

To accompany minutes of March, 1986

THE UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

PHONE NUMBERS AND AREAS OF REPRESENTATION

CHAIRMAN

Dr. J.B. Farmer

3296

Chemical Safety

SECRETARY

Miss K. Shaw

5478

CUE

Mr. M. Barnes

4283

CUPE 116

Dr. G. Bates

2834

Faculty Association

R Mr. E. de Bruijn

4555

Library/Academic
Services

R Mr. P. Buchannon

5778

AAPS

* Mr. T. Derouin

4185

IUOE 882

Dr D.J. Farquhar

228-7011

Student Health

Ms M. Flores

5778

Housing

Mr. D.R. Haller

5543

Physical Plant

* Mr. D. Harper

4654

CUPE 2278/TAU

R Dr. J.B. Hudson

4621

Biohazards

Ms E. Lebitschnig

2713

CUE

Dr. D. McAdam

2459

Faculty Association

* Dr. R.T. Morrison

228-8373

Radio-Isotopes

Mr. D. Napier

3419

CUPE 116

Mr. G. Sloan

6522

CUPE 116

Dr. F.J.R. Taylor

4587

Diving

OBSERVERS:

R Assistant-Chief S. Affleck

224-5415

Fire Department

Mr. D. Bell

2643

Occupational Health
and Safety Office

Mr. R. Black

228-7644

Health Sciences Ctr.

Dr. W. Greene

4218

Occupational Health
and Safety Office

GUESTS:

Mr. D. Haig

273-2266

W.C.B.

Dr. J. Gregg (for J. Hudson)

Biohazards

Captain R.W. Lawrie (for S. Affleck)

Fire Department

* Indicates absence

R indicates absence with regrets

➤ Note new phone number of Ms Lebitschnig.

MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE HELD MARCH 25, 1986, AT 10:30 A.M. IN THE BOARD AND SENATE ROOM

Dr. Farmer announced that Dr. Gregg was representing Dr. Hudson at this meeting and that Mr. Buchannon had sent his regrets. He introduced Mr. David Haig as an Occupational Safety Officer from WCB. Dr. Greene presented Mr. David Bell who recently came from the Ministry of Labour to join UBC's Occupational Health and Safety Department as the Occupational Hygiene Officer.

Mr. Napier commented on the absenteeism at the meeting. He urged members to send replacements when they knew they would be absent.

Adoption of the minutes

After a short discussion to resolve the terms report and investigation on the accident forms, Dr. Bates moved, seconded by Dr. Farquhar, that the minutes be adopted as circulated. Carried.

A. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1. Eye Wash

Dr. Bates told the committee that a plumber had come to repair the eye wash in Chemistry. The plumber reported that the problem arose because of faulty assembly and a missing part. The equipment is now working. Dr. Farmer noted that it took 13 months to repair the eye wash.

2. Accident Investigation Forms

Dr. Bates announced that he and Dr. Greene would meet to fine tune the report form and add the instructions on the back. Further they would prepare for a trial run. Dr. Greene will approach Mr. Haller about Physical Plant's participation and he may ask one of the science departments to be involved.

When Mr. Haig inquired whether the same provisions would be made to record incidents without injury, he was told the same form would be used but without the name of an injured party.

3. Campus smoking policy

Ms Flores reported that the Vancouver City Council had endorsed the recommended amendments to their Health Act but asked that it be drafted and brought back for further review before being enacted.

When deciding about seating arrangements in restaurants and personal services, the report recommended that where there was seating for less than 10 people, no smoking would be permitted. For areas that accommodated 10 or more, 50% would be set aside for smokers. The Council felt this was restricting and asked that it be reworded.

She added that she had been in touch with Knowledge Network who had material on sidestream smoke.

Ms Flores thanked Dr. McAdam and Mr. de Bruijn for sending her literature on the subject.

She closed her report by saying the sub-committee is intending to propose that the University change its smoking policy for conform to the Vancouver health by-law amendments. They will have more to report at the next meeting as they think the issue will be resolved in April.

In response to a question from Mr. Napier, we were told there had been no opposition from hotels and restaurants at the Council meeting. When Dr. Taylor inquired why UBC chose to follow Vancouver's decisions in this matter, Ms Flores answered that although the sub-committee had reviewed several policies, they chose to focus on Vancouver's because that is the policy UBC had chosen in the past. Our geographical position made the choice reasonable and convenient.

4. Fire Safety Plan

Capt. Lawrie passed out outlines of the original fire safety plan plus a newer format where committees could fill in the blanks. Ms Lebitschnig recommended that copies of the latter be issued to all the committees who have not completed their plan.

When Dr. Taylor asked how the fire department would handle a forest fire on the University Endowment Lands, Capt. Lawrie indicated that the Forestry Service would come to their aid.

In response to Miss Shaw's inquiry about fire wardens, Capt. Lawrie stated the positions were to be voluntary and the fire code recommended supervisory staff be involved. Those individuals would not be held personally liable for others during an emergency.

5. The Protection of Animals in the Event of Fire

Dr. Gregg read his report to the committee and presented it to Capt. Lawrie for approval. Copies will be presented to the committee members at the next meeting.

Capt. Lawrie stated that it was a good report which may be incorporated into the fire safety plan. He agreed to present it to the Fire Chief. When Dr. Gregg asked if the location of the animals was required, Capt. Lawrie said their location could be indicated by a symbol on the maps and by labels on doors.

6. Radio-active lines

After Mr. Napier outlined the problems plumbers face when asked to flush drains from labs where they are suspicious about the presence of radiation material, he requested written procedures.

Dr. Greene told the committee that he had discussed the matter with the Radiation Protection Officer, Armando Zea. Both preferred concerns about radiation be referred to Mr. Zea.

Dr. Greene stated that it is within the worker's right to ensure safe working conditions.

He explained that only certain types of radio-isotopes are allowed to be disposed of via the drain; the dangerous ones are held and disposed of through Chalk River. Those which trained lab workers put down the drain were of a dilution factor and in quantities that would not result in injury or life threatening situations.

When Mr. Napier insisted on written procedures, Dr. Farmer asked that the arrangements be made through Dr. Greene's office.

7. WCB Course

Both Mr. Napier and Ms. Flores gave written and oral reports of the seminar held through the Workers' Compensation Board, "How to Develop your Occupational Safety and Health Program". Portions of the written report are:

"The course stressed the high cost of accidents to the province of B.C., to the employers, and to the individual workers. It was noted that in B.C. we had 154 fatal accidents last year. Most of these fatal accidents could have been avoided if proper training had been given or if better inspections had been carried out in the workplace. Many deaths from accidents are caused by a lack of experience which might have led to better personal judgement when young workers are put in dangerous situations without pointing out the hazards. Costs to employers from accidents include uninsured property or equipment damage, the cost of replacing an absent employee, lowered morale, idle machine time, time loss from first aid and accident reporting, and many other items, such as increased cost of WCB payments. For the Province, the cost in increased health care and rehabilitation benefits were noted."

"One point which was made through out the seminar was that responsibility for ensuring a safe workplace and for following safe work practices falls on both management and the worker. The safety committees are a key to identifying problems, whether they are physical dangers of the workplace or hazardous practices by fellow workers. But the important point is having these problems corrected. It is important that management play an active role in the safety committee, and in pursuing safety as a corporate goal. The Committee should insure that workers are trained to use safe work habits and practices as laid down by UBC policy. It is also equally important that workers understand that they do not have the choice to disregard safe work practices such as wearing personal protective equipment and using lock-out procedures."

Mr. Napier referred to the fatality statistics and said that there were over 300,000 reported "near misses" last year. Only a fraction of a second separated those "near miss victims" from death or injury. Proper, perpetual training would prevent complacency which in turn would save lives.

Ms Flores moved, seconded by Mr. Napier, that the University endeavor to send two participants from each safety committee to this course in the future; one from management and one an employee. Carried

The delegates emphasized the importance of members of a committee taking the course at the same time and that interaction with representatives from industry was an beneficial experience.

Ms Flores described the "Iceberg principle" comparing the money and time spent on the course to the high cost of time loss, morale, insurance, not to mention life or injury.

When Dr. Bates asked if WCB could design a course for the campus, Ms Flores pointed out that the present course was thorough and well rounded, Dr. Farmer stressed the merit of a diverse program and Mr. Haig stated the course focused on policies, procedures and concepts in getting the program together.

Dr. Farmer noted that this would be noted in the minutes of which a copy would go the President's Office and instructed Dr. Greene to provide the details when presenting the motion.

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. Accident and Industrial Disease Report

Dr. Greene distributed copies of the February report. An additional page was added detailing 11 wage loss claims. He pointed out that there was a significant decrease in the number of working days lost and compensation compared to this time last year. Since the report was drawn up 2 additional incidents occurred. One involved a student tripping over a rack and injuring a hand; the other involved a motorist backing into an occupied car.

The Fire Hall reported 27 incidents involving a rescue ambulance; some involved taking students to the Acute Care Hospital. Mr. Napier commented that fewer accidents indicated the committees were working better.

2. Director's Report

Dr. Greene read his report to the committee. Copies will be attached to the minutes.

Ms Lebitsching suggested having an outside company remove the backlog of chemicals to a disposal site off campus. When Dr. Bates inquired about involving the Fire Dept., Capt. Lawrie agreed to ask the Fire Chief about burning off the chemicals.

Concern was raised by several members about the present storage facilities providing enough space, protection from public interference and knowledge of the material. They were assured that adequate space and protection is available and that an inventory is being kept.

C. OTHER BUSINESS

SICK ROOMS

Miss Shaw explained that her local committee had instructed her to find out whether the university had a policy about facilities for men who needed to use a sick room. Her committee understood places on campus were available for ladies but no one seemed to know where men could wait until they were well enough to drive home.

Members of this committee were unaware of any policy or such facilities. Mr. Bell said the regulation that required businesses to provide the sick rooms for ladies had been repealed.

Dr. Greene agreed to check into this matter.

Adjournment

Ms Flores moved, seconded by Dr. Bates, that the meeting be adjourned.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, April 22, 1986, at 10:30, in the Board and Senate Room.

J. B. Farmer
Dr. J. B. Farmer (Chairman)

K. Shaw
K. Shaw (Secretary)

The Protection of Animals in the Event of Fire

A large number of laboratory animals are maintained in the bio-medical sciences Departments on the Main Campus and the South Campus. The animals are used for research and teaching purposes. They comprise a wide range of species, but the great majority consist of rats and mice. They are housed under optimum conditions and their standard of care conforms to the recommendations of the Canadian Council on Animal Care.

A recent CCAC Assessment Panel suggested that the University should have some guidelines for the protection and safety of these animals in the event of an outbreak of fire, subject to the fact that human safety must come first. This report is intended to review the matter and to make whatever recommendations appear appropriate. The review will be considered under three headings:

- A. Preventive measures;
- B. Action to be taken in the event of fire;
- C. Action to be taken following a fire.

A. Preventive measures

The precautions that are already in place to prevent an outbreak of fire will serve to protect the resident animals as well as the human occupants of any building. It is also considered highly unlikely that a fire would originate in an animal room or enclosure. With the exception of the farm animal buildings of the Dept. of Animal Science, these areas are built of non-combustible materials and do not have windows. Cages are also non-combustible. Smoking is normally prohibited in animal rooms. All electrical outlets are or should be water-proofed. Inflammable agents, such as ether, should not be used or stored in an animal room. It seems therefore that the installation of smoke detectors or water sprinklers within the animal rooms would not be justified. However, the Fire Protection Officer and Building Safety Committees should ensure that the above precautions are being taken, that animal room doors are fire-proof and that technicians are familiar with the location of fire-extinguishers in the near vicinity of the animal facilities.

B. Action to be taken in the event of fire

For the reasons stated above, it is very unlikely that a fire will actually originate within an animal room. (Farm animal units are considered to be a special case). The action to be taken is therefore based on the premise that any such fire would occur elsewhere in the building, albeit in the near vicinity of the animal rooms. The type of action will depend on several factors but primarily on the severity of the fire. In the event of a major or widespread conflagration, only one course is possible, i.e. all personnel must vacate the building immediately. The only protective action that might be taken would be to ensure that the doors to all animal rooms are closed.

Should the fire be of less severity, then other factors must be considered. These are:

1. The location of the animals

In several buildings the animals are housed in a self-contained suite of rooms which in some cases are located on the ground or basement level while in others they are on an upper floor. In other Departments the rooms are distributed throughout the building. In these circumstances the location of the fire in relation to the animal rooms will be critical and there can be no firm recommendations as to the removal of animals. Obviously, the transfer of animals from an upper floor could present a serious hazard and should not be attempted except with the knowledge and approval of the Fire Chief.

2. The species of animals

Large animals, i.e. cattle, sheep, pigs, dogs and cats, are usually loosely housed and if released, will survive outside the building and (with the possible exception of cats) can subsequently be recaptured. In contrast, small animals, i.e. rats, mice, guinea pigs and rabbits are maintained in far greater numbers and are held in cages which are mounted on wall shelving or racks. If released, they would not survive outside their normal controlled environment and could not be retrieved. It would therefore not be prudent nor humane to release these small animals from their cages. If it is feasible to transfer them from the vicinity of a fire, this should be done without removing them from their cages. In most instances this would be a slow and physically arduous undertaking. The removal of wild or exotic animals would require even greater discretion, since they would be dangerous if released and their recapture would be difficult.

3. Availability of Staff

Some species or individual animals, if frightened, are potentially dangerous particularly with strangers and may require skilled handling or restraint. It is advisable therefore that the removal of animals be carried out only by the technical staff or in their absence, by the Director and staff of the Animal Care Centre, or at least under their supervision.

C. Action to be taken following a fire

Once a fire has been extinguished or brought under control, it is essential that the Director of the Animal Care Centre and the technical staff should enter the building as soon as it is safe to do so, to permit the examination of the animals. They can then be given appropriate treatment or else be humanely destroyed, depending on the nature and severity of the injuries sustained.

In summary, there is no single course of action or series of actions that can be uniformly applied to all outbreaks of fire in buildings which contain animals. However, the following guidelines may serve to reduce the potential loss of life.

The University Fire Department should be provided with the home telephone number of the Director of the Animal Care Centre and the names and phone numbers of the animal care staff in all bio-medical Departments.

Building Safety Committees should ensure that all electrical outlets in animal rooms are protected and that inflammable agents are properly stored elsewhere.

All animal technicians should know the location of fire extinguishers in the near vicinity of the animal unit.

In the event of a major fire, the technicians should close all doors and leave the building.

In less serious outbreaks, the animal care staff should be prepared to release all large animals if they are considered at risk, given the approval of the Fire Chief.

In no circumstances should small animals and wild or potentially dangerous animals be released from their cages. However, if time permits, the cages containing these animals may be moved to another part of the building or outside the building, preferably by the animal care staff.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

2071 WEST MALL
VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA
V6T 1Y9

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT HOUSING
& CONFERENCES

March 24, 1986

TO: Dr. Farmer, Chairman
Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Dr. Greene, Director
Occupational Health and Safety

FROM: Mary Flores, Director, Student Housing and Conferences and
Doug Napier, CUPE 116

The seminar on "How to Develop your Occupational Safety and Health Program" which we attended at the Workers' Compensation Board Offices on February 26 and 27, 1986, was an excellent presentation. Three instructors: Mr. John Spence, Mr. Arden Campie, and Mr. Ivo Saarni, worked together to keep the pace changing and to involve the participants in the discussion. The three instructors used their personal areas of expertise and their backgrounds as both employees in industry and as inspectors for the WCB to relate the material covered to the actual workplace.

The purpose of the seminar was to instruct members of safety committees (both management and workers) in how to set up a working occupational safety and health program which would include:

- a corporate safety policy
- safety inspection of the workplace
- instruction and training in safe working practises
- accident investigation, focusing on prevention of future accidents
- effective safety committees

The course stressed the high cost of accidents to the province of B.C., to the employers, and to the individual workers. It was noted that in B.C. we had 154 fatal accidents last year. Most of these fatal accidents could have been avoided if proper training had been given or if better inspections had been carried out in the workplace. Many deaths from accidents are caused by a lack of experience which might have led to better personal judgement when young workers are put in dangerous situations without pointing out the hazards. Costs to employers from accidents include uninsured property or equipment damage, the cost of replacing an absent employee, lowered employee moral, idle machine time, time loss from first aid and accident reporting, and many other items, such as increased cost of WCB payments. For the Province, the cost in increased health care and rehabilitation benefits were noted.

One point which was made throughout the seminar was that the responsibility for ensuring a safe workplace and for following safe work practises falls on both management and the worker. The safety committees are a key to identifying problems, whether they are physical dangers of the workplace or hazardous practises by fellow workers. But the important point is having these problems corrected. It is important that management play an active role in the safety committee, and in pursuing safety as a corporate goal. The Committee should insure that workers are trained to use safe work habits and practises as laid down by UBC Policy. It is also equally important that workers understand that they do not have the choice to disregard safe work practises such as wearing personal protective equipment and using lock-out procedures.

The Industrial Health and Safety Regulations manual was used throughout the course to train participants in how to look up regulations and to instruct the class in what is expected of safety committees, etc. Other handouts were provided on the various topics covered.

We believe that this course was very beneficial in awakening participants to the wide scope of the regulations, and the responsibilities of all of us to ensure that safety becomes a priority in the workplace. The class would be of benefit to any safety committee members, and particularly beneficial to on-line foremen and heads of departmental shops. It would also benefit senior management where they have delegated safety committee membership to middle management, so that they to are aware of the stepping order of responsibilities of safety. The course could be offered at UBC, but the discussion which was possible with participants from other industries would be missed.

It is our recommendation that the University endeavor to send two participants from each safety committee to this course in the future; one from management and one an employee.

MF:dd