Minutes of the Memorial University &
Memorial University of Newfoundland Faculty Association
Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee (JOHSC) Meeting

Tuesday, October 7, 2008

2:30 p.m.
Inco Innovation Centre, Room IIC-1034

Present: Dr. Robert Gendron, MUNFA Representative and Co-Chair; Dr. George Jenner, MUNFA Representative; Dr. Barbara Neis, MUNFA Representative; Mr. Ian McKinnon, MUN Representative and Co-Chair; Dr. Ramachandran Venkatesan, MUN Representative

Apologies: Dr. Sandra LeFort, MUN Representative; Mr. Craig Boyd, Manager of Safety & Environmental Services

1. Approval of Minutes of May 7, 2008 - motion by R. Gendron, seconded by G. Jenner.

2. Approval of Agenda: G. Jenner and I. McKinnon

3. Update on previous Action Items
   a) I. McKinnon reported that Facilities Management were not in a position to provide funding for a visit from the CAUT consultant; re: configuration and structure of OH & S Committees. G. Jenner will follow up with CAUT and investigate the possibility of a cost sharing arrangement between MUNFA and CUPE to cover the costs associated with such a trip.
   b) I. McKinnon reported that he has been in touch with the Communicator and there are plans for an article in the December issue on health and safety initiatives on campus. G. Jenner suggested that an article on the work done by Barb Neis with Safety Net might be appropriate. I. McKinnon will follow up.
   c) EN-3050 - I. McKinnon reported that Custodial Services have resumed their daily cleaning of the office but that it is still in a very messy condition. As there are no immediate health hazards and R. Venkatesan indicated that there have no reports of odours from those in adjacent offices, the matter was considered resolved for now.

4. New Business
   a) Health Science Air Quality - R. Gendron provided committee members with a brief history and overview of the issue. It was noted that despite numerous efforts
to address the odour which is centred mainly in Community Health, the problem still persists. It was noted that a letter was sent to Gary Peddigrew, Director of Administrative Services, Faculty of Medicine, requesting that the affected employees be moved to other offices or be given the opportunity to work from home. As the Health Science OHS Committee noted that there have been some ongoing concerns with the labs in the School of Pharmacy there was some speculation that the source of the odour might be emanating from Pharmacy. Before a written request is made to Facilities Management to investigate the possibility, G. Jenner suggested that we request a meeting with Pharmacy to get their side. I. McKinnon will contact Pharmacy to arrange a time. B. Neis suggested that what is required in such a situation is an Occupational Hygienist. R. Venkatesan noted that the Faculty of Engineering had a similar problem but on a smaller scale which was properly handled by Facilities Management.

b) Allergy Alert - Due to a severe allergy to fragrances and scents that an employee in the Faculty of Medicine has, the issue of the University’s Scent Free Policy was discussed. It was agreed that representation from our committee to serve on the Scent Free Committee would be beneficial. B. Neis agreed to submit her name forward.

c) Waste Disposal - R. Gendron reported on the ongoing issue of chemical waste disposal. There have been reports of slow response times to requests for chemical waste pick ups. The problem is being aggravated by the lack of capacity for storage on campus of hazardous chemicals. It is hoped that the appointment of a new Hazardous Materials Officer will alleviate some of the delays.

d) Director - Health & Safety - I. McKinnon reported that he has not yet heard back from Mr. K. Decker’s office regarding our request to have input into the search for the newly created position, Director of Health and Safety. It was decided that I. McKinnon will follow up with Mr. Decker’s office.

e) CUPE Request - CUPE Local 1615 has written all other OHS Committees on campus seeking their support for a joint recommendation for an Advisory/Coordination Occupational Health and Safety Committee at MUN. The intent is for the new committee to be responsible for the coordination of all OH&S activities of the other OH&S Committees. As this proposal is linked to our discussions regarding the CAUT visit, it was agreed that it would be appropriate for the CUPE and MUNFA committees to meet to discuss the best model after hearing from the CAUT consultant.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.