



To Radiation Protection Supervisors and Departmental Administrators
From David Plumb, Radiation Protection Adviser
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Subject Update information
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**DATE FOR YOUR DIARY - RPS UPDATE MEETING NEXT YEAR - THE MORNING OF
THURSDAY 21st MARCH 2013!**

Following the Radiation Protection Supervisors update meeting held on 28 March 2012, a reminder of some of the topics covered is provided below. These topics are relevant to RPS and also to Administrators and senior management of departments. The PDF versions of the presentations for most of the sessions given at the update meetings for 2008 - 2012 can now be found at: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/offices/safety/radiation/ir/training/index.html>

1. Exemption from the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010/11

A summary was given of the implications of the changes to the 'Exemption Regime' to the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010. As previously under the Radioactive Substance Act, certain practices involving low activity/low risk radioactive substances are exempt from the requirement for a detailed Permit (previously 'Certificate'). The Permit of course contains lengthy conditions relating to control of radioactive substances. If the substance in question, at the activity held, falls within the new exemption criteria, then the conditions for acquisition, storage and eventual disposal of the substance are, in general, much simpler than for fully 'Permitted' substances. However there are residual conditions attached to the exemption, and these must be observed.

Some very low activity substances are now deemed to be completely 'out of scope' of the EPR – in these instances no (EPR) regulatory controls apply, either by Permit or Exemption condition. However, the safety aspects of the substance may still fall within the scope of the Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999! Substances that may fall within the exemption regime are: naturally occurring materials, geological specimens, 'small' sealed sources, Uranium and Thorium and electrodeposited sources such as Nickel 63. RPA advice is always needed in order to determine if a proposed 'new' acquisition by your department is out of scope, exempt or subject to a full Permit – contact the Safety Office!

**2. Management Systems for the Control of ionising
Radiations**

An example was given by the RPSs from a large Cambridge Research Institute, of the 'top down' management structure used by that Institute for the

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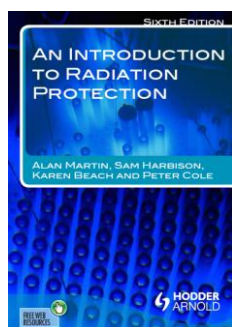
control of ionising radiations. Whilst every department and institute will have differing local needs and structures in terms of safety management, the example given contained all of the advised elements in order to satisfy University and the regulatory agencies requirements. Particularly, the involvement of senior staff, regular meetings of RPSs, and clearly defined tasks relating to record keeping, staff induction and training.

3. Managing Sealed Sources

Dr Peter Cole, RPA at the University of Liverpool, gave an informative and entertaining presentation on the characterisation and control of sealed radioactive sources. The need for clear identification of ownership of sources, justification for use (and continued storage!) thorough and unequivocal record keeping, and consideration and preparedness for contingencies were the principle messages. The presentation reflected a general issue in academia of individuals acquiring radioactive materials (sources) that are 'interesting' without sometimes fully appreciating the commitment (financial and otherwise) in terms of the control and eventual disposal that these items may require.

Peter is a contributing editor– referenced below – to a publication that is widely used and recommended for users of ionising radiations, RPSs, technical and academic staff – overall a good reference source for radiation protection.

An Introduction to Radiation Protection – a Handbook for All!



ISBN 979-1-4441-4902-9

4. Use of Ionising Radiations in Veterinary Medicine

Professor Hertridge, of the Cambridge Veterinary School and Hospital, gave an informative presentation on how ionising radiations are used and controlled at the Madingley Road site. Particularly interesting was the need for informed flexibility to be followed when setting up and operating equipment in controlled areas' in the field'. As we have seen in previous RPS update presentations, sometimes the radiological hazard is not the only or the principle matter for consideration in the risk assessment – Tigers (as previously, Polar Bears), may be the most significant risk!

5. University Documentation

Recently update guidance available on the Safety Office website was highlighted, and a reminder given that the website should be checked from time to time to ensure that the current versions of publications are used within departments. If practical, linking your website to the SO pages is advised.

Next Year – A date for your diary - Thursday 21 March 2013!

We appreciate that other meetings are sometimes arranged after we fix the date for the annual RPS update meeting – in an effort to maximise attendance next year, we have already set the date of the next RPS update as above. Further details, venue etc will be forwarded at the end of 2012!

Ideas and suggestions for the 2013 RPS update meeting are sought. It is anticipated that the format will follow a conventional half-day meeting, with the option of a buffet lunch following the meeting. Please forward any ideas and requests to David or Lisabeth.

Other update news items

“Something important” that we forgot to mention at the meeting!

Radioactive Waste Management...A reminder is given that all bags consigned to the ‘Black’ solid waste ‘drums’ in your department waste store or at the Addenbrooke's Site central waste store, **MUST** be individually labelled with information indicating – *Department, Group or lab, Name, Radionuclide and Activity*. There must be at least one radiation ‘Trefoil’ visible on the outside of the bag. – i.e. visible when the lid of the drum is removed.

Audit and inspection programmes

A new audit programme (unsealed sources) is about to commence – a reminder was given that the audits will concentrate on EPR compliance – and thus the use of the ‘matrix’ to demonstrate or aiding in demonstrating compliance is advised!

Two Day course for Radiation Protection Supervisors

RPSs are reminded that the annual two-day course will be held on the 18 and 19 July 2012, at the Department of Pharmacology, Tennis Court Road. Although the course is intended for RPSs who have recently been appointed, or ‘potential’ RPSs, existing RPSs who have not completed this course or who have been in post for many years are very welcome on this course! **If you have not attended this course in the past four years**, you really should consider registering for the course this year. The course is organised jointly with the East Anglian Regional Radiation Protection Service (Addenbrooke's Hospital), and places may be booked at the SO website. Further information is available from David Plumb. There is no course fee payable for members of the University, and refreshments and lunches are also provided.

RPS Appointment Letters

A reminder was given that appointment and annual re-appointment letters should follow the *general* format of the model on the Safety Office website – BUT these letters should be customised by administrators/Heads of Department, to reflect the actual work to be carried out by the RPS – for instance x-ray supervision or the use and disposal of unsealed sources. HSE guidance (paragraph 294) in the IRR 1999, is that RPS appointments should be in writing *so there is no confusion* as to the duties expected.

Reminder!

The Safety Office are pleased to be able to offer a short 'road show' on instrumentation and monitoring, and bring our expertise and range of monitors to your department and discuss issues and problems with users of radioactive substances and machines. A number of Departments have already taken the opportunity to facilitate this presentation. If you think that one or more short (up to ninety minutes) sessions would be useful for users in your department, please do not hesitate to contact Lisabeth or David directly in order to discuss possible arrangements and to arrange suitable venues and times. Alternatively, there is some availability at a session to be held at the Safety Office on Wednesday 20th June – book via Safety Office website.