

Foreword to the 2025 Autumn Issue

Welcome to the second issue of the fourth volume of the Safety-Critical Systems eJournal, published by the Safety-Critical Systems Club (SCSC) with Publication Number SCSC-210.

Although named the Autumn Issue, it has been delayed into Winter by a number of factors. One of these I wish had happened some years ago, because it would have been useful in my work. In a previous job, I was asked on several occasions by project managers why it was necessary to assure a whole system: “*I am procuring a well-established computer from <a well-known manufacturer>; it is trustworthy, we can save money by just assuring the application*”. Yes, well, it may save money in the short term... I use one of those computers from the well-known manufacturer to prepare and publish this journal. After many years of loyal service, a monitoring and maintenance program, of which I was not previously aware, suddenly decided it had top priority and would lock out normal operations while it defragmented disks, and such like. That would have been a good example to have on hand with which to refute the “*no need to assure*” brigade’s arguments.

This issue of the journal contains three papers:

1. Chris Hobbs, Jeff Joyce, and Julian Lapenna contributed “*Enhancing Sensitivity Analysis in a Safety Case Argument*” in support of a tutorial on Sensitivity Analysis on Day 2 of the Safety-Critical Systems Symposium (SSS’26).
2. Peter Ladkin is also to present a tutorial at SSS’26; his topic is Possibility Analysis, introduced here in “*A Tutorial on Varieties of Possibility Analysis*”.
3. Jon Ricketts, in “*Enhancing Bowtie Hazard Analysis*”, presents a method, based on Natural Language Processing, to extract pertinent information from occurrence reports, so as to provide insight into how the barriers identified in a bowtie analysis are actually performing in operation.

My thanks go to the authors for contributing their papers, and also to the anonymous peer-reviewers for suggesting clarifications and other improvements. Apologies also to those reviewers who made some recommendations that were not taken up.

Thank you also to the newly-volunteered reviewers. We still need more, as some have had to withdraw, and others have become very busy. To register as a reviewer, please go to <https://scsc.uk/journal> and click on “Register” at the top right of the page. You will be asked to state in what subjects you are most interested, so that you can be matched up with appropriate papers. When a new paper comes in, potential reviewers are sent an e-mail stating the paper’s title and abstract, and inviting their review. A link is provided asking them to respond with whether or not they can review within the required timescale. If they can, they have typically two or three weeks in which to provide comments, so it is not an onerous task. Some people have said to me that they do not think themselves experienced enough to be a reviewer. Actually, those with less experience are valuable reviewers, because they can point out where there is a lack of clarity in a paper, or where previous knowledge of a subject has been assumed.

John Spriggs, SCSC Journal Editor
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