



# President's Message

*International System Safety Society President  
Chuck Muniak*

## Thoughts on the Conference

The recent International System Safety Conference (ISSC) in Albuquerque, New Mexico was a thought-provoking event.

Professor Edward Gibson gave the first keynote address. He described the engineering programs at Arizona State University (ASU) and some possible relations with the system safety discipline. Members of the Executive Council (EC) had additional meetings with Dr. Gibson to explore including system safety concepts in the school's engineering curriculum, as well as the relationship between ASU and the ISSS.

One of the most venerable members of our Society, John Rankin, gave several presentations on hazard analysis. He also provided a viewing of the movie *Fate is the Hunter* and explained how it helped inspire him to invent Sneak Circuit Analysis.

The Conference featured many excellent papers and tutorials. One that received a good deal of positive commentary was on the topic of "gamification" in teaching software safety analysis. The authors, Brian Connell and David Musgrave, have developed an entertaining and effective way to train on this topic.

The two-day EC meeting and the Conference itself included a variety of breakout sessions that explored strategic topics, as well as a panel on paradigm shifts. One topic that came up in a number of discussions was "What is the value of the ISSS to members?" along with suggestions on how we can improve it. According to my notes, the primary items that now represent value are:

1. Building a network of relationships with people that may help with careers, as well as personal fulfillment

2. Gaining useful experience through working on projects that might not be available in one's day job
3. Enhancing our knowledge of system safety through thorough training and certification
4. Contributing to the theory and practice of system safety

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This is not a new topic; similar discussions may be found in past editions of *Journal of System Safety* (e.g., Larry W. Jones President's Message in the September/October 2005 issue). Various discussions have indicated that the first item on this list may be the most important to members, but also may not be appreciated by potential new members. This is probably a result of a changing world that includes social media and the belief of many younger engineers that anything professional societies (not just the ISSS)

can offer can be found for free on the Internet. Please contact me if you have any possible solutions to this issue.

Items three and four can be accomplished by attending, presenting and publishing at the Conference and in *JSS*. The EC is exploring relationships with academic institutions that may further enhance these opportunities. One idea raised was providing periodic webinars on topics important to our members.

The next ISSC will take place in Phoenix Arizona, August 13-17. The venue for the 2018 ISSC will be the Arizona Grand. This conference will include some interaction with ASU, which should be very interesting.

It is time to start preparing your next paper or tutorial.

*Best wishes,  
Chuck*