

**University of St. Andrews**  
**SCHOOL OF CHEMISTRY**

*Minutes of the School Health and Safety Committee Meeting held on  
Friday, 14 August 2015 in Room 229A at 11.00am*

**Present:** Dr. Filip Wormald [PWo] - Health and Safety Coordinator (Chair)  
Dr. Alan Aitken [RAA]  
Dr. Paul Connor [PAC]  
Miss Iona L. Hutchison [ILH] - Disabilities Coordinator  
Dr. John S. G. Smith [JSGS]  
Mr. Brian Walker [BW]  
Prof. Paul Wright [PAW]  
Dr. Eli Zysman-Colman [EZC] - Deputy Health and Safety Coordinator

**1. *Apologies***

Apologies received from IAS and KK.

**2. **Minutes of Last Meeting****

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2015 were taken as read and approved.

**3. **Matters Arising****

Any matters arising from the previous minutes will be discussed in the following items.

**4. **Report from Health & Safety Coordinator (PWo)****

*Purdie Lecture Theatre A* - PWo informed the Committee that several pick-ups by the Recycling Team at Estates have been arranged for the clearing out of electrical and wood equipment from under the Purdie Lecture Theatre A. PWo noted that Estates will not clear the wood until the present building work outside Purdie Annexe has finished as this obstructs the placement of skips. RAA will be available to assist in the removal of said electrical items.

**[Action: PWo & RAA]**

*Waste Complex* - PWo stated that the Waste Complex has been completely cleared out and yellow lines are to be painted surrounding the area - post contract work on the Purdie Annexe - to ensure that Fife Council are able to access the area more freely. JSGS also noted that a request has been made to increase the 'flat roadway' area into Purdie Annexe/Waste Complex.

RAA suggested that clarification on the procedure of waste disposal is needed, both for chemists and non-chemists. Waste disposal forms must be completed *via* the Estates webpage and posted on waste in order for it to be removed from the Complex. The suggestion was made to implement this into the H&S general induction talk, Handbook and also the new website. A notice explaining this procedure should also be clearly displayed on the Complex.

Who was responsible for battery disposal and uplifting of the battery collection boxes was discussed and PWO will contact Barbara Aitken at Estates, to find out.

**[Action: PWO]**

*H&S Handbook - Poisons List* - PWO informed the meeting that the H&S Handbook requires to be updated and certain items within the handbook would benefit from RAA's expertise. RAA agreed to assist. PWO would like the Poisons list to be inserted back into the Handbook. After much debate it was agreed that as well as inserting the Poisons list back into H&S Handbook, it would be helpful to clarify the list for all users. Therefore a link to the list will be available on the H&S website. Additionally it was noted that centralised secure storage facilities be installed for such substances. Furthermore it was highlighted that an email to all staff be circulated requesting an inventory of all current stock and their volumes to provide an estimate of the quantity of such substances present within the School.

**[Action: PWO]**

## 5. Items for Discussion

### (i) Cyanide First Aiders

PWO stated that concerns have been raised in relation to the Cyanide and oxygen-breathing lab in 4.02 of the BMS building. Neil Keddie [NK] is the only Cyanide First Aider in this area. Workers made the assumption that if NK is absent no cyanide-based experiment could occur, due to the fact that no Cyanide Aider would be on stand by during this time. It was highlighted that there are 5 aiders in total, most of whom are spread across the Purdie building. Therefore, it was agreed that it is the responsibility of those who are conducting the cyanide-based experiments to familiarise where the nearest Cyanide First Aider is located and alert the Aider to be on stand-by at this time. It was noted that this information can easily be found on the H&S website.

**[Action: PWO]**

### (ii) Cyanide Lab and Use

It was highlighted that the Cyanide lab is used for other reactions whilst cyanide is in use. JSGS confirmed that a sign reading, '*Cyanide in Use - Do Not Enter*' has been ordered which will then be displayed when a cyanide reaction is taking place. No other reactions can occur during this time. It was also suggested that this information should become available in the new updated Safety Handbook.

JSGS to enquire about the delivery time of the 'Cyanide' sign.

**[Action: JSGS]**

### (iii) In-house Substances and Hazard Codes

It had been suggested, originally by EHSS, that workers estimate their own hazard codes on substances that they make themselves for which there is no datasheet/information already available. The decision within the Committee was unanimous - no attempt should be made to estimate hazard codes if the substance is not commercially available. Furthermore, clarification on this

matter needs to be entered into the new updated Safety Handbook. PWo will formally respond to EHSS's with this decision.

[Action: PWo]

*(iv) Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)*

It was decided that the general rule should be that **all who are conducting work with chemicals and/or solvents** within the labs must wear lab coats, preferably coats that are fastened with studs rather than buttons. Therefore, this policy should be implemented within the Health and Safety talk and should be stated in the Safety Handbook.

[Action: PWo]

*(v) Annual Lab Inspection Schedule*

It was agreed that the six members [three pairs] of staff within the H&S Committee with an in-depth knowledge of Chemistry should carry out the annual lab inspections within the Purdie, BSRC, Chemistry Teaching Labs in MS and BMS buildings. PWo stated that the current lab inspection checklist will need to be reviewed, and so he will circulate the checklist shortly for comments on its contents. The timescale for this year's inspection is to be confirmed, but has to be carried out, signed by the HoS and submitted to EHSS by 1<sup>st</sup> December. Thereafter inspections will occur during the summer. Once inspections have been carried out, PWo will collate the checklists and produce a report that is given to the HoS who will then provide feedback to Supervisors.

PWo will send an email detailing the teams along with the areas in which they are designated to inspect.

[Action: PWo]

*(vi) General Office*

There has been a foul smell within the General Office (Room 211), which has been on going for quite some time. The Secretaries have been moved temporarily to Room 208. JSGS reported that the next steps are to, firstly introduce a fresh air supply because it is a sealed room at the moment and there is no air change within the room. Secondly, air-conditioning will be installed within the office. JSGS explained that extensive investigations into the source of the intermittent bad smell has been going on for the past three months and is still ongoing as the source has not yet been identified. Taking this forward, HoS has actioned this as an urgent matter.

*(vii) New Website - Content*

PWo has created a new Health and Safety website through WordPress. The link to the website is located on the front of the Chemistry homepage. PWo commented that the site is still under construction and asked that the Committee have a look and provide feedback on its content.

The topic of Fire Warden's contact number information was raised again, and it was agreed that, in addition to operating walkie-talkies, Fire Wardens are to be asked to provide personal mobile numbers for back-up purposes during fire drills. Issues regarding staff not having mobile phones, not having their mobile phone with them when the fire alarm sounds and providing numbers which some staff will regard as personal were discussed.

As was agreed at a previous H&S meeting, there should be a H&S Coordinator and two H&S Deputies. Therefore, it was noted that as NJW is no longer a member of the H&S Committee, a new deputy must be identified as soon as possible. PWO will discuss this further with the HoS

**[Action: PWO]**

Further discussion on Evacuation procedures and fire drills took place where it was concluded that PWO is to send out more email reminders underlining procedures for evacuation during drills, and to re-emphasise the importance of immediate evacuation to the designated assembly point. Additionally, PWO made the suggestion of sending out follow-up emails after drills/evacuations, giving information on the incident and positive/negative feedback on how well the evacuation procedure was carried out.

**[Action: PWO]**

*(viii) Asbestos*

It was advised that asbestos had been discovered in the base of one of the old drying ovens whilst being repaired in the workshops - this was reported to PWO. The oven had been repaired on the basis that the asbestos was not being disturbed during the repair. There are a number of similar ovens within the department, so far JSGS has removed six containing asbestos. It was agreed that BW will carry out risk assessments on the remaining ovens. BW is to contact JSGS should there be any asbestos present. JSGS to retrieve asbestos list from Estates.

**[Action: BW & JSGS]**

**6. Report from Buildings Officer [JSGS]**

JSGS reported that the Boiler Replacement work is due to be completed by Friday, 4 September 2015.

It was noted that the newly commenced work to refurbish the Purdie Annexe is scheduled to be completed by Friday, 11 December 2015

**7. A.O.B**

No further issues were raised.

**8. Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that H&S Committee meetings are now to take place four times a year, and to be held approximately three weeks before the School Council Meetings. Therefore, the H&S Committee Secretary will circulate the date of next Health & Safety Committee meeting *via* email.

The meeting closed at 1.20pm.

**Filip Wormald  
31 August 2015**