

SCHOOL of CHEMISTRY HEALTH and SAFETY COMMITTEE

30th November 2007 at 2:30 p.m. in Room 7.27

In attendance:, Prof .P.O`Brien, Dr. E.M.Armstrong, Dr. C. Davidge, Mr. A Sutherland, Mr. K. Jones, Dr P Quayle, Dr. P.O`Malley, Mr. G. Smith, Mr. A. Griffiths,, Mr. J. Robinson, Dr..M. Attfield, Dr. R. Dryfe, Mr. K Greenway, Mr. J. Martin.

1. Apologies

Dr. D. Smith, Prof. F.Livens, Mr Shumit Mandal

2. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 28th September 2007 were passed with minor amendments. CD raised a query over a 50 year duration for storage of all COSHH records; suggesting that different classes of chemicals had different durations up to a 50 year maximum. EMA to investigate and present at next meeting.

Action EMA

3. Matters Arising

Matters arising : Replacement of Digital locks – Still on-going due to problems with two lost orders. POB to write letter to Estates.

Action: POB

4. Correspondence

No correspondence since previous Health and Safety meeting.

5. Chairman's Business

Concerns were expressed over plans to pave the School's loading bay as part of the Public Realm works and the likely subsequent increase in slip, trip and falls have been raised with the University Safety Advisor, Dr Melanie Taylor and the Architect. An amended plan, retaining some tarmac in the loading bay areas, has been submitted to Manchester City Council.

First aid service changes. Concerns were raised that The University had, in effect, overridden the school policy in respect of the requirements for first aid cover for the School. As a result of the change in University Policy to withdraw the University-paid first aid honorarium, the School has three first aiders, working in critical areas, who are unwilling to continue in post. POB had expressed his strong negative feelings, at the highest level, about this change in policy which had been implemented by the University without consultation with managers within Schools. The Schools had also been forbidden to make local arrangements with their first aiders. A paging system was suggested as a possible solution to the School operating with fewer first aiders, although it was accepted by all that this would be a more costly solution than paying honoraria. CD agreed to take the committee's concerns further with Occupational Health.

Action CD

6. Fire Drill and Fire Awareness Talk

A fire drill was carried out on Monday 15th October at 10:45 a.m. The full evacuation of the building took 8 minutes. Concerns were raised over the amount of time taken for full evacuation and people spilling onto Brunswick Street. The subsequent demolition of the Chisholm building should aid egress from the building in the future.

The fire awareness talk took place on Wednesday 31st October, approximately 80 people attended. The event was held concurrently with the School Board meeting, as this was the only Wednesday in Semester that didn't have colloquia booked - which caused a conflict for some members of staff. The SSA has now arranged for the Fire awareness talk to be scheduled instead of a colloquium, and separately from the School Board. , The Head of School suggested that the afternoon of the fire awareness talk be expanded to a safety afternoon.

7. Safety Champions

Nominees for safety champions have been requested from Academic staff by 10 December 2007. So far there have been five responses.

8. Accident / Incident Statistics

3 accidents since September, 1 glass cut (pipette in finger), 1 acid cut to hand and 1 acid splash to face. A serious acid splash to the face of an undergraduate student is currently being investigated by PQ, EMA and SF. The committee would like to express thanks to Peter Quayle, Elaine Armstrong and Steve Faulkner for their involvement during the investigation. There have been 6 incidents since September, which include a mercury spillage from a gauge, breakage of a bromine vial that fell from an overcrowded fridge to floor, breakage of a Winchester of solvent which was on the floor by striking with a trolley, 2 small fires in the synthesis teaching laboratory and a possible exposure of contractors to asbestos during work in the basement.

11. Inspection Reports and Arrangements for Inspections

The latest inspection raised two major problems. The room temperature of the ground floor extension synthesis laboratory was found to totally unsuitable with extensive draughts and a temperature gradient from 10-16°C between one end of the laboratory and the other. This problem has subsequently been rectified. Concern was also raised at the large quantity of waste solvent (25l) being stored in the open laboratory (GE.006). EMA is to liaise with AEG over the purchase of smaller, 5L plastic containers, available as a stores stock item for temporary laboratory storage of solvent waste.

Action EMA

Next inspections

Synthetic Undergraduate Teaching Laboratories Tuesday 4th December at 10:15 am PQ, EMA, CD, GS, KJ

Basement To be arranged in December JDR, AMS, EMA

7th floor To be arranged in January CGD, GDS, EMA

8. Dates of next meeting(s)

Friday 25th January 2008 at 2:30pm in 7.27

Friday 28th March 2008 at 2:30pm in 7.27

Friday 6th June 2008 at 2:30pm in 7.27

Friday 25th July 2008 at 2:30p.m in 7.27

A.O.B.

Oxygen depletion monitors have been installed in the Spectroscopy (EPR and NMR) rooms in the basement and the 2nd floor teaching laboratory room 2.044.

On the evening of the 29th November 3 homeless people were moved on from the Schools bin sheds. They were taking refuge within the shed, and had started a fire .

9 laptops were stolen on 20 November It remains unclear where entry to the building was obtained by the thief, however both the boiler room and plant room door were both found to be unlocked. EMA is to present a report of recommendations to the management committee suggesting ways to improve security in the building.

Action EMA

Concern was raised about using the stairs within the building in an emergency within the hours of darkness as there were often no lights on and the light switches couldn't be seen. Two possible solutions – highlight the light switches with fluorescent tape or leave some lights on.

The evacuation chair situated on the 6th floor main stairwell was found to be unsuitable/faulty during the evacuation chair training course. EMA to contact Terry Graham about repairing or replacing it. Once the chair is repaired / replaced EMA to rearrange training.

Action EMA

A request was received for soap dispensers to be provided for hand wash basins within laboratories. EMA to look into this.

Action EMA

There being no other business the meeting closed at 15:30 p.m.