

SCHOOL of CHEMISTRY HEALTH and SAFETY COMMITTEE**Monday 26th January 2009 at 14:30 in room 4.20**

In attendance: Mr. J. Robinson (Chair), Mr. G. Smith (Minutes), Dr. T. Apinall, Dr. D. Crouch, Ms. C. Davidge, Dr. E.M. Armstrong, Mr. S Holden, Dr. P.Quayle, Mr. T. Graham, Mr. P. Unsworth, Dr. M. Attfield, Dr. N. Bryan, Mr. J. Martin, Dr.P.O` Malley, Dr. D. Berrisford.

1. Apologies

Prof. P.O`Brien.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 21st December 2008 at 2:30 p.m. in Room 7.27 were passed with minor corrections.

3. Matters Arising

A box containing safety glasses has now been placed at the reception as previously agreed at previous committee meeting.

EMA reported to the committee that work was continuing on the School's new Health and Safety manual.

The mini audit on risk assessment carried out by the central Health and safety Services was discussed. The secretary agreed to circulate the results of mini audit to committee members.

EMA reported to the committee that she had not yet looked at provision of a smoker's shelter. There were comments made from committee members who were absent from the previous meeting. After discussion it was apparent that the majority of the committee members were against the provision of a smokers shelter. It was agreed that EMA would no longer look into the provision of a smoker's shelter.

EMA reported to the committee that training in first aid treatment using Diphoterine® was now complete. All qualified first aiders and teaching laboratory technicians undertook the training.

EMA reported that Prof G Procter had been contacted over change in first aid procedures following purchase and training with diphoterine®.

4. Correspondence

An email had been received about a death of a researcher at UCLA (California). The researcher was severely burned and subsequently died as a result of an accident with tBuLi. It is thought that the barrel of the syringe containing tBuLi may have come out while undertaking research. The burns were worsened with the researcher not wearing a laboratory coat and wearing a synthetic sweater. The committee discussed the accident. The consensus of the committee was that there

should be a recommendation of non-synthetic clothing for all laboratory workers. DB commented that this type of accident was common to more than BuLi and was likely to be a result of overpressure. He suggested that good practice would be to allow pressure release in the reagent container by the insertion of another needle linked to inert atmosphere. PQ commented that we should find out more information before formally commenting. EMA agreed to forward more information to everyone on the committee.

5. Chairman's Business

EMA told the committee that information concerning "REACH" should be released shortly. It was expected that there would be implication to research with some chemicals being completely ruled out. Hexane was given as an example.

6. Latest accidents/incidents

There were no accidents to report since the last meeting. However on the 9th of January there was a Fire from tissue residues from a glove box. Pyrophoric material on the tissues ignited when exposed to the air. The risk assessment is now being tracked down and the fire investigated.

7. Proposed guidance document for scale up of chemical reactions

EMA proposed that point 10 of the "Guidance on risk assessments for chemical reactions - interpreting journal protocols, changing parameters and scaling up" was excessive and maybe not desirable. The committee were of the opinion that it may be applicable for Chemical Engineering but not for chemists since chemists can not always know the heats of their reactions.

The question was asked what is there to stop a similar accident to the one that occurred in MIB. TA replied that since the explosion in the MIB new assessment and checking procedures have been implemented and are working well. All assessments involving explosive materials, specified chemicals on a high risk register as well as quantities above a certain amount require the PI to obtain a counter signature from David Berrisford. A similar system is in operation in the Chemistry building where some reactions have to go to EMA for a countersignature.

EMA reported that Ian Watt had been asked to comment on the guidance document. His initial comments were that literature should be used where available and that training could be provided in the form of videos on different stirring techniques. DB suggested that industry be consulted about their procedures for scale-up.

DC stated that additional comments should be included for Lithiation reactions.

CD asked if there was a Procedure and Method Sheet. EMA replied that there was a P&M sheet dealing with destruction of alkali metals and their reactive organic derivatives but not on how to handle these chemicals in a reaction.

8. Home office visit – Drug Precursors

EMA reported, the middle of the January the home office visited the School looking at drug precursors. The home office was in the main very happy. They made a number of recommendations. Double signature at point of issuing using a formal log should be implemented. They expressed concern over the security of chemicals within the School's stores. The double signature and formal log is something which is already planned. It was decided that EMA would examine the procedures within Radiochemistry for logging radioactive chemicals. NB stated that within Radiochemistry they have to account to the milligram where the radioactive material is, where it is used, by whom, throughout the life until the sample is poured down the sink.

9. Latest Inspections / Arrangements for inspection

7th floor inspection TBA - GDS, EMA, CD

6th floor inspection TBA - EMA, SH, DC, JR

5th floor inspection (Upper Brook Street wing) TBA - NB, JM, EMA

5th floor inspection (Dover Street wing) TBA – GDS, CD, DC

10. Dates of next meetings

Monday 23rd March at 14:30 in Room 4.20

Monday 18th May at 14:30 in Room 4.20

Monday 29th June at 14:30 in Room 4.20

11. AOB

DB asked if there was a change in status has regard to the Director of MIB still being in charge of day-to-day safety within MIB. EMA responded that there was no change in status however POB did have responsibility for Chemists from the School of Chemistry working within MIB and has such wanted a representative to represent them at the School of Chemistry Health and Safety committee.

The committee wished to thank TA and DB for joining the committee.

NB reported that some unrecorded radioactive material was discovered in the un-refurbished part of the 5th floor of the Chemistry building. The material was labelled with dates ranging from between 1982 and 1986. All radioactive material found is now suitably stored in the School's isotope store and logged in the inventory. Monitoring had been carried out in the room containing the legacy

and no residual radiation was observed. The Management Committee had asked whether there was a written record of the negative results found in this monitoring – it was agreed that this minute could be used as the formal record that no residual contamination was present. NB was asked if it was possible that there was any more unrecorded radioactive material within the School of Chemistry. He replied that the 5th floor had been extensively searched and nothing else found.

EMA reported to the committee that there had been concern over fire safety with the rear corridor to the lecture theatres. The concern was firstly chemicals being stored in cupboards on a fire exit. Secondly two lecture theatres are due to be refurbished over the Summer and this corridor will be used for access/egress by the contractors. NB, EMA and DC have subsequently cleared the rear corridor. A manual is to be produced showing best practise for demo lectures.

CD expressed a concern to the committee over people handling cash and especially walking with cash and potential risk of assault. EMA replied that within the School it was very rare that members of the school needed to walk with cash on them, but she would check with the people who handle money to ascertain whether this was a problem.

Meeting finished at 15:50pm