



Security Analysis and Risk Management Association

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The Risk Communicator: November/December 2007 Edition

Welcome to the Risk Communicator, SARMA's newsletter for information, trends and issues of concern to security analysis and risk management professionals. This complimentary news service is distributed every other month. Please feel free to share this e-mail with your colleagues and encourage them to sign up to get their own copy [here](#).



If your server is blocking HTML e-mails you can view the current Risk Communicator through your browser by clicking [here](#).

News

SARMA Hosts Recognition Breakfast at the Ritz-Carlton

SARMA held a Founding Board and Sponsors' Appreciation Breakfast on 16 November at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Tysons Corner, VA, to show its appreciation for past and current board members and corporate sponsors. SARMA President Ed Jopeck recognized Arion Pattakos, Geoffrey French, Robin Dillon-Merrill and Lisa Bendixen for their contributions as Founding Board Members, and also thanked PricewaterhouseCoopers, SRA International, Analex and SAIC for their corporate sponsorship. Guest speaker Michael Beland, Counsel for the US House of Representatives' Committee on Homeland Security, thanked SARMA participants for their voluntary efforts and spoke about the Committee's views on the importance of security risk management in the future of homeland security efforts.



Ed Jopeck thanks guests.

New Additions to the SARMApedia!

Imagine

...one information resource.

Create it

...by sharing what you know.

Benefit

...from the knowledge of many.

SARMApedia, the wiki-based home of SARMA's Common Knowledge Base (CKB) project, has recently received an updated, easier-to-navigate format, and two new content areas. The first addition, **Who's Who in Security Analysis**, allows both individuals and organizations to make themselves known to others in the profession, as well as to organizations seeking specific expertise. (See

the article "Who's Who Wants You" in this issue for further details.) The second addition, **R&D in Risk Management**, allows researchers to post descriptions of their research and development projects in security risk analysis. The R&D section also provides a means by which practitioners can post issues still needing research and development. Through this exchange of research information, it is hoped that unnecessary duplication of research and greater applicability of future research projects can be achieved. Because both are on the SARMApedia wiki, additions from all practitioners are encouraged, and the resulting SARMApedia resources will be available to all at no cost. [\[Go to the SARMApedia\]](#)

Nov./Dec. 2007

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SARMA

P.O. Box 710172
Herndon, VA 20171
Phone: (703) 635-7906
Fax: (703) 635-7935
E-mail: info@sarma.org



Government Accountability Office Hosts Homeland Security Risk Management Forum

On 25 October 2007, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) hosted a Comptroller General Forum focused on the use of risk management in homeland security. The gathering marked the latest installment in a long-running effort by GAO to advance the national dialogue in this area. Participants included current and former government leaders, as well as representatives of the private sector and academia. [\[Read More\]](#)

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Who's Who Wants You!

Do you have practical experience in the field of security analysis and risk management? Do you work for a government, private sector, academic or non-profit organization directly involved in the field? Do people point to your expertise or your academic research when the subject comes up? If so, we'd like to hear from you. [\[Read More\]](#)

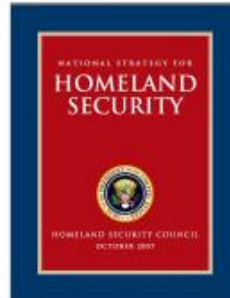
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Reports and Reviews

National Strategy for Homeland Security Updated

On 5 October 2007, the White House released an updated National Strategy for Homeland Security. In addressing the role of risk management in homeland security, the Strategy mirrors a SARMA position that *"to develop this discipline, we as a Nation must organize and help mature the profession of risk management by adopting common risk analysis principles and standards, as well as a professional lexicon."*



See Kerry Thomas's commentary in this issue, and click below to view the document. [\[Get the Document\]](#)

Commentary: The National Homeland Security Strategy

Kerry Thomas, SARMA's Executive Vice President, comments on the recently released "National Homeland Security Strategy." [\[Read More\]](#)

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Discussion Paper: Port-Wide Risk Management Planning

Contributed by PricewaterhouseCoopers, this paper highlights the steps DHS and the nation's ports should consider to address the primary criticism of current port security efforts. [\[Read More\]](#)



Links of Interest

[OPSEC Professionals Society](#)

[GMU Critical Infrastructure Protection Program](#)

The Risk Communicator

The Risk Communicator, newsletter of SARMA, the Security Analysis and Risk Management Association

Send questions and comments to Editor-in-Chief
newsletter@sarma.org

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PRIVACY POLICY

The views expressed in the Risk Communicator reflect the views of their authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of SARMA, the US Government, or the employers or clients of the contributors.

Hold the Date:
SARMA Annual Security Analysis and Risk Management Conference,
May 13-15, 2008,
Arlington Virginia



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Conferences and Events

2008 National OPSEC Conference

The OPSEC Professional Society's 2008 National Conference will be held in Denver, CO, on 7-11 April 2008. SARMA representatives will be among the speakers at this upcoming event. [\[Read More\]](#)

SARMA Annual Conference 2008

The 2nd Annual Security Analysis and Risk Management Conference will be held 13-15 May 2008 in Arlington, VA. This year's conference will be co-hosted with George Mason University's Critical Infrastructure Protection Program. If you are interested in presenting at this conference, please contact the conference committee at conference@sarma.org.

Critical Infrastructure Protection Workshop

Entitled "Critical Infrastructure Protection: Metrics and Tools," this workshop is being organized by the Center for Homeland Defense and Security, and the Center for Contemporary Conflict at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA. It is scheduled for 5-7 June 2008.

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Miscellaneous

Want to Contribute to the Risk Communicator?

Do you know of an item you would like to see included in the Risk Communicator? Do you have ideas for new and interesting features for future editions? If so, please contact the newsletter staff at newsletter@sarma.org.

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The Forum focused on addressing three specific questions:

- What lessons can be learned from leading organizations about the effective use of risk management practices?
- What are the key challenges faced by public and private sector organizations in adopting and implementing a risk-based approach for homeland security?
- What actions should be taken in the near- and long-term to address the most pressing of these challenges?

To ensure an open and honest dialogue, the Forum was not open to the public or the media. In addition, GAO enforced a strict policy of non-attribution for all comments. However, GAO did invite SARMA to observe the proceedings, and both SARMA President Ed Jopeck and SARMA Executive Vice President Kerry Thomas attended on behalf of the organization.

We are told that GAO does intend to produce a monograph of the Forum, and the Risk Communicator will report on that document when it becomes available.



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Who's Who Wants You!

SARMA is pleased to unveil the newest section of its SARMApedia: [Who's Who in Security Analysis](#). For the first time you can list yourself or your organization -- or both -- in a few easy steps, right here on our website. Best of all, it's free!



I want you...
...to be listed in Who's Who!

Why should you be listed in Who's Who in Security Analysis? Because federal agencies, state and local governments, private companies and researchers are working hard to improve the management and best-practices of security analysis and risk management, and they need help from specialty experts and practitioners in the field. In other words, from people like you.

Who's Who aims to be their single authoritative reference point for identifying such expertise. By creating a free page for yourself and your organization, you will become a known resource -- adding your voice and experience to a growing network of concerned security analysts and risk management professionals who can:

- Participate in expert forums that seek to define the national strategy for security risk management;
- Address known procedural, technical and linguistic issues in the profession; and
- Improve the overall practice of risk-informed decision-making and resource allocation.

Simply go to [Getting Started](#) to find out how you can become part of this select group, at no cost and no obligation.

A SARMA representative may also contact you via e-mail or telephone to invite you to be listed, and can assist you in getting your listing started. Please feel free to contact Lisa Jones at 646-269-8776 or Lisa.Jones@sarma.org for assistance in creating or editing your page and protecting it from further editing.



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The National Strategy for Homeland Security: Commentary by Kerry Thomas, SARMA Executive Vice President

As many of you may be aware, the White House recently issued an updated version of the National Strategy for Homeland Security. While this document is significant in many ways, what its authors had to say about risk management is particularly encouraging.

"The assessment and management of risk underlies the full spectrum of our homeland security activities, including decisions about when, where, and how to invest in resources that eliminate, control, or mitigate risks. In the face of multiple and diverse catastrophic possibilities, we accept that risk -- a function of threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences -- is a permanent condition. We must apply a risk-based framework across all homeland security efforts in order to identify and assess potential hazards (including their downstream effects), determine what levels of relative risk are acceptable, and prioritize and allocate resources among all homeland security partners, both public and private, to prevent, protect against, and respond to and recover from all manner of incidents. A disciplined approach to managing risk will help to achieve overall effectiveness and efficiency in securing the Homeland. In order to develop this discipline, we as a Nation must organize and help mature the profession of risk management by adopting common risk analysis principles and standards, as well as a professional lexicon."

-The National Strategy for Homeland Security
October, 2007



The inclusion of this paragraph, and in particular the last sentence, is significant. Not only does this language officially codify the importance of risk management to the homeland security enterprise, but it accurately captures the steps that must be taken for the profession to mature and succeed. By recognizing the need for a professional language, as well as common principles and standards for security risk analysis, the authors of the National Strategy for Homeland Security have taken a bold step in establishing a national vision for success. The challenge will be in realizing this vision.

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There have been many efforts over the years to implement more uniform and rigorous security risk management processes and methods. These efforts have met with limited success largely because they were outgrowths of individual department and/or agency efforts that lacked a clear mandate and an overarching system of governance. To avoid these pitfalls going forward, establishing a national system of governance would seem to be the critical next step in implementing the vision articulated in the National Strategy.

It would also seem that professional security analysis/risk management associations like the Security Analysis and Risk Management Association (SARMA) can help with this. SARMA, along with the American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS), the Risk Management Institute of Australasia and others, have given the governance issue and foundational requirements considerable thought, and in many cases have proactively sought to develop solutions. For example, through its Common Knowledge Base (CKB) program, SARMA has begun to document the analytical methods already in use, establish a consensus-based lexicon for security risk analysis and develop standardized approaches to key security risk analysis issues. In the coming weeks, SARMA will also promulgate a position paper detailing a proposed approach to the governance issue.

Given these efforts, and the opportunity presented by the National Strategy to more holistically mature the profession of security analysis/risk management, the advantages of establishing appropriate public/private partnerships seem obvious. The government would benefit from the experience and work already completed by the professional associations, as well as in the private sector and academia. A collaborative approach would also allow for the broadest input and greatly facilitate the adoption of standards by the private sector. This in turn would lead to a more uniform implementation of security risk management in the United States - something that offers benefits for all involved.

Kudos to those who have framed the issues so well in the National Strategy for Homeland Security. Let us now take the next steps in a manner that is informed by the challenges of the past and recognizes the need for -- and strength to be found in -- collective solutions.

*Kerry L. Thomas
Executive Vice President
Security Analysis and Risk Management Association*