

CHEMISTRY BUILDING HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting Held at 2.00 p.m. on Monday 20th May 2013

In Attendance: Prof. J.C. Whitehead (chair), Dr. E.M. Armstrong, Dr. N. Bryan, Mrs. C. Taylor, Mr. S. Holden (minutes), Dr. John Gardiner, Dr. M. Attfield, Dr. P. Quayle, Miss C. Davidge, Dr. T. Aspinall, Dr. John Morrison and Mr. Jonathan Hughes.

1. Apologies: Mr. G. Smith.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday March 25th.

Were agreed as a true and correct record after the following alterations:

- Miss C. Davidge should be added to those listed as present.
- Item 5 should read "OHSTAG" for "OSTAG".
- Item 8 should read "BuLi" for "buLi" and "mL" for "ml".

3. Matters Arising.

None

4. Correspondence.

Received: from CD recent alterations to the arrangements section of the University's Health and Safety Policy.

Received: a paper from a post-doctoral researcher with suggestions to improve the chemical risk assessment form used by the School; a) to make it quicker to fill in and b) so that further alternative authorisers could be added.

A decision on part a) was deferred to allow further consideration.

Regarding part b) after some discussion it was decided that research groups should have procedures in place for authorised PI (or designated substitute PI) to sign the risk assessments for all work, including that taking place over the weekend.

JCW requested that EMA compose an e-mail reminding PIs of their responsibilities regarding chemical risk assessments.

5. HASMAP Audit/Annual Monitoring Report.

This item has been placed on the agenda to enable measurement of the School's progress against safety targets.

Last year's HASMAP (Management Arrangements) will be circulated to the Health and Safety Committee.

This year's HASMAP (PPE and LEV) has been issued as a draft report to EMA and will be presented to JCW in the near future.

The annual monitoring report has been submitted and accepted though it needs targets adding. The completed version will be circulated to the Committee.

6. Safety Climate Survey

This is due to be carried out in Chemistry, with the terminology of the original template "tweaked". The original intention was to survey the Chemistry Building only.

JCW asked if the whole of the School could be surveyed but with an option for the responder to identify which building they worked in. This was agreed.

The survey will be carried out at a suitable time to try to ensure maximum response rate.

7. Solvents.

EMA had raised the issue of bulking up collected waste solvent at the University Chemical Safety Forum. Unanimously the other Universities collect 5 Litres at a time and decant at the general collection area. This ensures the quantities of flammable liquids in any area are kept to a minimum.

Halogenated waste presents a manual handling concern if collected in bulk.

The current limit for the School is 50 Litres of flammable liquids per bay.

8. Safety Showers.

EMA is to arrange an open meeting on this topic after the busy exam period has finished.

9. Accidents and Incidents.

There was a fire in a laboratory in April when a researcher spilt some ether which was ignited by a hot oven next to where the solvent was being poured. The researcher stated that they had poured out the ether outside of a fume hood as the hood was too cluttered to use. The researcher received very minor burns (reddened face, singed facial hair).

An employee had hurt their back removing some equipment from a floor-level cupboard.

A researcher had suffered a cut to the hand when a beaker they were cleaning broke.

10. Near Misses.

A Winchester of THF shattered overnight whilst in storage. EMA had contacted the manufacturers but they had reported no known issues.

Discussion on the University Safety Forum had outlined several similar occurrences. EMA and Mark Mullin had met representatives from our solvent suppliers regarding supplying plastic-coated bottles. However these items are not on the North West Purchasing Consortium list and so the cost is prohibitive.

It was noted by the committee that there had been no accidents in the Teaching Laboratories and that it seemed that experienced researchers were having the accidents and incidents. This might suggest that there might be an issue of burden of work impacting on safety.

11. Inspections/Arrangements for Inspections.

There has been little progress since the last Committee meeting.

Three inspections will take place in the next three weeks.

12. School Safety Alert.

The poster on correct fume hood sash use will be circulated. The next poster will be on the topic of sharps and blades.

13. MIB update.

The safety climate survey had met with a disappointing response.

The draft HASMAP report has been received.

14. Next Meeting

22nd July 2013, venue tba.

15. Any Other Business.

PQ requested that coat pegs be fitted in the Teaching Laboratories and all laboratory coats be laundered at the end of term.

JCW commented that another University had requested all the training records and chemical risk assessments for people moving there.

CD stated that Compliance and Risk now employed a person (Ryan Metcalf) who would be taking care of the chemical weapons precursor returns from now on.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 15.20.