

SCHOOL OF CHEMISTRY
University of St Andrews

*Minutes of the School Safety Committee Meeting held on Friday 30th November 2012 in Room
214b at 10.00 am.*

Present: Miss Margaret Aiton (Secretary)
Mrs Marjory Parker [MP]
Dr Nick Westwood [NJW] (Deputy Health and Safety Coordinator)
Mr Arnot Williamson [HAW]
Dr Filip Wormald [PW] (Health and Safety Coordinator) (Chair)

1. New CHARM System

PW reported that Lean are still working on the new CHARM system which is now top priority within IT Services. Once IT Services have coded the new CHARM system it will be sent out to Chemistry, Biology and Medicine for beta testing. PW has requested a two-year monitoring/follow-up period so that any teething issues can be resolved as they occur. PW will have meetings with David Macadam from IT Services Business Analysis during the development of CHARM 2.

2. Building Work Concerns

PW reported that there have been a number of complaints in relation to the recent building work and renovation of the PGB research group laboratories. A major concern was that shortly after asbestos was removed, the contractors then moved a large X-ray table from one of the rooms undergoing renovation. Moving the X-Ray table caused dust, which could potentially have contained asbestos, to escape from the room as containment panels were removed.

The committee then went on to discuss risk assessments in relation to building work and the question was raised as to who is responsible for carrying out such risk assessments. PW stated that it would be the contractors and University Estates who would carry out the risk assessments. It was decided by the committee that in future, feedback from the contractors/Estates following the risk assessments should be provided.

[Action: PW]

3. Teaching Lab Safety

Following frequent reports of glass being found in the paper bins in the Chemistry teaching lab, HAW was pleased to report that there have not been any further incidents during the last few weeks. PW stated that next year he will organise a briefing for all PG demonstrators to advise them about ensuring the undergraduates are following the correct procedure when disposing of waste in the laboratory. PW reported that he will discuss issues concerning lab safety and glass disposal with IAS, Chemistry Demonstrator.

[Action: PW]

4. Gas Cylinder Storage

Storage of Hydrogen and Flammable Materials in Stores Car Park

PW reported that cylinders of hydrogen and other flammable gases are currently caged in an area of the Stores car park situated directly under the Head of School's (JDW) office. Following discussions with JDW there are plans to move inert gases over to this area of the car park and move the hydrogen and other flammable gases to an area further away from the building. There is a surplus of cylinders containing flammable gases, many of which belong Sasol. Sasol's Managing Director, Dr Bob Tooze, has agreed to arrange for BOC to collect the extra cylinders. The committee agreed that a date should be set by which all cylinders must be moved by. It was decided by the committee that all cylinders should be moved by the 1st April 2013 and PW will inform the relevant parties of this date.

[Action: PW]

Cylinder Storage Cage in Stores Car Park

The committee also discussed the storage cage next the Purdie Annex which has become a "dumping ground" over the course of several years. It contains many cylinders of unknown substances. Some of these cylinders are old and rusted. The storage cage also houses Sigma Aldrich tanks containing potentially dangerous materials PW suggested that he would speak to Peter Pogorzelec, the DJCH group technician, to find out if he has any information regarding the content of the tanks and plans for their use/disposal.

[Action: PW]

5. Fire Alarm procedures

Practice Fire Drill

A practice fire drill was held on Wednesday 7th November 2012. The committee discussed the outcome of the fire drill. PW reported that five minutes was the length of time taken for the whole building to be evacuated after the sounding of the alarm and this length of time is deemed acceptable for evacuation.

Roll Call Procedures

Following a small fire in one of the research labs recently, the Fire Service noted that ideally, we should have a roll call of everyone in the building at any given time. The committee discussed this matter and concluded that it could never be possible to have full roll call due to such a large number of students attending lectures within the building throughout the day, including those from other departments.

[Action: PW]

Walkie-Talkie System

NJW asked the committee if they thought the current walkie-talkie system used by the Chemistry fire wardens during a fire alarm was working efficiently. The committee discussed the current system and it was agreed that all fire wardens should get together for a practice/walkthrough using the walkie-talkies to make sure the system is working as efficiently as possible.

[Action: PW]

6. Undergraduate Students - Out of Hours Access

PW queried whether Undergraduate students should continue to be permitted 24 hour access to the Common Room and Chemistry Library. The concern raised by PW was whether or not it was safe for an undergraduate student to potentially be the only person in the building at any one time. PW raised this due to fire call outs very late at night and students had remained in the building although the fire bell was sounding and fire services on site. The

committee discussed this and agreed that because students only have access to the library and common room, and not any of the laboratories, 24 hour access should continue. MP informed the committee that she would raise this query at the next joint union meeting, which the head of Health & Safety will be attending, to find out if there are any reasons why 24 hour access should not be permitted.

[Action: MP]

7. Undergraduate Students - Safety Concerns

PW reported that there had been no specific safety concerns raised on the student forum. The committee discussed undergraduate safety concerns and it was decided that the students should be given the opportunity to express any safety concerns they have at the Staff-Student Consultative Committee (SSCC). PW stated he would ask for this to be added to the agenda.

[Action: PW]

The meeting closed at 10.55 am. The date of the next Safety Committee Meeting was not decided.