**Hotwash: ARMSG Roundtable at SRA 2016**

Key Issue: What does our P&G doc have, uniquely, to give it credibility and standing to the “Risk Management –in-the-trenches” World, especially given all the other “standards” that are out there? We need to figure out if we have that “credibility and standing,” and then prove/establish that and articulate that, if anybody is going to pay any attention to our doc.

During-Meeting Idea: SRA, including especially the Foundations work, occupies a “High Ground” re methodological excellence, or whatever you want to call it. Really, reading some other docs (I haven’t read a lot), they generally seem to come from practitioners who have developed Best Practice concepts based on plugging through real-world practical work. That’s fine, and has its own wisdom that Foundations may lack, but it doesn’t occupy any methodological high ground. That may be dangerous arrogance, but if worded carefully, could be worded into an argument to pay attention to our doc.

After-Meeting Idea: Our doc will be unique in that it lists Guidelines for each of several application areas (as represented, admittedly highly imperfectly, by SRA Specialty Groups), generated by each of those SGs. It also defines Principles through a process of consensus among all of those SGs. It also cross-fertilizes the Guidelines among all SGs, and so generates Guidelines that benefit from that cross-fertilization. The net effect should be Principles (over all application areas) and Guidelines (one set for each application area) such that the Principles apply consistently over all application areas and the Guidelines apply in a framework such that those Guidelines are all consistent among themselves. I’m pretty sure that is unique, and is compelling in establishing a special place for our doc in a world of many different standards.

Another Take on That Concept (of Credibility and Standing): We can claim that Credibility and Standing in part by identifying The Gaps We Fill. I here present two of those gaps we fill:

GWF-1: Methodologically astute, based on Foundations work, on thinking from all of the SGs,
and consistency across all of those SGs.

GWF-2: Between SRA and practitioners. That is, SRA, as it is, comes across typically as too academic, and so inaccessible and apparently irrelevant to in-the-trenches risk management practitioners. Our doc can seek to bridge that gap.

Related To That: One key example (and pet peeve): We live in a world where a community (much larger than SRA) of risk management practitioners practice “ERM,” Enterprise Risk Management. ERM is practiced in many corporations and utilities above a certain size. (In my understanding) It is largely composed of procedural and prose-related measures. It is practiced by people typically with backgrounds in business, business management, engineering and law – NOT analysts steeped in the principles of risk analysis as framed by SRA. While I’m frankly not familiar with ERM as practiced, what little I know suggests that ERM could benefit by some interaction with SRA expertise.

I add later: Actually, we in SRA could learn a lot about real-world risk management from ERM practitioners.

One participant asked if one of our goals is to “reclaim terms,” which I then modified only by wondering about the “re” in “reclaim.” But he raises a very good point: We can use our doc to make a claim for SRA as the “Keeper of the Terms.” And that does everybody a favor, since there currently seems to be many different terms in many different docs. So there is a need for a single “Go To” place for definitions of terms. Again treading into dangerous arrogance territory, I think that is a position that SRA can legitimately, effectively, and credibly take. But that said, we should keep in mind one of Terje’s points:

We should, prominently, include a Glossary (actually, we should simply adopt and possibly extend the Glossary Terje and ten others have already written). And we should carry forward Terje’s concept of multiple meanings for certain terms, to capture the reality that certain terms do, in fact, have differing meanings in different areas. So while we should “claim terms,” that can include recognizing multiple meanings for certain terms.

(From Floris:) Our doc could be used to “make a case” to industry to conduct analyses supporting risk management. That is, if Floris is going to approach a company in his industry, e.g. IMO, to conduct analyses supporting risk management, he will be able to make a stronger case if he can use our doc as a reference, and in doing so he will also be making the case to conduct those analyses at a certain level of quality.

One thing we should consider: We could circulate our doc to other “standards” organizations for comment, review, and/or even approval. That would give our doc special status. (I add later:) We could include text very early in the Front Matter that explains that we did that circulation, and then cite what other organizations have said about our doc (if anybody responds with anything).

(I add after:) We could do two things, though both would take a lot of work, and we’d probably only consider them in later years:

1.) Systematically cross-correlate our work with other standards;

2.) Approach DOD, DOE, DTRA, etc. to ask them to consider referencing our doc. For example, there is a U.S. military directive, DOD Directive 5000.61 (2009) directing that for all DOD significant decisions that are supported by models, those models must be VV&A’d (Verification, Validation and Accreditation). Then there is a U.S. military directive, MIL-STD-3022, that specifies what should go into a VV&A. We could investigate what it would take (if it’s at all possible) to get our doc referenced in such other docs.

Guidance From Terje: Pick concrete feasible steps (1 or 2) to get done this first year, then get them done.

(After the Roundtable I add:) We already have a few natural steps identified for 2017. One set was discussed and I acted as if we are committed to it for 2017: We did that at the Over-Beers SG Chair session Tuesday night. About six Chairs showed up, which is pretty good for a meeting at 7:35 pm after the Mixers. There we agreed that:

1.) I would circulate to them a template for Guidelines, and an example (I would draft that example for terrorism risk assessment). I would do that in consultation with the ARMSG, in particular our Inner Circle, which is us Roundtablers (including Terje), Steve Ackerland, Carl Dister, Dan Hudson, Susmit Panjwani, Barry Ezell and Patricia Larkin.

2.) Each SG Chair would supervise the writing of a draft of Guidelines for their area(s) of application.

3.) We in ARMSG would cross-fertilize those drafts by circulating them to all SG Chairs, so all Chairs can see others’ Guidelines and perhaps tweak their own accordingly. We would expect each set of Guidelines to eventually become a selection from a Boolean Union of the ideas all SGs.

One other step would be to structure the Principles based on Dan Hudson’s good work mapping our ten Principles (in this draft) to three other sources (as on Slides 7, 8 and 9 of the Roundtable slides):

Slide 7: Requirements for Decision Quality (Society of Decision Professionals).

Slide 8: Ten Commandments for Good Policy Analysis (Morgan and Henrion).

Slide 9: Principles for Risk Management Decision Making (Presidential/Congressional Commission
on Risk Assessment and Risk Management, 1997.