

**NAS Health and Safety Committee Meeting**  
**21 November 2008 9:30am, Lord Clerk Register's Room, GRH**

**Attendees:** Dave Brownlee (Deputy Keeper- Corporate Services), John Fraser (ICT Digital Information Systems), Jimmy Gilmour (Archive Attendant Team Leader, Reader Services Branch), James McCormack (Court and Legal Records Branch), John Mitchell (Accommodation Services Branch), Gordon Stocks (Conservation), John Welsh (ICT Digital Information Systems), Jenny Cutts (secretary).

**Apologies:** Bob Phillips (Accommodation Services Branch).

**1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were noted.

**2. Health and Safety Section for *theOracle***

2.1 John Mitchell explained that the health and safety micro-site will be made live on theOracle as soon as ICT branch are able to enact it. Most of the content is ready and some additional policy documents will also be developed. Inclusion of posters featuring different health and safety topics in rotation was discussed. It was confirmed that the pages will be printable so that paper copy handbooks can be produced by staff if required. Dave Brownlee anticipated that the site will be running by the time of the next meeting. It was agreed to produce a one page (A3) leaflet containing key H&S messages to be issued as a desk drop at the time when the new H&S site goes live.

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

3.1 John Mitchell explained that although new members of staff are given health and safety and fire safety inductions, it is also intended that all staff will receive refresher training. This is expected to take place before the end of the current financial year.

3.2 It was reported that the auditors are currently carrying out an assignment within Accommodation Services Branch and it is likely they will recommend that the personal objectives of Health and Safety Liaison Officers and Fire Safety Officers include items relating to the discharge of these functions. This should guarantee that line managers give HSLOs and FSOs the necessary support to carry out these functions.

3.3 Jimmy Gilmour raised concerns about the till screen at the shop/reception desk in General Register House. A DSE assessment is required. Dee Williams, Head of ScotlandsPeople Centre, will be approached regarding arrangements.

3.4 John Mitchell explained that a member of GROS staff undertaking health and safety inspections within New Register House, will be asked to cover the ScotlandsPeople Centre staff workstations.

3.5 Alex Cochrane noted that where staff members require physiotherapy, greater expertise in work station assessment is required. John Mitchell reported use of a

specialist company for provision of specialist desk chairs and assessment. Re-use of specialist chairs which may be available in the office is feasible.

#### **4. Current H&S issues of concern**

4.1 Gordon Stocks asked whether suitable fire evacuation chairs had been identified to replace the Evac Chairs. John Mitchell explained that several options are under investigation and a meeting with one supplier has been scheduled. Alex Cochrane noted that the Historical Search Section are keen to find a suitable solution for the safe evacuation of disabled customers in the event of fire.

4.2 John Welsh described an area within DIU where the floor is not level. John Mitchell added that in various places around General Register House, contractors have accessed panels beneath the carpet which are now uneven. It was agreed that a full review of General Register House carpet tiles be undertaken following completion of refurbishment snagging. John Mitchell will consult Bob Phillips about undertaking this.

4.3 James McCormack noted that the list of first aiders and fire marshals has not been updated at TTH although staff members including himself have changed locations. It was agreed that Dave Brownlee request all HSLOs, first aiders and fire marshals to confirm their status and location, in order that lists may be accurately updated by building.

#### **5. Accident reports since last meeting**

5.1 John Mitchell reported that there have been 5 accidents recorded since the last meeting. Most of these were classified as minor accidents and one was potentially more serious but injury was averted. In consequence of one accident occurring within DIU, the layout will be adjusted.

#### **6. SHAW report**

6.1 It was noted that Linda Gordon will no longer be representing SHAW at the Health and Safety Committee meetings. Dave Brownlee had discussed SHAW activities with Arlene Chalmers. A 'wear it pink day' and Macmillan coffee morning had taken place in support of charities. It was reported that alternative therapies continue to be hosted at WRH and that John Blyth has organised a series of lunchtime walks for interested colleagues. The Development Centre intend to issue a health questionnaire shortly.

#### **7. Minutes of the last meeting (5 August 2008) and matters arising**

7.1 [7.1] John Mitchell updated the committee on progress with H&S training. Three DVDs will be made available for training all staff and for fire marshals specifically. Arrangements for using these training materials in each of the three buildings were discussed. Dave Brownlee and John Mitchell will discuss details further.

#### **8. Any other business**

8.1 Jimmy Gilmour enquired about cabling within the ScotlandsPeople Centre. Dave Brownlee confirmed that the issues identified were being investigated. John Mitchell added that Accommodation Services Branch will take action as necessary.

8.2 John Mitchell explained that HSLOs are required to do walk arounds in each building each quarter and these have not yet commenced.

8.3 Dave Brownlee explained that part of the agreement that GRH be used as a commercial venue included the identification of event liaison officers to work closely with Accommodation Services Branch and security personnel to ensure that health and safety procedures are followed. A Code of Practice on use of the building has been agreed with the events organisers. Edinburgh City Council have inspected GRH with regard to granting a license for GRH to be an approved venue for hosting civil weddings. Disabled access and fire safety are amongst the criteria.

8.4 Alex Cochrane asked how venue arrangements affect the hosting of Scottish Government meetings within GRH. Dave Brownlee explained that commercial events will only be held outwith normal working hours. It was confirmed that meetings of the Unions or the Civil Service Benevolent Fund may be facilitated, but we are not keen for Scottish Government units to use GRH for business meetings or awaydays, unless an NAS or GROS member of staff is hosting them. Helpdesk personnel have been briefed to this effect.

8.5 John Mitchell asserted that Disability Equality should feature on every Health and Safety Committee meeting agenda. Dave Brownlee agreed that this would become a standing item. It was also agreed that Tracy Richardson of the Development Centre will be invited to a subsequent meeting to discuss disability equality.

8.6 Alex Cochrane confirmed arrangements for accompanying disabled visitors to the Historical Search Room and noted the best routes to take through the building. Dave Brownlee added that the rear door from the Matheson Dome into the garden will be suitable for disabled access once the *ScotlandsPeople* Centre opens fully.

## **9. Date of next meeting**

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

Jenny Cutts

21 November 2008