

From the Editor's Desk...

JSS Technical Editor
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Organizational Problems

System safety professionals must not only keep an eye on the here and now — determining where hazards exist and ways to eliminate or avoid them — but also must be aware of the future. New technologies may help lead to safer outcomes, but in many cases, these breakthroughs bring with them their own issues. The field of system safety must keep up and adapt to the ever-evolving world.

The first technical paper in this issue, “Organizational Problems – Potential Causes – Unintentional Consequences – Some Personal Views” by Dr. Malcolm Jones, provides some insight into the concept that having many processes may sometimes exacerbate problems rather than help to solve them. Dr. Jones explores the medical analogy of “treating the symptoms rather than the root cause” in addressing the issue of corporate cultural bias toward choosing a rushed response for maximum early effect, rather than for a more measured, longer-term strategy. I must remember the principles of this paper when advocating changes to International System Safety Society (ISSS) processes.

Our second technical paper, “Reducing Pedestrian Collisions Through Blended Outreach and Engineering” by Michael J. Conlon, describes public outreach — through education, improved signage and other forms of communication — and engineering changes to enhance pedestrian safety for a metro transit system after a spate of accidents and fatalities in one short period at the end of 2015.

We also have a special third technical paper in this issue, “Role of Regulators in Safeguarding the Interface between Autonomous Systems and the General Public” by Chris W. Johnson. This paper deals with the difficulties regulators have when it comes to a rapidly changing and evolving field, in this case autonomous and semi-autonomous systems across a range of industries. The author offers some suggestions to overcoming the “regulatory lag” com-

panies face when exploring new markets and new technologies.

In the TBD column, Charles Hoes and Lee Flint discuss how the ISSS, or a chapter, might get involved in student engineering and science fair projects at the seventh to 12th-grade levels. By introducing system safety concepts early in the education of scientifically minded students, the seeds planted could grow into something special.

David MacCollum, in his Design-Based Safety column, discusses how the removal of hazards at the time of planning and project design keeps things “Ahead of Schedule and Under Budget.” In an increasingly automated world, the role of safety — and the system safety professional — should evolve and adapt to both new opportunities and new dangers.

In the System Safety in Healthcare column, “Electronic Medical Record Assimilation and Integration,” Dev Raheja and Dr. Maria C. Escano discuss some important safety aspects of how medical records are handled. Electronic Medical Records (EMRs), the digital versions of classic paper charts, hold a lot of promise for patient care, including efficient, seamless integration between healthcare providers, but there are many challenges that must be overcome before that promise becomes a reality.

The Notes on Society History column by Rex Gordon explains why Dr. Jerome Lederer was recently designated a *Pathfinder of System Safety*. Dr. Lederer, born before the first flight of the Wright Brothers, came of age as the study of aeronautics began and was instrumental in many of the safety programs that became integral to that field.

I welcome your comments, letters to the editor and article submissions. Please email me at cmuniak@stevens.edu.

Regards,
Chuck