

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
OLD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
6328 MEMORIAL ROAD
VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA
V6T 2B3

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

TELEPHONE (604) 228-4218

October 16, 1985

Ms. Karen Shaw
Safety Officer
C.U.E.

Dear Karen:

Thank you very much for your letter of September 26, 1985 concerning University health and safety policy.

As you know the University has made a major commitment to the health and safety program for all faculty, staff, students and visitors. This commitment by the University was discussed and acted upon by the Executive Council on January 22, 1985.

"The University shall be administered so as to ensure that health, safety and accident prevention form an integral part of the design, construction, purchase and maintenance of all buildings, equipment and work processes." Further, the Executive Council policy statement contained: "Compliance with the Workers' Compensation Act and related legislation is the minimum standard which is acceptable to the University. The intention is to encourage all faculty, staff and students to strive to exceed the minimum legal standards."

The successful application of this policy will be achieved by everyone exercising their personal responsibility for safety. In terms of individuals this responsibility can be carried out by observing safety rules and procedures established by the supervisor, department head, the University and the Workers' Compensation Board; by taking an active part in practicing safe work habits; by immediately reporting any accident, injury or unsafe conditions to a supervisor; and by proper use of personal protective equipment provided by the University.

The University by acting through Deans, Directors and Department Heads will provide a safe and healthy working environment, ensure regular inspections are made and take action as required to improve unsafe conditions; provide first aid facilities; support the supervisors and safety committees in the implementation of an effective accident prevention program and ensure compliance with the W.C.B. regulations.

As you can see the University's intent is well established and founded. It has been further enhanced by the establishment of the Occupational Health and Safety Program. This program is new and small but its direction and mandate are clear.

The emotional health of University employees, faculty and staff is of concern. Emotional health is affected by any factors, not all of which are under the control of the University. Through the judicious use of the Medical Plan, the University Health and Safety Program and the Personnel Services' referral procedures the University will assist those employees so affected as has been done in the past. Employees are encouraged to contact Libby Nason (228-6792) if they would like to discuss individual problems.

I trust the above information concerning the University's Policy and Procedures will clarify some of the concerns that you have.

Sincerely yours



M. WAYNE GREENE, Ph.D.
Director

MWG/sn

cc. Libby Nason
Personnel Services



association of university and college employees

September 26, 1985

Dr. Wayne Greene
Director
Occupational Health and Safety
Room 209
Old Administration Building
UBC Campus

Dear Sir:

It has been brought to my attention that members of my union who work in the Finance Department have been suffering from a variety of severe discomforts such as:

1. Shingles
2. Hives
3. Backaches
4. Migraine headaches (increasing in frequency)
5. Bleeding ulcers
6. Broken teeth (caused by clenching the teeth too tightly)

These seem to be stress related. This is understandable as those people are being subjected to unreasonable tension caused largely by the study by Ritchie & Associates.

Please look into this matter.

In closing I present you with three questions, two of which I asked the Library Administration. (A copy of that letter is enclosed.)

1. What assurance can I give my fellow union members that their physical well-being will be protected while at work? Or will they be expected to put their lives on the line to meet deadlines?
2. Can I give them equal assurance about their emotional health?
3. What responsibility is the University taking for this added and unreasonable tension?

I would appreciate a written response.

Sincerely,

Karen Shaw
Safety Officer, CUE

xc:CUE
:Vice-President Gellatly

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

1956 MAIN MALL
VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA
V6T 1Y3

LIBRARY

October 2, 1985

Ms. Karen Shaw
English Language Unit
Catalogue Records

Dear Ms. Shaw:

I thought I should send you a note to let you know what has happened with your two recent letters.

Your letter as Safety Officer of AUCE has been referred to Eileen Stewart, Director of Personnel Services, since she is responsible for liaison with AUCE in matters relating to Ritchie & Associates. I have offered my assistance in responding, if she should need it.

I will have to wait for advice before attempting to reply to your second letter. All that I can say at this point is that staff members will not be asked to do anything that is in conflict with current union agreements.

Sincerely,



Douglas N. McInnes
University Librarian

DNM/slz



association of university and college employees

September 20, 1985

Mr. D. McInnes
University Librarian
Main Library
UBC Campus

Dear Mr. McInnes:

At first I thought it was unfortunate that you dismissed the meeting regarding Ritchie & Associates before allowing everyone to ask their questions. Upon reflection I realize that your answer deserves to be in writing.

I am concerned about the safety of the campus community in general and my fellow union members in particular in relation to the Ritchie & Associates' activity at UBC.

Under heavier work loads and added stress, people are tempted to take unnecessary risks.

Accident reports suggest that most injuries could be avoided if people did not attempt short cuts.

Although we do not work in a factory, offices and libraries can be dangerous places. I am concerned that people will:

- overload book trucks
- try moving these overloaded trucks alone
- in a hurry, try to move a truck with one hand
- fill and lift boxes beyond recommended safe weights
- run up or down stairs
- make one trip with a large load instead of two trips with reasonable loads
- use faulty equipment
- fail to maintain equipment
- fail to use protective equipment
- run duplicators for long periods of time to meet deadlines without consideration for those forced to breathe the toxic fumes.
- fail to clean up spills
- insist on coming to work when ill resulting in spreading of communicable diseases, prolonging their own illness, etc.
- remove paper clips from floor sockets with metal letter openers. (Perhaps you did not know how creative some people could be!)

The visiting company claims to be able to save the University money within a year. I counter that during that time and over a longer range of time, the cost will be greater.

Not all things can be measured in dollars and cents.

Can we put a price on life? On morale? As the morale declines so will the productivity. As these fall, UBC's accident rates, the severity of those accidents, WCB claims, sick leave usage, and the University's insurance rates will rise.

In closing, I ask you three questions.

1. What assurance can I give my fellow union members that their physical well-being will be protected while at work? Or will they be expected to put their lives on the line to meet deadlines?
2. Can I give them equal assurance about their emotional health?
3. Has the Library considered the total expense of this study?

I look forward to your written reply.

Sincerely,

Karen Shaw
Safety Officer

xc:CUE