MINUTES OF THE MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY & MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND FACULTY ASSOCIATION
JOINT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE (JOHSC) MEETING

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

9:30 a.m.
Arts Building, Room A-3033

MINUTES

Present: Dr. Robert Gendron, MUNFA Representative and Co-Chair; Dr. George Jenner, MUNFA Representative; Dr. Sandra LeFort, MUN Representative; Mr. Ian McKinnon, MUN Representative and Co-Chair; Dr. Barbara Neis, MUNFA Representative; Dr. Ramachandran Venkatesan, MUN Representative; Mr. Darrell Miles, Director of Facilities Management

Apologies: Mr. Craig Boyd, Manager of Safety & Environmental Services;

1. Approval of Agenda: B. Gendron asked that one minor change be made to item 2(b) to reflect C. Boyd’s information regarding work environment standards as per the ACGIH and not the Canada Standards Agency. R. Kelly already made the correction in the agenda and passed around before the meeting began. The agenda was approved as submitted.

Protocols and procedures of JOHSC.

I. McKinnon asked D. Miles to provide the Committee with an update of the OHS Committee structure at MUN. D. Miles indicated that he recently met with the provincial government officials who reviewed MUN’s committee set up and agreed that a site based approach was not feasible, and that the Union based approach is an appropriate model to use. D. Miles noted that the only concern would be to ensure that employees not represented by a Union are covered. The University is reviewing how to address this issue.

The issue of an overarching committee was also discussed. Some members felt it would be a positive way of sharing issues and provide co-chairs of the various committees an opportunity to discuss concerns and be able to look at statistical data. The concern about such a committee is that work issues are resolved at the point committee level, leaving a question as to the need for an overarching committee.

G. Jenner mentioned that he had recently been to a CAUT meeting and was speaking with the CAUT Occupational Health and Safety Officer, Laura Lozanski, and she indicated that she would be interested to come to the university and help set up an overarching committee, to run a workshop, or training programs. The Ontario OHS have some new items listed on its website regarding workbooks.
B. Neis brought up that ergonomics is a major issue at the university and that you have to submit a written request to have one done. D. Miles responded and said all a person has to do is verbally request and one will be done. B. Gendron asked D. Miles if his department carried this out. D. Miles mentioned that the Human Resources department oversees this program and sometimes they use an outside agency. B. Gendron thought that this information should be made known to people. I. McKinnon will check into this.

B. Gendron mentioned that the Finance department is the common administrative body for ordering dangerous materials on campus and that all responsible staff such as principal investigators and laboratory heads must have, by law, on file a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for all hazardous chemicals or potentially dangerous materials. He asked D. Miles what resources if any Facilities Management has in place to deal with ensuring that MSDS accompany every single purchase of a hazardous material so that the collection and filing of MSDS can become an automated process linked to purchase orders. D. Miles responded that MSDS sheets are very easy to access if needed. B. Gendron mentioned that by automating the process and linking it to purchase orders, that having the MSDS in future would be guaranteed and that this would be a good proactive process to have the MSD sheets in place for easy access if a problem should arise.

S. LeFort mentioned that general education and training is required because the university is such a unique environment. Most individual faculties have their own autonomy and it is good to know who is in charge and who has the responsibility to deal with issues as they arise. D. Miles responded that there is a process in place for the pick-up and disposal of active cylinders. It only takes a telephone call. G. Jenner brought up that labs are shared resources with people coming and going therefore sometimes containers may get left behind and eventually forgotten about. D. Miles responded that a lab has a permit holder who is responsible for keeping track of this information.

With respect to the Committee’s role, G. Jenner noted that faculty need to know who to go to. D. Miles noted that this information is available on the website. When there is an incident, D. Miles noted that it is the Head’s responsibility to investigate and if technical assistance is required, then personnel from Safety would get involved.

How can we make sure that faculties and other unions have a better understanding – does the administration give out more information? Can we put out information in conjunction with the other two unions letting people know who is on each committee? G. Jenner mentioned that maybe by placing information in the Communicator, the Gazette or on Newsline it will give it more visibility. S. LeFort said maybe C. Boyd could start with something like this. I. McKinnon to follow-up.

2. I. McKinnon moved to have previous minutes approved, S. LeFort seconded and B. Gendron approved motion.

3. **Update and Follow Up on “Action” Items from January 10 Meeting:**
   
   a) Note of thanks was sent to Dr. Volkoff and Dr. Bishop on March 7.

   b) C. Boyd information was corrected to reflect the ACGIH guidelines book. D. Miles spoke on how the book deals with a certain process. He also mentioned
that the State of Minnesota have an information website listing work environment standards.

c) I. McKinnon and B. Gendron attended meetings for overarching JOSHC.

d) Copies of the JOHSC Terms of Reference were circulated.

e) The URL for University’s Safety, Environment and Health Procedures was sent on April 25.

f) Status of 4 Clark Place – Some small amounts of mold were found and cleaned up, but there are still some issues. Facilities Management went back and checked again – holes were punched into the wall and more mold was found. Clean up of this was completed. Facilities Management have been monitoring to see if any mold has come back. There are other different problems there also, i.e. Furnace and floor leaking. Dehumidifiers have been used; Facilities Management have gone back and checked. Everything is totally cleaned and the walls have been punched to see if any mold has come back. B. Gendron asked if this is a more chronic issue or fixable. D. Miles said it was more chronic – dehumidifiers and a full fledge system is in place to deal with situation and continual monitoring is taking place.

g) Henrietta Harvey Building asbestos, dust, wall cracks and air quality issues. I. McKinnon addressed this issue and mentioned that the asbestos abatement is complete. The asbestos plan training program is on-going to make everyone aware of it. B. Gendron asked if notices could be placed in the bulletins to let people know about it. I. McKinnon responded by saying that there are three or four hour training sessions. Will circulate a list of all buildings to MUNFA for their members to become aware and choose what training session they would like to attend.

h) Faculty of English office air/fumes issues – An air conditioner has been installed in the office and the issue is being resolved. B. Neis said that the system was not working and that the ASM should have been moved. I. McKinnon said that it took a long time to resolve and that the ASM did not want to move and that air testing was carried out. The air quality was compromised probably due to the five coats of paint on the wall or the new finish on the floor. D. Miles said that out gassing lasted longer and with the new materials in the ASM’s office this could have caused the problems. B. Neis suggested that given the potential OH issues with off-gassing, the university should explore developing a policy to notify people of the risk and encourage them to notify their head if they experience any problems or delay moving people into newly built or renovated spaces for an appropriate period after completion (would need to be researched) to reduce the risk of sensitization and illness. D. Miles responded that in certain situations where it is insisted that it is an air quality issue when in fact it is something that was brought in from outside that causes the problem. A briefing paper is sent to administrative and department heads occasionally to inform of any problems. G. Jenner said that people should know the lines of communication – to be informed and delegate responsibility.
i) Arts/Administration elevator issues – one main elevator is not working, the glass back one. While doing repair work it was discovered that the shaft is crooked and therefore it is a structural integrity issue and now under construction. The second elevator falls under capital renewal review but deemed safe. I. McKinnon mentioned that all buildings that are accessible are listed on the website.

3. New Business

a) C. Boyd – led information seminars and directions for MUN H & S policy: Role of MUN/MUNFA JOHSC and other JOHSC in MUN policy development. B. Gendron and I. McKinnon attended these seminars.

b) Workplace Inspections and involvement of JOHSC – mandated to involve B. Gendron and I. McKinnon, who have completed a couple of inspections, it was decided that the committee would divide into groups of two in order to cover all inspections. B. Gendron and S. LeFort would cover the medical buildings; G. Jenner and R. Venkatesan would cover the Science and Engineering buildings; B. Neis and I. McKinnon would cover the Inco and Arts buildings.

New issues submitted to JOHSC

c) Hazardous materials inventories and links to Finance/Administration – address in organizational structure.

d) Teaching facilities and MUN fire hazards classifications – all classrooms have an occupant capacity. What are the limitations on the room? Are regular inspections done by the fire department? D. Miles a new room is inspected and given a capacity number, regular fire audits and inspections are carried out. B. Neis asked if there is a checklist. The Registrar’s office has a list of classrooms that are used for teaching courses. Any rooms that departments have for studying are not listed with a capacity number because they are not on the Registrar’s office list.

e) EN3050 - an inspection was carried out by B. Gendron and I. McKinnon after custodial services refused to enter and clean due to unsafe conditions. Recommendations were made to clean up and to make it ergonomically fit, additional shelving is required, and recycle bins will be placed outside. R. Venkatesan offered help to clean if the faculty member requests it. I. McKinnon mentioned that there is no immediate health issue. B. Gendron asked what the committee will do after four weeks if the office is not cleaned. It was decided to deal with it if that should happen.

B. Gendron thanked D. Miles for attending and answering many of the questions and concerns that the committee had.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.
Action Items from May 7, 2008 Meeting

2. Define Structure.
3. CAUT visit.
4. I. McKinnon to contact the Communicator.