

**College of Life Sciences
Health and Safety Committee Meeting
Friday 21st August 2009**

Present

Magnus Alphey (MA), Irene Blair (IB), Lisa Grayson (LG; Chair & Minutes), Monica Lacey (ML), Stella Mitchell (SM), Kiran Oza (KO), Debbie Hill (attending on behalf of ZH), Vasso Makrantonis (VM; possible replacement for MA)

Actions are highlighted in **yellow**.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Allison Bridges (AB), Letty Gibson (LMG), Zoe Hirons (ZH) and Andrew Newman (AN).

Fiona Mitchell is now writing up her thesis and has stepped down as the PhD representative. **LG to ask the PhD Administrator to help recruit a replacement.**

2. Previous Minutes

The minutes were approved

Matters Arising

Item 2.1.1.7va: E&B has finally confirmed that the safety showers in WTB should be chlorinated but cannot be and that the shower drains have been blocked off. IB has put in a request to have the shower heads removed. Lab Managers have been informed and asked to advise staff to use the hand-held eyewash showers and showers off the WTB atrium instead.

Item 2.1.7iv: LG and KO have still to meet to work on IT Support risk assessments. LG issued a rough draft to KO to serve as a starting point. **LG and KO to meet to finalise risk assessments.** MA asked if work on computers in lab areas will be covered. LG confirmed that this activity would be assessed and noted that a member of LSC had expressed concern over this very issue. LG stressed the importance of issuing LSC staff with lab coats and, if appropriate, gloves and safety glasses, when they are required to work in lab areas.

Item 5: LG informed the Committee that the 'stress' survey results and HR proposals on how to improve well being at work are on the H&S web site. LG confirmed that the survey will be rerun next year and, once again, there will be a donation to Cash for Kids for every form returned.

Item 6: See item 6 of the 21/8/09 agenda.

Item 11i: LG informed SM that CAHId's nearest shower was on WTB Floor 2, off the atrium. **SM agreed to inform CAHId personnel.**

Item 11iii: IT/Secretarial staff H&S training still to be arranged by LG.

Item 11iv: **First Aid training for Reception is still to be arranged by IB.**

3. Revised CLS H&S Policy Document

LG summarised the minor changes made to the CLS H&S Policy document and informed the Committee that the new version is available on line.

4. Basic H&S Training Checklist

LG outlined the BH&STC system and expressed concern over the number of new recruits failing to complete a checklist within their first few days at work. LG pointed out that the problem is limited to areas that *do not* have a Lab Manager. After some discussion on how to rectify this **LG agreed to discuss the options with Human Resources.** LG informed the Committee that she intends to create a training database and link it to the CLS Staff Database. KO had no objection to this.

5. Pandemic Flu Information

LG gave a quick tour of the Pandemic Flu web pages on the H&S web site and procedures on the CLS wiki. It became apparent that several staff are unaware of these resources. **LG to send an email to cls-all to raise awareness.** SM enquired about procedures for planned closure of the College/University. LG said this was under discussion at the moment and outlined some of the proposals. SM asked how the intention to close will be communicated to the CAHId teaching personnel and what will be expected on them in such an event. LG explained that each unit needs to develop their own contingency plan to address its own specific issues. IB noted that the order to close will come from the University centre and not CLS management. LG emphasised the need to get approval from the University Swine Flu Planning Group before issuing any local guidance.

6. CLS Emergency Line

ICS have confirmed that this can be set up for a small fee. LG is waiting on permission to proceed from Ian Leith. LG informed the Committee about the recent 4141 failure and CLS's request to Safety Services and

Campus Security for regular, recorded testing of the 4141 system. SM asked if 999 should be used as an alternative. IB confirmed that, yes, it should be and that (9)999 has now been added to the CLS Emergency Numbers Cards. SM was unaware of the Emergency Numbers Card and asked if she could have a supply for CAHId. **LG to hand some into the CAHId main office.** The Committee discussed how to ensure the Emergency Line number is readily accessible within and outwith the College. LG suggested adding the CLS Emergency Line number to the Emergency Numbers Card. Further discussion resulted in a proposal to develop the existing LSC help line number into the CLS Emergency Line. **LG and KO to discuss this further.**

7. Inspections

LG gave an update on the following:

- Internal TC Facility Inspection programme;
- Counter Terrorism Security site survey of Gamma Irradiator Facility by Tayside Police;
- Home Office Drug Precursor Inspection;
- HSE CL3 Facility Inspection;
- SASA Inspection.

Full details/reports are available on the H&S web site.

8. Accidents and Incidents

i. IB highlighted the three potential fire incidents and emphasised how switching equipment off at the plug cannot only save energy but greatly reduce fire risk. The large number of fainting incidents in the undergraduate classes, 12 in total, was also noted. IB also commented on the improvement in near miss reporting.

ii. SM informed the Committee that not all minor cuts/nicks sustained during the CAHId undergraduate classes are being reported due to the complexity of the official report form. SM asked if a simplified version could be used in the teaching labs for recording minor injuries only. IB/LG agreed that this would be acceptable. There was some debate about what information to include and how the reports would be summarised and forwarded to CLS H&S and Safety Services. **IB/LG and SM to discuss this further.**

9/10. Items from Committee Members/AOCB

i. MA reported that the drain cover on WTB1 north is creating a trip hazard. The Lab Manager for WTB1 has already brought this to LG's attention and raised the issue with Terry Sweeney. **LG to ask Terry for a progress report.**

ii. MA expressed concern over the height of the shelving in the recently refurbished WNH lab area. The shelves are positioned higher than normal to accommodate the taps and there are no upstands along the rear of the shelves to prevent items falling off. **IB and LG to investigate to see if anything can be done to improve the situation.**

iii. MA raised an issue on behalf of a CDB staff member who is experiencing glare on their computer screens when the evening sun reaches the north side of the building. This has been raised at Divisional level but has not been resolved thus far. **IB advised that the individual concerned talk to their Lab Manager about getting blinds fitted.**

iv. LG informed the Committee that Safety Services has purchased camera equipment and sent a member of staff on a training course with a view to making their own H&S training videos. LG is currently helping to develop a Tissue Culture safety video. KO recalled a previous discussion about using currently available training material developed by other institutes. LG explained that, although some very useful packages are on the market, we need something more specific to CLS. KO was of the opinion that we should have collaborated with DoJ on this and made use of existing resources, rather than Safety Services going to the expense of training and purchasing their own camera equipment. SM commented that she is keen to find someone who can produce/help develop training videos for CAHId as and when required. LG proposed persevering with the TC video to see how good a job Safety Services make of it and how well received it is by the target audience. ML suggested approaching a DoJ student with regard to the CAHId videos and developing a pilot to compare with the TC video. KO recommended SM contact Steve Flack. KO also advised that ICS offer a basic video recording service for events and such like.

v. IB asked the Committee members to encourage their peers to use the H&S Comments Boxes which have proven to be worthwhile and produced some useful suggestions. KO asked if LG had considered having a 'comments box' on the H&S web site. LG and the other Committee members thought this was a good idea. **LG to investigate.**

11. Date of Next Meeting

Next Meeting will be held during the middle two weeks of August 2010. **Exact date and time to be arranged by LG.**

Many thanks to Magnus for his input and interest over the years and we wish him the very best of luck in his future career at St Andrews.

Many thanks to Vasso for agreeing to replace Magnus as the Post Doc representative on this Committee.