

SPACE SYSTEMS SYMPOSIUM (D1)
Lessons Learned in Space Systems (5)

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PERSPECTIVES ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT AT NASA

Abstract

Risk Analysis and Risk Management are two terms that are bandied around quite a bit but mean different things to different people. There has been a significant amount of work on risk assessment and management techniques but little has been done to demonstrate the depth to which these techniques are employed or even understood in practice. Large mail out surveys could gather this information but both the survey population and response rate often render this approach of little use. NASA is one of the world's largest and most respected technical organization and one that employs risk assessment and management in several forms. This provides a robust and adequate population for conducting a survey. In this paper we report on a survey conducted at NASA that addresses how risk assessment and management is conducted and interpreted by managers involved with various phases of the current programs and projects. We provide analysis of several comparative questions as well as several open ended questions which should shed light on the similarities and dissimilarities of risk interpretation at different project phases.