

Assessing and Communicating About AV Safety

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https://asu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hsy4tzsMQXWPRDY1MD6-BQ

About the Speaker

Marjory Blumenthal is a senior policy researcher and ad hoc program manager at RAND, where she has studied such topics as automated vehicle safety, how to evaluate research, citizen science, and emerging technologies. Prior to joining RAND, she was executive director of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). Blumenthal's PCAST projects addressed the implications of new technologies for cities, how systems engineering can improve the delivery of health care, big data and privacy, cybersecurity, technology for education, biosecurity, and more. Previously she was associate provost, academic, at Georgetown University, developing academic strategy, strengthening the sciences and research overall, and promoting innovation. Before starting at Georgetown, Blumenthal was the founding executive director of the National Academies' Computer Science and Telecommunications Board. She teamed with technologists, social scientists, and other experts, producing over 60 influential books and reports on the full range of information technologies and their societal impacts.

About the Talk

Public trust in automated vehicles (AVs) can build on meaningful assessment and effective communication about AV safety. Each of these presents challenges and opportunities. My remarks will draw on a pair of projects conducted over the past three years and drawing heavily from semi-structured interviews with AV developers and other experts and stakeholders.

Our research indicates that there are three principal approaches to assessing AV safety: measurement, processes, and thresholds. None stands alone—rather, they complement each other, speaking to gaps in what is known. None is stable—they evolve over time, and so does the way they interact. There are important opportunities for industry to converge on how to present AV safety assessments in consistent and comparable ways.

Public reactions to AVs are colored by how people perceive risk, which can be very subjective. Our most recent research included a novel survey of how the public responds to different sources of information about AV safety. It underscored the importance of messages that are data-driven and that come from objective sources.

This seminar has been converted to a webinar and is now webcast live to a worldwide audience using Zoom.

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