

NAS Health and Safety Committee Meeting
4 February 2009 10:00am, Robertson Wing Meeting Room, GRH

Attendees: Dave Brownlee (Deputy Keeper- Corporate Services), John Fraser (ICT Digital Information Systems), John Mitchell (Accommodation Services Branch), Bob Phillips (Accommodation Services Branch), Tracy Richardson (Development Centre), Gordon Stocks (Conservation), John Welsh (ICT Digital Information Systems), Jenny Cutts (secretary).

Apologies: Alex Cochrane (Accommodation Services Branch), Jimmy Gilmour (Archive Attendant Team Leader, Reader Services Branch), James McCormack (Court and Legal Records Branch).

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were noted.

1.2 Dave Brownlee welcomed Tracy Richardson to her first meeting of the NAS Health and Safety Committee.

2. Health and Safety Section for *theOracle*

2.1 It was reported that a meeting to finalise this section had been postponed. It is expected the final amendments will be agreed soon and the intranet pages made live.

2.2 John Mitchell explained that a Health and Safety information 'deskdrop' would be organised for all NAS staff.

3. H&S Inspections, Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessments

3.1 John Mitchell noted that assessments are underway and capacity has been increased by the move of Alex Cochrane to Accommodation Services Branch.

3.2 Some trip hazards presented by cables in the basement of GRH have been identified and a report will be forthcoming.

3.3 Bob Phillips has investigated hazards at TTH and a camera cradle stored in the stairwell will be removed.

3.4 It has been observed that some material in the basement of GRH awaits removal. John Welsh will discuss arrangements for this with Paul Riley.

3.5 Dave Brownlee explained that room 21 in GRH will come into use before the next meeting of the Committee. This room has been converted into office accommodation in preparation for housing three members of Scottish Council on Archives staff. It was agreed that NAS may provide a Health and Safety assessment once the Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) have installed their equipment although they are not NAS personnel.

4. Current H&S issues of concern

4.1 John Mitchell reported that the ScotlandsPeople Centre reception desk has been re-arranged in order to create more space for personnel. It was thought that wiring in the ScotlandsPeople Centre may require tidying up.

4.2 Flakes of paint layers have become loose from GRH stairwells and examples were demonstrated at the meeting. This flaking is regarded as a health and safety issue because of the size and thickness of fallen pieces. It was resolved that the solution is to engage a specialist contractor to remove the multiple paint layers in a similar manner to that employed as part of the redecoration of the Adam Dome. If approved, an invitation to tender will be issued.

4.3 Bob Phillips explained that Digital Imaging Unit (DIU) personnel have complained about the temperature within the main DIU workspace. He confirmed that there is no fault with the system and any anomalies are the result of people interfering with the controls. John Fraser suggested that backshift staff have altered the controls at the wall panel and a sign about this has previously been disregarded and removed. It was agreed that a further sign be placed by the heating controls. It was agreed that removal of the control panel would resolve this situation though it would be a complicated exercise.

5. Accident reports since last meeting

5.1 John Mitchell reported that two minor accidents were reported since the last meeting.

5.2 In addition, a serious accident had occurred whereby a customer had fallen down the stairs approaching the smoking shelter to the rear of GRH. It was confirmed that customers have never been permitted to make use of the staff smoking shelter and that signs have been placed by the stairs to reiterate this. Further public signs have been displayed explaining that visitors must leave the Register House campus in order to smoke outside the perimeter. It was noted that a full report is currently being collated regarding this accident. Staff members will be encouraged to politely challenge anyone who does not hold an appropriate identity pass at the smoking shelter in order that unauthorised people may be redirected away from this area.

5.3 A further accident that caused injury to the leg of one of the Scottish Government security personnel had taken place on 3 February 2009.

6. Disability Equality

6.1 Tracy Richardson explained the Equality duties imposed on public bodies and circulated the published NAS Disability Equality Scheme and recent Annual Report. It was explained that relevant information had been obtained from key areas within NAS and updated information will be required on an annual basis.

6.2 It is considered that ongoing consideration of Disability Equality and collation of information is best suited to the Health and Safety Committee as these are overlapping concerns.

6.3 It was noted that Disability Equality will remain a standing item on the Health and Safety Committee meeting and that Tracy Richardson will be invited to attend alternate meetings. The Development Centre will also supply reports where a representative will not be in attendance.

6.4 Bob Phillips elaborated on the requirements for public bodies to accommodate disabled visitors and staff. It was noted that practicality and business requirements are also factors in facilitating disability equality and requirements are assessed on a case by case basis as the need arises.

6.5 It was agreed that the minutes may record action undertaken to accommodate people with disability as long as the individuals are not named as this would be an illegal contravention of their rights.

6.6 Dave Brownlee enquired about the Scottish Government's intention to unify Equality Duties into a single Equality Scheme and reporting framework. Tracy Richardson concurred and expects that this initiative to be pursued during 2009. The Scottish Government's Equality Team will be contacted to confirm these plans.

7. Minutes of the last meeting (21 November 2008) and matters arising

7.1 The draft minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting held on 21 November 2008.

7.2. [3.5] John Mitchell updated attendees regarding provisions for specialist back problem assessment. An external company has been identified for addressing special requirements by one member of staff and costs will be provided.

7.3 [4.1] Investigations into upgrading evacuation equipment are ongoing. A further supplier has been identified and Bob Phillips and John Mitchell will consider replacement Evac chairs along with senior management. The number of such chairs required was discussed. It was thought that one for each of GRH and TTH would be sufficient whereas two are required for WRH.

7.4 [4.2] Uneven floor sections within GRH were discussed. One area outside the DIU office has been fixed and loose flooring in the basement will be improved following completion of server room refitting.

7.5 [4.3] James McCormack was not present at the meeting and it was not known whether the TTH list of first aiders had been updated. John Mitchell will investigate this matter.

8. Any other business

8.1 Bob Phillips circulated information about the Health and Safety Offences Act, 2009, concerning the prosecution of individuals for breaches of health and safety. It was explained that if any member of staff was found responsible such a breach then senior management or the accommodation manager may be prosecuted as individuals.

8.2 The Fire Safety in Crown Premises Enforcement Policy was discussed. Dave Brownlee and Bob Phillips resolved to consider this in further detail.

8.3 John Welsh announced that this would be the last meeting he will attend in consequence of his planned departure from NAS. Dave Brownlee recorded thanks for his work with the committee and as a Health and Safety Liaison Officer (HSLO). It was agreed that a replacement HSLO would be sought.

8.4 Gordon Stocks queried his booking on a HSLO training course as he had received no information about this. John Mitchell will pursue this with a colleague at GROS who had made the booking. It was added that Iain Miller will receive HSLO training and has now transferred from GROS to NAS.

8.5 Two companies are under consideration for the provision of training for fire marshals. Arrangements will also be made for the use of a fire safety DVD at each NAS building.

8.6 John Mitchell asked about responsibility for the health and safety induction and assessment of non-NAS staff, such as volunteers and Scottish Council on Archives personnel. It was agreed that the NAS health and safety team may undertake these assessments.

8.7 Tracy Richardson reported that Leanne Swallow will step down as Scotlands Health at Work (SHAW) representative and a potential successor will be approached.

9. Date of next meeting

9.1 The next meeting is due to be held during early May 2009. Jenny Cutts will canvass for dates nearer the time.

Jenny Cutts
4 February 2008