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### *Special Guide Number*

*In this issue, there is a 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. Note, the format of this issue will be different, but the regular edition will follow with breaking news during December.*

Firstly, I would like to welcome a number of Module 1 students of the International Diploma who have recently joined us. If anyone, students or others, would like to refer to earlier issues, they are all displayed on the **irm** Website and may be accessed as follows:

Type **IRM** or Institute of Risk Management or [www.theirm.org](http://www.theirm.org) into your search engine. On the home page there is a link lower down on the right to [special interest groups](#), then scroll down to [People, communication and behaviour](#) and you should be into our area.

This opens with a note that the SIG actually originated from an academic base – when Module 1 under the old syllabus was re-aligned for 2005 from “Risk Management: Organisation and Communication” to “Risk Management: Organisation and Context”, the communication aspect became the foundation stone for the full portfolio of our SIG.

The *NEWSLETTERS* all have links one under the other starting with the latest and going back to issue no 1 in December 2005. NB - early editions have the secretary’s old e-mail address containing the word “[writer](#)” - this is no longer valid, all contact is to [bruce.widdowson@btinternet.com](mailto:bruce.widdowson@btinternet.com)

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Anyway to the matter in hand for this special issue:

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People, Communication and Behaviour SIG – “Guide/Handbook”  
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As you will recall, the go ahead was given for this publication in July last but was deferred until the new International Diploma Module One was fully in place. The reason for this should be clarified:

**Referencing** My directive from “Lloyds Avenue” was that the Guide, whilst intended as a practical tool, must be properly referenced to give credibility to the **irm** and the secondary function as an academic reference in itself. It was decided to align this to the International Diploma coursework, especially Module 1 as far as possible. There would be other references though and I will mention one of these a little later on in this issue.

#### **Timetable**

Nov / Dec 2008    Initial drafting by the team. Team members to submit their

	contribution to BW by Christmas 2008.
Jan 09	Conclusion and refer back as necessary
Feb / Mar 09 office	Redraft - followed by submission to Carolyn Williams at the <b>irm</b> office
April 09	and report progress to our own SIG AGM, all in late March. <b>irm</b> office to make comments and submit the academic areas to the Faculty for overview.
May 09	Publication timetable to be announced

### *The International Diploma*

At this stage, it may be helpful to our readers, some of whom qualified a time ago, to have a brief overview of what has and is happening at the **irm** on the educational front. Under the old syllabus, each subject was self contained – both the knowing and the solving of problems. With the advance of the “Global Society” on the one hand and the creation of the Certificate (CIRM) on the other, there was a need for change. The diploma content is now based on UK, US and Danish (representative of Europe with English as second language) content and the Diploma is pitched at Post Graduate level. At the student workshops last year, I asked for a show of hands and about half the room were graduates. The remainder came in by the alternative entry qualification route, mainly the Certificate.

The new Module 1, *Principles of Risk*, is directed at thinking across a very wide spectrum at deeper than certificate level - and is a base from which the later modules fan out. Module one is now mainly a *knowing* subject with just a little solving including two of the original RMOC (see above) chapters from the old syllabus. In fact, so dramatic has the change been, that there was in interim paper for 2007, where only part of the new coursework ran with about 70% of the old RMOC text - whilst that subject also ran side by side in run-off. Now for 2008 we have the final format - as well as continuing with the work of the UK's *John Adams*, for the first time there are papers by many of the traditional American thinkers, including *Slovic, Tversk and, Kahneman*.

So that is why there has been this slight delay with the Guide, for purposes of alignment. The main point for us is that Module 1 is now “people” driven much more than anyone felt necessary in earlier days.

### *“The Psychology of Risk” by Glynis Breakwell - 2007*

I said that I would cover one of the other reference sources in this issue. “Word on the street”, was that this author is an excellent authority, especially on Risk Communication and I note that Professor Breakwell, who is Vice Chancellor of the University of Bath, is a psychologist and also specialises in leadership, identity processes and military cultures.

The learning curve actually starts with the cover – but that is perhaps down to the publisher, Cambridge University Press: There is a superb view of a snow covered mountain range more befitting a best selling novel than an academic work. It was only on the second inspection, that I noticed a tiny figure (a base jumper) in the top right hand corner leaping out into the abyss. When first viewed as a two dimensional

image, the angle of the shot conveys that the jumper may not be wearing a parachute and is going to crash into a jagged rock prominently below – clearly intended to shock and **RAW DATA** as defined by our SIG. On closer examination as a three dimensional study, it becomes apparent that the jumper probably does have a parachute as the trunk of the body appears to be thick and that there are indications that a concave cliff lurks behind the jagged prominary in the foreground - **INFORMATION** as defined by our SIG (the difference between **RAW DATA** and **INFORMATION** was the first point to be brought up by a member in discussion via the early *NEWSLETTERS* and will become the first “tool” in the solving section of the Guide/Handbook).

Back to the book review – this work is set out in a delightful way as each chapter starts with a preview to set the context and then ends with a conclusion, so you can first of all read through all previews and conclusions to quickly get the bigger picture and “peek at the answers”. Also, there are well illustrated boxes and references to many of the US authorities as above – *Slovic, Tverski, Kahneman* and others, all in the correct place and followed through with later developments right up to date. I will draw reference from this publication for our Guide and no doubt mention it again in future *NEWSLETTERS*.

*We couldn't miss out the something different section from this issue, so here goes:* Bonfire Night in the UK falls on 5<sup>th</sup> November each year –for the benefit of our overseas readers, we celebrate during the evening by displaying fireworks and sometimes burning effigies of Guy Faulkes, who was one of the conspiritors of the failed Gunpowder Plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605.

*Editorial Comment* - now there is a lesson in Risk Management if ever there was one. Pet owners are advised to stay in and comfort their charges who may be frightened by the bangs. I was duly sitting with my dog to hold her paw whilst reading the latest edition of *Strategic RISK* (a magazine that I can commend to you) and noticed the feature on an interview with Stefan Siguilla, the president of DVS. Amidst an interesting viewpoint, *Sigulla* stated that, “I’m convinced there’s only one risk manager and that’s the CEO of a company.” The comment encapsulates much of my views on High Management, especially with regard to culture generated, which is of course one of the areas that we are looking into.

The SIG needs to consider ways of getting our finished *Guide* to the attention of the people that matter, especially CEOs. Any suggestions welcome.

By the way, my dog, who is a Neopolitan Mastiff (with the suspicion of a remote Great Dane ancestor) and very courageous, ended up licking your editor to comfort him as the bangs got louder later into the evening.

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