

21 January 2016, 1430, Cairo Room, Greenwich House

Present: Dr M Wills (Chairman), Ms L Hinton-Mead (Secretary), Dr G Christie, Dr A Clarke, Mr M Elsdon, Mr T Fitzmaurice, Mr T Jones, Dr J Kumita, Dr G Martell, Dr K Tibbles, Dr L Tiley, Dr M Vinnell, and Ms R Williams

In attendance: Ms L Dopson, Dr M Glendenning (observer), Mr A Hardwick (observer)

1 Apologies for absence

Mr C Allen, Ms P Ellis Logan, Mrs M Gentry, Dr A Gilliland, Professor I Goodfellow, Professor S Ozanne, Dr A Shortland, and Ms L Smith

2 Minutes of the Sub-committee meeting held on Thursday 22 October 2015

The Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3 Matters arising from the Minutes

The Chairman spoke about two matters arising:

Minute 4.3 (meeting 22.01.15) Membership

Professor Ian Goodfellow has been appointed to the Sub-committee by the School of the Biological Sciences.

Minute 19 (meeting 22.01.15) Information

The issue of CRISPR/Cas 9 will be addressed later in the Agenda.

4 Report from Sub-committee for Chemical Safety

Dr Tiley reported that 3 issues of particular interest had been discussed:

- Wearing eye protection: Currently the requirement for wearing eye protection is driven primarily by risk assessment. A new suggestion would be for departments to also review and identify **areas** where eye protection would be mandatorily required. This would entrain those working nearby into also wearing eye protection.
- Gloves: There have been a number of incidents concerning gloves. It was felt that users needed better knowledge and understanding of the chemical resistance and physical properties of different types of gloves that can be used, so that the most appropriate glove type is chosen. Also users need to be reminded of the necessity to change gloves if they become contaminated.
- Piped dry nitrogen: Nitrogen had filled a room which was not equipped to cope with it. This had occurred due to some 'ad hoc' plumbing which meant that the gas should have just been piped through the room en route to the final destination; however, it leaked into the room it was passing through. This incident brings up the very serious matter of poor design and how piped gas is installed, which rooms it is passing through, where the shut off valves are, where the joints in the piping are etc.

5 Codes of Practice/Leaflets/Policies etc

Immunisation Policy

Introduced by Dr Martell, she asked if the policy had implications for either Human Resources or Insurance and if they should be consulted. The Director of Health and Safety reassured her that it would not be necessary to refer the policy elsewhere at this stage.

Dr Martell was concerned that there may also be immunisation issues with CL2 workers, but as they do not routinely consult Occupational Health this may be an area that needs looking at. The Director of Health and Safety considered that using the departmental administrators was the best route to ensure the fullest dissemination of information.

PIs too have a major role to play in this process but Dr Tibbles was concerned that PIs were not necessarily doing what they should – perhaps due to a lack of knowledge themselves.

Dr Tiley expressed his concern from a data protection viewpoint that confidential health information on members of staff is sent to departmental BSOs. Dr Martell emphasised that this information has to be kept at a local level, but that it must also be kept securely.

Risk Assessment for New and Expectant Mothers at Work

Not commented on at meeting.

Latex Health Surveillance Questionnaires

Dr Martell asked for the Sub-committee's comments on the two documents and expressed her wish to pilot the forms in CBS. Mr Fitzmaurice felt that there should be an 'animal contact' question added which would help to tie the latex HS questionnaires in with the animal allergy surveillance form already in use. His concern was that the person could have an allergy to the animal rather than to the latex.

Action: Members to pass their comments on Latex HS Questionnaires to Mary Meredith in Occupational Health via Mary.Meredith@admin.cam.ac.uk by Friday 5 February 2016.

6 Reports on Visits and Inspections

6.1 External

See item 17.

6.2 Internal

There was nothing further to add to the information already given on the Agenda.

7 Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst (SBC)

The Chairman reminded members that, under certain circumstances, the Sub-committee acted as the Biological Safety Committee for the SBC. Nothing further to report. The Secretary and the Safety Officer for the School of the Biological Sciences have yet to arrange a visit. If there is anything to report, this will be circulated to members via email.

Action: Secretary and Safety Officer for the School of the Biological Sciences to arrange a visit to SBC.

8 Containment Level 3 (CL3)

The Director of Health and Safety reported that with regard to Project Bellatrix a feasibility study is currently being carried out. It could well turn out that the physical infrastructure proposed for the building might prove prohibitively expensive.

9 Formaldehyde and VHP

Dr Tibbles spoke to his report (*Paper BS/1516/13 attached*). According to information published by HSE last year, the use of formaldehyde as a biocide could be stopped by regulations. Dr Tibbles envisaged possibly 10 years left for the use of formaldehyde. Mr Fitzmaurice pointed out that using VHP instead of formaldehyde would require a lot of equipment to cover emergency procedures, involving much greater management and expenditure. This would affect laboratory design in order to take into account future fumigation methodology. Dr Tibbles believed that the HSE would run an impact analysis on any definite proposal to phase out the use of formaldehyde as a fumigant.

10 DEFRA

Nothing to report.

11 SAPO

The Assistant Biological/General Safety Adviser was unable to be at the meeting, but had provided a report (*Paper BS/1516/14 attached*).

12 Human Tissue Act (HTA)

The Assistant Biological/General Safety Adviser was unable to be at the meeting, but had provided a report (*Paper BS/1516/15 attached*).

13 Counter-Terrorism

Nothing to report.

14 Database/ASQ/Auditing Biological Safety

Ms Dopson reported that two more responses to the ASQ had been received since the last meeting and the overall response had been really good this time.

15 Biological Safety Officers

The Chairman reported that, subsequent to the list being published, an appointment letter had been received for Dr Bax of Materials Science. The Safety Officer for the School of the Biological Sciences to follow up Dr Adams' appointment letter for PDN.

Action: The Safety Officer for the School of the Biological Sciences to follow up Dr Adam's appointment letter for PDN.

16 Training

16.1 Annual BSO Event (Tuesday 17 May 2016)

The Chairman reported that one of the subjects to be covered at the BSO Event will be the CRISPR/Cas 9 system. His concern is that people are not thinking of it as a genetic manipulation, but as a 'kit activity'. In his opinion, this issue needs to be taken back to the departments by the BSOs as it has implications for compliance. The Secretary is in the process of trying to identify a speaker.

Action: Secretary to identify speaker on CRISPR/Cas 9 system for BSO Event.

16.2 DBSO Competency

The Secretary and the Chairman reported on the 4-day Biological Safety Practitioner (BSP) Level 1 accredited training course which had been run in December 2015. The course participants consisted of 6 from MRC-LMB and 6 from the University. The feedback confirmed that it was an excellent course. This was corroborated by the Chairman and Dr Christie who had

both undertaken the course. The Secretary told members that it was hoped that the course could be offered more regularly 'in-house' or at least locally so that more BSOs could undertake the training. She offered congratulations to the participants as they had all successfully passed the examination at the conclusion of the course.

16.3 **IATA**

The Secretary reported that a one-day course covering transport of biological materials, known as 'Section 6.2', had now been confirmed for Thursday 7 July 2016 and will take place in the Jaffna Room at Greenwich House.

17 **Health and Safety Executive**

The HSE had visited Physics and Veterinary Medicine between 24-26 November 2015. The Secretary tabled a short report, which she then spoke to, emphasising the verbal instructions given by the HSE as a result of their visit. Discussion emphasised that the correct terminology must be used in risk assessments, an example being, that health 'surveillance' should more often be referred to as health 'assessment' with an explanation as to what is covered by this term. The Safety Officer for the School of Clinical Medicine expressed his concern that departments should be updated with this information and also with the item discussed earlier regarding formaldehyde. It was suggested that the BSO Event might be a good opportunity to raise these issues. However, Dr Tiley thought that this was better targeted at certain BSOs involved with CL3 and most BSOs in this position were members of this Sub-committee. The Secretary reported that, overall, these had been two very good inspections as no letter was expected from HSE. The departments were to be congratulated.

18 **Accidents/Incidents**

No discussion took place.

19 **Miscellaneous**

19.1 **Report from Estate Management**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Jones as the new representative for Estate Management on this Sub-committee. Mr Jones then spoke to his report (**Paper BS/1516/19 attached**). A programme has been put in place to risk assess each property which falls under the responsibility of Estate Management. Remedial engineering works identified from recently completed risk assessments are currently in progress. It has become apparent that many departments fail to realise their responsibilities. EM are currently in the process of appointing a Water Hygiene Consultant. Some departments have been doing uncontrolled work which has resulted in plumbing deficiencies such as 'dead legs' in various systems, which are now having to be rectified.

The complicated matter with regard to responsibilities of embedded departments between Addenbrooke's Hospital Estates and University Estate Management was mentioned. It was noted that James Mackenzie in Estate Management had been acting as the link between these two since June 2015.

The Secretary asked Mr Jones if there was anything else he wished the Sub-committee to help with that perhaps might add some 'weight' to his requests to departments. He said that once the policy had been formulated he would like to pass it by the Sub-committee. He also wished to check the wording of the annual legionella email that is circulated to departments via the Safety Office before it is sent out again.

Action: Mr Jones to provide a communication to departments regarding Legionella and water hygiene to be sent out from the Sub-committee.

- 19.2 **Report from the Safety Officer, School of the Biological Sciences**
The Safety Officer, School of the Biological Sciences, had nothing to report.
- 19.3 **Report from the Safety Officer, School of Clinical Medicine**
The Safety Officer, School of Clinical Medicine, reported that he had received notice of an expected visit from the HSE in the middle of February 2016 regarding transgenics. They would be looking at physical containment and management systems.
He also notified the Sub-committee that another 3 MRC units were due to join the University shortly. He felt that the one of most note to this Sub-committee would be the MRC Mitochondrial Biology Unit.
Subsequent to Sub-committee meeting the HSE visit has been moved to March
- 19.4 **Reports from the Committee on Student Health and Wellbeing and the Advisory Group on Communicable Diseases**
The Director of Health and Safety had nothing to report.
- 19.5 **Report from Consultative Committee for Safety (CCFS)**
The Chairman reported that a discussion regarding the wearing of safety spectacles had taken place.
- 20 **Information**
Nagoya Protocol The Secretary reported briefly. She explained that it was regarding 'property' rights in reference to genetic resources. However, there was nothing at the moment to concern this Sub-committee. The Safety Officer for the School of the Biological Sciences reminded members that if anybody should ask about this issue, then to refer them to the Research Office.

NB - The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international agreement which aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way.
- 21 **Date of next meeting**
Monday 11 April 2016 in the Cairo Room at Greenwich House starting at 1430. The Chairman apologised for the change of date due to his work commitments abroad.

The meeting closed at 1605.