

ESREL / SRA E 2025 Special session

Title: Professional practice for improved safety decision making

Organizers:

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Decades ago, the focus of attention for studies of what makes for the best safety performance moved from those at the coal face to the organisation itself. Social science research into safety performance improvement and accident prevention typically addresses systemic motivations for the actions of individuals but are all those involved in safety decision making really such passive actors? We think it's time to focus the spotlight on professional practice and highlight the work of engineers, pilots, scientists etc when it comes to safety performance.

This session seeks to explore topics related to the safety work of professionals and the interactions between professionals and the wider organisational system within which they function. Empirical and theoretical contributions are welcome. Possible research areas include:

- What are the links between ethics, safety and professional practice?
- What are the implications of increased digitalisation and use of AI on safe professional practice?
- How do changes in work organization (precarity, working from home etc) impact professional practice?
- What do we know about emerging best practice in professional education for safety?
- What is the role of organisations (employers, professional societies) in developing and maintaining professional practice?
- How does professional licencing impact professional practice? Is this good for safety?