

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS

SCHOOL OF CHEMISTRY

*Minutes of the School Safety Committee Meeting held on  
Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018 at 14.00*

<b>Present:</b>	Alan Aitken [RAA]	School Safety Coordinator (Chair)
	Eli Zysman-Colman [EZC]	Deputy Safety Coordinator and Inorganic Representative
	Magnus Alphey [MA]	BSRC, X-Ray
	Paul Connor [PAC]	Physical
	Chris Goodsell	Estates
	Juan Carlos Penedo [JCP]	Laser Safety Officer
	Iain Smellie [IAS]	Teaching
	Bob Steele	Research Officer (Earth and Environmental Sciences)
	Nick Taylor [NT]	(Janitorial representative)
	Brian Walker [BW]	Technical
	Carolyn Busby [CMB]	Secretarial

1. **Apologies**

RAA thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Apologies received from Tommaso Di Rocco, Iona Hutchison and Terry Smith.

2. **Minutes of previous meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> May and matters arising**

These were circulated and had been considered at the Staff Council Meeting in June.

3. **Report on developments since the last meeting:**

(a) Record keeping, SharePoint

RAA discussed this in some detail with FRK and there has been some progress. After looking into SharePoint in detail it has been found that it is not suitable for our purpose as there is a confidentiality issue. It would be possible for those entering data to see other people's data which is not permitted. FRK has found a simpler way to do this in Microsoft Forms and he should be able to create this and have it ready for the new PG starts. This MS Forms solution is much simpler.

**[Action: RAA/FK]**

(b) Roof access procedure

RAA and CAG have discussed this in the past and CAG is ready to discuss the new proposals with RAA and EZC. He has created new permits for lead work on the fume cupboards and also for any other general work. There is a procedure for reporting on what is going into the fume cupboards and a procedure for issuing the new roof permits and it is likely to be CAG, RAA and EZC who will be responsible for issuing the permits. CAG and BW have also been looking into a possible traffic light system on the door to the roof with the lights being controlled through an interface on a computer. RAA asked that there be a meeting with CAG as quickly as possible to discuss the development of the new system as he didn't want to go into more detail at this meeting.

**[Action: RAA/CAG]**

(c) Number of out of hours access doors and sign in procedure

After previous discussion it was agreed the lock was to be changed on the Surface Science door adjacent to Theatre B to stop out of hours entry. RAA asked CAG that this be done as quickly as possible as the decision was made in December. RAA confirmed that you cannot exit from the front doors after 6 pm. PAC stated that you can still swipe and enter the front doors and saw someone do this recently. RAA reminded the committee that this was allowed temporarily when the Common Room door was out of action and should not be the case now. He thought this should have been re-set and requested that CAG get this done as a matter of urgency since there is no signing in book at the main door. The number of out of hours doors is restricted as it is difficult for the fire service to check who is in the building if there are several doors available for entry/exit. There is no reason for anyone to use the main level 2 door to exit and anyone working on Level 2 needs to leave via the interior stairs to the Common Room – there is no out of hours exit from Level 2. The main doors are a security risk as they don't close quickly and should not be in use out of hours.

**[Action: CAG]**

(d) Survey of magnetic fields - 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017

CAG has spoken to Estates and asked for the lines to be painted as required. RAA noted this on 1<sup>st</sup> November and this needs to be actioned.

**[Action: CAG]**

(e) Procedure when lift gets stuck

RAA asked CAG on progress. CAG said there had been only 4 breakdowns in the last year in Purdie. RAA thought this was quite a lot. RAA said it was agreed at the previous meeting that if the lift company was called out they would notify the University. CAG had referred this to Estates and he will chase this up.

**[Action: CAG]**

- (f) Revised occupational exposure limits from 21<sup>st</sup> August 2018

RAA has entered the new revised limits on CHARM and in the Safety Handbook and everyone should have received a summary about the changes. RAA stated it wasn't necessary to update the old COSHH forms.

- (g) Drug precursor licence

This has now been approved and is in place. We did not have to pay the full re-application fee of £3,000 because the delay was not our fault and we only had to pay the renewal fee of £300. Linda has copies of the form as it concerns orders and we are now covered to order these products.

#### 4. **Annual Safety Inspection and Report**

These took place in June and July with two teams: EZC/PAC and RAA/IAS. RAA gave out a summary of the results. These have not been fed back to the staff involved yet as RAA wanted the committee to look at these and make any comments first of all. RAA mentioned the point that there were many rooms where there was some doubt as to whether fire extinguishers were needed. RAA felt this should be tackled with a global review of fire extinguisher provision in consultation with EHSS and the University's Fire Safety Adviser. The usage of the rooms has changed in some cases and although a company does come and check if the extinguishers are working they can't judge what is needed as they don't know what type of work is being done. RAA wants to have proper review of the deployment/placement of fire extinguishers and he will deal with this as soon as possible.

RAA mentioned a few points including the Wolfson Room on Level 3 that was in a real mess at the time of the inspection but has now been fully cleared by the former Kamer students and himself. He was also concerned that he found a few needles lying around particularly in AS's lab where the new procedure was clearly not being followed. RAA will speak to AS about this. CAG mentioned that he had been given a needle that had been found in the Level 1 corridor and RAA said he would like to be informed of any future incidents like this.

Overall it was agreed that the inspection was a lot better than the previous year.

RAA suggested that the summary sheet be sent out to all Supervisors as this would be easier than separating everything out for individuals and the Committee agreed.

RAA and CAG have resolved the issue about fume cupboards being marked as failed following testing but still being in use. It has been agreed that each time there is a major testing round of fume cupboards, the safety coordinator should be told when any fume cupboards fail so that action can be taken. The majority of fume cupboards in BMS were below the required limit but were still in use despite being marked "FAILED, DO NOT USE". CAG advised that testing will be done next month and there will be a technician going round with the tester who can make any repairs.

This report is section 5 of the Annual Report which is submitted in November to the University.

## **5. Policy on smoking near building entrances**

RAA had to extinguish a significant fire at the easterly exit yesterday afternoon, which took two buckets of water and assistance from a member of Estates who helped by unlocking the bin. RAA was able to move the bin away from the building as it was not attached to the ground and it clearly had not been emptied for some time. EZC thought that the proposal at the School Council was that the bins should be moved further from the buildings in consultation with CAG and that DOH was going to discuss this with CAG. PAC pointed out that this is really a health and safety issue if the bins are going on fire close to the building. It also seems unclear whose responsibility it is to empty these bins and CAG said that this should be done by Grounds staff. RAA suggested that he and CAG would go round the building and move the bins further away which seemed to be an immediate solution. BS asked CAG if No Smoking signs could be put on the wall outside his lab as smoke comes in from outside vents and CAG agreed to provide these. It was noted that there is no specific policy on how far from a building you can smoke only that you cannot smoke inside any University building.

**[Action: RAA/CAG]**

## **6. New Fire Alarm System**

The system in the Purdie Building is in the process of being completely replaced. RAA made the point that at no time was he informed in advance that this work was going to take place. He was surprised that Estates would not take into account the implications of this regarding weekly fire alarm testing. CAG did not get much notice of this either but he was told that tests could still take place in Purdie during the work. RAA emphasised that he should have been informed that this work was going to take place and he also asked CAG why it had taken so long to complete. CAG does not yet have a final date of completion due to many discrepancies in the wiring in the old system.

The contractors are testing the system but EZC pointed out that we have not had a weekly test for some time so don't know if either system is working. There was some discussion between BW and CAG which concluded that it was not possible to do a test as BW is not familiar with the new alarm panels. RAA asked when training will be available on the new panels and CAG said this would be done as soon as the system is completely finished. The focus now is to make sure everyone knows how to use the new system as quickly as possible.

The issue of fire cover during the work was discussed but it was assumed that complete cover was being provided during the changeover as CAG had not been advised otherwise.

In general, EZC felt that we are not advised when work is being done by external contractors in the building and we need to have a better policy on this. He asked that if there is any health and safety concern, that RAA or EZC (or another member of the committee) should be informed in advance. BS also had experience of contractors appearing to do work without notice.

EZC also pointed out that the legal responsibility lies with RAA for Health and Safety matters, devolved from the Head of School, so he or his deputy should be aware of work being done in advance. CAG felt that the Director of Estates has final legal responsibility.

EZC asked if Estates policy could be revised so that people are notified in advance and CAG suggested a meeting with the Deputy Director of Maintenance. RAA pointed out that there is still a meeting to be scheduled with Michael Orr re lab access.

This brought up the issue over access to labs as they have notices outside saying that Estates personnel and contractors are not allowed to enter without permission and the cleaning staff are not going into labs because of this. NT mentioned this had been brought up at a recent Estates meeting and perhaps not all rooms need these signs as some rooms have changed use. The notices were put up as in the past equipment had been damaged.

EZC is happy to attend a meeting with the appropriate person in Estates to resolve the breakdown in communication issue and have the policy changed regarding external contractors. It was agreed that this meeting should be with EZC, RAA, CAG and Estates, including Michael Orr.

[Action: RAA/EZC/CAG]

#### **7. Waste disposal update and system for Biology (BSRC)**

RAA informed the committee that all the Kamer chemicals are either being re-used or are being disposed of and this is being done in conjunction with chemicals from retired BMS/Biology staff and these are ready to be sent. Under the previous Safety Coordinator, it had been up to individuals in Chemistry to arrange disposal via EHSS but RAA has now taken control of this. However, Biology (BSRC) had a different system where Stores staff organised the collection of waste and this broke down from time to time. RAA and MA have therefore agreed that the BMS/BSRC Biology staff can notify RAA and use the system in place in Chemistry - any chemical waste can be catalogued and sent off along with Chemistry waste. It was noted that biohazard waste is a separate issue. MA is finalising an email, in consultation with D. Evans (BSRC Director), informing BSRC/BMS staff of this change and this should be sent out shortly. For each uplift we are charged a flat rate fee and Chemistry and Biology are charged separately at the moment. By combining the waste there will only be one fee which means a saving of £200 on each uplift and the cost can be shared.

[Action: MA]

#### **8. Revised University Chemical Safety Guidance**

The VP Research requires a number of policies to be separated into Policy and Appendices. Concerning the Chemical Safety Guidance Booklet this means that any specific lists of toxic substances etc are to be taken out of the policy document and put into appendices. The end result will be an actual policy and any examples are in the

appendices. This also includes the Biological Safety Handbook. RAA has done this, EHSS has produced a draft and RAA has amended this and the final version should be ready soon.

[Action: RAA]

## 9. AOB

RAA notified the committee that the University has appointed a new Head of EHSS, Mr Hugh Graham, starting on 4<sup>th</sup> September. The title of the post is no longer Director but Head of EHSS.

*First Aid Workers.* A problem arose with First Aid Workers following on from an email sent by EHSS advertising a refresher course in September. When we checked our records it appeared that several staff were no longer current and their qualification had expired. Two years ago we compiled a list with expiry dates but we had not had any reminder from EHSS which meant the expiry dates had not been checked since then. We have several people attending the course in September and if their qualification has fully expired they have to do the full 3 day course. They are also considering having a course in October too. Once people have passed the course then we have enough First Aiders for the list. BW asked if this includes defibrillator training and it doesn't. MA asked who was oxygen trained and this is still Neil Keddie – RAA will check that this is up to date. The course will be week beginning 3<sup>rd</sup> September and CMB will update the signs around the buildings and the website will be updated. RAA suggested asking EHSS to notify us each time there is a refresher course so that we can keep lists up to date in the future.

EHSS provided RAA with a provisional list of other courses which RAA will follow up with Christine Linton.

[Action: RAA, CMB]

*Defibrillator Batteries.* BW has been advised that the battery needs to be changed and RAA contacted Paul Szawlowski and was advised that Christine Linton manages the maintenance of the Defibrillator batteries throughout the University. As the batteries need to be changed every 5 years, Christine has been asked to contact Chemistry so this can be progressed when she returns from holiday.

*Safety Handbook.* RAA mentioned that he had recently completed the process of updating the Safety Handbook and this will be uploaded on the website in time for new arrivals and annual safety talks.

R A Aitken  
4<sup>th</sup> September 2018