

Summary of concluding remarks

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Summary of Concluding Remarks

Closing Address

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This session has brought forward several interesting and important papers on safety concepts. It is not fair I think to single out any particular papers. I shall therefore put forward two comments of general nature to the papers.

Firstly, several of the presentations have focused on the task of optimizing safety within economic constraints - or was it vice versa? Anyhow, I have noticed that economy has entered the equations as a kind of "total cost" concept. Furthermore, it has been treated as an investment proposition in a long term perspective. This puzzles me, because so many decisions regarding economy - also in relation to safety - are taken on the basis of cash-flow considerations. To me it is then a question of how realistic the equations for "minimizing total cost" really are, and subsequently how realistic are the models which have been presented in this context?

If the models and the basic reasoning do not match the daily life of the decision-maker or the businessman, we are on the wrong track.

Secondly, I have the impression that every contribution more or less touched on the subject of safety versus economy, treating the two as equal parameters. In my opinion this is not always true as I have already stated in my introductory general survey.

I think we have to fully recognize the fact that in the individual trade-off between safety and economy: safety comes last. It is a common business attitude - found also in public authorities - that safety is considered a limitation to business opportunities. Perhaps equally important is that safety is considered as a limitation to human initiative and freedom. To accept this fact of life, is very important in my opinion. Because if we don't, we shall not gain further ground in our quest for greater insight into the handling, analysis and acceptance of risks.

Having made these two points, I shall only refer to the many excellent papers you have heard today which certainly have given plenty of major topics to discuss.