

School Safety Committee meeting minutes
23/July/2014, 2 pm, Rm 223, Rankine Building

Present: Manuel Salmeron-Sanchez, Robert Hadfield, Simon Wheeler, Douglas Irons, Scott Roy, Bill Monaghan, Peter Miller, Margret Lucas, Andrew Glidle, Donald Balance, Chris Hardy, Douglas MacIntyre, David Muir. Apologies: Dougie Thompson, Safa Hashim

1) Minutes of previous meeting

The previous minutes were examined and there were no queries.

2) Arrangements for forthcoming safety inspections

The previous safety inspections of the school had been conducted a little over a year ago and were largely done by the Technical Managers and the Safety Director. No major hazards had been found (mainly items that require E&B to address them, and trip hazards).

Within the EEE in the Rankine Building, when these had been done in the past, they were organised on a floor by floor level and it was discussed whether this was still appropriate now that the School was being done as a whole and been a significant diversification and intermingling of activities in some locations within the School.

It was decided that it may be preferable to try and arrange for the labs to be grouped by theme, whilst trying to avoid the logistical problem of 'volunteers' having to traipse around too much. AG agreed to investigate and arrange suitable groupings and organise a schedule.

3) Safety procedures for new RAs, students and staff

A document was previously circulated describing possible arrangements about how to convey safety information to new people. This was discussed and agreed in principle, however AG was also asked to consult with Debbie Goldie about arrangements that she was working on for the induction of new staff. For PhD students an arrangement was in place for Elaine to cc AG in an e-mail she sends to all new PhD students, allowing him to follow this up with a message to them asking them to read the safety information on the website and get back to him to say that they had done this etc. This has been working relatively well for the last year or so, with a 'success' rate of 80-90%.

4) Safety procedures for visitors

As above, with comment that all medium and long term visitors requiring access to the building would get an entry card from either Bill or Doug, and recently a school-wide system had been introduced asking for some paperwork to be completed in order that the School Office knows of their visit. This offers the potential to convey safety information to them or remind them that they should get this from their local host. It was noted that now that there were a significant number of risk assessments and codes of practice being completed across the school, the concept of working safely and conveying this to others was becoming better engrained in the culture of the School. Areas like the JWNC, Bio and Environmental labs (where most of the non-electrical or mechanical hazards are), already have in place good communication systems in this respect.

5) Updating the risk assessment forms and electrical safety guidelines

The current format of the risk form was found to be working fairly well, with good uptake. Whilst it was preferable to have people undertaking individual risk assessments, it was thought that it would be advantageous to be able to have some forms where groups of people could sign up to them, to say that they had read and understood them. This would be of great benefit to the migration of JWNC forms. AG was asked to investigate this, and the migration of JWNC forms with the IT group.

In light of the recent electrical shock incident in a laser lab, the School safety team had investigated this and also considered additional wording that could be added to the School Safety Manual to make it clearer what people could, or could not do, with respect to mains wiring (or high voltage equipment). It was agreed that such restrictions have to be tempered with the fact that this is an Electronic Engineering department, with an educational and research role. The previously circulated proposed form of words was agreed with some minor changes.

6) New activities/lab guardians for teaching labs (mainly in the James Watt building)

Over the previous 12-18 months there had been a significant influx of new people and new activities, and more were known to be on the horizon. A list of areas known about was previously circulated and the safety implications of these were discussed. It was felt that there would be no major issues. The notion of lab guardians for the teaching labs was discussed and whilst these were relatively easy to identify in the Rankine Building, this was harder to do in the main non-computer teaching lab in the James Watt Building, the Tuck Lab. It was agreed that Donald Balance would investigate who should do this role for that lab. It was indicated that the preference for this role should be an academic since they will probably be the people deemed responsible if something goes wrong.