Health and Safety Committee Minutes

Date/Time: Wednesday, 23rd June 2021
Location: Virtual (via Zoom)

Present:

Prof T Wilkinson TW Chairman & Laser Safety Officer
Prof R Prager RP Head of Department
Mrs R Williams RW Head of Buildings & Estates Services
Mr G Steele GS Safety Officer
Mr S Wickens SW Safety Coordinator
Dr T Savin TS Biological Safety Officer
Dr D Hasko DH Division B/Local Safety Coordinator Rep
Mr A Dennis AD Laboratory Technicians
Mr R Boothroyd RB Design and Technical Services Rep
Mr J Chandler JC Schofield Laboratory
Prof S Savory SSa Teaching Office Representative
Dr S Pattinson SP Division E
Mrs M Farrell MF Administrative Staff Representative
Dr S Scott SS Division A
Dr G McShane GM Division C
Dr G Parks GP Radiation Safety Officer
Miss S Liu SL Graduate Student Rep
Mr M Nuh MN Graduate Student Rep

In attendance

Mr Tim Ablett TA Representing IT Services
Dr M Glendenning MGL University Safety Advisor
Mr G Jack GJ BOC Representative

Minutes:
Mr S Wickens SW Safety Coordinator

Apologies:

Miss L Sebastiani LS Trade Union Safety Representative (Unite)
Mr J Saunders JS Whittle Laboratory
Ms R Cronin RC Administrative Staff Representative
Miss D Hazell DH IT Services Representative
Mr Stuart Fordham SF Workshop Technicians
Mr M Greenhalgh MG Facilities Manager/Department Fire Officer

Absent:

Prof Simon Godsill SG Division F
Dr S Haigh SH Division D
Dr R Roebuck RR Dyson Design Centre Representative
1. **Apologies & Welcome to New Attendees**

1.1. Apologies received from Lesley Sebastiani, John Saunders, River Cronin, Diane Hazell, Matt Greenhalgh and Stuart Fordham.

1.2. TW welcomed Tim Ablett who is attending on behalf of IT Services and Xiaoqi (Shirley) Liu and Mishael Nuh who were representing the Graduate students.

2. **Risk Assessment App – Update**

2.1. GS reported that Julia Eason could not attend today but confirmed that the App was now live. TW commented that his first opinion was that it looks good and that when people get used to using it there should be a definite benefit.

2.2. GS reported that Julia had resolved a recent login issue where there was a conflict with Microsoft Office 365. If anyone has, any further issues let the Safety Office know and an “enhancement list” will be created for future updates.

3. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

3.1. Approved with no amendment.

4. **Matters Arising**

4.1. **Action Plan**

4.1.1. SW reported that the building Covid checklist was held back whilst waiting for updates and asked the Committee whether they still thought it would be useful. It was agreed that now with the situation changing it was probably not required. **Action: Closed**

4.1.2. Safety Tours have restart, IfM is the first scheduled tour, it was agreed to close this item as Safety Tours are a standing agenda item. **Action: Closed**

4.1.3. The rest of the action plan was reviewed and discussed, with all other items deemed ongoing business or on-hold.

5. **Coronavirus (COVID-19) update**

5.1. RW reported that there have been no significant changes since the last meeting. The Department had been working towards a potential final easing of restrictions, which has now been delayed until at least the 19th July. Any changes will be made in line with the guidance issued by the University.

5.2. RW reported that the level of infection in Cambridge is rising again and that the ventilation risk assessment is the key tool to use when determining safe occupancy limits. When restrictions are lifted at a national level it is highly likely that workplaces will not match the general guidelines and that some restrictions may remain in place.

5.3. RP reinforced the comments made by RW and added that there is a concern about the situation within the Colleges where compliance is patchy at times and there is a difficult balancing point as some restrictions are eased.

5.4. GS reported that the University Safety Office has released updated guidance regarding travel and working away in so much as if a risk assessment is deemed high risk solely due to the Covid level then individual Departments are able to sign them off rather than having to submit them to SARAC (Study Away Risk Assessment Committee).
6. **Accident/Incident Report**

6.1. Eight (8) incidents have been reported since the last meeting. SW gave details of three accidents of note.

6.1.1 **B411/A8**: IP was manually sanding a piece of wood when their hand slipped, sliding along the wood. This resulted in a 4 cm long splinter in their right hand, penetrating to 2.5 cm depth. First Aider attended to remove splinter and cleaned wound. IP went to A&E to get wound assessed and X-rayed to check that all material was removed. Unfortunate accident during a routine activity in a workshop. Sanding is a common process with this being the first injury of its kind. Any future incidents will be reported and if it is found that the process needs to be adapted measures will be implemented. Lost time: 3 days.

6.1.2 **B410/A21**: IP tripped over the edge of the sofa, the bottom corner leg on their way out from the Language Unit (This is the sofa that the back of it is facing the offices). As a result, the IP fell down on their front, which caused problems with breathing. IP stated that they could not stand up for a while. IP did not inform anyone as there were no first aiders around and this happened just before the end of their shift. IP thought that it is more sensible to go back home and inform us later on. In response to the incident, the follow actions have been undertaken:

1. Area was checked and no obvious trip hazard was present.
2. Line manager has explained what steps should have be taken to resolve this situation in a more effective way as we have a duty of care and all the systems in case of any emergency on-site are in place. RIDDOR reportable over 7-day injury. Lost time 24 days - ongoing. (Up to 31/05/2021).

6.1.3 **B274/A9**: IP was leaning over to lift a small platform step and twisted their back. This aggravated an existing back injury. In response to the incident, the follow actions have been undertaken:

1. Line manager (LM) to reiterate to team the need for all individuals to inform LM if they know of anything that they may be suffering from that could be made worse in the course of their work activities.
2. Manual Handling Refresher to be undertaken when current restrictions allow. Lost time: 1.5 days.

6.2 SW made the Committee aware that a number of recent reported incidents have been the result of individuals having pre-existing back problems (non-work related injuries) and have made their condition worse due to a work task. This is due to individuals not informing their line manager of their current symptoms/back problems etc. CUED Safety Office will look at ways to inform individuals of the need to raise these concerns with their line managers/ supervisors. **Action: CUED Safety Office**

7. **Fire Safety Report**

7.1. In MG’s absence, RW reported that it was business as usual with regard to fire safety.

7.2. GS reported that Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service had visited the IfM with Mick Marsh, (University Fire Safety Advisor), following an incident previously reported to the Committee. Six minor deficiencies were notified in writing for improvement, including storage of items in escape corridors and fire doors wedged open. An action plan has been developed and the remedial work has commenced. **Action: CUED Safety Office**

7.2.1. AD asked if the fire doors had been wedged due to Covid ventilation requirements. GS replied that this was not the case and it is done for convenience as people work between labs. RW added that alternative access arrangements could be investigated.
8. **Safety Officers Reports**

8.1. **Department Safety Officer – GS**

8.1.1. The Safety Office has had a busy three months. A full LEV inspection has been undertaken with a number of failures identified which are largely due to how systems are vented externally and follows a change in HSE policy. TES, (the company that undertake these inspections), will send a surveyor to suggest modifications to current systems or alternative arrangements.

8.1.1.1. TES will also inspect some additional systems at IfM that have been overlooked.

8.1.1.2. The EEDB has previously been part of the Estate Management LEV testing schedule however this contract has come to an end. We will look to include this with the rest of the Department. Dave Roberts is liaising with Estate Management to ascertain the details required.

8.1.2. A health and safety survey has been issued by the University Safety Office to all Departments. Nearly every section of this applies to the Engineering Department so a large amount of work will be required to complete it.

8.1.3. Mick Brennan from the University Safety Office (Technical Services) has commenced a programme of noise and HAVS (Hand-arm vibration syndrome) surveys. He has focused initially on the Trumpington Street main workshop/carpenters areas. The surveys will be rolled out across the Department in due course.

8.2. **Biological Safety Officer – TS**

8.2.1. A new biological risk assessment has been issued by the University Safety Office. The form has 13 sections across 11 pages. The form is optional so even if it is decided that it will not be used in its entirety certain sections may be adopted to add as attachments to the new online RA app e.g. COSHH and disposal methods.

8.3. **Laser Safety Officer – TW**

8.3.1. It has been noticed that a number of laser cutters are being purchased across the Department but the items are not being registered and is not good practice. If people become aware of new laser cutters in their areas, they should ensure they have been registered with TW.

8.4. **Radiation Safety Officer – GP**

8.4.1. GP stated that there was nothing new to report. TW enquired as to whether there were any radiation sources within the Department currently. GP confirmed that there were some X-ray machines and other low-level teaching materials, which come under his remit.


9.1. The Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) rolling 12 months (June ‘20 to May ‘21) stats were issued, this showed 23,934 items tested. 5,276 items being tested during Mar - May, with 7 items failing.

9.2. Quite a large amount of office equipment is unavailable due to home working arrangements.

9.3. One serious fire risk was found in the open office area at the IfM. This was an iPhone mobile phone charging plug, which had dark discolouration to indicate overheating or fire damage. The socket where it was found showed no signs of damage which suggests the incident occurred elsewhere yet the plug was still being used. TW suggested issuing a safety alert to the Department warning of the danger of using damaged electrical items. **Action: CUED Safety Office**
10. Safety Tour Programme – Update

10.1. SW reported that the safety tour programme had recommenced and further tours would be scheduled over the coming terms. **Action: S Wickens**

11. Any Other Business

11.1. AD had received concerns that the same few first aiders were covering Trumpington Street and with periods of annual leave approaching would the site have enough cover. SW reported that he had contacted all Trumpington Street first aiders to confirm which people were solely working from home and when any leave was to be taken. This information will be used to inform plans going forward and whether any amendments need to be made to the existing procedure.

11.2. GS advised the Committee that the University Safety Office are going to be commencing a programme of workshop inspections. He has contacted relevant people so that they can prepare for them. The PUWER (Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations) training that has been mentioned previously is still on hold but will start again as the Covid restrictions are eased.

11.3. TW thanked SS for his time spent serving on the Committee, as this was his last meeting. He also thanked DH in case he does not attend the next meeting, as he will be retiring at the end of this academic year.

12. Date of Next Meeting

12.1. The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday 22nd September 2021 @ 10:00am**.

12.2. Future meetings are provisionally scheduled to take place on Wednesday 8th December 2021 and Wednesday 23rd March 2022.