

The University of Melbourne

Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Minutes of Meeting 3/08

Meeting 3/2008 of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee was held in Room G27, Melbourne Law School on Wednesday 5 November 2008 at 10am.

1. Welcome and Attendance

1.1 Apologies

MEMBERSHIP	In Attendance	Apologies
Employer Representatives Vice-Principal nominated by the Vice-Chancellor (Chair) Vice-Principal, Human Resources or nominee Vice-Principal, Property and Campus Services or nominee Dean of a laboratory based Faculty General Manager, Environment Health and Safety Unit Academic Registrar or nominee	Mr Nigel Waugh Ms Julia McQuillan Pr Ken Hinchcliff Mr Stefan Delaney Mr Garry Thomson	Mr Colin Reiter
Employee Health and Safety Representatives Six Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) elected by the Health and Safety Representatives	Ms Jennifer Scott Ms Sarah Epskamp Mr Lindsay Rayner Ms Kate Nowell Mr Steven Adams	Mr Paul Donald
Student Observers One student nominated by the University of Melbourne Student Union One student nominated by the University of Melbourne Post Graduate Association		Mr Scott Bloodworth Mr Tony Williams
Occasional Observers Other observers as determined by the Committee and invited by the Chair.	Mr Alan Smith	
Standing Observers WorkCover & Rehabilitation Manager	Mr Peter Robertson	
In Attendance	Ms Belinda Rule (Minutes Secretary)	

1.2 Result of HSR members election and welcome to new members

The committee welcomed three re-elected employee Health & Safety Representative members:

- Steve Adams (HSR for Melbourne School of Engineering);
- Lindsay Rayner (HSR for BioChemistry and Molecular Biology);
- Jennifer Scott (HSR for Chemistry).

These members were elected by a meeting of the University's HSRs on 23 October 2008, with Su Butler from the EHS Unit acting as observer. They are elected for a period of two years concluding 23 October 2010.

2. Minutes of the previous Meeting 02/2008

Minor changes agreed to the minutes for items 4.1 and 4.3.1. Mr Thomson will supply a redrafted passage for part of 4.3.1 for the committee's approval. Pending these changes, the minutes were approved as distributed. [Update 20 November 2008: Mr Thomson's changes have been circulated and agreed by the committee.]

3. Action items from meeting 02/2008

3.1. Brief updates to Action Sheet

The committee noted the action sheet circulated previously and discussed the following items:

Item	Item title	Action #	Action	Person Responsible	Status/Deadline
4.4.1	OHSC terms of reference, protocol and membership	7	Form subcommittee to discuss	HSRs to nominate 2 members. Management reps to nominate 2 members. B Rule to coordinate.	See detailed discussion below at 3.2.
4.4.1	OHSC terms of reference, protocol and membership	8	Seek advice from University Secretary about reporting line and other implications for OHSC of the new University committee structure.	S Delaney	Advice received that the OHSC is no longer a committee of Council governed by regulations. There is now more flexibility to amend the Terms of Reference. Subcommittee to amend TOR.
4.4.2	Cleaning on campus	9	Invite Manager Facilities Services and GM Campus Operations to speak on avenues for communicating problems with cleaning	S Delaney	See detailed discussion below at 3.3.
4.4.3	ERC work environment	10	Write to the Vice-Principal Property &	B Rule to	Memo to VP. P&CS complete – pending reply.

Item	Item title	Action #	Action	Person Responsible	Status/Deadline
			Campus Services to seek advice on decision-making processes regarding occupation of buildings during refurbishment.	draft	

The following additional updates have been provided out of session:

Item	Item title	Action #	Action	Person Responsible	Status/Deadline
3.2	EHS Manual review	1	Travel Procedure & Policy to go to new Admin Policy & Procedures committee.	S Delaney	Materials now require update due to change in HR travel policy – in progress.
3.5	Standing resolution: HSR member ceasing to be HSR	3	Advise outcome of School of Chemistry HSR election	J Scott	Ms Scott has been re-elected.
4.3.1	Staff/students ill during class	4	Issue Safety Bulletin communicating agreed guidelines, including encourage staff to keep emergency information up to date in Themis.	S Delaney	In progress.
4.3.1	Staff/students ill during class	5	Investigate technology to store emergency contacts in mobile phones	S Delaney	In progress.
4.3.2	NAT/SafetyMAP gap analysis	6	Discuss prospect of Uni-wide verification of fulfillment of EHS responsibilities – through PDF or other means	N Waugh & A Hunt-Sturman	In progress.
5.1	Further meetings for 2008	12	Review remaining 2008 calendar and add a 4th meeting	B Rule	Complete.
5	Other business	11	Issue Safety Bulletin regarding staff using heaters	S Delaney	In progress.

3.2. OHSC terms of reference, protocol and membership

The subcommittee of Stefan Delaney, Susan Butler, Sarah Epskamp, Lindsay Rayner and Steve Adams had met and begun to discuss committee protocol, membership and terms of reference. The subcommittee will need to meet at least once more before drafting recommendations to present to the committee. Ms Rule will organise another meeting before the next meeting of the OHSC.

3.3. Cleaning on campus

Mr Alan Smith, Manager, Facility Services, attended to discuss avenues for communication about cleaning on campus. Mr Smith advised:

- Most buildings have communication books for sending messages to the cleaners;
- Monthly building cleanliness inspections are carried out in high traffic areas;
- Building supervisors are also a channel of communication;
- Sometimes a building maintenance issue underlies an apparent cleaning issue. Facilities Services staff report such issues to Asset Services when they come to attention;
- An ability to offer feedback on cleaning is planned to be implemented in the BEIMS maintenance request system in 2009;
- Mr Smith is happy to be contacted regarding any matters concerning his staff (includes building supervisors) or cleaning contractors.

Members noted that it was also important that local management representatives are kept informed and involved in problems, as it is they who have initial responsibility for the health and safety of staff in a local area. High level risks should always be addressed by escalation through a management representative.

Members noted that an extensive backlog maintenance program is in progress, but were concerned that the extent of the backlog, together with a lack of information about how maintenance priorities are determined, may discourage staff from reporting issues. Ms Rule to prepare memo to Mr Reiter asking him to address the committee on this subject.

Members noted that some paper towel dispensers seem to be being replaced by electric hand dryers. This is understood to be the result of a 2007 discussion paper on the relative health, cost and environmental merits of paper towels and hand dryers compiled by the Manager, Contracts and Procurement. Ms Rule will seek a copy of the paper and circulate to the committee, as the paper is no longer online. Concerns about unfilled paper towel dispensers should be communicated through the channels discussed above.

Mr Smith left the meeting at the conclusion of the item.

4. Reports

4.1. Workload Advisory Committee

Mr Waugh reported that the WAC had no further matters to report since last meeting. The proposed email protocol is progressing, and a draft will be discussed at the next WAC meeting. Funding is being sought for independently facilitated focus groups on workload.

The committee noted that the formal framework concerning workload exists in policy. Staff wishing to raise specific concerns should do so with their management clearly in writing, and escalate through the management chain if required.

Members also noted that the Expenditure Review Committee has taken preliminary steps to examine academic workload.

4.2. Workplace Bullying Advisory Group

The committee noted the WBAG minutes, which were distributed at the meeting and will be attached to these minutes.

4.3. Faculty and Department Safety Committees

No reports were received for this item.

4.4. Health and Safety Representatives Report

The HSRs raised a matter concerning a staff member frequently required to travel on foot across campus, who had asked his/her supervisor for wet weather gear. The committee noted that strategies for resolution include escalation through the management chain or using the Issue Resolution Procedure in the EHS Manual.

4.5. Significant Incidents Requiring Notification and Regulatory Activity

The committee noted the combined report and complimented Mr Delaney on its improved format.

4.6. EHS Audit Reports

4.7.1. External Audits

Mr Delaney reported on the WorkSafe Self Insurance Licence Renewal audit, which had taken place between 29 September and 16 October 2008. The committee noted the attached WorkSafe presentation from the closeout meeting on 27 October 2008.

Mr Delaney had just received the draft audit report and was providing preliminary feedback to WorkSafe. More details of the findings will be reported after WorkSafe reissues the report following the preliminary feedback.

WorkSafe found the quality of risk assessment to be a general area of deficiency. In response to a question about difficulties with the University's Risk Management training, Mr Delaney undertook to provide feedback forms for participants, and stressed it was preferable to ask that the training be run as a customised session for a particular area, so that examples can be tailored to the area's risk profile. In response to a question about the subjectiveness of risk assessments, Mr Delaney agreed that risk assessment is inherently a subjective and qualitative process, which assigns relative priority rather than absolute value. Staff should seek the advice of their EHS Adviser if uncertain.

4.7.2. Internal Audits

The committee noted the year to date results report, which were distributed at the meeting and will be attached to these minutes. The committee noted the continued reduction in adverse findings.

4.7. Review of EHS Manual

Mr Delaney presented the revised Chemical Management procedure. This had been devised with the input of the Chemical Management Working Group, and had also been subject to the usual and required consultation arrangements. Feedback received had concerned only the risk assessment process: respondents had asked that the EHS Unit create generic risk assessments. Mr Delaney advised that while the EHS Unit has indeed created a number of generic risk assessments for use as templates, WorkSafe rejects the uncustomised use of these as local area risk assessments.

The committee supported the procedure.

5. Other business

There was no other business.

The next meeting of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee will be held on Tuesday 2 December 2008, at 2.15pm, in the Moot Court Room, Old Quadrangle.

MEETING CALENDAR FOR 2008

Tuesdays at 2.15pm in 2008:

- 5 February Old Quadrangle Moot Court Room
- ~~8 April Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics~~
- ~~8 July Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics~~
- 14 August @ 11.30am Pierre Gorman Room, 1888 Building
- ~~28 October Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics~~
- 5 November @ 10am Room G27, Melbourne Law School
- 2 December Moot Court Room, Old Quadrangle

BJR
24 November 2008

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. V.', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.