

Castors versus Glides Survey

First Survey Email 15/2/10

From: Lisa Grayson
To: H&SMC Committee
CC: Daan van Aalten; Deena Leslie Pedrioli; Ian Gilbert; John Lucocq; Michael Stark
Date: 15/2/2010 15:12
Subject: ACTION REQUIRED: H&S Management Committee
Attachments: 2009_report.pdf; minutes.pdf; castors_ra.pdf; castors_incident.pdf

Dear All,

Minutes of the H&S Management Committee meeting held on 8/2/2010 are attached along with a revised version of the CLS H&S Report 2009. Please send any comments on these documents to me by 28/2/2010.

Please note item 7ii of the minutes. I have attached the original risk assessment (castors_ra.pdf) and incident report (castors_incident.pdf) as required. Please respond directly to Doreen as requested and before 28/2/2010.

In light of feedback received after last week's meeting, I would like to propose that Letty Gibson, Zoe Hirons, Vasso Makrantonis (Post Doc Representative) and Aleksandra Zemla (PhD Student Representative) join the H&S Management Committee and that we dissolve the H&S Committee these individuals are currently part of. (See <https://secure.dundee.ac.uk/lifesciences/intranet/slsonly/safety/policy/App2.htm> for current composition and remit of both committees.) If you have any objections please respond before 28/2/2010. If I do not hear from you by this date I will assume that you are happy with this proposal and will put it to the H&S Committee.

Thanks and best wishes,

Lisa.

Responses

22 Recipients

2 responded directly to LG, both agreeing with the risk assessment (i.e. in favor of castors) and one suggesting that an SOP for getting on and off the chairs safely should be in place to cover all eventualities.

? responded directly to DAC

Addendum to Risk Assessment in June 2010

Two accidents have occurred – one in February 2009 and one in June 2010 – which were directly attributable to castors being fitted on a Draughtsman chair. In both cases the victim suffered minor injuries.

In May 2010 an incident occurred involving a chair fitted with glides in which a researcher bumped into a chair expecting it to move out of her way. When it stayed put, she faltered and dropped the centrifuge rotor she was carrying. No injury was sustained but the floor covering and rotor were damaged.

As a result of these accidents/incidents, the risk assessment has been reviewed and rather than the likelihood of falling while attempting to get on to a Draughtsman chair being 'extremely low', it has been re-categorised as 'low' and the risk deemed comparable to that associated with chairs fitted with glides.

In light of this, the H&SWG are conducting a survey amongst all lab personnel to establish whether there is a strong preference for either type of chair. If, in general, there is no strong preference, or there is a definite preference for chairs fitted with glides, the H&SWG recommends that glides are fitted to all Draughtsman chairs within the Complex. If there is a preference for castors in some areas, the H&SWG recommends that individual research groups are fully appraised of the hazards and risk associated with both types of chair and lab workers are instructed in the safe use of their particular chair.

Second Survey Email 17/6/10

Dear All,

The debate about whether our draughtsman chairs (i.e. the chairs used at the lab benches) should be fitted with glides or castors continues to rumble on. A recent accident on WTB 3 has brought the issue back to the fore. We need to establish how many lab personnel have a strong preference for one option or the other and document any incidents or concerns that have not previously been recorded. To facilitate this, could you please email the personnel in your area and ask them (1) if they would prefer castors or glides on their lab chair and (2) if they have had a lab chair related incident in the past 4 years (i.e. since our original risk assessment - copy attached - was conducted). Note: we will take no reply to mean no preference. Please ask your people to respond by Friday the 2nd of July.

Many thanks and sorry for the hassle,

Lisa & Irene.

Results

162 expressed a preference
149 in favor of castors (92%)
13 in favor of glides (8%)

Individual Responses

In favor of castors:

1. Wheels
2. Here's one vote for castors on lab chairs, as they do need to be moved around. I have not had any lab-chair related H&S incidents.
3. Castors, no incidents
4. (1) I much prefer castors. actively dislike fixed/gliders (2) no incidents

5. I would prefer castors and I have not had any lab chair castor related incident (ever!)
6. I'm not sure what castors or glides are but I would be very displeased if Health and Safety too the wheels off our chairs.
7. Castors, please! And no to point 2!
8. I prefer castors--no incidents
9. Castors. No incidents.
10. castors preferred; haven't managed to fall off or miss chair yet!
11. 1) Prefer castors; 2) No lab chair related incident
12. my preference is definitely castors. If I have to compare them I would say 100 to castors 0 to glides. As far as I remember, I have never have any incident with chairs at this place. I did have a couple of them in my previous work place though. In both cases I was using chairs with glides (in theory, glides are supposed to be safer. In my experience they are killing machines!)
13. prefer wheels definitely
14. castors are actually much better for some of our work.
15. I prefer castors for my office chair. No accidents to report.
16. I prefer wheels (castors)
17. I prefer to keep the castors that are already fixed to the chair
18. I'd prefer wheels!
19. We have castors and we would like to keep castors. I didn't have any incidents so far.
20. Castors please.
21. I prefer the chairs with castors.
22. Here's my vote: I like castor chairs. Go, castors, go! As for question (2), I have not seen a single incident with castor chairs in the 8 years we've had them in the lab.
23. Most of us in **DVA lab (15 in total)** strongly prefer chairs with castors.
24. I'd like to state a preference for castors,
25. I prefer chairs with casters; I spend sooooo much time trying to work around the chairs in our bay that being able to easily move a chair from in front of a fridge/freezer/drawer is almost essential. I have thought about taping my chair with adhesive grip, like you put on stools, to keep from sliding off and give more grip, but I would rather have that than be constantly moving chairs that are not on wheels. I strongly believe that the chairs should be collapsible to the point where they fit *completely* under the benches, and significantly narrower than the current set. There should also be somewhere to store chairs that are not being used. I use my chair maybe 3-4 times a month, and the rest of the time it is just a nuisance/trip hazard. Most bays could probably get away with 2 chairs per 4 people in a lab bay just fine.
26. Castors please
27. I prefer castors.
28. Castors are still the preferred arrangement in our **lab (JZ: 6)**.
29. Have only had 3 responses in total re castors v Glides from **JBC1. 3** including myself prefer castors.
30. Me, Simon, Cyrille, Graeme, Kevin, Naoko and Mhairi want the chairs that move. From Hari's lab, Clare, Chris and Katie want chairs that move. **[10]**
31. due to the cramped spacing between benches in JBC castors are essential. When moving about the lab with both hands full it can be impossible to navigate a bay without moving one or more chairs in a bay. This is no problem with castors but would be a problem with glides which don't glide, more likely the chair is pushed over. Also when sitting at the bench it is easier to avoid contamination in event of a spill by pushing back on castors which is not possible on glides or sticks as I prefer to call them. When we had the sticks I pushed over a chair on several occasions while trying to move about a bay containing three chairs and on one occasion this resulted in a domino effect and two chairs fell over.
32. Castors please

33. Castors please
34. I prefer (strongly) castors/wheels.
35. I prefer castors. No incidents.
36. 1) Prefer the castors; 2) No accidents
37. I prefer caster chairs because they are easy to be moved.
38. There is a unanimous preference for castors in CIRRU and TGS [guess 8].
39. Me personally, I love the castors and would be irritated by not having them, but I don't work at the bench any longer. When Pam fell the bruising was incredible, and I would hate that to happen to anyone again. Can no ruling be made, and give individuals ability to choose then label chairs?
40. In response to an email from our lab managers I am sending you this to affirm that from both the safety and comfort angles we all are much happier with castors on our lab chairs than glides. We would be extremely unhappy if the castors were removed. At present, all but one of our lab chairs have castors and we want them to stay that way. [MJRS lab; 6]
41. I had 19 responses indicating a preference for castors. Three people said that they would actually prefer a lab stool rather than the draughtsman chair (one already has a stool). I did also bring this up at the PI meeting and there was a unanimous vote in favour of the castors by the PIs (none of who responded in email). I would expect therefore that any move to fit glides would be met with a MRC veto.
42. I have a strong preference for chairs with castors rather than glides for all lab work but particularly in TC.
43. VERY VERY strong preference for castors (if that means wheels!) on my lab chair..... The gliders do not work.... I have never had a problem with the castors.
44. I would like to opt for leaving the castors ON CHAIRS as they are. In my opinion the lab chair without wheels is not usable and within my 5 years in different labs I have not experience nor witnessed any accident involving a chair with castors.
45. After you explained what is what CASTORS I prefer !!!!
46. I prefer wheels (castors)
47. Absolutely have to have castors!!!!!!! Total pain in the arse without them. No incidents to report.
48. I have a strong preference for castors. Gliders will impede movement say, when you want to go from your office to the atrium, you have to move around 4 chairs in a lab bay. They are a more solid obstacle if you have your hands full or if you had to leave quickly because someone set off the fire alarm. Sticking with castors has the added benefit of no one needing to go around and change all the chairs. I've never had a chair related incident, nor have I ever seen one.
49. I cannot work in the bays we have when the chairs have no wheels, simple as that. I am prepared to sign a waiver in case people are afraid of litigation or something silly like that.
50. When Scills [29-2] occupied JBC 4 the chairs were ex TMRC days and were unmodified ie fitted with glides as supplied new. All but two members of staff have requested castors to be fitted. The staff who did not want castors came from Cyclacel.
51. a) prefer castors; b) had no incident with the lab chairs in the past four years.
52. I have a very strong preference for castors. As stated in your risk assessment, they are much more convenient for moving about a lab. I have not had an incident in the last four years, or in the previous twenty for that matter.
53. Our lab (TOH; 11) prefers the castors. I would prefer to continue using chairs with castors as I think chairs with glides would be very inconvenient. I've had no problems with my chair in the last 1.5 years that I've been here.

In favor of glides:

1. I would prefer glides under my chair.

2. I would prefer glides
3. If chairs have to be used in the laboratory then glides would be the more sensible option. However, I would recommend that chairs be dismissed altogether from bay areas as they are a constantly being left in the middle of the bay, in short, they are a nuisance & unnecessary. I realise I am probably in the minority with this suggestion & would be unpopular if this practice was implemented but no chairs means less accidents!
4. I prefer chairs with glides for the lab and castor chairs for the office. Sometimes if you go to sit on the castor ones in the lab (as they are generally higher than when in the office) they slide away from you and you end up nearly on your backside!!
5. Regarding the e-mail about lab chairs I think that in the general lab area that glides are safest (there's been a couple of times when I've sat in a colleagues castor chair and it's slid away from me almost causing me to fall) . However, when working in the tissue culture suite at the laminar flow cabinets I find the chairs with castors much better as it's very difficult to move away from the cabinet and also it seems that the height of the chairs differs (the chairs with glides being too high up to sit comfortably with legs underneath the cabinet).
6. I had an incident with a lab chair last month. I dropped a rotor because I caught my elbow caught on a glider chair that was in an odd place. I was told at the time that the incident wouldn't have happened if the chair had been on wheels. Having said that I would prefer to have glider chairs in the lab as I don't really feel secure sitting on high lab chairs with wheels.
7. Have only had 3 responses in total re castors v Glides from JBC1. 1 prefers glides.
8. Madhu wants the chairs that dont move.
9. I prefer the glides
10. I had 2 responses indicating a preference for glides. [MRC]
11. All barr two members of staff have requested castors to be fitted. The staff who did not want castors came from Cyclacel. [SCILLS]

Proposed Action

1. Let individuals choose between castors or glides.
2. Label the back of each chair.
3. Draft a procedure, or put together a poster, detailing how to use the chairs safely.