

University of St. Andrews
SCHOOL OF CHEMISTRY

*Minutes of the School Safety Committee Meeting held on
Friday, 27 February 2015 in Room 229A at 2.00pm*

Present: Dr. Filip Wormald [PW] - Health and Safety Coordinator (Chair)
Miss Kirsty Knowles (Secretary)
Prof. Nick J. Westwood [NJW] - Deputy Health and Safety Coordinator
Dr. Eli Zysman-Colman [EZC]
Prof. Paul C.J. Kamer [PCJK]
Dr. John S. G. Smith [JSGS]
Dr. Michael Corr [MC]
Dr. Sabine Gruschow [SG]
Miss Iona L. Hutchison [ILH]

1. Strictly Controlled Conditions according to Reach.

PW advised that some companies now require that an additional form be completed when purchasing a particular compound. This is as a consequence of Article 18(4) of the REACH Act pertaining to the Confirmation of Handling Under Strictly Controlled Conditions (SCC). This form must be completed, signed and returned before the compound is released. Linda Brannan, School Purchasing Office, will forward these to the supervisors. There are approximately 50 compounds which now require these SCC forms to be completed and PW stated that he will e-mail the list of compounds to Supervisors but that this list is not exhaustive. Some companies send a form others only a signature is required. PW stated that it may be acceptable to put down 'University Research' on the template which will decrease the amount of details required. The SCC form is valid only for 3 months.

[Action: PW]

2. Changes to Waste Complex & Waste Disposal Charges

PW stated that he had spoken with Barbara Aitken (Estates recycling) regarding the missing metal bin in the Waste Complex and this bin is being replaced. It was agreed that all signs within the Complex are to be made larger with pictures indicating what is to go in which bin.

This area is to be cleared out and yellow lines marking out clear areas which should hopefully stop the area from being blocked when refuse vehicles come to collect the waste.

Waste Disposal Charges

PW raised the matter of waste disposal costs and who pays for it and why. At the moment all waste disposal is charged to the School. From EHSS the figure of 17.2 tonnes was quoted for Organic Waste, which came out of the Department in 2014. PW queried with chem-FAS and TRAC on who should be paying for this waste and why. It was confirmed when it is a FEC grant this is to be put onto direct costs. There was much debate on waste disposal and where this cost should be allocated. It was agreed that clarity of how this works within the School is needed.

[Action: PW]

3. Visit by Health & Safety Assurance Group and EHSS:

A visit from the Health & Safety Assurance Group and the directors of EHSS took place on Wednesday 18 February for a H&S tour around the School. We will receive a summary from this visit later.

A discussion on a chemical stock inventory system took place during the tour and PW and EHSS have received specific requests from the group associated with scoping such a system after the tour took place.

4. Computerised Chemical Stock Inventory System for the University

PW commented on recent conferences he had attended eg UK University Safety Forum regarding this type of system and the general synopsis has been failure; in theory it works fine but in practise it becomes complicated and too much time is consumed. PW also mentioned that in meetings with the Home Office and Counter Terrorist Agency they have been pushing this for several years. EZC mentioned there is actually a very small subset of groups that are using an online chemical compounds database system within the Department, which is entirely searchable throughout the groups. EZC commented if we are to go along this route, everyone has to be on board to have his or her group's database made accessible. PW suggested this to be put forward. JSGS noted that Counter-Terrorism policies will drive this matter forward; due to the change in legislation meaning perhaps this will be forced upon the School.

[Action: PW]

5. Confusing PPE Policy?

PW made reference to the Code of Practice within the PPE policy and emphasized the inconsistency between policies implemented by the School and those of the University policy. PW gave the example of lab coats; highlighting the disparity in the School's PPE policy as to when and where lab coats should be worn. PW described the confusion over this matter for students, and believed this was something which needed to be looked into. EZC suggested that there should be a policy throughout the School which conforms to the norms seen anywhere else in the country and that is proper PPE at all times. Everyone should operate under the most conservative of situations.

PCJK was surprised to find out that Stores are selling polyester lab coats which are extremely flammable. PW confirmed that Stores should stock cotton lab coats but also anyone can purchase these from Fischer if they so wish to.

PW commented that the 'type of glove' should be stated on COSHH forms as stated in the University PPE policy. EZC suggested that a checklist of items - that must be present on the forms in order for them to be passed - should be circulated to ensure that everybody is adhering to the same checklist. NJW asked if PW would circulate an email to inform all of this checklist. PW is only asking for the type of glove to be stated in the 'details of procedure' or that a solution made available in CHARM program to conform to University policy.

It was suggested that the School's Health & Safety policy should comply with University Policy entirely.

It was added that there are lab books for each experiment which are not vetted in any way for H&S in the requirements. PW stated that it is important to have consistency throughout all the policies as well as the lab books but that this was done by teaching staff members. NJW made the suggestion that Ian Smellie (IAS) and Gordon Florence (GF) collect a Word version of policies. PW will speak with IAS and GF on this matter.

[Action: PW]

NJW gave an update on the Teaching Lab Review, stating they are looking to write a final report next month and perhaps add in an assessment about H&S relating to the labs; to see what has been done. PW agreed this would be helpful.

6. CHARM System Issues & EHSS Feedback Poll

EHSS have come back on the poll which was sent out for the CHARM system. It was reported that the main issues raised were: hazard ratings, CAS numbers, and automated emails. PW said that many automated emails were found in junk inboxes. PW has asked Fraser Kirk and EHSS to look into this problem and to come back with a report on their findings with regards to the CHARM email system.

EZC enquired about switching from St. Andrews specific hazard rating codes to a system that is more universal. PW informed this matter has to be raised at the Chemical and Biohazards Committee. There was debate as to how to move forward on this matter. It was agreed a motion be put forward to the School Council on behalf of the Health & Safety Committee making a recommendation that the CHARM system should move to EU hazard rating codes with CAS numbers emphasising the Committee would like backing from the School in order to propose this matter to the Chemical and Biohazard Committee. PW stated as this is a University-wide issue it should go to the Chemical and Biohazard Committee first for discussion and that he will speak with the University Chemical Hazards Officer Dr A. Aitken on this matter.

[Action: PW]

7. News from Disability Officer

PW will email Paul Szawlowski to remind him of training for the evacuation of disabled persons with evacuation chairs and also where the stations are located and alarm calls. PW pointed out janitors have requested a refresher course for evac chairs training. ILH and PW will discuss this further after meeting.

[Action: ILH &PW]

8. Postgraduate Issues

MC asked whether the new dual bins in the labs are the equivalent to the red chemical bins in the BMS; and if the bins are for low chemical waste. PW stated that the new dual bins are not an equivalent, they are for recycling purposes.

SG stated there may be confusion between the labs as to which bin is for what waste product. SG requested there be labels located above bins and for there to be a general chemical-contaminated waste bin in all labs. PW will look into this matter further.

[Action: PW]

9. **A.O.B.**

Cameras

JSGS reported that a proposal has been brought forward for siting cameras in Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4 in BMS, Level 3 foyer of BMS Annex and to monitor the Radioactive labs in BMS. JSGS met with the Security Manager and explained that only the cameras will be funded.

JSGS stated that he would like to extend the security levels of the east end of BMS, Levels 3 and 4 where there are no prox. at the moment, and there was other areas in Biology that was brought up however funding may not be available for this time.

JSGS noted in the summer, the out-of-hours entrance door will be replaced, if Estates are willing to pay for it. JSGS requested it must be a prox door in order to improve the security of the building. It may be that the School will have to pay for it - £2,000. JSGS suggested prioritising this; University Court may advise on securing the labs more highly, this is a good time to say, why not secure on a level basis, thus securing more of the building. JSGS met with Counter-Terrorism Officer and was advised to consider securing the building as a whole.

NJW asked if people would need to be notified about CCTV cameras. JSGS explained that as it is a public area, CCTV cameras can be displayed along with signs indicating CCTV is in operation.

[Action: JSGS]

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next Health & Safety Committee meeting will be held on **Wednesday, 30 September 2015**.

The meeting closed at 3.25pm.