

# Y'22 ACM Risks Forum Annual Report

MC

Monique Chang



To:

- Bruce Shriver;
- Brian McKay;
- Diane Crawford

Thu 6/30/2022 1:49 PM

39th Annual Report Relating to the ACM Risks Forum  
For the Period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022  
Submitted by Peter G. Neumann

Date: June 30, 2022

To: The ACM Board, 1601 Broadway, 10th Floor, NY, NY 10019

This report summarizes my activities relating to the ACM Forum on Risks to the Public ('RISKS', which I began on 1 August 1985, at the request of the ACM president Adele Goldberg), and the Inside Risks series of 252 articles in the Communications of the ACM (which began in July 1990) for the ACM fiscal year that has just ended.

In that we again have a new incoming ACM president, I include some relevant historical background. In addition to the ACM Risks Forum and the Inside Risks articles, I have contributed highlights from the online RISKS to each quarterly issue of the ACM SIGSOFT Software Engineering Notes ('SEN', for which I was the founding editor, in 1976). My 1995 book, Computer-Related Risks, drew heavily on materials from SEN and subsequently RISKS. Perhaps surprisingly, many of the risks considered in the book are still with us today in one form or another, and have actually increased in frequency and impact. For example, I recently put together a summary of one-liners relating to election integrity from SEN, my book, and all of the issues of the ACM Risks Forum. (Given the startling number of such items, I need to update it.)

During the 2021-2022 ACM reporting year, there were 53 issues of the ACM Risks Digest (Volume 32, issues 75 through 96, and Volume 33, issues 1 through 31). RISKS issues are available online at <ftp.sri.com/risks/> and at <http://www.risks.org> (which redirects to a nicely formatted searchable site at the University of Newcastle in the UK, courtesy of Lindsay Marshall), as well as on USENET (via Panix); it is also mirrored elsewhere around the world. The extent of its readership is considerable, but not easy to estimate. It continues to get new subscribers, and has relatively few unsubscribers.

The CACM Inside Risks was initially a one-pager (on the Inside back page of the CACM, to add a pun to its identity as an Insider's view of Risks). The first 216 issues were monthly until June 2008, after which it has appeared as Viewpoint articles three times a year; the change was initiated by

Moshe Vardi, who noted to me that the Inside Risks articles were the most popular in the CACM, and he wanted to use that space for other purposes. During the 2021-2022 reporting year, there was unfortunately only one column (as a result of various time-consuming events and personal conflicts, plus one life-critical medical emergency that caused an author to drop out after a partially written article):

\* June 2022. #252. PGN, Toward Total-System Trustworthiness:

This is a long-term goal to systemically reduce risks.

<http://www.csl.sri.com/neumann/cacm252.pdf>

The above RISKS-related activities provide a highly visible public ACM activity (consistent with Adele Goldberg's original desire). They also serve vital educational roles, and provide useful resources for teachers, researchers, developers, and end-users. (I gave a talk on the RISKS material for Dave Farber's course at Keio University in Japan earlier this month.) Long-time RISKS readers tend to be very savvy when it comes to trustworthiness (safety, security, reliability, system survivability, etc.), and some of them have been reading or contributing for decades.

Although the ACM Committee on Computers and Public Policy (CCPP) was transformed into a function of the ACM Council by Cherri Pancake when she took over the ACM reigns, the committee still exists for Inside Risks and RISKS activities; it consists of Steve Bellovin, Peter Denning, Virgil Gligor, Kevin Fu, Nancy Leveson, David Parnas, Jerry Saltzer, Zeynep Tufekci, Lauren Weinstein, and Ben Zorn. Fortunately, they are all still present as extremely relevant and diverse advisors, primarily as a review board for potential Inside Risks articles, but also for dealing with special considerations relating to the ACM Risks Forum.

Plans Through 30 June 2023

At Yannis Ioannidis's request, I am happy to continue moderating the on-line ACM RISKS Forum, to commission and edit future Inside Risks columns, and to contribute quarterly RISKS highlights to the SIGSOFT SEN, all closely related to the RISKS activity, as in the past 38 ACM years.

Peter G. Neumann, Chief Scientist, Computer Science Laboratory,

SRI International EL-243, Menlo Park CA 94025-3493

E-mail addresses: Neumann@CSL.SRI.COM for computer-related e-mail and

PNeumann@acm.org for nonbusiness related communications

Website: <http://www.csl.sri.com/neumann>

Cell phone: 650-804-1802 [preferred]

Office phone: 1-650-859-2375 [not used during COVID]