

**School of Life Sciences  
Health and Safety Committee Meeting  
21<sup>st</sup> May 2007**

**Present**

Gail Alexander (GA; Chair), Magnus Alphey (MA), Irene Blair (IB), Lisa Grayson (LG; Minutes), Letty Gibson (LMG), Monica Lacey (ML), Aileen Watson (AW), Fiona Mitchell (FM), Stella Mitchell (SM), Don Tennant (DT; attending on behalf of AN), Kiran Oza (KO)

**Apologies**

Donald Gardiner (DG), Andrew Newman (AN)

**ACTION**

**1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes were approved

**Matters Arising**

**Item 1.3:** LG confirmed that Safety Services staff are willing to help produce training “movies” and the first joint venture will be to produce a GLP training package.

**Item 1.6:** The Out-of-Hours signing in books have been removed from MSI, WTB and JBC receptions. After some debate, it was agreed that there was no point wasting resources on investigating electronic alternatives.

**Item 1.7iv:** GA communicated the H&S Management Committee’s decision on traffic through labs.

**Item 1.7va.** IB explained that no final decision had been made as to the fate of the WTB safety showers. MA said a few members of staff had raised concerns about the proposal to remove them. IB/LG acknowledged these as valid concerns. IB said she would consult E&B on the chlorination issue. Committee agreed that if the showers can be properly maintained they should be kept. IB to report back at next meeting.

**IB**

**Item 7iv.** LG and KO still to meet to discuss IT Support risk assessments.

**LG/KO**

**Item 2.** GA gave a status update on the Stress Risk Assessment programme. It became apparent that most personnel are unaware of this initiative. LG to get assessments on web and meet with Gillian Jones to draft an email for issuing to all personnel. KO asked what individuals are required to do. GA clarified that individuals are not required to do anything unless they want to discuss the specifics of the risk assessment applicable to them, in which case they should make an appointment to see the HR Officer.

**Item 3:** GA communicated the H&S Management Committee’s decision on wearing of lab coats. LG pointed out that CPD had issued an email explaining the lab coat policy to all personnel. Committee members all agreed that this had had very little effect. SM commented that in A&FA practical classes some students were failing to acquire lab coats in time for the new semester and were being issued with plastic aprons in the interim. ML offered to supply lab coats on loan. MA added that, if there was a shortage, research staff would be willing to donate any spare lab coats. ML to liaise with the relevant senior technician.

**ML**

**Item 4:** LG said that the inspection program is ongoing and emails to this effect would be issued in due course.

**Item 1.8i:** LG confirmed that signs asking personnel to remove gloves and wash hands before entering a non-lab area had been posted on all main lab doors throughout the Complex.

**Item 1.8vi:** GA explained that CPD was unwilling to make an official statement on what constitutes acceptable clothing for wearing in the lab, primarily because of the shorts versus skirts issue, but that he had agreed that open-toed sandals/shoes were clearly not appropriate. FM asked if there could be some official communication to this effect. LG to ask CPD at the H&S Management Committee meeting in June.

**LG**

**2. CLS Annual H&S Report**

GA summarised the H&S targets identified in the CLS Annual H&S Report. LG explained the reasons for this document being drafted and how it could be the much needed driver for significant H&S progress. KO picked up on the risk assessment database related targets and asked if attaching individual names to risk assessments records would be desirable. LG envisaged problems in keeping such a system up to date. LG and KO to discuss this further.

**LG/KO**

**3. Revised CLS H&S Policy Document**

GA asked for comments on the H&S Policy and, more specifically, the revised composition and remit of this Committee. KO said it was important to hold members accountable for fulfilling their role. Committee agreed. LG stressed the importance of Committee members communicating information to their respective personnel groups. This prompted a discussion on the state of the emailing lists and the difficulties involved in keeping them up to date. KO to attempt to rectify the problems and report back at the next meeting. LG informed the Committee that Kaera Jarvie -

**KO**

- manager of the Oligosynthesis facility and NEBOSH General Certificate holder - had agreed to take on the role of CRUK NASRG representative. The Committee members welcomed this appointment. LG said she would be approaching Debbie Hill regarding the Clerical/Admin/Portering staff representative's role. GA also informed the Committee that this would be her last H&S Committee meeting as she will be retiring in the summer. LG will take on the role of Committee Chair. **LG**
- 4. Draft Policy on Eye Protection**  
The Committee members were happy for the policy and guidance to go to the H&S Management Committee for approval as is. **LG**
- 5. Revised H&S Basic Training Checklist**  
All members approved of the revised BTC and associated guidance. KO enquired about training for BTC trainers. LG said a meeting/training session could be arranged. KO felt that he was not best qualified to deliver this training. LG conceded and said that it would be feasible for her and IB to act as BTC Trainer for groups of support staff with a low staff turnover. IB agreed. LG to amended list of Trainers accordingly and inform relevant individuals. LMG asked if it would be appropriate to have an official out-duction checklist. General consensus was, yes, there should be an official out-duction checklist. LMG said she would send LG the version she currently uses. KO suggested IB/LG liaise with HR on this to ensure consistency with their in/out-duction procedures/checklists. LG to consult the HR Officer. **LG**
- 6. Revised DSE Policy & Procedures**  
LG issued the revised DSE policy and guidance and explained the key changes and the importance of focussing our limited time and resources on those at greatest risk. LG pointed out that some additional guidance is required on how we deal with existing personnel, as the policy tends to concentrate on new recruits. LG to amend guidance accordingly and issue revised version. **LG**
- 7. Accidents & Incidents**  
IB explained the reason for the new style, less cryptic accidents/incidents summary report and highlighted some key concerns. When reaction to nitrile gloves was mentioned FM pointed out that latex gloves are still used as standard in her area. IB/LG to re-examine the College policy on disposable gloves. MA noted that basic safety rules applying to the use of microwave ovens are not always being followed. LG said that this would be covered in the GLP training movie which would, hopefully, convey the message more effectively. LG drew attention to the vacuum flask/dry ice incident as a warning not to use domestic vacuum flasks for transport of refrigerants/cryogenes. **LG/IB**
- 8. Items from Committee Members**
- i. **Oxygen Depletion Monitoring in Stores**  
DG had emailed LG enquiring about servicing of oxygen depletion monitoring equipment. LG said she would be organising this in June. MA asked when the monitor would be returned to the X-Ray Crystallography Facility. LG said she had received the repaired monitor last week and would see the Facility Manager about reinstating it. **LG**
- ii. **First Aid Training**  
FM asked if more research staff could be trained as First Aiders to increase the likelihood of a First Aider being available outwith normal working hours. IB explained Safety Services policy on First Aid training and how CLS already have a full complement as far as the 1 First Aider for every 50 staff as required. However, IB is now a qualified First Aid Trainer and plans to run courses in-house to give more flexibility and meet the increasing demand from staff. IB to email all staff once courses are arranged. MA suggested contacting Dr Christine Milburn – the University's Generic Skills Training Co-ordinator – for assistance in setting up the training program. IB thanked MA for this suggestion. **IB**
- iii. **Out of Hours Access/Egress to/from CLS Buildings**  
FM raised concerns over people becoming trapped in stairwells within the Complex outwith normal working hours when they leave their proximity card in the lab. LG/IB to investigate and issue clear guidance. **IB/LG**
- 9. AOCB**
- i. LG informed the Committee that there had been a recent complaint about cigarette smoke entering the FACS laboratory on MSI floor 1. LG has posted signs at the relevant air intake to deter people from smoking close to it. LG said there was a general lack of awareness of the University's policy on smoking and this needs to be addressed. LG to email copies of the policy to Lab Managers for posting on safety/general notice boards. LG also to ask the H&SMC how the policy will be enforced within CLS. **LG**
- ii. IB thanked GA for serving as Committee Chair over the past 18 months and wished her a long and happy retirement, a sentiment shared by all the Committee members.