



# NEWSLETTER

Vol 1 No 2 May 2011

## Welcome to ISCRAM2011

ISCRAM2011 is underway! It promises to be the best ISCRAM conference yet. As I write this just under 200 participants have registered and there are two weeks or so to go yet. I have had the pleasure (?!?) of refereeing many of the contributions and there are many excellent papers, promising a meeting full of discussion and debate.

This is the second edition of the newsletter, and, I am pleased to say, it is taking shape. The first edition promised that future editions would have articles and news in them. This one begins to deliver on that.

I have written a short personal piece reflecting on whether the handling of the Fukushima Nuclear Crisis in Japan has drawn in all the lessons that we learnt in the aftermath of Chernobyl.

Maria Santos has written a short piece on the work at LNEC (Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil), the Portuguese National Civil Engineering Laboratory and our hosts for ISCRAM 2011. I am sure that any of the local conference team would be delighted to discuss LNEC's work with you.

Another article reflects on ISCRAM's apparent lack of interest in emergency planning and response issues arising in relation to healthcare systems. Since disasters and other crises often bring huge demands for medical response, it is surprising that we were unable to stimulate interest in a healthcare track at ISCRAM2011.

One of the aims of the newsletter is to connect members and stimulate collaboration across our community. Look at the juxtaposition of two items in the News of Members and you will see why Zeno Franco, Alan Boyd and I will be having a drink together at the conference! Yep: the newsletter is achieving that aim already.

Enjoy ISCRAM2011!

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The ISCRAM Summerschool is sponsored by:



## ISCRAM Summer School

The next event in the ISCRAM calendar is our 4th Summer School which will take place in Tilburg from August 17 to 26, 2011. The format and structure of the summer school have been totally revised, focusing on information systems and logistics aspects of humanitarian response. The programme has been developed by Bartel Van de Walle (University of Tilburg) and Paulo Goncalves (University of Lugano), while internationally renowned organisations such as UN OCHA, JRC Ispra, ICT4Peace and B-FAST have joined as foundational partners and will contribute to the contents of the summer school. The theme of the 2011 summer school is the Haiti Earthquake. More information can be found at:

<http://iscram.org/live/summerschool2011>

The deadline for applications is June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011

## ISCRAM China 2011

Following the success of the fourth ISCRAM China conference held in Harbin last September, planning is well underway for the fifth event this coming October. Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- Crisis and disaster management,
  - Crisis and disaster management theory (e.g. occurrence, development, and evolution mechanisms; management mechanisms),
  - Crisis and disaster management models and methods (e.g. early warning; crisis assessment; the design and adjustment of emergency plans; decision-making models and methods),
  - Relevant applications of technology (information collection and integration technology, simulation and emulation of crisis and disaster management; crisis and disaster management information systems);
- Nuclear emergency management,
  - Assessment of nuclear accidents,
  - The design and adjustment of emergency plans,
  - Nuclear emergency management information systems,
  - Information collection and integration technology, simulation and emulation of nuclear emergency management;

- Earthquake Crisis Management,
  - Earthquake crisis management theory,
  - Assessment of earthquake crisis management,
  - The design and adjustment of emergency plans,
  - Decision-making models and methods,
  - earthquake crisis management information systems,
  - information collection and integration technology, simulation and emulation of earthquake crisis management;
- Other aspects related to crisis, emergency management, information system and emergency response.

The registration fee for ISCRAM China 2011 is expected to be RMB 2800.

### *Important Dates*

Jun 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011: Final submission date for papers.

Jul 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011: Notification of the results of the reviewing process.

Jul 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011: Final submission of accepted papers.

Oct 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>, 2011: Conference

Further details as they become available may be found on [www.iscram.org](http://www.iscram.org) or the ISCRAM china website (currently in Chinese): <http://conference.hrbeu.edu.cn/ISCRAM-CHINA/>

## ISCRAM Live

We always point to [www.iscram.org](http://www.iscram.org) for details of all ISCRAM activities. It is our 'front door', so to speak. Admittedly it is a front door in need of 'repainting', being built on a somewhat old and tired blogging system. Indeed, the board are busy refreshing and restructuring the site. But whatever the state of [www.iscram.org](http://www.iscram.org), do not forget about ISCRAM Live: <http://www.iscram.org/live/>, our more informal social networking site where we collaborate, share ideas and develop our thinking. During ISCRAM2011, as during the previous two conferences, ISCRAM live will be active, piping content from the sessions, discussing issues and generally softening the geographical boundaries of the conference, extending out to our community worldwide. A guide to using ISCRAM live is available in your conference packs.

# ISCRAM General Assembly and Board Elections

Notice is given that the 2011 General Assembly meeting of the *International Association for the Study of Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management* will be held on Tuesday, May 10, 2011 at 16:00 during the ISCRAM2011 Conference at the LNEC Congress Centre, Avenida Do Brasil, 101, Lisbon, Portugal.

## Agenda:

1. Presentation of the present Board of Directors
2. Acceptance of membership, for members proposed by the board of directors
3. Approval of the yearly accounting report and the budget proposal
4. Approval of the work plan of the board of directors
5. Granting of discharge for the current members of the board of directors
6. Election of new members of the board of directors
  - Short presentation on the house rules concerning the Board of Directors election and vote on these rules
  - Announcement of the set-up of the 2011 Election Committee
  - Election of the new Board of Directors
7. Further communications on the Association

The current Board of Directors of the *International Association for the Study of Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management* consists of the following members:

Dr. Bartel Van de Walle (president),  
Dr. Suzanne Jul (vice-president),  
Dr. Gerhard Wickler (secretary),  
Dr. Frank Fiedrich (Treasurer),  
Dr. Paul Burghardt,  
Dr. Song Yan,  
Dr. Simon French,  
Dr. Mark Haselkorn,  
Dr. Tim Grant  
Dr. Murray Turoff.

The board will continue to consist of 10 members and, as required by the Articles of the Association, at least one third of the current board will step down. One of the current Board members has indicated not to run for re-election, and therefore in total

there are now 5 open positions for the new Board. More information, such as the Articles of the Association, the election procedure and registration forms can be found on [www.iscram.org](http://www.iscram.org). Do not hesitate to contact the President, Bartel Van de Walle ([bvdwalle@gmail.com](mailto:bvdwalle@gmail.com)) if you have any further questions.

The candidates for election to the five vacant positions on the board are:

Dr. Julie Dugdale, Dr. Frank Fiedrich, Dr. Simon French, Dr. Linda Plotnick, Dr. Bartel Van de Walle, and Dr. Song Yan.

## Statements of Candidates for Election to the Board



**Julie Dugdale**  
(University of Grenoble/  
MAGMA Research Team,  
Grenoble Informatics  
Laboratory, France)

*Short Bio:* Julie Dugdale is an Associate Professor at the University of

Grenoble and a co-director of the MAGMA, Multi-Agent Research Team in the Grenoble Informatics Laboratory. She teaches Masters students in computing, mainly in the areas of artificial intelligence and modelling. Her research draws together the domains of artificial intelligence, cognitive science and the social sciences and focuses on modelling aspects of human behaviour using an agent-based approach. Her work is predominately applied to two fields: emergency and crisis management and energy management for ambient intelligent homes. Her models are typically used to develop simulations in order to improve work procedures or to develop new technologies. She has published widely in the area of agent based social simulation and is a member of various international conferences concerned with this topic. Similarly she has edited several journals and has several national and international projects concerning agent based social simulation applied to emergency and crisis management.

*Previous ISCRAM Activities and Achievements:* Julie has been involved in the ISCRAM community since 2004. Initially her involvement came from publishing at the conference and through organising or co-organising various tracks. From 2007 to 2010 she co-organised the Intelligent Systems track and in 2005 she organised a track on

'Complexity, Crisis and Robustness' and one in 2006 on 'Stakeholder Coordination for Crisis Management'. She has a particular interest in mentoring PhD students and she co-organised the ISCRAM PhD Doctoral Colloquium from 2007 to 2010. At the ISCRAM 2010 conference she was very proud and happy to receive the ISCRAM Distinguished Service Award. She is also a member of the ISCRAM Journal Editorial Board. In 2010 she was an invited keynote speaker at ISCRAM-CHINA 2010 and in 2011 she is the Program Co-Chair for the ISCRAM 2011 Conference in Lisbon.

*Ambitions and Plans as a Board Member:* My ambitions if elected lie in two areas. Firstly, I have always been interested in mentoring PhD students and I am keen to further this in ISCRAM, not only through the PhD Colloquium, but through developing a mentoring scheme specifically for Crisis Management PhD students. This could allow them to develop a real working network of colleagues in the area and gain advice on careers, research avenues and practical aspects such as presentation skills etc.

Secondly, through my research work and previous ISCRAM activities I have developed contacts with crisis management researchers in Asia, notably Vietnam, China and Japan. There is a huge body of researchers and practitioners in Asia tackling the problem of developing information systems for crisis management. I would like not only to work on developing ISCRAM-CHINA but to develop ISCRAM in other areas of Asia possibly by initially organising an ISCRAM-ASIA workshop in Vietnam, and by highlighting ASIAN based activities (projects, communities, funding opportunities, etc.) by linking them to the ISCRAM.org website.

Finally, I would like to continue being involved with the ISCRAM Conference, possibly serving as a link between ISCRAM 2011 and ISCRAM 2012 and to continue work on the ISCRAM Academic Standards Committee.



**Frank Fiedrich**  
(Wuppertal University, Germany)

*Short Bio:* Brief summary of my academic background: Master in Industrial Engineering (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology - KIT), PhD in Civil, Geo and

Environmental Sciences (KIT), Asst. Prof. at the Institute for Crisis, Disaster and Risk Management at the George Washington University, Prof. of Public Safety and

Emergency Management at Wuppertal University.

*Previous ISCRAM Activities and Achievements:* I am involved with ISCRAM since the very beginning and so far I attended all conferences. 2008 I organized the ISCRAM conference in Washington, DC. Beside this I am regularly organizing special sessions and served on best paper committees. I am also founding board member and the current treasurer.

*Ambitions and Plans as a Board Member:* Continued support for our young organization – whatever relevant issues have to be resolved.



**Simon French**  
(Manchester Business School, UK)

*Short Bio:* My connections with crisis management – professional that is: personal crises have always abounded! – began in 1990 when I joined the International

Chernobyl Project to understand the decision making that had taken place during and in the four years since the Accident. Since then, I have been involved in building, designing and studying emergency management processes and decision support tools. My interests have expanded into risk communication and sense-making during crises. I also work in many related areas of decision theory, analysis and behaviour. Away from research and development, as a professor I have spent most of my life teaching and I have always emphasised the need to mentor doctoral students and early career researchers. Currently I approach retirement from a chair of Decision and Information Sciences at Manchester Business School, but I have no intention of retiring from research nor from helping to develop ISCRAM.

*Previous ISCRAM Activities and Achievements:* I was an invited speaker at the first ISCRAM workshop and have attended every one of our conferences. I was a Programme Chair for ISCRAM2010 and am acting as liaison between the Board and the Committee for ISCRAM2011. I have also taught at two ISCRAM Summer Schools. I was elected to the first ISCRAM Board two years ago. I have participated in the Board fully and am a member of the publications committee. I edit the ISCRAM Newsletter. Finally, I am very proud to have won an ISCRAM Service Award in 2008.

*Ambitions and Plans as a Board Member:* I would like to develop the Newsletter -- perhaps in a more electronic, social networking form -- to be a further element to foster interaction and communication across the ISCRAM community. Alongside this I would like to continue to help develop a publications strategy.

Generally I see the task of the Board as performing a difficult balancing act. I believe that we still have much to do to make ISCRAM a fully functioning international professional and academic association. We are a community and we are developing more and more activities. But our resources are limited both in terms of finances and personal efforts. We cannot yet manage our association as well as we would like. One day we will but for a little while we will need to temper our ambitions with a realistic assessment of our capabilities: a balancing act. Thus developing and delivering a strategy to develop ISCRAM as an association and community remains a major task for all Board members.



**Linda Plotnick**  
(Jacksonville  
State University, USA)

*Short Bio:* I am an Assistant Professor of Information Systems at Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama, USA. I received my PhD in

Information Systems in 2009 from the New Jersey Institute of Technology. My dissertation research studied student partially distributed virtual teams engaged in developing the software for an emergency management information system. My research has included studying the threat rigidity thesis and its implication for emergency management system design, social media to support community resilience and virtual collaboration, leadership and trust in partially distributed emergency response software development teams, and the development of a unified emergency scale. Currently I am engaged as a Research Associate in a project that seeks to understand and measure community resilience and am co-PI on submitted (but not yet awarded) proposals to study rural community hazard mitigation program implementation and one to investigate the use of information systems in New Zealand around the recent earthquake. In addition to my ISCRAM activities noted, I have attended, in 2010, the WISE (Women's Institute for Summer Enrichment) workshop which focused on cybersecurity and trustworthy

systems. While my interests are eclectic, I am committed to striving to make a contribution to the emergency management domain.

*Previous ISCRAM Activities and Achievements:* I have been active in ISCRAM since 2006 when I assisted Murray Turoff in preparing for, and running, the ISCRAM conference at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. The ISCRAM conferences have been an important part of my career and I have attended in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009, and will be attending this year (2011). I attended the Doctoral Consortium in 2006 and Summer School in 2007. I have presented papers at ISCRAM in 2007, 2008, 2009, and will be co-presenting a paper in 2011. Also, I have been a session co-chair in 2008, 2009, and 2010 and am a track co-chair this year (2011). Additionally, I have been a reviewer for ISCRAM conferences and am a member of the Programme Committee. I was co-editor of a special edition of IJISCRAM in 2010 focused on online social networks to support community collaboration and co-authored an article published in the journal edition. Thus, I have been active in ISCRAM since 2006 and intend to continue my participation at even a greater level of activity.

*Ambitions and Plans as a Board Member:* My goal is to be of service to ISCRAM and its community: to help it maintain its current direction, incorporate new ideas, and promote and manage its growth. My experience will be invaluable in organizing conferences and other activities, both face-to-face and virtual. Unfortunately, in the past few years there have been unprecedented large scale disasters requiring the response of emergency and humanitarian personnel. ISCRAM serves a unique role in bringing together academicians and practitioners to share ideas and collaborate to understand and assist in these circumstances. While I am eager to serve ISCRAM in any way I can, I would like to focus my efforts on organizing events and building community ties. For example, although the ISCRAM forums seem to have been abandoned in favor of social media (e.g. Facebook), I believe there is a need and a place for both. A forum still has the potential to be a vibrant place for members to find collaborators, offer help, ask for help, and share ideas. I would like to see if raising awareness of the discussion board's existence revitalizes interest in it. Thus, I am eager to give back to the ISCRAM community wherever there is need.



**Bartel Van de Walle**  
(Tilburg University, The Netherlands)

*Short Bio:* I am a tenured Associate Professor at the Department of Information Management, Tilburg School of Economics and

Management at Tilburg University (the Netherlands) and visiting professor at the New Jersey Institute of Technology (USA), Harbin Engineering University (China) and the Università della Svizzera Italiana in Lugano. Since April 2010, I am also a staff advisor on science policy to the Flemish minister of science and innovation and board member of the Flemish Institute for Technological Research (VITO). I have published widely in the domain of ISCRAM.

*Previous ISCRAM Activities and Achievements:* I am one of the founders of the ISCRAM Community in 2004, and I have since been quite busy with co-organizing ISCRAM conferences in Europe, USA and China, and the ISCRAM PhD Summer Schools in Tilburg. I was elected founding chair of the Board of the ISCRAM Association in 2009, a function I am very pleased to fulfill to this day. I am currently also still co-editor-in-chief of the ISCRAM international journal.

*Ambitions and Plans as a Board Member:* I would like to use my experience as ISCRAM chair to continue to strengthen our still young association, both internally and externally. Internally, I would like to help drive the development of the ISCRAM committees that are being formed (such as the standards and publications committee) and pay special attention to specific functions, such as a much needed member management function at the board level. Externally, I would like to continue to engage other organisations to work with ISCRAM. The current agreements with IAEM and UN OCHA that were established in the recent past need to be fully implemented, and serve as a basis for future collaborations.



**Song Yan** (Harbin Engineering University, CHINA)

*Short Bio:* Song Yan, female, born on Feb. 14, 1974. Now a professor of School of Economics and Management, engaged in Teaching and research about E-

commerce, Logistics, Crisis Management, Information System, Decision-making. At the

same time the director of Research Institute of Disaster and Crisis Management in Harbin Engineering University. Also the vice dean of School of Economics and Management in Harbin Engineering University. She got Bachelor's degree of Computer Technology and Application, Master' degree of Computer Technology, Doctor's degree, Management Science and Engineering in Harbin Engineering University. During 2006, Collaborative Research of Information Management System for Crisis Response and Management in Tilburg University, the Netherlands, Sponsored by China Scholarship Council.

*Previous ISCRAM Activities and Achievements:*

- Founder and Program Chair of ISCRAM-CHINA Conference from 2006 to now
- Board Member of ISCRAM Association
- Member of Editorial Board of Journal of Marine Science and Application
- Director of Heilongjiang Economics Association
- Associate Editor of The International Journal of Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management (IJISCRAM)

*Ambitions and Plans as a Board Member:* My first objective is to develop ISCRAM-CHINA as much as possible, not only taking it as a conference, but also as an academic association. The association named Heilongjiang Crisis Science and Technology has been proved by the government and we are preparing the formal ceremony for its establishment. From 2012, I plan organize ISCRAM-CHINA conference indifferent cities of China, and if possible we will make it as the annually event covering ASIA. Papers accepted by ISCRAM-CHINA will be indexed by EI which attract more Asian scholars and higher quality will match this index standards. Taking part in more international collaboration via ISCRAM ASSOCIATION based on my Research Institute. Now I have a over 30-members team including teachers and master students. Everybody is very active at this field.

## ISCRAM Activities Report

In addition to this newsletter, you can find more information on what is going on in the ISCRAM community in the ISCRAM Activities Report. The latest (March 2011) edition can be downloaded from:

[www.iscram.org/activities/](http://www.iscram.org/activities/)

## Opinion

# Chernobyl and Fukushima: what to tell the public?

On April 26th 25 years ago the Chernobyl Accident happened. It remains – and hopefully will do so for a very long time – the World’s worst nuclear accident. The earthquake and tsunami hit plants at Fukushima are being brought under control, albeit very slowly, and seem very unlikely to lead to the same scale of radioactive releases as Chernobyl. It is clearly too early to analyse the full impacts of the events at Fukushima, but perhaps it is not too early to start asking some of the questions that will need to be answered.

I was involved in the International Chernobyl Project of 1990-91. Indeed, that project was my introduction to the myriad of issues that arise in crisis response and management. Before then I was a pretty theoretical guy working on decision and risk analysis. Talk about being thrown in at the deep end! The project made many findings, but one has remained with me since then, driving much of my research: namely the importance of a coherent, harmonised and sensitive response to an emergency. Inconsistent responses – or simply inconsistent information – from the authorities can confuse the public, lead to poor implementation of countermeasures or recovery strategies and confuse the public. Media coverage tends to focus on such inconsistencies, amplifying the public’s confusion and concerns, and raising stress levels. Our findings suggested and several further studies over the past 20 years have confirmed that increased stress in the public can lead to significant health effects. In the case of Chernobyl these effects seem to be fully commensurate with those arising from the radiation itself.

Such findings place a great responsibility on the authorities and the media to provide the public with as much information as is available and in doing so to address the inherent uncertainties fairly and openly. Did this happen in the case of Fukushima?

Firstly, it is clear that the two accidents were very different and happened in very different circumstances. Fukushima happened because of a frightful earthquake and tsunami, events that led to many thousands of deaths and devastated much of the infrastructure in the region. The radiological risks are only a small part of a much wider

catastrophe. Against such a background, inconsistency and confusion in the provision of information can only be expected. Indeed with so much destruction around and so many deaths, there were and are many things to draw the public authorities’ attention away from the unfolding events at Fukushima. But, of course, the media pulled attention back to the dangers at the nuclear plant. As days passed, there was less to report on the physical impacts of the earthquake and tsunami, and the ongoing story of the fight to control the overheating reactors took their place on the front pages of the World’s press.

Have the authorities handled the provision of information on the Fukushima accident well? My impression is that they did at first, and then were not entirely open about what was happening, especially in relation to the contaminated cooling waters; but they have now come good in providing full information. But that is just my impression filtered through the World’s (English speaking) media and the web. Some of the media seem to have provided balanced careful coverage of events; but other parts have been more sensational.

All that, though, is just a personal impression. What we must do – and maybe the ISCRAM community with its worldwide reach can help in this – is analyse the information provision over time. Did it provide a balanced fair view of events? Or did it inflame public concerns? And if it do the latter, what effects will that have in terms health and the long term well being of the affected populations?

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## Institutes and Groups

### LNEC

The Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil (National Civil Engineering Laboratory) of Portugal is a state owned R&D institution founded in 1946. Its main goals are to carry out innovative research and development and to contribute to the best practices in civil engineering.

LNEC activities are integrated in a global strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction, addressing, among others, the following risks: seismic and geotechnical risks; river and coastal floods; coastal erosion; risks in structures and infrastructure systems (e.g., buildings, dams, tunnels, maritime works, water and wastewater

utilities); ground contamination and maritime pollution; surface and groundwater pollution; transportation systems; fire in buildings and confined spaces; social risks.

LNEC research greatly benefits from an interdisciplinary approach in the various domains of civil engineering, supported by development efforts in several cross cutting areas such as risk analysis and management procedures, emergency management information systems and other decision-support tools, geographic information science, data acquisition, etc.

As to risk, the major purpose of LNEC research activities is to contribute to:

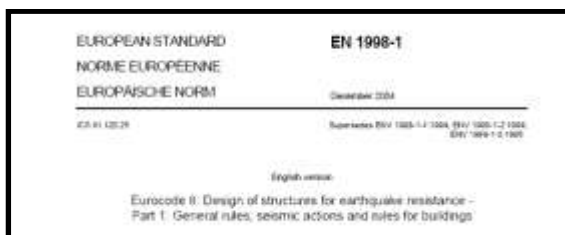
- Mitigation of natural and technological risks.



- Quality and safety control of the major public works (e.g. dams, bridges, maritime works,...).



- Quality of construction (Portuguese technical commissions, Eurocodes, European standards, homologation of new materials...).



- Safety of persons (e.g. early warning and alert systems to support emergency planning).



- Protection and rehabilitation of the natural and built heritage.



## Research

# What is the state of research on IS for health care crisis response and management?

This was the question the organisers of the ISCRAM 2011 track on Emergency Management In Health Systems were left asking themselves when they received only two submissions. Healthcare is certainly an important domain for crisis response and management. Any disaster can quickly become a health disaster unless public health and medical care systems can surge to meet the increased demand for care. And that importance may be growing. The number of frail, sick and disabled people being cared for in community settings is increasing as populations age and medical technology

develops, and these people are particularly vulnerable to adverse health consequences when disaster strikes.

Relatively recent reviews of the academic literature (Altevogt et al., 2008, Abramson et al., 2007, Sementelli, 2007, Acosta et al., 2009) have found large gaps in research on emergency management in healthcare. Gaps related to information systems and information technology fall into several categories, and include:

#### *Disaster Planning*

- Exploring how technology innovation and adoption by the communication and health care fields will influence emergency planning and response. How can the public health system best anticipate and plan for these changes?
- Develop data sources to support research and evaluation, either by leveraging existing data or by creating new data sources or repositories.

#### *Responder Training*

- Comparing the effectiveness of computer simulations with other training in enhancing the performance of the healthcare system and of specific personnel.
- Investigating the extent to which different training modalities improve information management and visualization, and hence produce better decision analysis and outcomes.

#### *Incident Response Communication*

- Improving information sharing among various levels of government and across different organizations and jurisdictions.
- Improving information sharing between health staff and emergency management officials in other organisations in the face of barriers such as different terminologies.
- Measuring the value of "relationships" or "connectivity" between healthcare organisations and other partners in information exchange in emergency settings.
- Exploring how information flows among emergent volunteer groups.

#### *Information and Decision Support Systems*

- Understanding the social, economic, administrative and political contexts within which tools and decision rules are applied.
- Developing simulation and decision support systems.
- Further developing GIS applications.

- Investigating how IT innovations such as wireless technologies and systems integration can strengthen emergency response systems by improving situational awareness, data sharing, and decision support for the health workforce.
- Developing shared data systems (E.g., health records, pharmacy records) to aid short-term recovery.

#### *Public Information Dissemination and Risk Communication*

- Exploring how new social media and technologies can be better used to fill risk communication gaps in emergency settings, including those experienced by vulnerable populations
- Enhancing systems of information exchange to reach into vulnerable and special needs communities in emergency settings
- Developing public information and education systems

So why is there a lack of interest in a health systems stream within the ISCRAM community? Our challenge to IS researchers attending ISCRAM 2011 is for you to try to answer this conundrum, and tell us how research on healthcare IS should be developed. Come and talk to us at the conference, or send us an email.

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Geoffrey Hoare (geoff\_hoare@doh.state.fl.us)  
Simon French (simon.french@mbs.ac.uk)

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## **Next Issue**

The next issue of the Newsletter will be published in time for this year's ISCRAM Summer School in August.

## Dates of Future ISCRAM conferences

Planning for ISCRAM2012 has begun with a location set and a team in place. The location will be announced during ISCRAM2011, but I can tell you the dates now: April 22-25, 2012. Put them in your diary now and start planning your contribution.

In fact, we are now almost ready to announce not just the location of ISCRAM2012, but also that of ISCRAM2013. Dates are set as: May 12-15, 2013.

The ISCRAM Board is now turning its mind to ISCRAM2014 and looking for bids to host that. One of the board's key objectives over the past couple of years has been to secure and improve our conferences with longer planning cycles. We are getting there.

## News of Members

Congratulations to two of ISCRAM members for their successful defences of their doctoral theses: **Sophia Liu** and **Willem Muhren**. Sophia's thesis was entitled *Grassroots Heritage: A Multi-Method Investigation of How Social Media Sustain the Living Heritage of Historic Crises*. The dissertation investigated and provided empirical evidence on how heritage is a living and participatory phenomenon that needs to be considered when designing technology for heritage matters. The concepts of grassroots heritage and socially-distributed curation were offered as ways of interpreting cultural heritage in the context of the participatory Web. Willem's thesis was entitled *Foundations of Sensemaking Support Systems for Humanitarian Crisis Response*. It used sensemaking to describe actors' interpretive information processes with which they give meaning to events in a crisis environment. Sensemaking is a crucial process in crisis response, as the manner how actors deal with crucial events and the success thereof is determined by their grasp of the situation. The research investigated to what extent we can lay the foundations of Sensemaking Support Systems for humanitarian crisis response.

**Zeno Franco** is looking for potential collaborators on a new project looking at hospital based incident command using team-in-the-loop simulation. This work builds on a prior NSF STTR funded project, in

collaboration with Quimba Software, that won the best paper award at ISCRAM 2009. Currently the focus is on building a loosely knit, transdisciplinary team including stakeholders from the US emergency response community and a major regional academic medical center. Zeno is interested in forming additional relationships with collaborators in human-in-the-loop simulation, gaming, pre-hospital and hospital based crisis response management. He anticipates seeking new grant funding in late 2011.

**Starr Roxanne Hiltz** and **Murray Turoff** just returned from a week in Romania where they had organized two workshops on Collaborative Methods in Foresight and Planning. This is part of an ongoing foresight study on the future of Romanian Higher Education and was intended to aid faculty and administrators from various universities to design and conduct their own studies dealing with the future of their local institutions. Planned changes by the national government are causing a certain ongoing degree of emergencies for the local universities which has stimulated more interest in planning.

**Alan Boyd** and **Simon French** at Manchester Business School are leading a team to provide a scoping review of R&D needs for emergency planning in healthcare within the UK. See the article above on page 8 for some of the issues that the project will address. Further details may be found at:

<http://research.mbs.ac.uk/hsi/Ourresearch/CurrentProjects/EmergencyHealthPlanning.aspx>

Alan and Simon would be delighted for any comments or suggestions that might focus the project on current issues R&D needs in this area. Please send any suggestions to [Alan.Boyd@mbs.ac.uk](mailto:Alan.Boyd@mbs.ac.uk).

Please send any short items of News to the Editor: [simon.french@mbs.ac.uk](mailto:simon.french@mbs.ac.uk)

## Help Still Wanted

Yep! We are still looking for volunteers to help deliver our plans for the newsletter. We need a small team to help write, gather and edit sections. If you are interested in helping in any way from collating a list of preprints to interviewing some of the key figures within ISCRAM and the crisis management and response community, please email me as soon as possible ([simon.french@mbs.ac.uk](mailto:simon.french@mbs.ac.uk)). And beware that tap on the shoulder at ISCRAM2011. I shall be actively seeking out volunteers!