

21 January 2019, 1430, Cairo Room, Greenwich House

Present: Dr M Wills (Chairman), Dr A Gilliland (Secretary), Dr H Bertrand, Mr R Borthwick (invited), Professor I Brierley, Dr G Christie, Professor P Cicuta, Mr M Elsdon, Mr T Fitzmaurice, Mrs M Gentry, Mr T Jones, Dr G Martell, Dr T O'Connell, Professor S Ozanne, Ms C Pungong, Dr K Tibbles, Dr L Tiley, Dr M Vinnell, and Ms R Williams Jones

In attendance: Ms L Dopson

The Chairman welcomed Ms Pungong to the meeting and the Sub-committee then did a 'tour de table' with each person introducing themselves.

1 Apologies for absence

No apologies received.

2 Minutes of the Sub-committee meeting held on 15 October 2018

The Minutes were approved and then signed by the Chairman.

3 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

4 Biological Compliance

4.1 SAPO

The Secretary reported that an application for work in the Department of Veterinary Medicine on the SAPO3 agent African Horse Sickness Virus had been submitted to HSE in December 2018. She also reported that HSE had been in touch with her today to arrange a date for a SAPO inspection in Veterinary Medicine and to also arrange a date to inspect CL3 facilities at Addenbrooke's and Veterinary Medicine. Everything else under the current University SAPO licence remains unchanged.

4.2 Human Tissue Act

The Secretary reported on the inspection that was carried out by HTA on 6-7 November 2018. Out of the 47 licence standards audited against, they identified 5 minor shortfalls, all of which have now been either partially or completely addressed since the inspection. There are still a few actions to be undertaken and the Secretary will be following these up. However, the HTA considers that all standards have been met. The written report was finalised by the HTA in mid-January 2019 and is now online. Dr O'Connell wished it to be minuted that they appreciated the immense amount of hard work the Secretary had put in with regard to this issue and in helping to steer departments through the inspection process with the HTA. Dr Vinnell, as DI, agreed wholeheartedly with these comments.

4.3 Counter-Terrorism

The Chairman wished to emphasise to members that there is a requirement for the Safety Office to be informed about any police counter-terrorism visits that are due to take place as these have to be reported centrally. Dr Tiley informed the

Chairman that Veterinary Medicine is due to have their regular annual visit shortly under CTSA.

4.4 Reports on Visits and Inspections (HSE/Defra)

The Chairman reported that he was not aware of any visits or inspections that had taken place. He also reminded members that they must inform the Safety Office if they receive notice that any visits or inspections are due to take place in the future as these also have to be reported centrally.

4.5 Biological Safety Officers

The Secretary reported that there are two BSO appointment letters outstanding. Dr Tiley asked if it was possible for his appointment letter to be for 3 years rather than each academic year. The Secretary and Chairman agreed that this would be acceptable.

4.6 Biological Annual Safety Questionnaire

The Secretary reported that out of 55 biological questionnaires sent out, there were 4 responses outstanding (Departments of Archaeology, Biochemistry, Pathology and Veterinary Medicine). Dr Brierley from Pathology said that the completed questionnaire for his department would be returned very shortly. Others had been in contact with the Safety Office and would also be returned shortly.

4.7 Containment Level 3

The Chairman asked for a round table update on the various CL3 facilities:

Veterinary Medicine – Dr Tiley reported that their CL3 facility is not back in action yet, but work was due to be carried out tomorrow and he hoped that the room would be back up and running very shortly.

Chemical Engineering & Biotechnology – Dr Christie reported that there were still problems with the doors and interlocks. However, he was quite optimistic that these issues would be resolved shortly.

Medicine – The Chairman reported that the CL3 facilities on Level 5 had both been passed following an inspection by Crowthorne. With regard to the Capella building, Medicine has been working closely with a CL3 health and safety external consultant Paul McDermott and the CL3 facilities are on schedule for completion. It is anticipated that this building will be handed over and commissioned in April 2019.

5 Training

5.1 Annual BSO Update (Tuesday 14 May 2019)

The Chairman reminded members of the date for this year's BSO Update and listed the topics that they were anticipating covering – Occupational Health talk; CRISPR/gene drive; talk by Dr Vinnell on biosafety post-Brexit; the roles of the BSOs. The Chairman informed members that they were also open to any other ideas or suggestions and to just email the Chairman and/or the Secretary to let them know.

5.2 IATA

The Chairman reminded members of the dates for the two IATA courses being run in 2019, as listed on the Agenda.

6 Accidents/Incidents

The Chairman told the Sub-committee that no queries had been received regarding any of the accidents/incidents noted in the report.

Reports

7.1 Report from Sub-committee for Chemical Safety

Dr Tiley could not fully report as the Sub-committee for Chemical Safety was not due to meet until the following day. However, he did speak about the issue that he is planning to bring to that Sub-committee regarding oxygen depletion monitors in cryogen storage facilities which are mandatory. He felt that this would be a very useful question to be included in the biological safety questionnaire and biological safety audit question set so that the BSO is reminded to verify that the alarm is working. This was agreed.

Action: Ms Dopson to update the annual biological safety questionnaire prior to it being circulated to departments in the summer to ensure it includes a question on checking alarms on oxygen depletion monitors in cryogen storage facilities. The biological safety audit question set is to be similarly updated.

7.2 Report from Estate Management

Mr Borthwick spoke to his report (*comprising Papers BS/1819/11a, 11b, 11c*) previously circulated to members.

- 22 buildings have now been audited by Estate Management (EM)
- 90 buildings (representing 26%) have new style Log Books with older versions still in use elsewhere. New buildings will be issued with new style Log Books at the outset
- Training programme is under way – 3 courses ran in 2018 with approximately 40 people having attended so far
- Intranet site designed to support departments is now live on the University website
- Water Safety Standard (*Paper BS/1819/11c*) issued in draft to the Sub-committee for their comments. Mr Borthwick requested comments back to him directly prior to the next Sub-committee meeting on 1 April 2019. This had been circulated without EM's mark-up comments and therefore will be re-circulated with the mark-up comments showing
- 87% of operational estate has a RA in date. Remainder are in hand.
- Engineering remedial work scheduled on 96 buildings in 2018/19
- 6 buildings are the subject of ongoing legionella monitoring. This includes the Institute of Metabolic Science (IMS) which Mr Borthwick stated was the responsibility of the NHS Trust. Professor Ozanne said that IMS should still appear on our records as the University is still responsible for the University people working in the labs there. Dr Tibbles asked if the NHS Trust were responsible for the entire water supply and Mr Borthwick confirmed this to be the case. Dr Tibbles wished it to be minuted that this is the situation.

Dr Vinnell explained at this point that a new Sub-committee for Estate Safety has been established this term. Prior to this, multiple issues including water safety were reported through various Sub-committees. All the current reporting roles will go to this new Sub-committee in future – legionella, buildings, infrastructure etc.

Dr Vinnell felt that the Biological Safety Sub-committee's concerns over the relationship between the NHS Trust and the University should be put forward in order to seek formal confirmation of the management arrangements between the NHS Trust and the University regarding the water supply and the issue of water hygiene. He suggested that Mr Jones and Mr Borthwick could work on the wording of this item to be forwarded to CCFS.

Several members wished to emphasise also that the NHS Trust should be reminded that on Level 4 they are potentially endangering their own staff as well as the University staff who work there.

Dr Vinnell said that it had yet to be confirmed if there would still be EM representation on the Biological Safety Sub-committee.

Actions:

- Ms Dopson to re-circulate the Water Safety Standard HSD081B document to members to include Estate Management's mark-up comments for consultation.
- Members to send their comments on the Water Safety Standard directly to Mr Borthwick prior to next Biological Safety Sub-committee meeting on 1 April 2019.
- Mr Jones and Mr Borthwick to word a note to go to next CCFS meeting on management arrangements for water safety between NHS Trust and University of Cambridge.

7.3 Report from the Safety Officer, School of the Biological Sciences

Mr Elsdon had nothing to report.

7.4 Report from the Safety Officer, School of Clinical Medicine

Dr Tibbles spoke to his report (*Paper BS/1819/12*) previously circulated to members in which, via discussion amongst the members of this Sub-committee, he was seeking clarification on the situation across the University regarding 2nd generation lentiviral expression systems. Different departments treat 2nd, 3rd and 4th generation differently, whereas some believe 2nd and 3rd generation should be treated the same. Are these different approaches across the University acceptable? Discussion ensued between members. Some did not think it was necessary to test 2nd generation for replication competency (RC) unless it was carrying an oncogene in which case it would need to be tested. Others considered this less relevant (since the oncogene may not make it into the RC virus). The Chairman spoke on behalf of Medicine where the Department believes in making sure that 2nd generation are not RC and has a 'gatekeeping' responsibility to ensure the safety of staff handling 2nd generation systems created by others elsewhere in the University as the Department oversees access to the flow cytometry cell sorting facility which is offered as a service to other departments in the University. He also emphasised that he believes that the policy for a particular GM Centre is **the** policy for that GM Centre. The Secretary reminded members that the University operates separate Departmental GM Centres and as a result there may be variations in assessing similar risks. Dr Vinnell said that those that create the risk control the risk and that it is reasonable to operate a 'gatekeeping' system to reassure other people who did not initiate the work, and that this must be based on risk assessment. Some practical advice on the most efficient tests was proffered.

Ms Pungong and Dr Bertrand left the meeting at 1535

7.5 Report from Occupational Health

Hep B Vaccine

Dr Martell reported that the situation with regard to the Hep B vaccine now meant that Occupational Health was back up and running and working on a catch up as

the supply of the vaccine is fine now. It is still waiting for national guidance on 5 year boosters and will update the policy when it is published.

The immunisation policy is currently being reviewed including whether first aiders should all receive the Hep B vaccine. HSE guidance does not recommend routine vaccination of first aiders. Occupational Health have proposed that we remove the recommendation that we offer Hep B vaccination to first aiders from the policy as the risks are very low. Discussion was held about the potential benefits and risks of vaccination and whether it should be continued for first aiders and it was concluded that it could still be offered based on risk assessment and clinical need.

Health Surveillance

With regard to animal allergy, Dr Martell said Occupational Health had confirmed through the laboratory animal health surveillance scheme that four sensitised individuals had been identified. Three vet students thought to have sensitisation prior to commencing at Cambridge and one person working in an animal facility who have been confirmed as sensitised, but it is not yet clear if the sensitisation occurred prior to commencing work at the University of Cambridge. OH continue to undertake significant amounts of enhanced surveillance to monitor staff. Dr Vinnell commented that the use of powered respirators in laboratories is on the increase and that this is a positive step.

7.6 **Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst (SBC)**

The Secretary reported that the SBC lab & facilities co-ordinator and BSO at SBC had now retired. The BSO role has now been taken on by Dr Joe Boyle who is a Vet Med post-doc based at SBC and has been there since the start of the joint venture between the University of Cambridge and SBC. He will specifically be reporting to the University of Cambridge on UoC biological matters. The University of Hertfordshire which has taken over the lease of SBC has its own GM Centre No for any of its people working on GMOs there. The Secretary will be meeting Dr Boyle in the next few weeks.

7.7 **Report from Consultative Committee for Safety (CCFS)**

This was presented to the Sub-committee. No comments were received.

8 Date of next meeting

The Chairman reminded members that the next meeting of this Sub-committee would take place on Monday 1 April 2019 in the Cairo Room at Greenwich House starting at 1430.

The meeting closed at 1550.