

CHEMISTRY BUILDING HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting Held at 2.30 p.m. on Monday 19th April 2010

In Attendance: Prof. C. Whitehead (chair), Dr. E.M. Armstrong, Dr. N. Bryan, Mr. M. Bromfield, Mr. S. Holden, Mr. J. Robinson, Mr. T. Graham, Dr. M. Attfield, Dr. T. Aspinall, Dr. C. Raynor, Mr. S. Mottley.

1. Apologies: Miss C. Davidge, Mr. G. Smith, Mr. P. Unsworth, Dr. D. Crouch, Dr. D. Berrisford, Mr. A. Sutherland.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday February 15th in room 4.20.

TA stated that it was NB who had raised the need to retain radiochemistry records for 50 years.

A member of staff's name was spelt incorrectly.

Other than this the minutes were held to be a true and correct record.

3. Matters Arising.

Second gate for the basement moat is being chased up.

Fifth floor magnetic locks worked for a while, but now are not working properly and have been re-reported to estates.

Solvent stills plug rewiring is ongoing.

EMA e-mail regarding fatigued/attacked rubber tubing still to be sent out. (**Update:** now sent.)

Safety champions list has been produced. Who is exactly responsible for which room still to be sorted. EMA will see CW regarding this.

Estates have followed up the incident regarding sewage ingress into the building. Procedural failure (rather than people failure) has been highlighted. EMA feels that there is a need for written guidance as to who is responsible for what in any future incident.

The new fire alarm system is now completely installed and will go immediately into full evacuation mode if a call point is activated.

Emergency lighting installation is completed but will have to be re-examined as the emergency lights are currently on all the time.

The solvent stores gas suppression system cannot be tested as the room is not airtight – which is part of the room design as solvents are handled in there. Further work will be carried out to fit fans and dampers which will seal the area in the event of fire alarm activation.

4. Correspondence.

The School has received a circular regarding Carcinogenic, Mutagenic and Toxic for Reproduction (CMR) substances. There are new guidance and procedures on the website. EMA feels these need some improvement before general circulation.

The CMR audit team have visited the School and in subsequent discussions it seems that our post-graduates are not receiving pre-employment health check questionnaires. EMA will take this information back to Nicky Snook/Lorraine Onabanjo/Vicky Turner. However, it seems that COSHH assessments need only to be kept for five years, except in the case of handling CMR's in which case it is forty years.

5. Chair's Business.

CW is talking to all the undergraduate students. The fourth year students have raised concern about the length of time it takes to get a safety induction in the MIB and the PSI. This was contested by TA but she will follow up this issue, liaising with Karen Charters.

6. Retention of Health and Safety Data.

It may be necessary to establish a procedure for this.

Current situation:

Radiochemistry (fifty year retention required): from 1999 to present full records, stored but not protected; from 1990 to 1999 partial records stored but not protected; before 1990 no records.

CMR (forty years retention required): relevant since 1989. Up to 2004 Occupational health services hold individual records held centrally, exact status not known; since 2004 Principal Investigators have kept their own researchers' records, exact status not known; since September 2008 electronic disposition has been available.

It was suggested that action should be taken to safeguard Radiochemistry's records, safeguard other paper records and store the electronic records on a centralised system. CW suggested that Nicky Snook initiates a project to look initially at processing of paper records.

7. Latest Accidents/Incidents.

Fall from a wooden ladder causing a dislocated shoulder. Future inspections will lead to the immediate withdrawal of unsuitable or defective ladders.

Glass cut from a sample vial.

Glass cut from cracked glassware.

Cut from sharp ceramic when removing broken hotplate stirrer.

Needlestick injury when withdrawing a syringe of Acetonitrile under negative pressure.

8. Latest Near Misses.

Stopper forced off pressurised glassware leading to spill of contents of flask.

Oil spillage from broken measuring cylinder.

THF still collection vessel overfilled and spread into other stills and fume hood/electrical appliances.

Persistent pyridine-like smell in the area around G.20.

9. Inspections/Arrangements for inspections

Fifth floor, Radiochemistry and second floor teaching laboratories done, reports not yet complete.

First floor teaching laboratories, 4.06, third floor (Upper Brook Street side) and third floor (Dover Street side) next on the list.

(Volunteers for these inspections NB, JR, PQ, EMA, GS, TA and SH).

10. Next Meeting

21st June 2010.

11. Any Other Business.

MIB Update.

A student has been living in the building. In the light of this a new “exceptional access” form has been introduced for out of hours working.

The new inspection regime seems to have brought about a dramatic improvement in the standards within the area.

A new exit policy has been introduced for groups leaving the building (this has been a historic problem in the Chemistry Building).

There being no other business the meeting closed at 15.25.