



Newsletter

The System Safety Society Eastern Canada Chapter Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

<http://www.russona.com/ECC-SSS>
www.system-safety.org

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Introduction

In January of this year, our chapter issued its first newsletter. It carried no edition number, for there was no certainty that a newsletter would be a continuing feature. At a meeting in September the Executive Committee agreed that newsletters should be an important component of the Chapter's activities. Hence an editor was appointed and a planned schedule was proposed of three newsletters in the coming 12 months: by the end of November 2006, in February 2007 and June of 2007. Assuming the viability of a newsletter has, by then, been established, we intend to review the frequency of publication and establish a regular schedule, based on the System Safety Society operating year of 1 July to 30 June.

This initiative has revealed the importance of using our website -

<http://www.russona.com/ECC-SSS> as effectively as possible. We need to keep visitors to this website up-to-date on our affairs. We trust that this newsletter will help to keep people informed.

Newsletter Outline

The principle purpose of the newsletter will, naturally, be to help members keep themselves informed of Chapter activities. We hope it will be of sufficient interest, also to stimulate interest among others who share our commitment to safety and, more specifically, system safety. One measure of our success will be the influence distribution of this letter may have on attendance at our meetings and, hopefully, increasing membership in our chapter.

Towards this end, we intend to summarize the proceedings of Chapter meetings since the previous edition and to advise of any executive committee decisions that may affect or influence current and future members or meeting participants.

As an additional and, we hope, significant stimulant, we are soliciting articles from anyone who has ever attended a System Safety Society event in Canada that can contribute to in some way to the aims of the Society. Articles, which should be of no more than approximately 250 words, may be of a variety of topics such as:

- Upcoming safety related events
- Technical system safety analyses
- Operational system safety analyses
- Any controversial safety related topic that projects a professional standard.



Having explained our plan for issuing newsletters, no purpose could be served by any message from the president in this newsletter. However, he will, of course, reserve the privilege to deliver a message from time-to-time by this means.

In order to keep things simple we intend to refrain from using photographs either of the Chapter Executive, members or contributors to the newsletter.

2006 Meetings to Date

To date this year, we have held four meetings:

In January, one of our members, Terry Kelly, president of SMS Aviation Safety Inc, gave a presentation which he titled: *“And Now for Something Completely Different.”* Terry questioned whether the new tools and processes – the widely touted panaceas that will usher-in global improvements in aviation safety performance – are in fact “new”. He wondered if some are any more than newly liveried techniques that, with the best of intentions, disguise what might only be safety management placebos? He suggested that the best of our diligent efforts may affect very little change in actual safety performance?

The presentation initiated a dialogue on issues that Terry considers need critical examination. These issues relate to human factors, safety management and safety measurement, and to systems that integrate quality with safety management. He made no attempt to provide answers. Rather, he engendered discussion the purpose of which was to let others wishing to share their perspectives, knowledge and experience in future presentations.

The title of the March presentation by Bryce Fisher, Manager Safety Promotion and Education at Transport Canada and Vice President of ECC-SSC, was: *“The Safety Spectrum.”* Bryce observed that commitment to safe operations varies from one company

to the next; hence the notion of a spectrum of safety and safety management. The Safety Spectrum speaks to behaviours exhibited by players in their attempt to reconcile business, safety and management issues. The Safety Spectrum categorizes these behaviours under cultural labels that, if approached frankly and soberly, can help companies and their regulators advance the cause of safety by using the strategies on offer.

In May, we held a half-day Panel and Workshop at the University of Ottawa to conduct *An Exploration of Safety Culture*. Our speakers included:

Mr. Charles Packer (Consulting, Cherrystone Management) an expert on nuclear power safety discussed: *Does Safety Culture add Safety Value?*

Dr. Nancy Durbin (University of Washington) discussed: *Safety Culture as an Aspect of Organizational Culture—Rethinking Our Definitions*

Mr. Maury Hill (Transportation Safety Board) discussed: *Safety Culture at the Investigation Coalface.*

Captain Dan Maurino (ICAO) discussed safety information collection and understanding of the message of violations as the pillars of a safety culture.

Following each presentation, participants were encouraged to discuss such topics as:

- Does safety culture really exist, or are we discussing sound business management practices applied to the management of safety?
- Can safety culture - as proposed by “folk models” - develop under prevailing legal system(s)?
- Is “folk” safety culture an essential requisite of Safety Management Systems?
- Can we have a good safety culture without actively working at it?

- Which organizational roles (positions) have the biggest impact on safety culture, and how do they exert this influence?
- Is a good safety culture the same as a good organizational culture in general?
- Safety culture folk tales – what are the practices in your organization that help create a positive safety culture?
- Describe interesting stories about accidents or “near miss” that became “lessons learned”. Discuss the similarities and the differences in experiences and what the stories indicate about the safety culture.

Our most recent meeting in October featured Heather Henderson of NAV CANADA whose presentation bore the title: *The Do's and Don'ts of Implementing a SMS*. Heather moved to the Nav Canada Office of Safety and Quality in 1999 to be the Manager, Safety Training and Communications. She has been actively involved in the development and implementation of NAV CANADA's Safety Management System. Her responsibilities include development of safety management policies and procedures, the design and delivery of corporate safety training within NAV CANADA, safety management assurance including the conduct of safety reviews, and the promotion of safety within NAV CANADA.

A number of strong messages came from the presentation. Be patient and be thorough! It requires a lot of professional effort from all departments. Everyone must be committed and top management must champion the effort. To be thorough takes time, and this must be accepted. Although there are synergies with the quality management system and they can be intertwined, they cannot be merged. It helps to have the Corporate Assurance Department as the management representative for both systems.

Upcoming Meeting – 1 December 2006

Our upcoming meeting is scheduled for Friday, 1 December. Our speaker, Heather

Parker, has given it the title: *“Understanding human performance in socio-technical systems.”* Heather is a Human Factors Specialist in the Civil Aviation Directorate of Transport Canada. Previously, she worked for the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

There is much support in the aviation industry for understanding human performance in socio-technical systems. As our systems become more complex, technology more advanced, and production pressures continue to increase, understanding how socio-technical systems work and how to support the performance of humans in these systems becomes increasingly important. The presentation will cover the definition of Human Factors according to ICAO, a conceptual model of Human Factors, and the relationship of Human Factors to other relevant disciplines and recent developments in terms of system models. Heather intends to introduce the audience to different models of accident causation, how they influence the findings and some tips for investigating and analysing human and organizational factors.

The meeting will be held in Transport Canada Tower C, Lower Food Court Conference Rooms – Lunenburg-Craigellachie. The meeting will be at no charge to participants!

Other System Safety Related Activities

Risk Management

An executive seminar on risk management co-sponsored by AlgoPlus and Dalhousie University was held on October 5-6, 2006 at Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS. This seminar was for aviation executives and managers, along with people who have risk management responsibilities.

Emphasis was on real problems based on actual events – the type that we experience all too frequently. Effective and efficient ways to meet the challenges were presented through the development and implementation of a safety management

system. Speakers illustrated how they incorporated risk management into their safety management systems to add value to their organizations. Full details are available on website:< <http://riskcentre.dal.ca> >

Topics and speakers included:

- Is a good safety culture the same as a good organizational culture in general?
- “How Safety Management is addressed by Enterprise Risk Management” by John Fraser, Chief Risk Officer, Hydro One, Toronto.
- “Evidence-based Decision-making” by Gerard Brohez, Turbomeca, France.
- “Safety Management and Quality: Do they belong in the same sentence?” by Tom O’Kane, Former Head of Air Safety, British Airways.
- “SMS Tools and Strategies for Problem-Solving by Dr. Alex Richman, AlgoPlus Ltd.
- “Integrating SMS into the Organization” by (our own) Terry Kelly, SMS Aviation Safety.

Description of the full program is located at:

<http://rbcriskmanagementcentre.dal.ca/SMS%20Risk%20Seminar>.

A portion of the seminar was made available as a webcast via the internet. This was a

very effective way for several people unable to be present to participate at the seminar.

Health Care Research

In April 2006, Dr. Sam Sheps spoke in Vancouver on his health care research. He explained that Canada needs an independent, arm’s-length federal agency to protect patients in the country’s hospitals and medical clinics, as recorded in a report commissioned by Health Canada. His study, along with Karen Cardiff of the University of British Columbia, observes that health care is a “high-risk industry” that could learn much from the nuclear and transportation world. It calls for the creation of a Canadian Patient Safety Agency that would report to Parliament like the Transportation Safety Board of Canada, which investigates plane, train and marine accidents.”

System Safety Society Membership

We have had several people become new members of our chapter and the System Safety Society. We will continue to reach out to people to encourage them to become members of the System Safety Society and our chapter in Canada.