
MINUTES

DEPARTMENT	Engineering, Health, Science and the Environment (EHSE)
MEETING TITLE	EHSE Workplace Health & Safety Committee (WHSC)
DATE	19 February 2015
TIME	9:00-11:00 a.m.
LOCATION	Blue 5.1.61 conference room
ATTENDEES	Bino George (BG), Mary Madden (MM), Himi Ibrahim (HI), Natasha Lawrence (NL), Leena Panicker (LP) <i>proxy for</i> Lolita Wikander (LW), Horst Walter (HW)– Manager HSE (guest), Yolande Yep (YY) <i>proxy for</i> Hemangi Surti (HS)
APOLOGIES	Nikeeta O’Sullivan (NS), Truc Nguyen (TN), Ruttiya McElroy (RM)
ABSENT	Chris Lugg (CL)

1. Welcome and Apologies

NL welcomed and thanked members of the Committee for the attendance and noted the apologies and attending proxies. NL informed group that this was her final meeting Chairing EHSE WHSC and that HI would be the next Chair.

MM arrived at 9:10am.

2. Membership, Terms of Reference and Communications

WHSC Terms of Reference (ToR) (under review by UHSC) were discussed at meeting. Vacant positions to be filled include:

- Environment Academic representative
- Health Safety Representative (HSR) from appropriate Precinct at Casuarina campus
- Student representative

NL noted absences and asked WHSC members to agree expectations for participation in WHSC. WHSC agreed regular attendance and involvement was important, and that members are required to physically attend meetings or provide input via electronic copy and send in a proxy if unable to attend future meetings. Members unable to attend in person for several consecutive meetings will be asked to relinquish their position.

From the next meeting, MM suggested that the Chair sends a reminder to members 2 weeks before to allow sufficient time to obtain feedback from respective area and suggest agenda items. The agenda will be finalised and distributed 1 week before the meeting. Meeting frequency is to be once every two months, timed to coincide with teaching-free periods as much as possible.

ACTION 1: HI to observe attendance in the coming meetings and approach representatives if absent from 2 consecutive meetings.

ACTION 2: WHSC representatives to ensure their Outlook calendars are current and include regular commitments to avoid setting WHSC times that don't suit most members.

ACTION 3: Dates and times to be set for bimonthly EHSE WHSC meetings for rest of year.

ACTION 4: HI to ensure Call for meeting and agenda items will be emailed to members 2 weeks before meeting date and finalised agenda items will be distributed 1 week before meeting date.

ACTION 5: HI to appoint a student representative, preferably a Postgraduate, and an Academic representative for Environment, for the next meeting.

3. Field work

NL provided insights on:

- a. VCAG paper and TSAC recommendations – additional 0.5FTE – 1.0FTE Field Work Officer on top existing 1.0FTE distinguished as one is a hands-on type while the other is a administrative-type. However, both will and should be able to support field work duties when required.
- b. Plan to implement online / electronic process for field work risk assessment, planning, approval and bookings.
- c. Field Work training sessions tentatively scheduled on 17/3 and 31/3. Will require WHSC members to attend and complete training to competently review fieldwork risk assessment and activity in EHSE, and make suitable recommendations to the Pro Vice Chancellor (PVC) EHSE.
- d. Elimination of ATVs usage by Faculty and replaced with UTVs. HW requested further information for the purpose of compiling information in case of questions arise on why certain areas in the university has stopped using ATVs while other areas are still using it.

ACTION 6: NL send fieldwork guide to WHSC members for feedback on page 7 of fieldwork guide, (...) for approvers, administrators etc.

ACTION 7: NL to provide to HW further information and documents from Faculty on the decision to replace ATV with UTV in its entirety.

4. Lab and Biosafety

HI informed the members on the revised membership for the EHSE Biosafety committee which was formed in Nov 2013 but was inactive throughout 2014. It will now be chaired by Martin Boland (MB), with members from research group Anna Padovan and Tech Services Marama Gray. The committee's role is to communicate directly with external organisation IBC as well as to feed information to WHSC on Biosafety. A joint inspection has been carried out in Nov 2014 with representatives from Menzies and Berrimah Lab. HI thanked MM for her input on Biosafety manual which was distributed to WHSC members.

ACTION 8: NL to distribute draft Biosafety Committee website to MB cc HI for updating and publishing.

5. School of Psychological & Clinical Science Hazard Profiling

HW informed the members a Risk Management training, incorporated with School meeting is planned for SPCS staff involved in the project.

ACTION 9: HW to re-send training calendar invite to Head of School Timothy Skinner cc Marie Collings.

6. Mentally Healthy Workplace

An initiative by Nursing theme which has taken place and is ongoing. The initiative has support from PVC EHSE, provided the initiative's champion/s inform or involve other relevant areas of CDU, and may be rolled out to other areas if successful.

HW informed the members of similar support are also available for staff members, as well as close family members, via the University's Employee Assistance Program and the counselling provided by Employee Assistance Services Australia (EASA).

7. Reports From Areas

- a. AllIRs: Additional to last report from Chair in Oct 2014:
 - i. Slip, Trip and Fall – A staff member had a slip, trip and fall due to a plover attack while walking to car park, received first aid for abrasion. Future control measure: alternative path to car park. To re-assess if the plovers change the pattern.
 - ii. Animal Hazard – A staff was stung by a catfish on the left hand during a project field work sampling. An immediate first aid response for catfish barb stings was applied and formal medical visit was completed the next day including antibiotics. Future control measure: Practice of wearing appropriate gloves and use of pliers should be maintained.
 - iii. Animal Hazard – A staff member was scratched or bitten by a fruit bat at Daly River during field work. Staff performed first aid but did not proceed with immediate formal medical attention and continued with the field work. HW urged on cases like this to be treated with utmost urgency and to seek formal medical help immediately as it involves possibility of Lyssa virus infection.
 - iv. Workplace Hazard – A staff member bumped into a stack of boxes on the corridor and physically responded to avoid the boxes from toppling over. This sudden movement has caused the staff to feel a sharp pain on the left hip. The pain subsided and followed by a dull ache.
 - v. Workplace Hazard – A staff member experienced a sharp musculo-skeletal pain twisting body to respond to colleague in/near office.
- b. SPCS – MM described a past case in 2013 where a student was agitated and unable to complete an assessment. Staff provided assistance to support the student to complete the assessment at a later date, however the ultimate outcome was unknown at the WHSC. LP informed the members of similar situation with a Nursing student. WHSC spoke about academic / professional responsibility to prepare and graduate students fit for industry and industry OHS requirements. WHSC may consider workshopping and documenting the strategies already in place to prepare and support students as much as reasonably practical, acknowledging the overriding commitment to academic and professional standards. HW spoke of the difficulty of (proactively) managing mental health and wellbeing before mental injury is sustained (noting WHS legislation targets the point of injury).
- c. SEIT – HI raised 2014 issue from SEIT Tech Services area for risk assessments to be taken seriously by academics as well as usage of PPEs. YY has noticed an improvement compared to last year's and will monitor the situation throughout S1.

ACTION 10: HI to add lab/biosafety to agenda of next WHSC meeting; HS to report on whether SEIT lab issues seem to be resolved or require WHSC discussion and action in the next meeting.