

## SCHOOL of CHEMISTRY HEALTH and SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 14:00 in Room 7.27

### In Attendance

Prof. J. C. Whitehead (Chair), Dr. E.M. Armstrong, Dr. T. Aspinall, Mr. G. Smith (Minutes), Mr S Holden, Dr. R. Blagg, Dr. P. Quayle, Mr J. Hughes, Dr. M. Attfield, Dr. C. Davidge, Mrs. C. Taylor, Dr. J. Morrison, Dr. N. Bryan, Dr. D. Berrisford

### 1. Apologies

Prof. M. Anderson, Mr. J. Smith, Mr. P. Unsworth.

### 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2011

PQ provided an email with further information on a number of issues discussed at the April meeting.

Item 3

DB and PQ have asked Karen Charters to incorporate a "PG Training Week" in the School Calendar for 2011-2012

Item 10

The incident in which a technician was spiked with an improperly discarded needle was taken most seriously (the needle contained traces of ethyl iodide):

- i. The whole class was re-appraised of the Schools H&S Policy – including the ultimate sanction of barring habitual offenders from the UG lab – and thereby expulsion from the course;
- ii. Additional signage concerning the proper disposal of sharps has now been posted in each bay;
- iii. Procedures for the safe disposal of broken glassware have now been re-evaluated;
- iv. While we were unable to identify the miscreant the students in the BAY where the incident happened were interviewed by Dr. Armstrong. Dr Armstrong was to liase with HoS concerning potential sanctions.

The committee was in agreement that the information should be added to the minutes of meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2011.

### 3. Matters Arising

John Agger and Delroy Flemmings both successfully passed their first aid at work course.

CD stated that safety concerns over the use of blackboard chalk were still being evaluated. JCW commented that for many students it was easier to see white (writing) on black (surface) than black on white.

EMA noted that sample tube holders had not yet been received from Cardiff University. Their use had resulted in a significant reduction in accidents to Cardiff undergraduates. She would speak to our workshop about having some similarly designed ones constructed.

The refurbishment of the goods lift will commence next week.

EMA informed the committee that the order for the refurbishment of room 5.07 had now been placed. NB said it was still a designated radiological supervised area as the Radiation Safety Unit (RSU) would not designate it until refurbishment was complete.

The replacement of the Chemistry building windows and installation of new blinds was out to tender.

EMA informed the committee that she still had to look at the fire marshal provision within the Chemistry building.

There had been no response to the NMR safety issue. GDS to contact Roger again to obtain an update.

EMA reported to the committee that the moat had been cleared of all the rubbish and the propane cylinders removed.

TA said that all three of the compulsory courses had been run in the MIB and not just one as indicated in the previous minutes.

#### **4. Correspondence**

- a) Received notification that safety courses for undergraduates and taught postgraduate students would be on line from September.
- b) Staff had been emailed for their views on retention of safety showers and eye wash stations in the Chemistry building.
- c) Received a message from the University on Bio-safety which was circulated but transpires is not applicable to work in this building.

#### **5. Chairman's Business**

A column regeneration kit had been received for the solvent purification system.

EMA had given a presentation at the School Away day in May which had prompted some very helpful feedback. Disposal of legacy material and greater use of e-prog for postgraduate students to sign off at various milestones, including health and safety issues, were discussed. NB said that a similar system is used in Radiochemistry and works well. PQ mentioned that e-prog had been rolled out to the first year Chemists and though it looked horrible it was actually quite easy to use. EMA had approached Tim Wallace for help to set up safety applications in the e-prog system and to prove supervision.

JCW said that the students had a responsibility to seek help also and informed the committee that EMA had done a good job at the open day.

In September e-learning will be rolled out for the undergraduates and taught postgraduates. This will consist of three basic safety modules accessed on Blackboard and students will not be allowed to attend practical sessions until such time as they have achieved a pass mark of 70% or more for all three modules. The modules will be open all academic year and will be available as soon as the student has registered. Karen Charters is to be informed so that this requirement can be added to the pre arrival pack for the undergraduates. RB asked whether these would replace the talks EMA gives to the undergraduates but CD replied that there was still a need for some local induction.

It has now been agreed with the Fire officer that EMA, SH, PNW CT and NS can validate and silence the fire alarm though resetting the alarm would still be a responsibility for University Security.

## **6. Latest accidents/incidents**

There have been three accidents since the last meeting:

1. A post-graduate had a cut from a NMR tube, which broke.
2. A post-graduate had a mercury spill on their hand.
3. A post-graduate was splashed with acid on her arm and looked for a female first aider to provide treatment however there were none in the building at the time. The lady had to be treated by a male first aider in the end.

This accident did raise the issue of number of female first aiders in the building.

The general opinion of the committee was that the total number of first aiders in the building was probably sufficient however there was an uneven gender balance. GDS suggested that we use some of the female first aiders from the Physics building which was not a popular suggestion. It was decided that we would try to get some additional female members of staff trained up.

## **7. Safety Showers**

EMA reported to the committee that she had had three replies to her proposal that showers and eyewash stations be removed and be replaced with diphoterine. The committee suggested that a full cost benefit analysis was prepared before a decision was made. PQ suggested that perhaps a few showers should be retained in the building. Another idea that was suggested was for the eye wash stations are kept and the showers removed. It was agreed that EMA would circulate the cost benefit analysis for the next meeting.

## **8. CRA Audit**

CD reported to the committee on the chemical risk assessment audit that had been undertaken in the School of Chemistry. As part of the audit a number of PI's were sampled across the school. CD did not find any unsafe work. However the assignment of toxicity for some chemicals was found to be questionable on a number of assessments.

Amongst the PI's there was a general assumption that the induction training provided by EMA was sufficient for all applications which is not necessarily the case.

As a result of some of the findings from the audit the chemical risk assessment forms will be slightly modified.

CD suggested that the anonymised CRA audit should be circulated to the committee members along with the modified CRA form ahead of the next meeting.

CRAs should be stored electronically on a central server. TA informed the committee that she was currently working with someone in FLS to create an electronic form though it is proving complicated and progressing slowly. She went on to say that CEAS have already developed one. EMA said for Chemistry there would be more stages required though it should still be possible. She went on to say that Tim Wallace mentioned that industry used e-notebooks instead of lab books. JCW wanted to know whether the faculty could support e-notebooks and if we could establish just how well they were working in industry. Concern was raised that if electronic assessment systems became a tick box exercise whether sufficient thought would be given to it..

CD asked for the minutes and agenda to be circulated earlier to allow people ample time to prepare for the meeting.

JCW thanked CD and MJT for undertaking the CRA audit for the School of Chemistry.

## **9. Gap Analysis of the Chemistry Building Health and Safety Management System**

EMA informed the committee that Simon Holden had passed his NEBOSH diploma with a distinction. The committee congratulated SH on his achievement.

The document produced by SH was discussed and CD stated the HASMAP audit backed up the findings highlighted in this document.

It was noted that no individual represented undergraduate teaching though PQ and DB do this by default. The lack of attendance at the last meeting was discussed. The general consensus was that the rearranged meeting was set at a bad time. It was decided that JCW and EMA would look at the structure of the committee and the timing of subsequent meetings. The idea of a more formal structure with each committee member having a deputy to attend in his or her absence was suggested.

Cultural issues would be dealt with separately, probably via the away days and the PDR process. JCW went on to say that he was keen for the naming and shaming to continue but that we should also provide commendation and positive feedback where it's warranted.

## **10. MIB update**

There had been an accident involving a chloroform splash to a researcher's eye in the MIB since the last meeting. The researcher was sent to the hospital the following morning. Investigation revealed that the researcher had not been wearing suitable eye protection.

The front doors to the MIB building are to be replaced in two weeks time. During the work, access to the building will be limited as follows: Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturday between 9am and 2pm.

A new 800MHz NMR spectrometer has been ordered and the repair of the 600MHz instrument has been commissioned.

Continuing internal audits were being carried out in the MIB. Jason Micklefield's laboratory was the most recent and TA was pleased to report that the results from this were generally very good. All the Facility safety files have been examined and a common problem identified was provision of safety information for samples, and especially those that were transported between the MIB and the Chemistry building. GDS noted that some of the safety data provided with commercial samples received for analysis was also of a poor standard.

## **11. Latest inspection /Arrangements for inspections**

### **Latest inspections**

6<sup>th</sup> floor was inspected and found to be fairly good.

The radiochemistry suite on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor was inspected this was found to be of a good standard.

The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor teaching laboratories were inspected. The inspections were undertaken while the undergraduates were using the laboratories. In both cases the laboratories were found to be good standard.

### **Future inspections**

4<sup>th</sup> floor Upper Brook Street  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Upper Brook Street  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Dover Street

CD, JCW (4<sup>th</sup> floor UBS), PQ, NB, GDS,EMA all volunteered for the inspections.

## **12. Dates of next meetings**

The dates of the next meeting were discussed EMA sent her apologies for August. It was proposed that the meeting be put back until September.

## **AOB**

There was nothing under AOB at the meeting.