
1 of 3 - Unforeseen Consequences – a problem of *Titanic* proportions

Your editor has been watching television again. This time a programme about the three sister ships: “Olympic”; “Titanic” and “Britannic”.

Appendix 1 attached

2 of 3 – Leading by example

In *NEWSLETTER No 27* (Early June 08), I made brief reference to the US magazine “Public Risk”, published by PRIMA

Appendix 2

attached

3 of 3 – Heuristics (part 2)

So important are heuristics in RM nowadays that they are being directly included within the **irm** Diploma course, Module

Appendix 3 attached

And now the something different section:

I mentioned under Heuristics (Law) above, the minimum age to drive a car. Ginetta, who are one of the few

Appendix 4 attached

In the next issue, there will be detailed progress report on the Guide which is now, at last, underway following the issue of the new examination syllabus, with which we wish to keep in step with as far as practical. So see you soon with *NEWSLETTER No 33*.

Bruce Widdowson
Secretary
e-mail bruce.widdowson@btinternet.com Tel. 0115 986 3254

Appendices

1 of 3 - Unforeseen consequences – a problem of *Titanic* proportions

Your editor has been watching television again. This time a programme about the three sister ships: “Olympic”; “Titanic” and “Britannic” under the title *Curse of the Titanic*.

The Olympic was the first and smallest of the sister ships – also the one that suffered least disaster, although she had a reputation for sucking other ships into her wash in port (***whatever happened to tugs in confined waters? – Ed***). There is little further that can be added to what is already in the public domain about the Titanic hitting an iceberg and

sinking on her maiden voyage crossing the Atlantic to the USA. What is of interest is the fate of the last and largest of the sister ships – the Britannic:

She was fitted with all the improvements that were learnt from the Titanic disaster – including better bulkheads that ran all the way to the top deck of the ship. There were waterproof hatches deep in the hull to allow stokers and similar to service the engines by going from one waterproof compartment to the next. To cut a long story short, what happened was that by the time the ship was ready, World War II had broken out and she was commandeered as a hospital ship and sent to the Mediterranean. In spite of being painted white with a red cross on her side she was still hit by a torpedo and sank ([The rights and wrongs of this are not relevant to our study](#)). The fact of the matter was, that in spite of having all the improvements, she went down *quicker* than the Titanic did, although the loss of life was not so great due to the location and the improvement in the number of lifeboats, the latter being another lesson learnt from the Titanic disaster.

The ship had been designed to operate in the cold North Atlantic, so in the Med, not only were the hatches in the bulkheads kept open to assist with air circulation for the stokers, the portholes were actually open too! Consequently, water just flooded in.

[Unforeseen consequences is probably an area that has been neglected in the past. Our SIG Guide will include a section on the subject. Ed.](#)

2 of 3 – Leading by example

In *NEWSLETTER No 27* (Early June 08), I made brief reference to the US magazine, “Public Risk”, published by PRIMA: Public Risk Management Association of USA.

There was a lead article on Human Factors and Risk Management, which was highlighted with the leader:

“Simply put, human factors are the values and behaviours we bring to and exhibit in the workplace.”

The article continued later with, “As you do your job, what is the risk management (how and why) you’re showing your employees?”

The article also made mention on the value of having a “mentor”. Something for future thought.

3 of 3 – Heuristics (Part 2)

So important are Heuristics in RM nowadays that they are now being directly included within the **irm** Diploma course, Module One. I started our own look at the subject in *NEWSLETTER No 29* (August 08) with reference to the dictionary definition and a light hearted reference to “gut feeling”.

For our practical needs, I thought it might be an idea to continue with a look at the current use of the word in other walks of life. From the research I have carried out, Heuristics are found in at least six disciplines. A selected feature from each which may help us is set out below:-

Psychology [learned \(through evolutionary process\)](#) – works well enough, but can be biased.

Philosophy use of [stories](#) or metaphors e.g. the notion of *Utopia*

Law *Practicality*, include when it is not possible to use a case by case analysis. There is mention of a *variation* in such things as minimum age to drive (at the arbitrary age, some will still not be mature enough, but others will have been mature beforehand).

Computer science ignores that a solution can be proved to be correct, uses a technique that usually produces a good solution.

Human-computer interaction usability testing technique – user interface is reviewed by experts.

Engineering experience-based method used to aid to solve process design problems – must understand their limitations

So a play with these words:

We need to work with professionals of all these disciplines - and more.

Risk in multi-dimensional. So what have we got as a starter:

“Learned (through evolutionary process), *practicality, variation, usability and solve problems, usually produces a good solution* - and we end with, *stories (to help tell Ed)* ”

Well, that’s a start.

And now the something different section:

I mentioned under Heuristics (Law) above, the minimum age to drive a car. Ginetta, who are one of the few surviving British sports car manufacturers, run a number of class motor racing championships for drivers in identical cars manufactured by them. These include the G20 1800cc Ford engined cars, up to the awesome G50s. Anyway, there is also a class for 14 to 16 year olds to convert to cars from karts in a down rated 1400cc version of the G20 with a fully enclosed GT body – in the 2008 Championship there are 19 young hopefuls running including 3 girls.

Editorial comment: I feel there is a great publicity/advertising opportunity here for some enterprising commercial organisation, perhaps an oil company, to run a couple of these cars for poor kids who would compete for places not only on driving ability, but on evidence of good voluntary works in the community. Still, that’s another story. Ed

I recently knocked up a very short DVD of clips from the round at Mallory Park this season and would be willing to send a complimentary copy to any SIG member who has contributed to or is going to contribute to the *NEWSLETTER* or the Forum workshop. Just drop me a note with the postal address – UK only.

***** End of Transmission *****