

The University of Melbourne

Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Meeting 4/05

Meeting 4/2005 of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee was held at 2.15pm on Thursday 10 November 2005 in the Jim Potter Room, Old Physics Building.

1. Welcome, Attendance and Apologies

MEMBERSHIP**Employer Representatives**

Vice-Principal nominated by the Vice-Chancellor (Chair)

Vice-Principal, Property and Buildings or nominee

Dean of a laboratory based Faculty

Director, Risk Management Office or nominee

Academic Registrar or nominee

Employee Health and Safety Representatives

Six health and safety representatives elected by the Health and Safety Representatives

Observers

Student Observers

One student nominated by the Melbourne University Student Union

One student nominated by the University of Melbourne Post Graduate Association (vacant)

Occasional Observers

Officials of trade unions with significant membership within the University
Officers of the University with significant membership within the University

Standing Observers

Minutes Secretary

In Attendance

Ms Elizabeth Baré

Mr Stefan Delaney

Mr Brendan Kehoe

Ms Alison Hunt-Sturman

Mr Paul Donald

Mr Peter McGrath

Mr Peter Krotsis

Mr Colin McIntosh

Apologies

Ms Julia McQuillan

Prof. Ivan Caple

Mr Garry Thompson

Dr Roberto Cappai

Mr Bruce Greenwood

Mr Mark Georgesz

Ms Jenny Nam
(nominated by the Interim Student Representative Committee)

Ms Vicki Mimis
(NTEU)

2. Minutes of the previous meeting 2/05

The minutes of meeting 3/05, held on 19 July 2005, copies of which had been distributed, were confirmed.

3. Action items from meeting 03/2005

3.1 Continuing vacancies

The Committee noted that a Postgraduate Association Representative had not yet been nominated for membership for 2005. It was also noted that this vacancy was unlikely to be filled prior to 2006.

4. Reports

4.1 Consultation Arrangements

4.1.1. Consultation Sub-Committee Report

The Committee received a verbal report from Mr Stefan Delaney on the progress of discussions held by the Consultation Sub-Committee. The Committee met two weeks ago and reviewed a draft Terms of Reference for the OHSC plus examined the possibility of establishing working groups across the University to look at a range of issues. Members of the OHSC agreed that the best consultation process for any proposed changes in policy or procedure would be for the changes to be placed on a website, for an article to be placed in Staff News and for HSR's to receive an email after which they could discuss in their DWG's if appropriate. It was also agreed that the consultation period should be a period of approximately two weeks.

4.1.2. Amendment to Observers of OHSC

Members were advised by Ms Baré that under the new Higher Education Workplace Relations Requirements, unions will no longer have an automatic right to an observer role on the OHSC. Members also noted that it would however be possible for the Committee to invite a union representative or any other person that was deemed appropriate as this would be compliant with the legislation.

4.2 Diving Officer

The Committee was advised by Mr Peter Krotsis from Zoology that under AS2299.2 the University is required to appoint a Diving Officer. The University now has a fully qualified Diving Officer in Mr John Ahern and members noted that there is work currently underway to produce a regulations manual with a first draft to be produced by the end of 2005, then to be publicised. The University must now establish a Diving Safety Committee, discussions for which are underway.

4.3 Performance against objectives and targets

Mr Stefan Delaney provided the Committee with a verbal report of the progress against plan for the University's 2004-2006 OHS Strategic Plan. Members noted that a small number of completion dates had been put back, due in part to the difficulties being experienced in recruiting to a number of vacancies in the OHS Unit.

4.4 Faculty and Departmental Safety Committees

No reports received.

4.5 Health and Safety Representatives

The Committee were provided with a copy of the minutes from the last Health and Safety Representatives meeting. Members noted that the attendance of the Senior Vice-Principal at the meeting was found to be extremely beneficial.

4.6 Workload Advisory Committee Report

The Committee noted that the WAC is currently in the data gathering stage and is looking at best practice in managing workloads.

4.7 Environment Advisory Committee

The Committee were provided with a copy of the Environment Advisory Committee minutes, the key items being:

- The role of the Committee with a review of its strategic objectives and targets
- The provision of a polystyrene collection facility for the use of Faculties and Departments. This will be provided on a trial basis with a view to considering alternatives

4.8 Significant Incidents

The Committee noted that an employee of a contractor had received an electric shock whilst testing and tagging equipment at Creswick. No serious injury occurred and the equipment has been modified. The contractor has notified the appropriate bodies.

4.9 Regulatory Activity

Members were provided with a consolidated list of WorkSafe visits together with a verbal report from Mr Stefan Delaney. The Committee noted that the PIN referred to at item 1.23 had been withdrawn following implementation of a Management Plan.

4.10 EHS Management System

4.10.1. Internal Audits

Members were provided with a document outlining the University's EHS audit schedule for 2005 together with the proposed schedule for 2006. It is anticipated that all Faculties and Divisions will be audited in 2006 with a focus on non-conformances and areas for improvement that were noted during 2005. An audit schedule for semi-autonomous bodies covered by the University's self insurer licence is yet to be determined. It was noted that a substantial amount of time was taken to complete and report on the audits for the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences but that the reports were quite detailed in their content.

4.10.2. Major Review of EHS manual

The Committee noted that the EHS manual is being aligned to AS4801 and AS14001.

4.10.3. Amendment to EHS Manual - Eye Protection

Members were provided with a document detailing recent incidences of eye injury. It was noted that upon investigation, many of these injuries could have been prevented if appropriate eye protection had been worn.

It was agreed that the Committee accept the recommendation in principal and that Mr Stefan Delaney would write to the Deans' of each of the laboratory based Faculties, advising them of the policy, requesting feedback prior to implementation.

5. Other Business

The Committee noted that at least one additional meeting will be required prior to the end of the year to ensure progress is maintained on current initiatives from the Sub-Committee.

The Committee also noted a request from the WorkCover Manager Ms Clare Murphy that she be permitted to attend the OHSC meetings. The Committee approved this request as it was felt that Ms Murphy, in her current position, could provide valuable input into discussions.

The next meeting of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee will be on a date yet to be determined.