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From the Editor's Desk

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Safety Tools

By Cliff Ericson

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Puzzle

Are system safety tools being used throughout industry? In the latest issue of *Consumer Reports* (Dec., 2008), a safety alert tells readers that Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicles have a defective cruise-control switch that poses a potential fire hazard, even when the vehicle is turned off. My question is: Where was system safety during the design of this system? *Consumer Reports* also notes that many auto recall notices are being ignored by consumers. Has the public become so overwhelmed with safety concerns, safety alerts and safety recalls that its tolerance and apathy levels are increasing?

In the first main article of this issue of eJSS, David Clarke presents a tribute to Trevor Kletz, who worked in safety at Imperial Chemicals Industries (ICI) in the U.K. Kletz contributed to the development and promotion of important new philosophies and techniques in process safety, including inherently safer design, HAZOP, HAZAN and prevention of accidents associated with human error. In this article, Clarke discusses much of Kletz's safety work and safety tools.

In the second main article, Mike Allocco teaches the concept of making safety-related decisions as part of the risk management process. He presents the methods and tools that are often applied to make appropriate risk-based decisions. He also presents a detailed decision-making example, performed as part of a risk assessment.

This issue also includes the inaugural column of John Livingston, titled "Gains from Losses: System Safety Commentary on Accidents and Other Events." In his first column, Livingston talks about human error with regard to a Predator unmanned aircraft mishap and the safety issues involved. Is the possibility that there may be more to human error than just human error a new safety concept?

In the Tech Corner column, Sherry Deatrick discusses something the Department of Homeland Security has cooked up called MALINTENT. It's a precrime tool computer system that can literally read a human being's mind and thoughts. I am wondering if this could be used in hazard analyses.

In their Outside the Lines column, Ira Rimson and Ludwig Benner continue their quest for the use of lessons learned in unmanned systems in Part 3 of "The Sky Isn't Falling — Or Is It?" In this article, they question why the FAA exempts certification requirements for UAVs, particularly given the risk involved and the mishaps that have been occurring.

In his President's Message, Jim Wiggins discusses the Executive Council meeting and the annual general membership meeting held at the 2008 ISSC in Vancouver. He talks about his vision of where we are as a Society, in relation to other industry groups and organizations, and how far we should go in growing our Society.

The statement, "It is unfortunate that the correct applications of system safety techniques and methodology are not more widespread," made by George Peters in his article in the Sept.-Oct. issue of JSS, seems to ring truer every day. I am starting to think that there is another safety concern on

the horizon, and that is apathy towards safety, possibly due to the deluge of safety recalls. System safety and system safety tools are apparently not yet appreciated by general industry for the protection of consumers.

Until next time,
Clif

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