

From the Editor's Desk...

JSS Technical Editor
C. G. Muniak Ph.D



More on Paradigm Changes

Several recent issues of *Journal of System Safety (JSS)* have discussed the subject of paradigms and how the International System Safety Society (ISSS) may want to change some of its ways of doing business. It has also been pointed out that we must be careful to preserve the things that work and are valuable to our members.

Some paradigm changes may apply to *JSS* itself. I have been looking into issues with respect to *JSS*: the copyright policy and getting *JSS* indexed in one or more databases. At this time, *JSS* policy is that contributing authors retain ownership of their contributions. This is somewhat unusual, as most journals take copyright ownership of the articles they publish. There are pros and cons in both approaches. Some authors may favor the present situation because they could publish the same article elsewhere. However, if *JSS* held the copyright, there may be opportunity for future sales of the articles via alternative methods, such as on the Kindle platform. This would allow the ISSS to make some money and give greater exposure to the original authors.

Another potential paradigm change is indexing; this is a topic that several prospective authors have been asking about. Indexing makes a journal accessible to a wider audience, improving its reputation and making it more desirable as a place to publish. If *JSS* were indexed, it would be more attractive to authors employed by academic institutions (some have told us this). But there are some questions associated with indexing. Where should we try to be indexed? There are many databases available, and it is not entirely obvious which one(s) would be best for us. There are costs involved, and there's an application process as well. If any *JSS* readers have opinions they would like to share on either subject (copyright or indexing), please contact me.

The first technical paper in this issue, "System Safety Matrix Methods" by Dr. Richard Zito, provides some insight into the analysis of networks and explains how networks are a common feature of many system safety analyses. The methods Dr. Zito describes may be applied to electronic circuits, software flowcharts, and maps

of land, air, sea and communications traffic. The article specifically addresses three areas of particular interest to system safety engineers: the bent pin problem, sneak circuits and software logic.

Our second technical paper, "Disaster Prevention through Intelligent Monitoring" by Dr. A.D. Painting and Dr. D. Sanders, describes an intelligent system that could monitor certain indicators no matter how complex the engineering industry, and could predict the potential situations that may lead to catastrophic mishaps.

In the "TBD" column, Charles Hoes describes one of the potential new paradigms for the ISSS. Charlie and Russ Mitchell have been working with Arizona State University (ASU) for some time. They were invited to attend the ASU Design for Safety Initiative stakeholders' meeting in September as full participants in the initiative efforts, representing the interests and objectives of the profession and of the ISSS. The goal of the ASU initiative is to introduce the topic of "design for safety" into engineering courses. The intent of this group is to work out a clear path forward and to implement one or more small pilot projects to work out the kinks, and then expand the effort campus wide, across the United States and, eventually, the world.

In the System Safety in Healthcare column, "How Good Are the Patient Surveys for Safety?", Dev Raheja describes problems with patient surveys and how to improve them.

Finally, Rex Gordon has contributed two articles to this issue of *JSS*. In the "Historical Note," Rex recounts the contributions of Erskine Harton to the ISSS. In his second article, Rex describes the mishap that resulted in the loss of the lives of three astronauts in the Apollo 1 program. He also discusses some of the subsequent ramifications of this catastrophe.

I welcome your comments and article submissions. Please email me at cmuniak@stevens.edu.

Regards,
Chuck