

The term “postmodernism” is usually reserved for art and architecture, not management style, but it is an emerging trend for governmental managers. There is a deconstruction of the bureaucracy, a careful dismantlement of the hierarchical structure of government. The military model of command and control is being replaced with a more egalitarian approach. There is renewed emphasis on using creativity and not doing things the way they have always been done. A new spirit of cooperation is growing between the regulated community and the regulators. The emphasis is on results that matter – using a risk-based prioritization. Indicators are collected to measure conditions, trends, and results.

What led to this burgeoning partnership? How do our respective professional organizations fit within this model? How can our partnership enhance public health and safety? What are the caveats?

The Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors (CRCPD) is a nonprofit organization made up of individuals in state and local government who regulate and control the use of radiation sources. Affiliate membership is available to individuals, regardless of employer affiliation, who have expressed an interest in radiation protection. The CRCPD's mission statement is "A partnership dedicated to radiation protection".

In this talk, I will describe the structure and function of the CRCPD, our strategic plan, our recent achievements and plans for the future, and how AAPM members can become involved with CRCPD activities. After the "thinking globally" portion of the talk, I will describe how the AAPM members can "act locally" and become a valuable resource for the state radiation control program director in their immediate area. I will stress opportunities for input in rulemaking and policy determination.

Governmental change has not occurred in a vacuum. It has occurred because of a change in attitude in the regulated community and in the general population. As I develop the theme of postmodern management think about how it may help you to achieve your goals. I will use some of the federal government's reengineering processes as examples, but I will talk about what states should do and what we should avoid. This will lead to a discussion of the proper state and federal roles in radiation protection, as well as roles for surrogate regulators.

Medical physicists and state regulators have an important, mutually reinforcing message to deliver. We are trying to protect the public while not restricting the profitability of industry within our borders or restricting the availability of new technological tools for diagnosis and treatment. My vision of postmodern management is: international standards developed jointly with all levels of regulators and regulated community; quality improvement measures enforced by surrogate regulators and economic incentives; prioritized and focused inspections using indicator systems; multidisciplinary participation in regulatory policy; and enhancement of public participation.

I hope that we will be able to explore mutual goals and define concrete actions that each of us can take to improve our working relationship and make our respective roles complementary.

