

COURT OF EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 20 May 2009
at 4.00pm in the Castle Room, Craighouse Campus**

PRESENT: Dr L Burley (Court)(Convenor); Professor M Darlison (Biological Safety Officer)(Faculty of HLSS Representative); Miss C Evans (President NSA)(Court); Professor T Fernandes (Court); Ms K Jackson (EIS/ULA); Professor J Kubie (Principal's Representative); Mr G McCarra (Court); Ms M Philip (UNISON); Dr M Sanderson (EIS/ULA); Mr M Wallace (NSA)(Court); Dr G Webber (University Safety Officer).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs M Cook (Human Resources); Mr P Hughes (Facilities Services); Mrs M Julier (Clerk); Ms L Young (Head of Health & Safety).

APOLOGIES: Dr L Birrell (Occupational Health); Mr D Davidson (Principal's Representative); Dr J Ensor (Principal's Representative); Mr J Goodlet (UNITE); Mr M Mackay (UNISON); Ms J Tennant (Occupational Health).

1. WELCOME

The Convenor welcomed Professor Darlison to the committee as the Biological Safety Officer and Faculty of HLSS representative.

Thanks and farewell was conveyed to the current NSA representatives who demit office in August, Professor Fernandes whose term on University Court is coming to an end and Mr Logie from HLSS who had taken up a new role within the University and was no longer a member of the Committee.

The apologies were noted.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2009 (HS/09/08)

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2009 were approved as an accurate record subject to the addition of Mr Wallace to the attendance list.

3. MATTERS ARISING

a) Mitigating Actions to Minimise Fire Risk in Student Residences

The Health and Safety Adviser circulated copies of the Student Accommodation Newsletter which included a section on fire risk and was distributed to all students in accommodation in February 2009.

The Committee were also advised that fire training had been provided to Senior Residents. A poster campaign was also being prepared by Policy and Communications in conjunction with the NSA. The NSA advised that they thought these initiatives were a good idea.

b) Managing Work Related Stress Update

The Director of HR provided an update on managing work related stress. Whilst the working group had not met again since the last meeting of the Health and Safety Committee it was noted that work as continuing in this area.

c) Gender Sensitivity and Health and Safety Policies

The Health and Safety Adviser and the UNISON Representative advised the Committee that the sub-group looking at Gender Sensitivity and Health and Safety Policies had met twice and a further meeting was scheduled for June. The sub-group had worked through the TUC checklist and this identified a number of gaps including that the policy on breastfeeding requires to be updated.

It was agreed that a report from the sub-group be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

DECISION

- **A report to be provided from the sub-group at the next meeting of the Health and Safety Committee.**

**4. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE 2008/09
(HS/09/09)**

The Committee received and noted the annual health and safety report for April 2008 to April 2009. It was agreed that the report reflected another good year and that it should go forward to University Court. Both the Convener and the University Safety Officer recorded thanks in particular to the Health and Safety Team and Occupational Health for all their hard work.

Of particular note, the University achieved the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award, again won the prestigious RoSPA Gold Medal and two Health and Safety training courses have been formally accredited by IOSH. The number of staff and student injuries are lower than the UK average.

Discussion took place around first aid refresher training and some concerns were expressed regarding the current frequency of the courses. The Director of HR advised that the possibility of these courses being held externally was being investigated as this would allow greater access and a variety of dates.

DECISION:

The University Safety Officer to take the Annual Report to University Court.

5. ACCIDENT STATISTICS

a) Summary Statistics (HS/09/10)

A paper detailing the analysis of accident statistics during the period 5 January to 5 April 2009 was discussed and noted.

It was noted that there was a slight increase in the number of accidents since the last reporting period. The main cause of accidents during this reporting period was falls on the level. Further discussion took place in the next item.

b) Serious Accidents / Hazardous Incidents (HS/09/11)

A paper summarising the serious accidents and hazardous incidents occurring during the period 5 January to 5 April 2009 was discussed and noted.

There was one serious accident involving a staff member who fell on ice and sustained a serious cut. It was noted from the previous item that the main cause of accidents during this reporting period was falls on the level. It was not possible to determine from the paper if the falls occurred inside or outside and it was agreed to look further into these statistics to make sure that there is not a problem with the external gritting contract.

One hazardous incident was noted whereby a member of staff was struck by a ceiling panel which resulted in minor injuries. The Health and Safety Team investigated the incident, recommendations were made and all panels were checked.

There were no fire incidents during this reporting period.

6. EMERGENCY EVACUATION REPORTS

a) Scheduled (HS/09/12)

A paper detailing the scheduled evacuations from University property during the period 5 January to 5 April 2009 was received and noted.

Discussion took place around the failure of the manual PA system at the rear of the Merchiston building, whilst this has now been rectified it was agreed that as part of regular testing that all areas of the building be checked to ensure the PA system is working correctly and this should be recorded in the fire log book.

It was noted from the paper that most occupants of the Canaan Lane building were not exiting via the nearest exit, it was agreed that the Health and Safety Adviser liaise with the Campus Principal to ensure that all staff and students are reminded to use the nearest exit in the event of a fire evacuation.

DECISION:

- **Manual PA system throughout the building to be checked regularly and the check recorded in the fire log book.**
- **The Health and Safety Adviser to liaise with the Campus Principal to ensure that all staff and students are reminded to use the nearest fire exit.**

b) **Unscheduled (HS/09/13)**

A paper detailing unscheduled evacuations from University property during the period 5 January to 5 April 2009 was received and noted.

The number of unscheduled evacuations at Riego Street and West Tollcross had decreased since the last reporting period.

It is hoped that the campaign noted above in 3a will help to further reduce the number of unscheduled fire evacuations, however it was noted that it is necessary to keep reinforcing these messages as there will soon be a new intake of students.

7. **HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTICES SUMMARY** **(HS/09/05)**

A paper detailing the Health and Safety Notices issued during the period 5 January to 5 April 2009 by the Health and Safety Team when a hazardous situation is observed or highlighted and requires immediate action was received and noted.

In total five notices were issued, four related to the control of contractors. It was however noted that this is a relatively small number in comparison to the total number of contracts carried out. It was agreed that future reporting would indicate the number of contracts carried out to help contextualise this. It was also noted that of the five notices issued, only one was deemed to be of a serious nature and it was agreed for future reports to indicate the seriousness of the notice again to help contextualise the report.

The Committee noted that the report provided assurance that the procedures and monitoring are working as these occurrences are being reported and actioned. It was further noted that contractors face removal from the approved list of contractors if they do not comply with health and safety requirements.

DECISION:

Future reports to note the number of contracts undertaken in the reporting period and indicate the seriousness of each notice served in order to contextualise the report.

8. **HSE – WORKER INVOLVEMENT – SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES AND SAFETY COMMITTEES** **(HS/09/15)**

A report summarising new guidance from the HSE was received and noted. Discussion took place around the inclusion of safety representatives and whether appropriate mechanisms were in place. Members of the Committee agreed that there were appropriate mechanisms available and that there was a good working relationship with the Health and Safety Team.

9. **COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES AND HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS FOR EXTRACTION OF AROMATIC OUTPUTS** **(HS/09/16)**

A paper was received from Union Representatives regarding safety standards and the extraction of aromatic outputs.

The Committee were advised that the Health and Safety Adviser had carried out an investigation in this area in 2007 and recommendations were made at this time. A follow up assessment was recently undertaken and a number of further recommendations made.

The Committee agreed that this matter should be addressed by the Faculty of HLSS and asked that the Health and Safety Adviser continues to assist in resolving this matter.

DECISION:

This matter should be addressed by the Faculty of HLSS and asked that the Health and Safety Adviser continues to assist in resolving this matter.

**10. FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS AND REPLACEMENT OF EQUIPMENT
(HS/09/17)**

A paper was received from Union Representatives drawing attention to concerns around financial constraints and replacement of equipment given the recently announced tightening of budgets within the University.

The University Safety Officer provided assurance to members that health and safety is taken seriously by the University and will continue to be of paramount importance even under financial constraints.

**11. RISK MANAGEMENT – UNIVERSITY ‘TOP RISKS’ EXCEPTIONS REPORT
(HS/09/18)**

The Committee received and noted the third and final monitoring report of the academic year regarding the top risk which relates to preparing for a major fire/flood etc. There was no change in the status of the mitigating actions compared to the last report.

The Committee will continue to receive monitoring reports of the refreshed risk during the next academic year.

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

All Wednesdays at 4pm, venues to be confirmed:

- 07 October 2009
- 10 February 2010
- 19 May 2010