

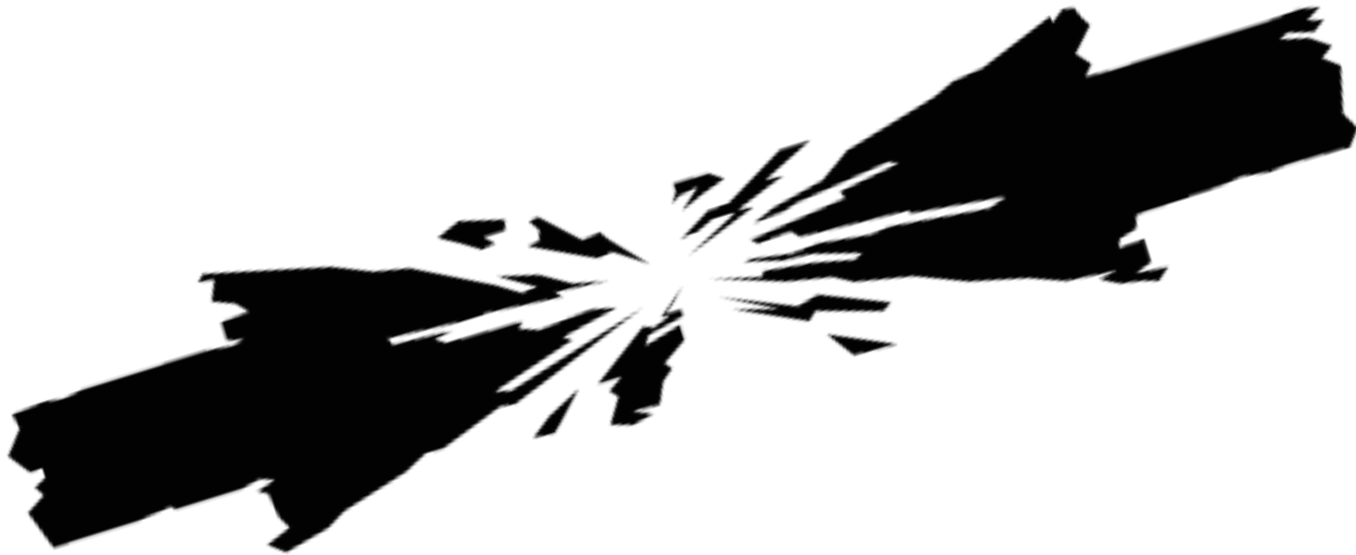
RISK PERCEPTION AND COMMUNITY OUTRAGE

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November 12, 2013

What is Conflict?

- Conflict exists when individuals/groups who depend on each other express different views, interests or goals and perceive their views as incompatible or oppositional



Sources of Conflict

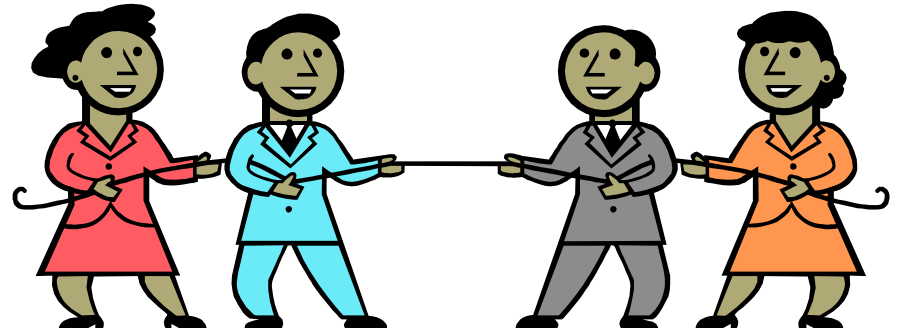
- Economics / Commodities
 - Competing motives to attain scarce resources, maximising gain
- Values / Principles
 - way of life, ideologies
- Psychological needs
 - power (maintaining or maximising influence), freedom
- Ineffective communication
 - miscommunication, misunderstanding

Myths About Conflict

- Conflict is always a sign of a poor relationship
- Conflict can always be avoided
- Conflict can always be resolved
- Conflict is always bad

Levels of Conflict

- Intrapersonal Conflict
- **Interpersonal Conflict**
- Role Conflict
- Intergroup Conflict
- **Multi-Party Conflict**
- International Conflict



Descriptors of Interpersonal Conflict

- **Crisis**
 - Behaviour is affected, normal functioning impacted - breaking point!
- **Tension**
 - Relationships are impacted by negative attitudes and fixed opinions
- **Misunderstandings**
 - Motives and facts become confused or misperceived
- **Incidents**
 - Short sharp exchanges without any lasting internal reaction
- **Discomfort**
 - conflict is not clearly manifested but declared onset with signs of discomfort

Approaches to Conflict

Win-Lose	Only one party gets satisfaction
Lose-Lose	Neither party gets satisfaction
Win-Win	Both parties get satisfaction

Win-Win Approach

A Win-Win approach is ALWAYS possible, a win-win outcome is not

The Benefits:

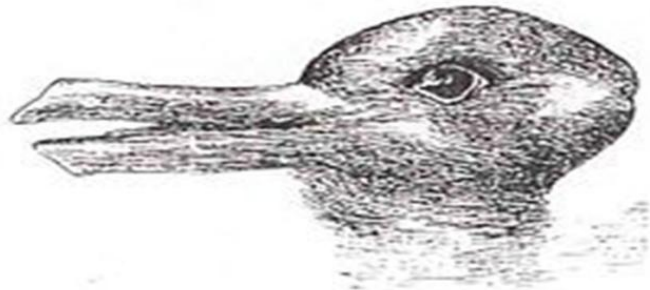
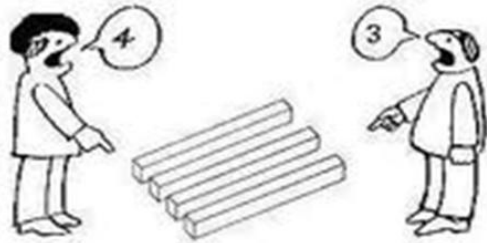
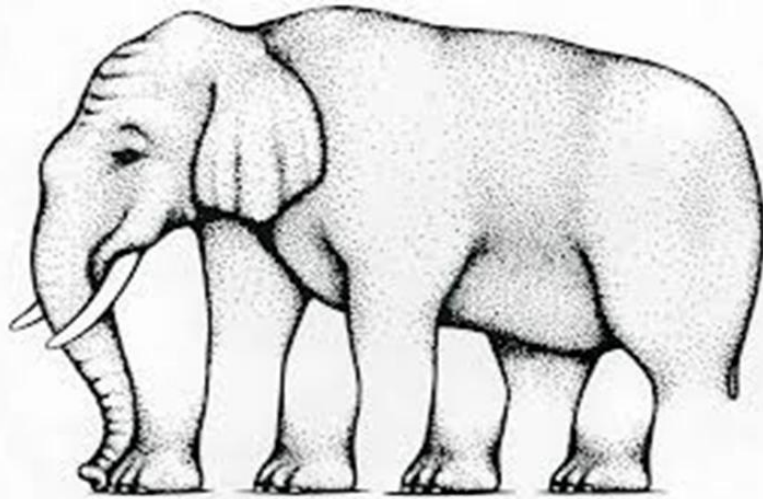
- Enhances relationships
- Encourages creativity
- Good quality solutions
- Focuses energy on problem solving rather than fighting
- Increases productivity

Perception



- Perception is the way we organise and interpret incoming information through our sensory receptors; making sense of what we see, hear, smell, taste, touch and see.
- Perception is how we experience the world

What can you see?



Risk = Hazard + Outrage

Peter Sandman

Components of Community Outrage

Voluntary or involuntary/coerced?

Natural or industrial?

Fair or unfair?

Familiar or exotic?

Not memorable or memorable?

Not dreaded or dreaded?

Chronic or Catastrophic?

Knowable or not knowable?

Morally irrelevant or morally relevant?

Can I trust you or not?

Is the process responsive or unresponsive?



1. Voluntary or coerced?

- People feel less at risk when the choice is theirs:
 - The right to say ‘no’, makes saying ‘*maybe*’ much easier
- What behaviours do you engage in that you may define as ‘not so risky’ because you voluntarily choose to engage in them?



2. Natural or Industrial?

- We are just naturally more forgiving of nature's coercion e.g. flood, than of corporate coercion
- Don't compare your risks with natural risks - in hazard terms there is no difference - but in outrage terms there is



3. Familiar or Exotic?

- Familiar risks and familiar surroundings diminish outrage.
- **People will usually underestimate familiar risks e.g. radon from your microwave, driving car, safety rules within the office**
- While explaining benefits can be useful, it is much better to explain the risks instead
- Don't evade the tough issues, explain the risks and make them more familiar
- We are more alarmed at what we don't understand!



You're looking at the future of Port Pirie.

tenforten.com



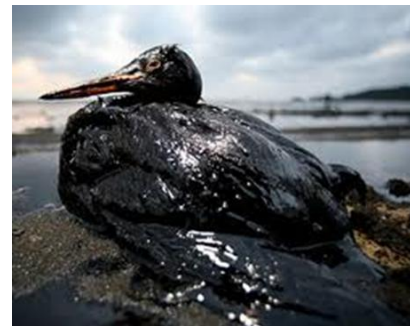
4. Memorable or Not Memorable?

- Memorable incidents and images of risk increase outrage and are influenced by:

- Personal experience
- Media
- Signals/symbols

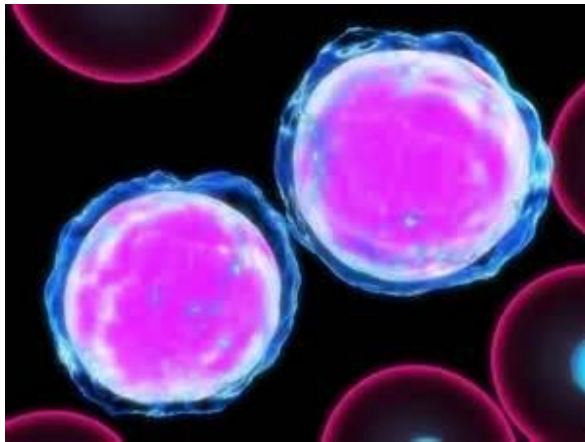


- The more memorable a risk, the more outrage it is going to generate
- Discuss the memorable events before you are accused of them e.g. *“yes we did a poor job on that”*



5. Dreaded or not?

- Some things are more dreaded than others e.g. exposure paths (contaminated water versus contaminated air), hazard categories (waste)
- Since you can't reduce dread, you need to acknowledge and legitimise it!
- Delayed risks seen to increase dread than an immediate effect

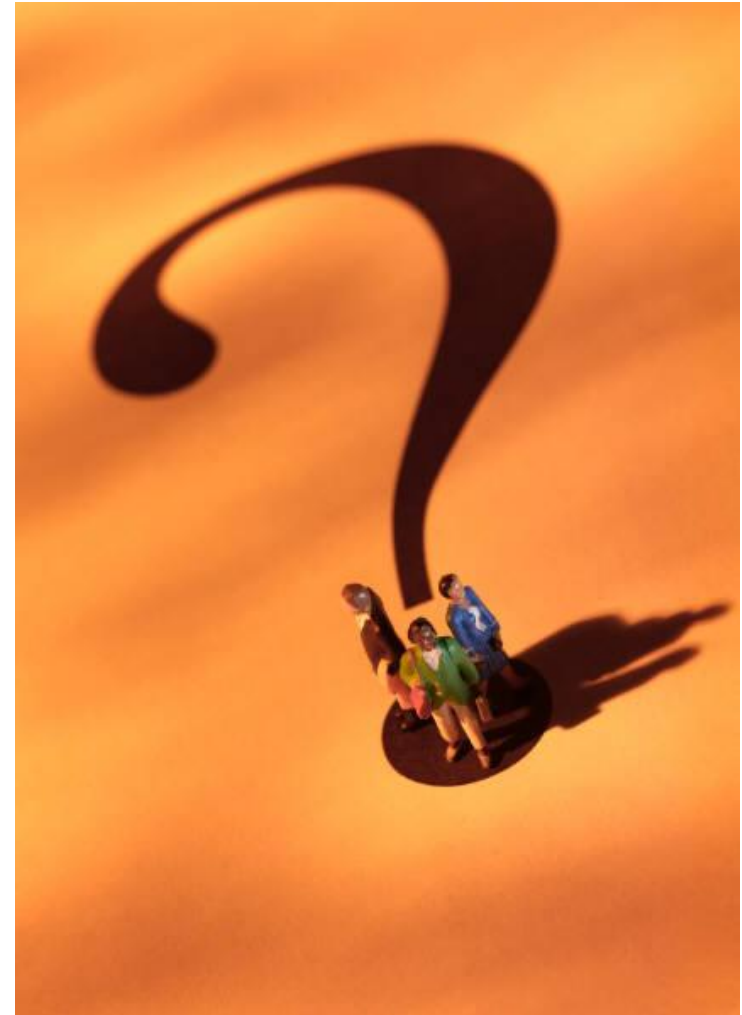


6. Chronic or Catastrophic?

- We are usually more concerned about catastrophe than chronic risk/impact
- As individuals, we place more attention on *probability* e.g. *less likely to speed for fear of getting a ticket than because we think we could have an accident*
- In assessing risks/impacts imposed on us and others, we become more interested in *magnitude* - the possibility that something may destroy me, my family, my community and neighbourhoodl generates a lot more outrage (irrespective of its probability of occurring)

7. Knowable or not knowable?

- The community worries more about uncertainty
- Uncertainty makes the risk/impact seem greater and thus the outrage stronger
 - *A risk that is more dangerous but more certain generates more outrage than one that is safer but more undefined*
- Expert disagreement can be unhelpful
- Need to improve detectability and increase knowledge of the risks



UH Air Quality Monitoring Network



Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network

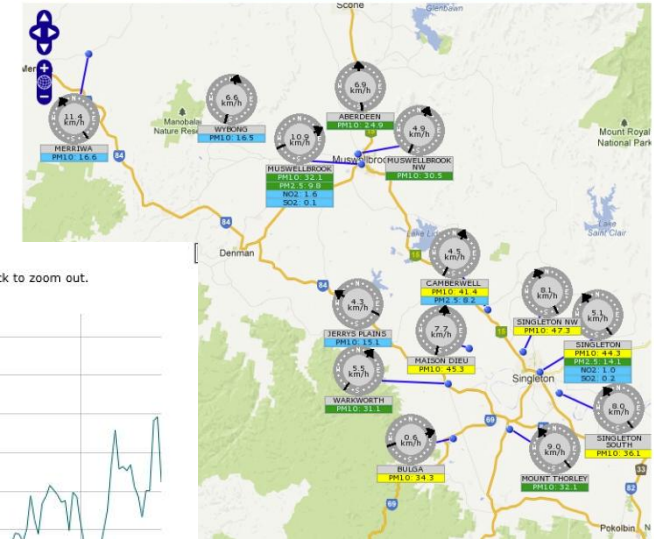


Second Interim Performance Report
July 2011 – June 2012

Wednesday
31 October 2012
8 - 9 pm
[Previous](#) | [Next](#)

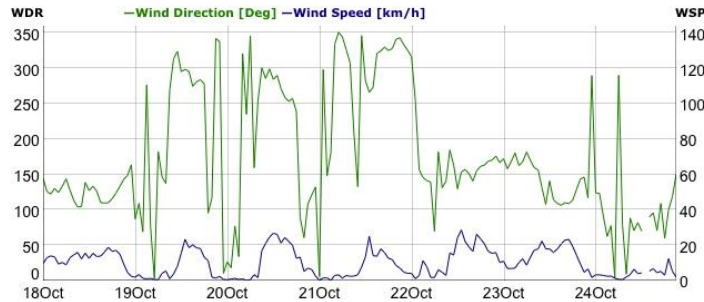
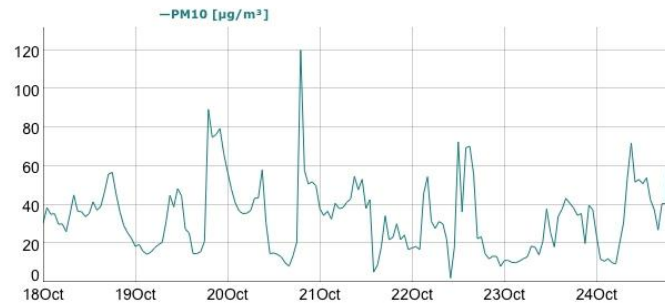
Base Layer

- Streets Map
- Physical Map
- Satellite Map
- Hybrid Map



BULGA (Hourly average data)

Mouse over to highlight individual values. Click and drag to zoom. Double-click to zoom out.



8. Controlled by me or others?



- Being at the mercy of someone else produces the most outrage
- Share control and outrage will be diminished
- *‘Share the Knife!’ where you can*

Port Hedland off-site dust management



9. Fair or unfair?

- Often the people who bear the most risk/impact often reap less of the benefit
- An unfair risk/impact is perceived to be a **big** impact
- You must try and articulate how you are trying to reduce the risks/impacts, but since you can't reduce the impact to zero, how are you going to deal with that?
- Involving people in the solutions - saying what they want - is more empowering than saying how you will fix it!



NIMBY

10. Morally relevant or not?

- Moral problems create complications when trying to make trade-offs
- Once something becomes a moral issue, then the language of trade-off cannot be used
- When a community responds to an issue strongly, it is likely that something has triggered a moral response
- You need to take seriously the moral relevance of the issue(s) and share moral responsibility where you can

11. Can I trust you or not?

- Polluting industries and government are widely distrusted
- If you are not trusted, then the community won't pay too much attention to your data, so...
 - You need to build trust but demand less of it
 - Make your actions more public, collaborative and accountable
- How trustworthy we are perceived is often related to what we are willing to share
- We need to learn to deal 'straight' and utilise more cooperative governance and co-ownership of processes and solutions

12. Is the process responsive?

The five main components of a responsive process:

1. Openness vs. secrecy - secrecy provokes outrage
2. Apology vs. stonewalling - say it like you mean it
3. Courtesy vs. discourtesy - follow-up, feedback, responsiveness
4. Compassionate vs. dispassionate - communities expect experts/agencies to be compassionate, agencies/experts expect the community to be more dispassionate. When a community is most heated, the experts resort to the technocratic approach, which only exacerbates the outrage
5. Sharing vs. confronting - credibility is influenced by expertise, altruism and understanding cultural values

Other key variables

- **Effect on vulnerable populations** - *outrage enhanced when risk is seen to affect more vulnerable populations e.g. children, the elderly*
- **Effect on future generations** - *delayed risks perceived as having more dread than immediate risks*
- **How identifiable is the victim** - *risks carry more weight when we have an identifiable victim*
- **Elimination vs Reduction** - *risks that can be eliminated generate more outrage than risks that can only be reduced*
- **Media attention** - *media attention is more a result of outrage than a cause and can also amplify outrage particularly in the absence of information, good process*
- **Opportunity for collective action** - *outrage is enhanced where local collective action is possible.*

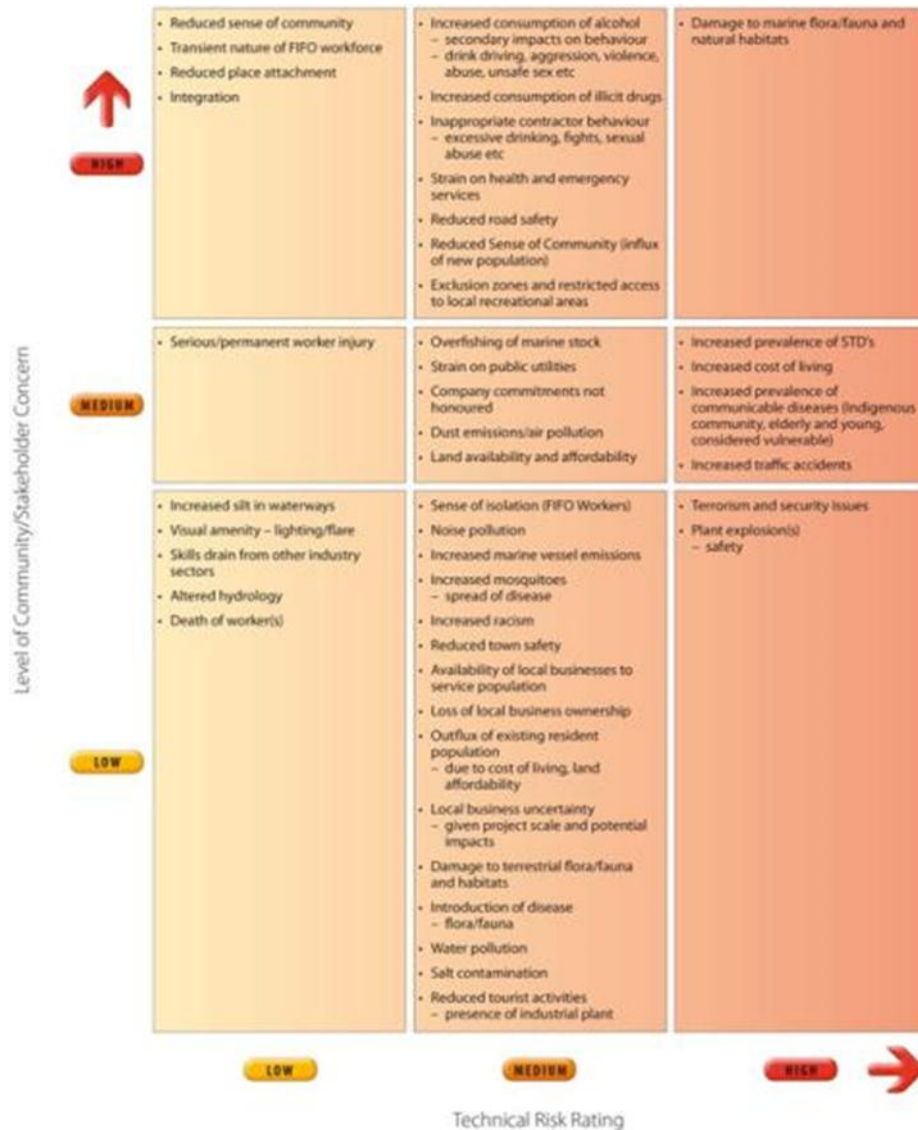
In summary...

- Is the decision being imposed upon me? - *Ask permission*
- Are the risks/impacts natural or industrial? - *Don't make comparisons with natural impacts*
- Is the process fair and equitable? - *Distribute benefits more equitably*
- Do I understand what it's all about? - *Make the risk more familiar*
- How have things been handled previously? - *Acknowledge how the risk/impact is memorable to the community*

In summary...

- How can I be sure about the level of risk/impact? - *Legitimise the dread*
- Are they doing all they can to reduce risks/impacts? - *Acknowledge the moral relevance*
- Do I have some control over the process? - *'Share the knife'*
- Can I trust who I'm dealing with? - *Build trust but don't demand too much of it*
- Will my views be listened to and considered? - *Respond to people openly, apologetically, courteously and compassionately*

Integrated risk approach



- Consider both perceived (Outrage) and technical (Hazard) aspects in assessing risk
- Perceived risks require the same amount of attention as dealing with technical risk