

College of Life Sciences

Health and Safety Management Committee Meeting

23rd September 2008

Present

Professor CP Downes (CPD; Chair), Mrs I Blair (IB), Dr JR Elliott (JRE), Professor AH Fairlamb (AHF), Ms L Grayson (LG; Minutes), Dr NR Helps (NRH), Mrs GR Jones (GRJ), Mrs M Lacey (ML), Mr IR Leith (IRL), Ms LM McKay (LMM; on behalf of IM), Dr EL Newman (ELN), Dr IG Scragg (IGS), Dr MJR Stark (MJRS; on behalf of AIL), Professor CJ Weijer (CJW)

Apologies

Professor S Black (SB), Professor AI Lamond (AIL), Professor I McLean (IM)

ACTION

1. Welcome and Apologies

CPD welcomed everyone to the meeting and ran through the list of apologies. There was no representative from the Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification (no one available), the Division of Molecular Physiology or the Division Molecular and Environmental Microbiology.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting [paper A]

The minutes were approved.

Matters Arising

Item 2, 5: Drug Precursors

The plan to establish a direct link from the controlled substances web page to the new e-procurement system has been put on hold until the current problems with PECOS are resolved.

Item 2, 8c: Smoking Outside CLS Buildings

CPD informed the Committee that the policy to ban smoking within 6m of all CLS buildings has been widely communicated and, although there are still some compliance problems, the number of complaints to CLS H&S has decreased significantly. IB was of the opinion that the perceived improvement was largely down to people being less inclined to open their office windows during a cool summer. AHF agreed and suggested that a smoking shelter would be the best long term solution. IB pointed out that this would also reduce the amount of litter at the south facing building entrances. IGS reminded the Committee that the University had decided against erecting smoking shelters. Despite this, the Committee members agreed that it was worth pursuing. CPD to raise at University level.

CPD

Item 3: Minutes of Health & Safety Committee (H&SC) Meeting and Matters Arising

LG confirmed that no regulations were being directly contravened by removing the Out-of-Hours Signing In Books and that the local Fire Brigade crews have no objections.

Item 4 i to vi: CLS Annual H&S Report 2007

All items are covered under the 23/9/08 agenda.

Item 5: Draft Policy & Guidance on Eye Protection

All personnel were informed of the new policy by email on 25/6/07.

Item 6: Revised Policy & Guidance on DSE

The policy was amended and brought to the attention of all relevant personnel on 13/6/07.

Item 8. Accident/Incident Statistics

See item 12 of the 23/9/08 agenda.

Item 9 i: AOCB

LG emailed the Divisional Secretaries in July 2008 asking them to forward any H&S related items from their Divisional meeting minutes to her for discussion at the monthly H&S Working Group meetings. Information is starting to filter through.

3. Review and Approval of CLS H&S Policy

LG summarised the minor changes to the document. Committee approved the new version subject to the corrections requested by JRE. LG to amend then bring to the attention of all personnel. **LG**

4. CLS Annual H&S Report 2008

- i. LG summarised the proposed targets for the coming 12 month period. Committee approved all targets. **LG**
- ii. LG to arrange a meeting between CPD, MAJF, IRL, JRE and IGS to discuss CLS adopting the POPIMAR H&S management model and IGS's suggestion to aim for international standard accreditation. **LG**
- iii. There was some discussion about the frequency of H&S inspections and how/when to compile/issue reports. CJW suggested getting Lab Managers to write the inspection reports for their areas. LG did not think this would be well received and advised against it. DAC suggested asking Divisional Secretaries to accompany the inspection team, take notes and write the reports. LG to discuss with Zoe Hirons. **LG**
- iv. IGS confirmed that he had no objection to IB delivering First Aid training and informed the Committee that all Campus security guards/janitors are now being trained as First Aiders as a matter of course. IB confirmed that SLSLT staff will be included in the training program but, in the first instance, she is planning to deliver a short course on CPR for PhD students and Post Docs. IGS suggested that a 'Lab' First Aid course may be more worthwhile. IB agreed and Committee approved this approach.
- v. CPD asked for one more target to be added to the list: achieve full compliance with the CLS lab coat wearing policy. There was much debate about how to attain this goal. AHF was of the view that a positive attitude to H&S must be adopted by the Head of Division and all Principal Investigators to ensure a good H&S culture throughout the Division. CPD agreed and acknowledged that the compliance problem is specific to the Research School rather than the College as a whole. MAJF stated that blatant non-compliance with H&S policy is indefensible. The Committee agreed. CPD and MAJF to discuss how best to tackle the problem. H&SWG to monitor compliance with the lab coat policy and regularly report back to CPD and MAJF. **CPD/
MAJF
H&SWG**

5. CLS Well Being at Work Survey

GRJ summarised the results of the CLS 2008 Well Being at Work survey and highlighted the categories flagged as red, i.e. peer support, bullying and role. Human Resources will focus on making improvements in these key areas during 2009. IGS explained the scoring and colour coding system and drew attention to the scores grouped by personnel category. CPD pointed out that there was very little difference between the 2008 results and those obtained during the University wide survey conducted by Safety Services in 2005. GRJ advised that the survey be repeated every 2 years to monitor progress. Committee agreed. AHF wanted it made clear that bullying will not be tolerated. CPD seconded this and all Committee members agreed. CPD proposed that he, GRJ and IRL meet to discuss how to achieve a measurable improvement in our survey results by 2010. **CPD/
GRJ/
IRL**

6. Water Cut Policy & Procedures

Approved subject to LG ensuring policy/procedures clearly extend to SLSLT. LG to bring to the attention of all personnel. **LG**

7. Procedures Governing the Use of Human Material

Approved. LG to bring to the attention of all relevant personnel. **LG**

8. Enforcement Notice

CPD informed the Committee that the accidental disposal of a sealed radioactive source during the MSI refurbishment has resulted in SEPA serving an Enforcement Notice on the University. IGS gave an account of the measures that have been put in place to prevent a recurrence. LG expressed some concerns over just how rigorously the new procedures will be implemented and proposed a meeting between the key individuals in CLS to ensure responsibilities are clearly assigned and understood. CPD asked for a report on this meeting. LG to organise. **LG**

9. Inspections

- i. LG informed the Committee that the HSE carried out a radiation safety inspection in October 2007. The report was generally positive. Safety Services took the lead on implementation of corrective action. CDP asked the Committee to take on board the comments relating to RPSs being given sufficient time to carry out their duties and the need for management involvement.
- ii. AHF informed the Committee that a SAPO (Specified Animal Pathogens Order) Inspection was carried out in the Containment Level 3 facilities in May 2008. AHF thanked Safety Services staff for their efforts in preparing for the inspection and implementing the inspector's recommendations. CPD noted that the inspector said he was "very impressed with the standard of containment and management of the unit" and commended AHF, MAJF and their staff on maintaining such high H&S standards within their Division.

10. Items Arising from Divisional Meetings

- i. MJRS raised the issue of the Risk Assessment (RA) Database on behalf of GRE. A recent H&S problem within the Division drew attention to the RA Database and the general consensus was that the system is not as easy to access and use as it should be. LG accepted this and explained why the switch to the web interface occurred and the problems it has introduced. LG also explained why logging in with a username and password is vital and pointed out that this and the other issues raised by GRE are addressed in the 2008 H&S Report (pages 5 & 6). LG to endeavour to meet all RA Database related targets as soon as possible and before the next H&SMC meeting. LG
- ii. LMM informed the Committee that she has taken on the role of H&S Adviser for Molecular Medicine and that a Divisional Biological Safety Officer is to be appointed shortly. LMM also relayed the Division's concern over contractors' H&S standards and gave an account of a recent incident when a hammer and Stanley knife were dropped from the scaffold currently around MSI, narrowly missing members of staff. LG pointed out that University Estates & Buildings are primarily responsible for ensuring the contractors they appoint are competent. CPD accepted this but agreed that CLS H&S personnel need to monitor contractors H&S standards while they are on our premises and report any concerns immediately to Safety Services and E&B.

11. Accident/Incidents

IB gave a verbal run through of the latest accident/incident statistics and pointed out that, in many cases, if the existing risk assessment and/or SOP had been followed the accident would have been avoided. IRL enquired about the relatively high number of accidents/incidents involving undergraduates. ML explained that this is down to SLSLT staff rigorously adhering to the reporting procedure.

12. AOCB

There was no other business.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 23rd September 2009; 10am; JBC Floor M