



# Director's Corner

In 1997, the year I was appointed Director, the Center established a consortium comprised of different size companies in the chemical industry. At that time, a fee structure was established without consideration of company size or function. The consortium membership consisted of Partner, Sponsor and Advisor at levels of participation of \$20,000, \$10,000 and \$5,000. These consortium members each have a representative on the Center Steering Committee. Twelve years later, this fee structure was still in place!

In October 2008, arising out of an action item raised by the current Steering Committee members, a task force was formed to study the current structure and report back to the Committee at large whether a fee and consortium restructuring was needed. The scope and objective of the study limited itself to the evaluation of current membership levels and recommending a restructured membership criteria designed to encourage membership and limit the risk of decreasing current participation.

The committee looked at other organizations and their fee structures, such as CCPS, EPSC and SOCMA. After reviewing their fee structures and after much discussion among the subcommittee members and with the steering committee, the members made their recommendations. These changes will take effect immediately for all new members joining the Center consortium. There are two levels of membership with voting rights regarding the direction of Center programs through representation on the MKOPSC Steering Committee. Operating firms (25+ employees) may become members for a yearly commitment of \$20,000 (*Partner*). Engineering firms (25+ employees) may become members for a yearly commitment of \$10,000 (*Sponsor*). *Partners* have two (2) votes and *sponsors* have one (1) vote and enjoy the benefits listed in the table found on

page 19 of this newsletter. Of course, engineering companies may elect to join the Center Consortium at the *Partner* level if they choose to do so and then enjoy the same benefits as *Partners*.

To fulfill one of the center's missions — provide service to small businesses — a category of *Associate* for annual membership dues of \$5,000 is available to organizations that employ less than 25 employees. In addition, individuals can become individual members for annual dues of \$1,000. Associate Members and Individual Members can serve on the Steering Committee as observers (without any voting privileges), and they have access to many of the center's programs, services and activities. Associate and Individual Members may be invited to serve on the MKOPSC Technical Advisory Committee. Because all membership amounts are minimum participation levels companies may opt to increase their membership to a higher level.

Many of you already have experienced the benefits of membership with the Center's consortium. However, there are several companies still out there who are not members. Some argue that in these economic times another fee to be a member of another group is not in the budget. My challenge to those of you sitting on that fence is to ask how can you not afford to be sitting at the table with your peers from large successful members of industry, with the best research based-science for process safety in the nation, at a table where research based science, industry and government meet both literally and figuratively? How can you not afford to invest in the safety of your employees, company, and industry? And finally, how can you not invest in the future leaders and practitioners in process safety?

*M. Sam Mannan*  
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