

ABSTRACT

Risk, Responsibility and Regulation: Whose Risk is it Anyway?

Ministers and policy makers tackle matters of public risk in a cauldron of pressure from a confrontational parliament, an aggressive media, sophisticated lobby groups and personal career pressures, to name a few. Any attempt to change the culture of policy-making to one where issues of risk definition, tolerance and management consistently receive rounded, systemic treatment must respect and reflect this pressure. The Better Regulation Commission has been shifting its focus to this challenge on the grounds that many issues of policy ineffectiveness, unwelcome curtailment of civil liberties or excessive burden can be traced back a poor response to public risk. This keynote speech will explore some of its working hypotheses.