

**University of St. Andrews**  
**School of Chemistry**

**Minutes of the School Safety Committee**  
**10<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

Kevin Jones	[KJ]	H&S Manager (Chair)
Bela Bode	[BEB]	Assistant Safety Coordinator
Petr Kilian	[PK]	Assistant Safety Coordinator
Andreas Stasch	[AS]	Assistant Safety Coordinator
Iona Hutchison	[ILH]	Disability Officer
Paul Connor	[PAC]	Physical
Magnus Alphey	[MSA]	BBSRC, X-Ray
Scott Filipovic	[SF]	Estates
Brian Walker	[BW]	Technical
Bob Steele	[RS]	Earth Sciences Representative
Terry Smith	[TS]	BBSRC
Juan Penedo-Esteiro	[JPE]	Physics and Astronomy

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies received from Iain Smellie and Nick Taylor.

### **2. Information on Health and Safety Roles in School of Chemistry**

KJ explained he would take over the majority of the H&S roles in the School of Chemistry and questions related to H&S can be directed to him in the first instance. Alan Aitken will retain his role as Chemical Hazard Advisor including the assignment of hazard codes for chemicals listed in the CHARM system. KJ queried whether PK, AS and BEB would be willing to continue acting as Assistant Safety Coordinators and if IH would continue as Disability Officer. All agreed to continue in these roles. PK queried whether the duties assigned to each assistant would change. KJ agreed to contact PK, AS and BEB in the near future to discuss additional roles in more detail. The committee were informed that KJ and BEB recently completed a Dangerous Goods by Air course and are qualified to advise on the sending of dangerous goods. KJ should be contacted in the first instance with BEB acting as deputy.

#### **[Actions]**

- KJ to e-mail department with full details of H&S roles
- KJ, PK, AS and BEB to discuss additional safety related tasks

### **3.1 First Aid Training**

KJ explained that several first aid qualifications had lapsed. KJ has arranged first aid training for Scott Filipovic, Iain Patterson and Dominic Stewart to provide immediate cover in the Purdie Building and Teaching Laboratory. The University Sports will restart first aid training in the near future. KJ queried if anyone would be willing to volunteer to undergo first aid training. PC and AS volunteered to receive first aid training. PC commented that we should have a first aider on each floor of the Purdie Building. MSA commented that first aiders in the BSRC building are available to staff and students in Chemistry. BW commented that the defibrillator in Purdie is >13 years old and consideration should be given to the unit being replaced. The fact that the defib pad was 4 years out of date was raised. It was unclear who is responsible for maintenance / upkeep of AEDs. IH commented that the AED was purchased by Derek Woolins and Computer Science and believed this is not centrally controlled. KJ offered to investigate and see if the current AED can be replaced. On a related note, BW commented that Jack in the workshop should attend manual handling courses.

### **3.2 First Aid Kits**

KJ commented that several research groups had queried whether they procure a first aid kit for lab space. KJ queried whether this had been discussed by the committee previously. MSA commented that previously only first aiders had access to kits in Purdie but this was different in BSRC building who provide access to first aid kits. PC commented that individual groups could be encouraged to purchase first aid kits for small cuts and minor burns. BW commented that ensuring that the material inside the first aid kit is within its expiry date is important. KJ suggested that this could be incorporated into his duties and inspect the first aid kits regularly.

### **3.3 First Aid Instructor Course**

KJ queried whether being trained as a first aid instructor would be beneficial. IH commented that this may be available through the Sports Centre ("train the trainer initiative"). PC queried whether KJ meant to certify staff / students as a qualified first aiders, or simply introduce people to basic first aid. KJ confirmed this was simply to introduce more people to basic first aid (i.e. 1-2 people per research lab). MSA commented that arranging this as a large-scale seminar for new starters would be a good approach as attempting this on an individual basis would be time consuming.

#### **[Actions]**

- KJ to investigate first aid kits and a replacement AED device for Purdie.
- KJ to investigate options for first aid instructor training.

#### **4. Lab Inspections**

KJ asked if AS could outline the approach to monthly lab inspections and provide feedback on the process. AS explained that supervisors are sent a Microsoft Form each month and asked to answer the questions and return the form. Some groups needed to be chased for responses. AS queried whether an appropriate delegate could complete the assessment. MSA mentioned keeping a record is useful for the Head of School and EHSS who may need to report these figures to the PO. BEB commented that the monthly inspections are an improvement on previous practices and requires supervisors to confirm they consider their laboratory space to be safe, but that additional inspections would be beneficial. KJ agreed that additional inspections by members of the H&S committee would be good and queried whether inspections every 3 months would be too frequent. BEB and AS suggested conducting an initial set of inspections to assess the situation and arrange follow-up inspections as required and to compare these results to the self-assessments to make sure everything aligns. Brian Walker commented that inspections should extend to the chemical stores and the Purdie workshops – possibly on an annual basis.

#### **[Actions]**

- KJ to liaise with members of the H&S committee and arrange time for lab inspections
- PC to send a lab inspection checklist to KJ

#### **5. Flammable Solvents / DSEAR 2002**

Related to the lab inspections discussed above, KJ outlined the DSEAR 2002 regulations for the storage of flammable solvents and explained that storing >50 L flammable solvent required an additional risk assessment that includes a justification. KJ noted that the University are keen to ensure we are in control of the situation and suggested conducting inspections to ensure labs are complying with these regulations. Brian Walker raised the issue of “earthing” solvent-purification systems and queried whether this can be included in the Works department checks (on an annual basis). KJ agreed that this was a good idea and will liaise with Brian about how to approach this.

#### **[Actions]**

- KJ to conduct inspections of labs for correct storage of flammable solvent
- KJ and BW to discuss earthing of SPS systems to be included in annual safety inspections

## **6. Fire Stewards / Fire Drills**

KJ explained that he was aware that a fire drill had not been conducted in the Purdie Building for some time and asked the committee if they were confident with the fire steward roles they had been assigned. AS commented that he had been provided with a vest and assigned an exit, but would prefer training to be provided. MSA commented that Christine Linton at EHSS has provided training for fire wardens in the past. PC commented that many of the current fire stewards will be working from home 19 and the list should be reviewed to make sure those listed are available.

BW queried the current state of the refuge system. SF confirmed it was still awaiting an upgrade and will involve discussions with Taylor and Fraser. BW also explained that the fire drill requires prior contact with the alarm company and offered to provide help as necessary.

PK queried the role of fire stewards versus fire marshal (incident controller). KJ explained that he would educate himself on the roles and get back in touch with the fire stewards to arrange appropriate training. BEB commented that he could send on a list fire stewards and associated entrances.

### **[Actions]**

- KJ to review fire stewards available under Covid-19 restrictions and arrange training with EHSS

## **7. Lab Waste**

KJ explained that the disposal of chemical waste in the School of Chemistry is different to that adopted by other science schools (i.e. BSRC). Other Schools separate chemically contaminated, biological waste and general waste. Chemically contaminated waste is collected by an external contractor (Tradebe). This is not the case in Chemistry. MSA confirmed that this is the situation in the BSRC and is dealt with by technicians. RS explained that earth sciences often remove lab waste themselves as the labs are restricted access. KJ explained that he had arranged a meeting with Paul Szwalowski (along with SF) to discuss this further and would circulate any useful information after the meeting.

### **[Actions]**

- KJ and SF to meet with Paul Szwalowski to discuss handling of chemically contaminated waste and circulate important information to H&S committee members for further discussion.

## **8. Standard Operating Procedures for Laboratory Operations**

KJ explained he had been contacted by several supervisors regarding standard operating procedures for common laboratory exercises. KJ thought the idea was reasonable, but did not wish to encourage supervisors copying and pasting SOPs without considering if they are suitable for use in their specific laboratory. PK thought it would be useful to have a database of SOPs available on the H&S website to help identify the risk assessments / COSHH forms needed for chemical procedures. PK also mentioned that many good procedures may already be in place and supervisors may be willing to share.

PC raised the point that risk assessments are not always COSHH forms and RAs should be in place for processes with an associated risk. MSA commented that the university has a standard risk assessment form that can be completed, but this is not stored centrally (i.e. not on the CHARM system). KJ mentioned that EHSS have indicated they plan to redesign the CHARM system in the near future and would raise the issue of incorporating risk assessments as part of the new design.

### **[Actions]**

- KJ to research list of SOPs for H&S website
- KJ and MSA to raise risk assessments in the new CHARM system with Paul Szwalowski

## **9. Monitoring of Risk Assessment Forms for Quality**

KJ explained that in a previous H&S meeting, the committee meeting discussed monitoring of CHARM forms for quality. The committee confirmed this activity was still to be completed. PK mentioned that providing training for postgraduates when they first arrive would be a good idea so they understand the CHARM system and what is expected. KJ suggested he could deliver this as part of an induction. MSA commented that the random sampling is a good idea, but felt the responsibility for training the students ultimately lies with the supervisor. BEB also raised concerns with KJ delivering training in place of the supervisor. BEB commented that assessing a random sample of CHARM forms allow the committee to assess the current quality levels and determine how quickly a follow-up survey is needed. PC and BEB suggested that supervisors who consistently fail to meet requirements can be offered training and referred to HoS in the case of ongoing non-compliance.

### **[Actions]**

- KJ to produce random sample of anonymous CHARM forms to circulate to the H&S committee for assessment.
- H&S committee to assess CHARM forms and provide feedback to KJ

## **10. Covid-19 Updates**

KJ explained that Covid-19 risk assessments had been updated by EHSS to include 1.8 M social distancing. The current RAs will remain in place until the University / HoS decides this should change. MSA commented that most of the changes were minor apart from the addition of CO<sub>2</sub> monitors to ensure sufficient ventilation when people are using spaces.

## **11. AOB**

BW commented on the earthing of metal frames throughout the department should be assessed. BW also raised the issue of jurisdiction within the Purdie building. He explained that Chemistry do not allow the use of round, two-pin plugs, but these are used in Earth Sciences. BW queried whether Earth Sciences should comply with Chemistry rules.

### **[Actions]**

- KJ to confirm with RS and BW that this issue has been resolved.