

University of Dundee

RADIATION SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Radiation Safety Sub-Committee was held at 10am on 15th May 2007 in the Baxter Suite, Floor 1, Tower Building.

Present: Dr David Hewick (DH) [University Radiation Protection Adviser & Convener]
Ms Lisa Grayson (LG) [Minutes]
Mr Martin Rollo (MR)
Ms Julie Smyth (JS)
Ms Sheila Sharp (SS)
Ms Aileen McLaren (AM)
Dr Nick Helps (NRH)
Ms Allison Bridges (AB)

Apologies were received from Prof Brian Eddy (BE), Mr Damian Leddy (DL), Dr David Sutton (DS).

MINUTES

Action

1. Minutes of the meeting on 5th Dec 2006/Matters Arising

The Minutes were approved.

Matters Arising:

All matters arising from the previous minutes were covered under the agenda.

2. New Items for the Agenda

See Item 9.

3. Composition of the Committee

a) DH welcomed Dr Nick Helps, RPS for the MRC Protein Phosphorylation Unit and Division of Signal Transduction Therapy, to the Committee.

b) LG informed the Committee that Pete Downes and Ian Leith agreed that it would be more appropriate to have a Life Sciences RPS join the Committee rather than a member of research/academic staff. DH expressed his disappointment but accepted their view. In light of this, LG proposed that Letty Gibson, RPS and Chief Lab Manager, be appointed as a member of the Committee. Committee agreed. DH to inform Letty Gibson and invite her to the next meeting.

DH

4. Main Campus

a) Single-Site Licence

DH reported that the certificates of Authorisation and Registration have been received. However, there are a couple of problems that need to be resolved:

i. The limit allocated for release of tritium gas* to atmosphere is too low to accommodate the work undertaken by Prof Mike Ferguson's group. DH has notified SEPA and explained that he cannot accept the certificate as it is. DH to ensure an adequate limit is allocated.

*LG confirmed that it is indeed ³H₂ gas that is being released and no other tritiated compound.

ii. The 10 fold relaxation on the amounts of tritium and ¹⁴C waste that can be disposed of as VLLW (see Item 8 for further information) has not been acknowledged on the certificates. DH has notified SEPA and written to its Chief Executive to ask that the current certificates are not revoked until the new ones are finalised. DH said he would appeal to the Scottish Parliament if there was any dispute about this 10 fold relaxation. DH to report back at the next meeting.

DH

DH

- b) HASS Registration
DL informed the Committee that the HASS licence for Life Sciences' gamma irradiator has been granted. DH highlighted the requirement to make provision for the disposal of the gamma irradiator at the end of its useful life. Gamma Services quoted £37000 to dispose of the source at today's prices. DH said it was imperative that we identify how this expense will be met. LG suggested that he consult Pete Downes and Ian Leith.
- c) James Black Centre (JBC), New Stores
DH informed the Committee that the new store is in use and complete apart from wiring to accommodate the fume hood that will be used for dispensing of ^{124}Sb . MR confirmed that Safety Services are retaining the scintillation waste store in the WTB basement for now.

5. MRC Unit

- a) NRH explained that he has taken over the role of RPS from Bob MacKintosh, who has now left the University, and is meeting with new users individually as part of their training.
- b) MR confirmed that he will be carrying out a mini-audit in the MRC Unit during the summer.
- c) AB confirmed that the ^{22}Na work is tailing off but ^{86}Rb experiments will be starting up again soon.

6. Medical School

- a) HASS Registration
JS reported that DS was taking the lead on this and is currently involved in discussions with Prof Eric Wright. A cheque to cover the application fee has been handed over. DS enquired about arrangements to cover the final disposal cost. JS said that the University would have to deal with this.
- b) Centre for Clinical Research
JS confirmed that the Centre was on course to open in 2007. There has been no progress on tendering for the PET CT scanner, therefore, it will not be in place when the Centre opens. Funding for the Cyclotron has yet to be secured.
- c) Translational Medicine Research Centre
DH confirmed that this unit does not use radioactive material at present. JS reminded DH that the University must inform Medical Physics if the status changes.
- d) Laser Safety
JS, DS, DH and DL met with Harry Moseley to discuss this issue. All parties agreed that the meeting had been very useful and constructive. JS explained that the University and Trust systems will be merged to ensure a consistent approach to laser safety training. JS asked about the laser safety guidance on Safety Services web site and how the Medical School issues will be integrated into the existing material. DL was not present to respond to this. JS stressed the importance of continuing to work together on this and other radiation safety issues. JS intends to take DL's training material and come up with a working model for the Medical School. The forms, codes of practice and reference material will essentially remain the same, with subtle changes being made only where necessary. DH added that the *Limits* software had been demonstrated and copies given to Harry Moseley.
- e) JS issued a hard copy summary of the Medical School's radiation safety activities over the past 6 months. There have been no new issues or significant changes since the previous report.

7. RPS Matters

a) New RPSs

In addition to NRH, Matthew Elliott and Jennifer Bain have been appointed as Deputy RPSs in DSTT. AB clarified that they are responsible for 33P use within the Screening Service only. It was also acknowledged that Lynn McKay continued to be an RPS although she is not assigned to a specific area at present.

b) Guidance for Campus RPSs

DH reported that the *Guidance for Radiation Protection Supervisors* document was introduced to the Life Sciences RPSs at a meeting on 30/01/07. JS informed the Committee that she had been working on the guidance from the Medical School perspective and asked if the document issued on 30/01 was a draft. DH said the document was in use as it is but was open to modification. JS was unclear as to why the document had been released without prior consultation with the Medical School and again stressed the importance of collaborating to ensure consistency between the Main Campus and Medical School. DH said a meeting could be arranged to review the document.

8. Waste Disposal

a) New UK LLW Policy

DH informed the Committee that he had been involved in the consultation on the UK LLW Policy and had pushed for the 10 fold relaxation that applies to tritium and ¹⁴C solid waste to be restored. An amendment that would now allow very low levels of alpha emitters to be disposed of via our VLLW stream has also been approved. DH is confident that this will reduce disposal costs.

b) Costs

DH pointed out the striking drop in the Ninewells' waste costs (see Appendix A). JS said this was a result of the switch from a 'charge by volume' to a 'charge by activity' system. MR said that the Main Campus charging system appears to take volume and activity into account and that he wanted to look into this further to ensure the Main Campus was not paying over the odds. MR asked if JS could provide a breakdown of the waste figures that shows volume, activity and cost for the first 4 months of 2007. JS said this would take time since the Trust's Estates department deals with the invoicing and NHS and University waste is eventually combined, but she would endeavour to compile the data as requested.

JS

9. Additional Agenda Items

a) Poor Attendance of New Users Course

DH expressed his dismay at the poor attendance figures for the most recent Radioisotope New Users' Course (held on 11/04/07). Of the 20 people registered to attend only 8 turned up. It transpired that several of those invited had already left the University but had not been deregistered. LG said that poor attendance of safety training courses was a common problem that she had been unable to find a solution to thus far. DH said those who failed to attend would be invited to the next course in November.

b) Clarification on Wipe Test Recommendations

LG asked for clarification on DL's wipe test guidance, specifically the recommendation to use the same swab on multiple sites. DH agreed that this introduces the potential to spread contamination and said he would ask DL to issue clarification.

DH/DL

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of this Committee will be held in the same venue, if possible, on Wednesday 5th December 2007 at 10am.

Appendix A

Annual Campus/Ninewells Radioactive Waste Disposal Costs

Campus [calendar year]		Ninewells [financial year]	
Year	Cost [£]	Year	Cost [£]
2002	20,508		
2003	12,684	2002/3	20,961
2004	12,122	2003/4	22,547
2005	6,399	2004/5	20,250
2006	9,589	2005/6	20,545
2007		2006/7	2,171

Year 2006 for the Campus includes the cost [£4,302] of disposing of 4 radium sources [two of which came from the Medical School].