



President's Message

By Leslie Lippard



Hello SDP,

This is my first time writing for this portion of the newsletter, and I'd like to begin by expressing some gratitude. First, I'd like to thank Pat Leach, our outgoing president and one of our DAAG conference organizers for all of his contributions over the past year. In addition to his formal responsibilities as president steering the organization through the start of the pandemic, he also spent a significant amount of time bringing me up to speed on various issues as well as offering thoughts and advice that have already helped me through the first months of my tenure.

I'd also like to thank Laura Keating, who is an outgoing board member. Laura has brought clear thought and an ocean of good humor to her many years of her board service, and we will miss her. We are grateful that she has agreed to chair the certification council moving forward, so that we will still have her in a leadership role.

I would like to thank Jay Andersen and (once again) Pat Leach, and Steven Glickman, the organizers of this year's virtual DAAG conference, as well as all the session chairs, speakers, the tech crew and most especially Hilda. You all pulled a rabbit out of the hat, conjuring an engaging, thought provoking experience that attendee feedback generally lauded as "great", and you did it with only a few short weeks to cancel the F2F plans and recreate the whole thing in the virtual setting. Bravo to all.

I'd like to thank Jerry Lieberman, who has been a longtime supporter in many key roles—from the DAAG production committee to being part and chairing the SDP program committee and then some—has decided to step back from leadership to make space for new endeavors. Jerry was my session chair the first time I spoke at DAAG, many years ago, and he was a role model for what a good session chair is and should be.

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Finally, I would like to thank the new / continuing officers (Eyas, Ashlee, and Jenn), the new and continuing board members (Troy, Matt, Brian, Candace, Jeremy, Dan, Andrew, Jim, and Joe), our tireless executive director, Hilda, as well as the many people who chair and serve on councils, work on ad-hoc projects, give webinars, lead chapters, chair sessions, create the newsletter, sponsor us financially, and contribute in all the many different ways that in sum, makes our organization possible, as well as a real, thriving community.

Everyone is likely tired of hearing that we are “in unprecedented times”. But it’s tired because it’s true, and as the pandemic has continued, it’s caused the SDP board to reflect on many topics that we used to take for granted—our plan for a sustainable organization; the initiatives that we have committed to; our strategic plan. But, as we revise our thinking about our context, objectives, our initiatives and how we measure success, some things remain the same.

Our charter calls for us to foster collaboration, continual learning and networking among members and other professional societies. It talks about growing our community, service, and long-term development of the field. It is my belief that these are our values and they will endure.

One of the activities that the board will engage in this year is to update our strategic plan. Our current plan was created in 2017 and at that point, the SDP’s financial footing was shaky. Thanks to the diligence of Ellen Coopersmith, Jim Driscoll, and many others, our current financial picture is more solid, although the success template of the past few years may not be the right one for the future. The bottom line is that this is a great time to be revisiting the strategic plan, as we successfully move past yesterday’s challenges and confront the new ones that we face today.

As an input to this process, I’d like to welcome your opinions.

Some of the suggestions that have surfaced so far include a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion to broaden the demographics of our community, continued focus on economic sustainability, improving our usage of social media to drive awareness, partnering with other organizations, refining and improving the way that we support chapters, providing more opportunities for training, rebooting the Speakers Bureau, and continuing to push our envelope into the data science realm.

Obviously, this list is already more than we can accomplish in short order. But, if you have some ideas that are not captured above that you believe could or should be addressed by our strategic plan, please share them (my email is below). To quote the DA bible, “you can’t choose an alternative that you haven’t thought of”.

Finally, my experience with the SDP has been that the more involved I’ve been, the more enriched I become. So if you are one of the people who is a member, but isn’t that involved, I would encourage you to take advantage of the fact that the pandemic has caused many of our favorite activities to be cancelled, and to find ways to jump in. There are many ways you can participate—you could serve on a council, you could do a webinar, plan a talk for your local chapter or for DAAG, or get certified or arrange a networking event—couldn’t we all use another online happy hour?. If you have an idea that doesn’t fit into our existing structure, we are very open to creating something new.

And if you do jump in, in addition to hearing me say thank you at the end of my term in June 2021, I think you will be telling yourself, “wow, I’m really glad I did that”.

You can reach Leslie at : llippard@gmail.com (please note the 2 l’s and 2p’s to avoid emailing my dad)

Upcoming Events



**SOCIETY OF DECISION
PROFESSIONALS**
Clarity & Insight for Decisive Action

DAAG 2021 _ VIRTUAL

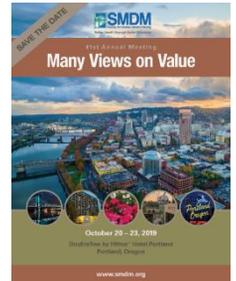
April 13 – 16 , 2021

Webinars:

[A Generalized Approach to Bridge Data
Requirements to Decision Making](#)

Wednesday, October 21, 2020

8 am PT | 11 am ET



Save the Date!

[SMDM 42nd Annual Meeting:](#)

Chicago, IL

October 18 - 21, 2020

The meeting theme is *Relationships in
Medical Decision Making*

Meeting co-chairs: David Meltzer, MD, PhD and
Alan Schwartz, PhD

Do you know of upcoming professional events that might be of interest to other SDP members? If so, please email the SDP newsletter at newsletter@decisionprofessionals.com

Farewell to SDP Newsletter Editor Steve Tani

Since the first issue of the SDP Newsletter was released in February 2017, Steve Tani has been an invaluable asset to its creation and production. As he adventures into retirement and passes on the torch of co-editor, we thank him for his dedication to bringing us the latest news about SDP and wish him well!

Join Us in Producing the SDP Newsletter

We, the editors, are actively looking for other SDP members to join us in producing this newsletter. If you are interested, please contact us. [Click here](#) to email the editors.

Emilia Silebi and Jack Kloeber
SDP Newsletter Editors

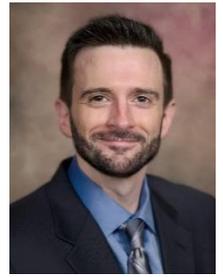




Spotlight on SDP Member Joe Melvin

In every issue of this newsletter, we turn the spotlight on a randomly-selected member of the SDP to learn more about that member's life as a decision professional.

The editors



Joe Melvin, our Spotlight Member for this issue, is starting a new position this month as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Cognoa, Inc., a startup focused on prescription digital medicines for pediatric behavioral health. Joe believes that his background as a decision professional will be quite helpful as he undertakes the responsibilities of this new role. He says that he learned from his prior start-up experiences that avoiding the “action bias” and being able to recognize that a decision does not need to be made immediately can be valuable traits.

Joe's has an eclectic professional background, though all of his past roles have had strong ties to research & development (R&D). After getting a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from MIT, his first job was with Procter & Gamble as a product development engineer, where he was the bridge between R&D and manufacturing for new paper products (i.e. Bounty paper towels). Two of his four years at P&G were spent in Europe, where he was based out of Frankfurt, Germany. Joe then decided to return to school for an MBA from the Stanford Graduate School of Business. For his summer internship at Stanford, Joe joined Strategic Decisions Group and then returned to SDG full time upon graduating. After spending 6 years consulting mainly to life science companies, Joe left SDG for the first of several positions within the Bay Area life sciences industry: Chiron, BD Biosciences, Genentech, plus a few start-ups. His roles in these companies ranged from strategy & portfolio planning to global marketing to finance.

Thinking back on his career as a decision professional, Joe can recall a number of occasions when his training and experience in decision science helped him to achieve great results. One such occasion was at Genentech while on the project team for an early-stage drug. Because the drug was both highly novel and had a very complex molecular structure, the team could not decide the number and size of doses at which to test the drug in its first human trials. Joe conducted an economic analysis of the drug's complex manufacturing process that clearly showed a cap on dose per patient, above which the drug could not be profitable. Joe's analysis provided an upper bound on dose that allowed the team to reach consensus on how to run the drug's Phase 1 trial. On another occasion, Joe was at a start-up that had licensed from a much larger company the right to develop a particular drug. The agreement included a “call back” option that gave the bigger company the right to buy the drug back at a specified development stage and price. Joe did a game theory analysis showing that the terms of the agreement as written would lead both parties to make sub-optimal decisions that, while logical to each company at the time, diminished the overall value of the drug. Because of this analysis, the two companies agreed to renegotiate the terms of their license..

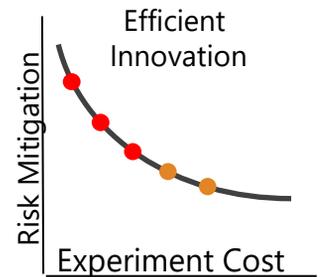
To be sure, Joe has faced some difficult challenges in his role as decision professional. In one instance, he was responsible for establishing and running a process to allocate the R&D budget for a company's entire portfolio of drug candidates. His team consisted of himself and one analyst. Despite being severely under-resourced, the two of them succeeded in identifying a value-creating portfolio by being intelligently selective in which candidates to analyze and by devoting long hours to the task.

Joe believes that his membership in the SDP gives him value through the friendships and networking contacts he has made and through the learnings he has gained via webinars, DAAG meetings and long conversations with other SDP members.

DP's can help teams manage risk bias of these issues while bonding the issues to relevant variables within the uncertainty valuation to provided a project risk score.

Credibility in the face of innovation ambiguity is a hallmark stature of DP's. Innovation teams will likely carry out non-traditional 'experiments' to discover and resolve a projects risks. These actions often strike executives as frivolous or invaluable because they don't stem from normal business operations. DP's can enable innovation discovery through **efficient frontier modeling** that organizes the highest degree of risk reduction relative to experiment cost.

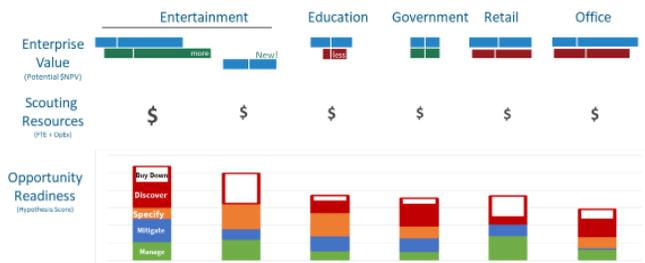
This analysis puts frames innovation projects in the same context as any business operation - bang for the buck.



Why it works

These three analysis can be articulated via a simple dashboard at the opportunity project level with updates after every discovery sprint. The goal being to reinforce the options nature of innovation

Innovation Management Accountability



The dashboard covers the three areas of interest to executives: profitability, effort / resources, and level of risk or readiness. Following the 'cognitive candy' rule of 3 makes it effortless for executives and stakeholders to grasp what is relevant and use the information as a decision dialogue starting point.

Additionally, an Innovation Dashboard highlights progression after every discovery sprint. Benefits include support for cancellation / acceleration which builds credibility in the innovation discovery process. More importantly most opportunities can take a couple sprints to reach a level of investment grade proposal and transition into core business units for execution. The value and readiness metrics provide stakeholders with a degree of velocity at which opportunities are maturing so they can prepare for adoption accordingly. Stakeholders can effectively monitor and engage in innovation proposals and the skills and role of decision professionals become integral to both the innovation and executive team management process.



Congratulations to New SDP Lead Practitioner Luis Mendoza-Nativid



Luis began his journey as a decision professional in 2013 with Decision Frameworks in Houston. He is now a senior consultant, based in Dallas, and works primarily with clients in the oil and gas industry and the U.S. Department of Energy. He values the peace-of-mind that decision quality brings for both personal and professional decisions, and he appreciates the work of the SDP, its volunteers and staff, to foster a community of growth and support.



Congratulations to New SDP Lead Practitioner David Briggs

David has over 20 years experience working as an internal consultant in both the consumer goods and oil & gas industries. His career has included roles in Decision Analysis, Corporate Strategy and competitor analysis, where he has worked with senior leaders on a wide variety of complex business decisions. He is currently working as a Decision Analysis Advisor working for CNOOC, based in London.

Congratulations to New SDP Lead Practitioner Jean-Paul Koninx



Jean-Paul is a highly skilled Petroleum Engineer (Petrophysicist) with 25+ years of worldwide oil and gas industry experience – South America to North Sea, and Australia to Middle East, while currently in Russia. His career spans Petrophysics and Field Development Planning; both in technical and commercial roles; in execution, joint venture as well as auditing roles. He is passionate about creating value at the interface between Exploration and Development, through targeted field appraisal, and focused development concept creation and selection. Value of Information, Decision Quality, and Risk and Uncertainty Management play a key role at this interface, and he is the Royal Dutch Shell Group Subject Matter Expert in this area.

Council Focus

Membership and Communication Council:

The Membership and Communication Council recently conducted a survey across SDP, and we are currently examining responses. Thank you to those who have responded. At this time, we'd like to share a few high-level observations.

By and large, most members feel that membership in SDP adds professional value. The top two responses for benefits and opportunities being utilized most and providing most value were the DAAG conference and webinars, followed closely by networking and access to knowledge content. The top two responses for how to best improve value were improvements to the website and an increase in virtual events.

We did receive feedback as to why some might not feel they are utilizing membership to its fullest. Thank you! We plan to focus on ways we can help.

In terms of opportunities for improvement, your responses have certainly provided us with great ideas and clarity on where to focus SDP's energy.

This council is especially pleased to learn that over 70% of respondents read either every issue of the SDP Newsletter or read them often. The favorite sections of the Newsletter are Ask the Fellows and the President's Message. Thank you to those who responded that they would be willing to contribute to the newsletter; the M&C council will be in touch.

Other Observations:

- Nearly two-thirds of respondents are over the age of 50.
- Energy/Oil Gas and Consulting are the sectors with the greatest representation.
- Just short of half of the respondents have been members since SDP's inception while almost a fifth have been members for less than two years.
- LinkedIn is far and above the most widely used social media platform for professional purposes.
- Lastly, the open-ended responses were rich with meaningful feedback

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our survey. We look forward to following up with you in the next newsletter where we expect to share thoughts and ideas on actionable objectives.

Council Focus continued on page 9:

Knowledge Sharing Council:

The Knowledge Sharing Council is excited to share a couple of updates. Our first update pertains to the Interest Groups. One of the benefits of being an SDP member is participation in one or more interest groups: Finance, Pharma, Scenario Planning, Cost and Schedule Risk Analysis, and Data Science.

Interest groups help to connect you with members who share your interests. This can expand your network as you participate in the learning process for yourself and others. All interest groups welcome members to share their knowledge and experiences. Please take advantage of the SDP Interest Groups and join one. If you would like to sign up for any of the interest groups, contact info@decisionprofessionals.com.

Our second update pertains to the codification of both a publication to share decision making stories beyond SDP membership and a collaborative forum for sharing and developing new ideas in decision making within SDP. Please check out the [Decision Analysis](#) publication on Medium that we have in the works. This is shareable outside SDP. We look forward to sharing more details in the coming weeks.

Interest Group News

Scenario Planning Interest Group:

The **SDP Interest Group Scenario Planning** has been active as from May 2020. Every first Thursday of the month a virtual meeting takes place. At a meeting a short presentation is delivered, followed by discussion. Usually there are between 6 and 10 participants at one meeting, although the membership of the interest group is 30+. There is also a forum available for offline exchanges. Meetings are recorded so members who could not attend can watch later. Topics so far have been, for example, global scenarios, horizon scanning and assigning probabilities.

Interested in joining? Send an email to henk@navincerta.com.

Chapter News

Vancouver Chapter:

The recently formed Vancouver Chapter has been meeting remotely since March. Two of the events focused on remote facilitation, given the times we are now in: one from Decision Frameworks on tips and tricks for a successful remote framing session and another event featured members sharing their experience with tools and techniques to support effective remote engagement. In our July meeting several DAAG 2020 attendees presented conference highlights. We even had a few virtual guests from Ontario! We have invited Amy Day of Clarity4Action from the Seattle Chapter to our September meeting to present on gamification and decision analysis, similar to a popular talk she gave at the DAAG conference.

London Chapter:

The London SDP chapter marked its first year anniversary in June and appointed Jan Paul van Driel (President), Warwick Blyth (Vice-President) and Mariely Salgueiro (Secretary) as new officers for the coming year. We are very thankful to our outgoing president Pete Naylor who did so much to create and launch the chapter. Since March we have been meeting remotely and have leveraged the opportunity, as the lone SDP Chapter in Europe, to reach out to the broader DA in this time zone. We've also switched our format to shorter, more frequent meetings built around a topic/speaker of interest and look forward to drawing in more UK and European colleagues in the year ahead.

Houston Chapter:

The Houston Chapter kicked off the fiscal year with officer elections. Outgoing as President is Chris Travis. The Chapter would like to graciously thank him for his service, and we are enthused that he remains part of the executive committee. Transitioning from Vice President to President is Ray Spence, and reprising her role as Secretary/Market Chair is Diana Swift. The Chapter would also like to thank Craig McKnight and Matthew Kurtz for their service on the executive committee. We hope you remain active in the Chapter and community. Joining the executive committee are Jim Spanier, Decision Quality Manager with BP Projects, and Ashley Corso, a consultant with Decision Frameworks.

The Chapter is gearing up for the return of general meetings, albeit in a virtual setting. The first meeting is scheduled for September 24th. Matt Distel, Mauricio Lira and Colin Bower will provide a brief overview of Decision Quality implementation at BHP and will be followed a virtual social. Additional general meetings are planned for October, November, January and February.

Chapter News continued on page 11:



Calgary Chapter:

SDP Calgary Chapter activity was put on hold in March when Covid19 hit Calgary. We are happy to announce that we are re-starting our meetings virtually as of Sept 17th with an informal discussion on the impacts of Covid and shifting to online work. The theme for the fall will be around facilitating online framing/strategy workshops.

The fiscal year for SDP chapters began anew on July 1, 2020. The SDP Calgary Chapter board and executive consists of:

President	Jessica Galbraith	Cenovus Energy
Vice President	Wisam Zalzal	ConocoPhillips
Secretary	Emilie Kamieniecki	Cenovus Energy
Advisor (Past President)	Kent Burkholder	Decision Frameworks
Advisor	Laura Keating	Calgary Zoo
Advisor	John Jacques	Cenovus Energy
Advisor	Andrew Bennet	Chevron
Advisor	Scott Bartsch	Decision Frameworks

Many thanks to outgoing president and chapter co-founder Kent Burkholder for his invaluable contributions the past 2.5 years. Luckily, Kent remains on the board as advisor and we will continue to rely on his broad knowledge, experience and insights. Jessica Galbraith, chapter co-founder, will transition to President and William Zalzal will transition to Vice President. We welcome new committee members Scott Bartsch & Andrew Bennet (Advisors) and Emilie Kamieniecki (Secretary) and returning member Laura Keating (Advisor).

Many thanks to our board for their contributions last year and to those who continue to advise this year.

Seattle Chapter:

The Seattle chapter is online! Our July virtual meeting covered DAAG workshop and session highlights for chapter participants who did not attend DAAG. In August, Amy Day spoke about gamification in decision education, sharing a game using a movie produced by Clarity4Action in partnership with teens from the Riekes Center for Human Enhancement and funded by the Alliance for Decision Education. In September, Troy Helm will discuss and demonstrate some of the software tools and platforms that can be effective in engaging groups in virtual/remote decision quality processes. Please join us/All are welcome.



Ask the Fellows

Question for our Fellows: Perhaps some of you (our Fellows) can think back to when you first started being interested in Decision Analysis. Maybe you called it Decision Quality or Decision Science or Decision Coaching. Was there something you know now that, for a fact, would have been a good thing to do or realize to help you along your journey? Maybe you did it or maybe you didn't, but it is clear to you that you should have done it.

Responses:

- 1) it is fascinating how many times I've heard "a world we didn't imagine" from a community who deals with decision making in the face of uncertainty. Our imaginations are flawed, and forecasts too narrow, if we didn't imagine the world we are in. When I was a TA at Stanford in 1974, I told my undergraduate students "everything you know is wrong, maybe the best you can do, but still wrong... uncertain". That's as true today as then.
- 2) Working as a consultant enabled access to other industries and many other types of situations. This helped me with the second insight of how decision traps, cognitive biases and cultural differences impact each organization quite differently. It helped me learn the value of clarifying ambiguities and biases before getting down to the mechanics of DA. Inquiring as an outsider, I found that many insiders were not very clear about the many things they had been glossing over for years. In a lot of cases, I think the identification of biases and clarification of objectives, alternatives and measures was perhaps more valuable than the analysis work.
- 3) The third major insight probably came from working with Japanese groups and observing how the energy of a group could be guided in a very subtle but forceful manner. The leadership style would often appear almost nonexistent to the American observer, but understanding a bit of the culture and language revealed why it works so well. I found that using this concept of recognizing an individual's or group's energy and bending it in a productive direction could be much more useful than a confrontational or directive style. Groups seem to enjoy the more pleasant experience as well, and that as much as good quality work tends to get you repeat business and positive word of mouth.
- 4) Being in industry, *before* consulting as a DA, was a huge benefit. Same with consulting with Japanese (and other) countries and cultures. You can't help decision makers whom you don't know.
- 5) If there's one lesson I wish I had learned earlier, it's Ralph Keeney's philosophy of proactively creating opportunities for yourself. When I look back on my career, I sort of backed into an awful lot of things. I took advantage of opportunities that happened to crop up, rather than actively thinking about what I wanted, and then working to create the kind of opportunity I desired. The only saving grace is that, in the "better late than never" department, I got into my current situation by being more creative and proactive than before. And I'm really enjoying it.

Our thanks to Harry Saunders, Gary Bush, Frank Koch, and Pat Leach (no special order)

A Word From an SDP Sponsor

In every issue of this newsletter, we include a message from one of the SDP sponsors, whose support contributes significantly to the on-going success of the Society.



Chevron produces energy to meet the world's needs, delivering results the right and responsible way. A key role within Chevron is that of the Decision Analyst. Decision Analysis (DA) is a job family within Chevron, with a career path and specific competency expectations established for each grade. Most Chevron decision analysts joined Chevron in another career field and became interested in DA as they experienced it being taught and applied. Most are intrigued by the opportunity to help provide decision makers with decision clarity and quality as efficiently as possible.

While many DAs elect to become "lifers," some use a DA role as a bridge to move from their original job family into other business and commercial roles. Approximately 20 percent of our DAs use DA roles to broaden their experience and provide professional development before returning to their core disciplines such as earth science, engineering or finance. When they move to other roles, they take their experience and dedication to decision quality with them. This helps all parts of Chevron.

Almost all Chevron professionals participate in an onboarding program known as "Horizons." The program includes a three-day class on decision analysis and decision quality. Taught by DAs, this class provides common foundational knowledge about DQ.

To develop our DAs, we have a large, internally developed and delivered training curriculum. The sequence of DA classes begins with an overall introduction to DA and DQ, illustrating the insights and value decision analysis provides, followed by a progression of introductory to advanced modeling classes. Other classes focus on value of information, framing and facilitation, game theory, understanding fiscal considerations, an operations research overview, and multiple objective decision analysis. We also offer a half-day "DA Essentials" class designed to address topics especially important for managers.

In addition to attending classroom training, DAs develop skills by helping to teach classes, mentoring, and experiential learning opportunities. These opportunities include helping to facilitate framing sessions and participating in model reviews. We also hold an annual, internal DA conference and provide ten DA/DQ webinars each year.

Our first generation of decision analysts is retiring. Looking forward, we are committed to remaining a learning organization. We have adopted a flexible system to encourage DAs to specialize in specific areas to provide the best portfolio of skills.

Many Chevron employees and retirees have served in roles within SDP. These roles include within local chapters, on Councils, in planning DAAG, and working with other professional societies as well as service organizations to enhance DQ.

A Proud Sponsor of SDP since the beginning.



Chevron was the first recipient of the Raiffa-Howard Award for Organizational Decision Quality.

Brain Teaser

Congratulations to Larry Neal

The answer to the brain teaser posed in the June issue is that you should ask to see a fruit drawn from the box labelled “Apples and Bananas”. A full explanation of the answer can be found by [clicking here](#). **Larry Neal** was the first to submit a correct answer.

THE SEPTEMBER BRAIN TEASER

Instructions: You can win “bragging rights” by being the first to submit the correct answer of this brain teaser to the newsletter editors ([SDP Newsletter: Brain Teaser](#)). We will announce the winner in the next issue.

Round-the-World Race

Your team has entered a round-the-world speedboat race. You have three identical speedboats, each of which can carry enough fuel to go exactly half-way around the world. All three of your boats must be at the home port for both the start and the finish of the race and the race is won when at least one of the boats circumnavigates the globe. The only source of fuel is at the home port.

Assuming that you can transfer any amount of fuel between boats instantly, how can you get one of your boats around the world in the shortest time? How much fuel does it take?

Useful Links

The SDP Board has posted the Society’s Bylaws and Policy and Procedure Manual, which can be found at: <http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/about/governance>

A listing of courses in decision analysis available to SDP members is at: <http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/courses/training-program>