” in Rome (Italy), October 2002.

Financial Statement (Estimates)

Budget at the end of 2001	\$2,500
Budget at the end of 2003	\$7,500





Chapter News

Northern California Chapter

Greg Brorby, Past President

The Northern California Chapter of the Society for Risk Analysis (NCCSRA) hosted its third event of the year (a record!) on “Perchlorate—Science, Tort & Management” in November. The event, held at Camp Dresser & McKee’s Walnut Creek office, featured scientists, risk analysts, and attorneys addressing the current knowledge of perchlorate toxicology and risk assessment, impacts to business and the community (from both the plaintiff and defense perspectives), and legal and business liability associated with investigation and remediation costs. Ms. Karen Jenni, a principal at Geomatrix Consultants, Inc., discussed how decision analysis can be used to define and manage different types of risk associated with releases of perchlorate to the environment. Dr. David Ting, a staff toxicologist with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment of the California Environmental Protection Agency, provided an overview of the science and regulatory aspects of perchlorate. The seminar concluded with a lively debate regarding toxic tort issues between Mr. Richard Franco, Esq., of Duane Morris, LLP (for the plaintiffs), and Mr. Earl Hagström, Esq., of Sedgwick, Detert, Moran & Arnold, LLP (for the defense).

To become a member of the NCCSRA, please contact Secretary Cassandra Tzou at 925-296-8023 or TzouKH@cdm.com.

We would like to invite all interested individuals to visit our Web site at <http://www.sra.org/ncc> for announcements of new events, including an upcoming half-day seminar addressing indoor air quality.

New England Chapter

Susan Matkoski, Newsletter Coordinator

The November meeting of the New England Chapter focused on risks to children and featured Kimberly Thompson of the Harvard School of Public Health, whose talk was “Managing Children’s Risks: It Takes a Commitment,” and Dale Hattis of Clark University, whose talk was “Age-Related Differences in Susceptibility to Carcinogenesis.” Dr. Thompson’s talk focused on the issues of improving the information available to assess the risks to kids and the importance of using good information to put children’s risks into context. She emphasized the importance of developing the field of pediatric risk analysis and ensuring that research on children’s risks leads to better choices and a larger commitment to improving the lives of children. Dr. Hattis presented how they systematically assembled and analyzed available animal and human data bearing on the differences in sensitivity to carcinogenesis as a function of age in fetal, neonatal, and adult life stages to facilitate quantitative use of these data in quantitative risk assessments. Their results indicate appreciable differences in relative pup/adult sensitivity between mutagenic vs. putative nonmutagenic carcinogens, and between male vs. female animals. In addition, the results suggest that preadult exposures to mutagenic carcinogens pose lifetime cancer risks that are comparable to risks from much longer exposures during adulthood.

The December meeting featured two luminaries of the SRA: F. Owen Hoffman, founder and president of SENES, Oak

Ridge, provided a talk on “Insights into the Public Health Legacy of the Cold War Era” and our own Northeast section president-elect Igor Linkov spoke to the topic of “Ecological Risk Assessment: Reconciling Theory and Practice.” Dr. Hoffman spoke about how after decades of diminished public awareness on the subject of health risks resulting from exposure to fallout, the release of the National Cancer Institute’s 1997 report on nationwide exposure to ¹³¹I from the Nevada Test Site has led to renewed interest. Many of the public requests for information stem from individual and family health problems, the right to credible and full disclosure of information, and the need for medical care and assistance for exposure-related health problems. Dr. Linkov described the development and application of statistical methodology to the deterministic and probabilistic phases of an ecological risk assessment recently conducted by ICF Consulting at a Superfund site. He discussed considerable research in the area of multicriteria decision analysis that could be used to supplement risk assessment and to apply scientific decision theoretical approaches to the multicriteria problem of remedial policy selection.

The spring programs started in January. With a few exceptions, the meetings are typically held on the second Wednesday of each month from 4:15 to 6:30 at CDM in Cambridge, Massachusetts. We usually host two speakers for each meeting and promote vigorous discussion following presentations. The upcoming seminar dates are anticipated to be 11 February, 2 March (special session with licensed site professionals [LSPs]), 14 April, 12 May, and 9 June.

Membership and Communication

We draw attendees to our meetings (and speakers) from New England generally, not just the Boston area. Membership is not necessary for attendance at meetings and activities; however, those interested in becoming members or in reading our electronically distributed monthly newsletter should communicate with Secretary Karen Vetrano (kvetrano@trcsolutions.com) or with either copresident, Jennifer Charles (jenEnviro@aol.com) or Rob Goble (rgoble@clarku.edu).

We also have a Web site, which is linked to the national SRA site and stands alone at www.sra-ne.org.

National Capital Area Chapter

Catherine St. Hilaire, Secretary

Elections for the National Capital Area Chapter (NCAC) were held in late November and the elected board includes President Kara Morgan, Vice President Robert Elves, Secretary Catherine St. Hilaire, Treasurer Wes Long, and Councilors Tee Guidotti and Dominic Mancini.

NCAC also hosted a very successful and well-attended reception at the annual meeting where the new officers were introduced and plans for the coming year were highlighted. Quarterly seminars are planned for the DC area and will focus on the various disciplines covered by SRA “umbrella.” The NCAC is asking for suggestions for program ideas and speakers, as well as volunteers to assist in organizing a session. If you are interested, please contact Vice President Robbie Elves at Robert.G.Elves@pmusa.com.



SRA-Europe

Andrea Thalmann

Young Scientist Workshop: Natural Hazards 4-6 March 2004, Innsbruck, Tirol, Austria

The Young Scientist Workshop, which is currently organized by the Society for Risk Analysis-Europe (SRA-E) and the Alp-S-Center for Natural Hazard Management, has gained international attention among scientists specializing in natural risk hazard. Scientists who are currently working on their PhD thesis and who have not passed the age of 32 were encouraged to submit their research projects to a critical "peer-review." Twenty researchers with the best papers among all submitted papers are invited. They will be given a travel stipend by SRA-E. The accommodations and the catering are sponsored by the Tiroler Zukunftsstiftung (www.zukunftsstiftung.at) and Swiss Re Germany (www.swissre.com).

Young scientists from more than 10 nations in Europe and overseas will participate in the workshop 4-6 March at the new facilities of the Alp-S at Innsbruck (Austria). Thematically, the workshop includes the following topics: regulatory

policy and decision making, risk perception and risk communication, research on rare and extreme events, risk assessment and monitoring, risk and economical/impact analysis, and engineering measurements of risk perception. Senior scientists who have gained expertise in those fields will give initial presentations on the topics and will support the workshop on these three days. Bringing together young scientists from different disciplines discussing important issues in the growing field of natural hazard is the overarching goal of the workshop. Further, this workshop will be regarded as a unique opportunity identifying new developments in these fields. Innovative inputs are expected to the entire SRA-E community. The best presentation will be offered publication in the *Journal of Risk Analysis*. Detailed information can be obtained at www.alps-gmbh.com/young_scientist_workshop.

SRA-E Congress 2004 in Paris

The location of the SRA-E Congress 2004 has been changed. The SRA-E plans to host the next congress in Paris in the autumn of 2004. Detailed information will be soon available on the SRA-E Web site: www.sraeurope.org. 



SRA-Japan

Saburo Ikeda

SRA-Japan 16th Annual Meeting

The 16th Annual Meeting of SRA-Japan was successfully held 20-22 November 2003 with 70 presentations and over 200 participants, including nonmembers from industrial sectors. The meeting was held at Tokai Village, Ibaraki, Japan, one of the largest research complexes in relation to nuclear energy and materials, where an accident of nuclear chain reaction operated by one of the energy firms (JCO Tokai) had provoked serious issues of risk management and risk communication in technological areas in 1999.

The main theme of the meeting was "Citizens, Organizations, and Society to Respond to the Science and Technological Risks." Plenary Guest Speaker Dr. Yoichirou Murakai (Emeritus Professor of Tokyo University) gave a lecture on "Safety, Security, and Society." Some specific sessions were "Societal Risk Governance and Citizen Participation"; "Risk Regulation and Legal System"; "Risk Communication with PR-TR (TRI in the US) System"; and "Risk Management and Organizational Culture."

On the final day, SRA-Japan invited the local residents to participate at the workshop "Chat About Various Risk Issues in Our Ordinary Life with the Members of SRA-Japan (Risk Experts)." This was a first attempt for SRA-Japan to organize such a workshop as a professional association.

The proceedings of the 16th SRA-Japan Annual Meeting were published with 382 pages that contain 70 papers with English titles and abstracts. The proceedings can be purchased from the SRA-Japan Secretariat (email: srajapan@ecopolis.sk.tsukuba.ac.jp).

Joint International Meeting

Japanese, Korean, and Chinese researchers/experts associated with risk analysis are planning to hold a joint international meeting in Seoul, Korea, 4-6 November 2004. This is the third venture of this kind; the first meeting on risk assessment and management was held in Beijing, China, in November 1998 and the second was in Kobe, Japan, in November 2001.

The Korean organizing committee, chaired by Dr. Shing of Yonsei University, is now preparing the joint program for the "Third East Asian Conference on Risk Analysis." With the main theme "Sharing Experience of Risk Science and Risk Management in East Asian Region," the meeting will be held at Ehwa Woman's University in Seoul, Korea, 4-6 November 2004. The Symposium Organizing Committee includes the Korean Institute of Toxicology and other Korean associations related to risk research (to be announced), SRA-Japan, and Beijing Normal University (China) (to be announced).

Topics will cover major risk problems that Asian countries have to respond to, such as health, environmental, and ecological risks in local, national, regional, and trans-frontiers; food safety and technological risks; natural disasters (yellow sand, floods, earthquakes); risk information, monitoring, and surveillance systems; risk perception and communication; and risk management (insurance, institution, governance).

The official announcement will be distributed via the SRA network. We welcome participation of SRA members. Anyone who has interest in this meeting can obtain further information from the SRA-Japan Secretariat: <http://ecopolis.sk.tsukuba.ac.jp/srajapan/>; email: srajapan@ecopolis.sk.tsukuba.ac.jp; Dr. Jun Sekizawa, Tokushima University, Japan (email: sekizawa@ias.tokushima-u.ac.jp). 

The 2004 SRA Annual Meeting will be held 5-8 December in Palm Springs, California.



News and Announcements

Web Site Update

Jim Butler, SRA Webmaster

There have been a number of changes made to SRA's Web site during the past year. The main priority was to redesign the site to improve navigation and update the "look and feel" of the site. The goal of this extensive project was to overhaul and reorganize the entire site to make it cleaner, easier to read, and more visually engaging. Feedback on each stage of the redesign was provided by a committee of SRA members: Rick Belzer, Brett Burk, Christie Drew, Jim Englehardt, Scott Ferson, Leslie Hushka, Lorenz Rhomberg, John Samuelian, and Jonathan Wiener.

A number of features have been added to the site in an effort to provide useful Web-based services to members. These enhancements include online access to *Risk Analysis* articles, online SRA Membership Directory, Web ballot to vote in the election, online form to join SRA or renew one's membership, an improved search engine that now includes both static and dynamically generated pages, a searchable program schedule and automated roommate matching service for the annual meeting, and registration and credit card payment for the world congress and annual meeting.

The next step is to develop a strategy for further development of the Web site, especially increasing content and services over time. The goal is to identify a variety of information and services that can be offered to members, which may also help to increase SRA student and regular memberships. Another priority is to start evaluating ways to increase the utility of the site for networking and other communication purposes. Although this is currently both a task-oriented site and an informational/educational site, it is possible that it could also be a more useful networking tool in the future. While always welcome, comments and suggestions from members would be especially helpful now as we discuss future options. Please send your thoughts to Jim Butler at webmaster@sra.org or Rick Belzer, the new Web Editor, at belzer@regulatorycheckbook.org.

Site usage has continued to increase, as it has every year since the Web site was launched in 1997. With an updated, user-friendly design and the addition of online services, we trust that the site will continue to grow and serve the needs of our members.

Homeland Security University Center of Excellence

SRA members are part of the first Homeland Security University Center of Excellence selected by the US Department of Homeland Security. The new Center, located at the University of Southern California (the lead institution) is called the Homeland Security Center for Risk and Economic Analysis of Terrorism Events and is headed by Professors Randolph Hall (PI) and Detlof von Winterfeldt (co-PI) at USC. Von Winterfeldt is a former associate editor (social science) of *Risk Analysis*. University partners with USC are New York University (represented by Professor Rae Zimmerman) and the University of Wisconsin at Madison (represented by Professor Vicki Bier) and others. Zimmerman is a former SRA president and Bier is a former associate editor (engineering)

of *Risk Analysis*. Other SRA members are on the team, including Lester Lave, a former SRA president. The USC team was selected from 72 applications. The Center will provide an integrated program of research, education, and technology transfer, including the development and application of modeling tools for optimal risk analysis and risk management measures for a variety of terrorist events.



left to right: Rae Zimmerman (New York University), Detlof von Winterfeldt (University of Southern California), and Vicki Bier (University of Wisconsin).

Comparative Risk Assessment and Multicriteria Decision Analysis: A Framework For Managing Contaminated Sediments SRA Workshop June 2004, San Diego (Tentatively)

Decision making in environmental projects is typically a complex and confusing exercise, characterized by trade-offs between sociopolitical, environmental, and economic impacts. The selection of appropriate remedial, abatement, and land-use policies for contaminated sites involves multiple criteria such as cost, benefit, environmental impact, safety, and risk. Some of these criteria cannot easily be condensed into a monetary value, which complicates the integration problem inherent to making comparisons and trade-offs. Considerable research in the area of multicriteria decision analysis (MCDA) and comparative risk assessment (CRA) has made available practical methods for applying scientific decision theoretical approaches to multicriteria problems. This workshop will present a review of available literature on the applications of CRA and MCDA in environmental projects. Based on this review, the workshop will develop a decision analytic framework specifically tailored to deal with planning issues arising in contaminated sediment management projects.

Contacts: Cochair Igor Linkov, ICF Consulting (ilinkov@icfconsulting.com), and Chair Todd Bridges, Army Corps of Engineers (Todd.S.Bridges@erdc.usace.army.mil). Current sponsors include the Society for Risk Analysis, the US Army Corps of Engineers, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Cooperative Institute for Coastal and Estuarine Environmental Technology, and ICF Consulting. Cosponsorship opportunities are available.

More information can be found at www.risktrace.com/sediments.

New Cross-Cutting Funding Opportunity in Human and Social Dynamics

The National Science Foundation has announced a new program solicitation inviting proposals for its first full competition in the Human and Social Dynamics (HSD) priority area. Its aim is to foster breakthroughs in knowledge about human action and development as well as organizational, cultural, and societal adaptation and change in a comprehensive and multidisciplinary context across the sciences, engineering, and education. The FY 2004 competition will include three topical emphasis areas (Agents of Change, Dynamics of Human Behavior, and Decision Making and Risk) and three resource-related emphasis areas (Spatial Social Science, Modeling

Human and Social Dynamics, and Instrumentation and Data Resource Development). Support will be provided for research-focused, education-focused, infrastructure-focused, and exploratory projects.

Complete information about the mandatory **Letter of Intent** (deadline of 3 March 2004) and **Proposal Preparation and Submission** (deadline of 30 March 2004), as well as descriptive information about the HSD priority area, may be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/home/crssprgm/hsd>. For further information, contact Dr. Miriam Heller, HSD Competition Coordinator, phone: 703-292-7025, email: mheller@nsf.gov; or Dr. Sally Kane, Chair, HSD Implementation Group, phone: 703-292-8700, email: skane@nsf.gov. 

SRA Call for 2004 Award Nominations

The Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) Awards Committee invites nominations for the following 2004 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 2004 award will be for the public sector.

The **Chauncey Starr Award** honors individuals age 40 and under 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 **3 May 2004** to the SRA Secretariat (1313 Dolley Madison Blvd., Suite 402, McLean, VA 22101; fax: 703-790-2672; email: SRA@BurkInc.com).



Advertisements

Short Courses for Regulators and Radiation Health Specialists

Approved for 32 Continuing Education Credits by the American Academy of Health Physics

Three Short Courses for Regulators and Radiation Health Specialists: Emerging Topics in Radiation Protection and Risk Assessment, sponsored by the Risk Assessment Corporation (www.racteam.com) 16-18 March 2004, Kiawah Island, South Carolina.

Course fee: \$1,200.00. For more information, contact Kristen Jacobucci (kjacobucci@caps-ltd.com) or Phoebe Boelter (pboelter@caps-ltd.com), phone +1-312-372-1255, fax +1-312-372-1427.

Day 1: Recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection—An In-Depth Summary of the Past and Future. Presenter: Dr. Roger H. Clarke, Chairman, ICRP.

Day 2: A Crash Course on Risk Assessment. Presenter: Dr. John E. Till and the Risk Assessment Corporation Team.

Day 3: Working with Stakeholders in Risk Assessment. Presenters: Ms. Laura Till and Dr. John E. Till.

RISK newsletter and SRA Web Site Advertising Policy
http://www.sra.org/policy_website.php

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Member News

Steven Lewis



Steven Lewis has announced his retirement from ExxonMobil Biomedical Sciences. He will be pursuing some long-delayed interests in teaching, research, and consulting and is an adjunct professor at Rutgers. His contact information is Steven Lewis, Adjunct Professor, Environmental and Community Medicine, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, 14 Merlin Drive, Washington, NJ 07882; 908-689-8644; stevenlewis@alumni.indiana.edu. 

Deadline for RISK newsletter Submissions

Information to be included in the **Second Quarter 2004** SRA RISK newsletter, to be mailed early May, 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 March**.

The Membership Directory is now online so you can check your information at www.sra.org (click on Membership). Make changes there or contact the Secretariat at SRA@BurkInc.com.

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