

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND  
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY STRATEGIC COMMITTEE MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting of the Occupational Health & Safety Strategic Committee held at 9.30am on Thursday, 14 February 2008 in the Conference Room, TC Lamble Building, The University of New England.

Lisa Allen  
Secretary to Occupational Health & Safety Strategic Committee

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**Present:**

Vicki Anderson	Director HRS
Michael Quinlan	Director FMS
Professor Ray Cooksey	BEPP, (excused at 10.30am)
Daphne McCurdy	OHS Officer
Rowan Webb	WG1
Leanne Lisle	WG4
Fran Cuskelly	WG5
Bruce Reeves (Chair)	WG6
Clayton Gilmour	WG7
Ross Bennetts	WG8

**In attendance:**

Gill de la Motte	NTEU representative
Professor John Gibson	Transitional Head of School of Environmental and Rural Science (arrived at 10.05am)
Lisa Allen	Secretary

**Welcome:**

The Chair welcomed Professor Ray Cooksey to the meeting as the new Academic Management Representative.

**1 APOLOGIES**

An apology was received from Susen Smith of WG3. Ms Smith has resigned as WG3 representative. A new academic staff member is to be trained as a replacement.

**2 ADOPTION OF UNSTARRED ITEMS**

Ray Cooksey requested that item 11 be starred for discussion.

**3 MINUTES**

**3.1 CONFIRMATION OF THE 13 DECEMBER 2007 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Occupational Health and Safety Strategic Committee held on 13 December 2007 were confirmed.

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## **3.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE 13 DECEMBER 2007 MINUTES**

### **3.2.1 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP CHANGES** (Meeting of 13 December 2007)

Members welcomed Professor Cooksey to the meeting.

## **4 MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS**

### **4.1 OHS OFFICER REPORT**

Daphne McCurdy tabled a detailed action plan for the information of members and briefly explained where she is up to on each item. A copy is attached for the information of members.

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Rowan Webb referred to the OHS officer's report – page 5 of the attachments under "consultation issues" and asked the OHS officer how the word "remote" was being defined. Daphne responded that various people were being asked to provide their relevant definition and an appropriate definition would be drafted from these.

#### **4.1.1 DRAFT POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

Members noted the report in the Agenda.

### **4.2 DIRECTOR – HRS REPORT**

Vicki Anderson tabled a memorandum addressed to the Committee, a copy of which is attached, titled "*Scheduled time for OHS representatives to carry out their functions*" and addressed the Committee on this matter.

The memorandum addressed the issue of OHS representatives not being provided with enough time to adequately perform their responsibilities as OHS officer and as a result OHS representatives were resigning from the position due to lack of time to perform the function.

Ms Anderson outlined that legislation requires the employer to provide adequate facilities and time during working hours to carry out this function and, after consultation with the OHS Officer, proposed that this Committee reinforce, possibly via herself as Director HRS, the legislative obligations on UNE for all OHS representatives to be provided time to carry out their functions – one or two hours per month is suggested as a minimum or rule.

Bruce Reeves, as Chair, welcomed this initiative on behalf of the Committee, however it was generally agreed that one to two hours may need to be increased.

Professor Cooksey pointed out that the OHS responsibilities would vary over the University and by nature of the different areas, some may require more time than others and that this may be intermittent. Therefore a clause should be inserted which allows for an additional provision for time and facilities as required over and above the minimum 2 hours stated in order to allow the representatives to adequately carry out their duties.

The Committee welcomed this initiative.

#### **4.3 DIRECTOR – FMS REPORT**

Mike Quinlan reported:

- Medical School accreditation complete and handover will be on Monday, 18 February 2008
- Carparks – Eastern and Clarks are still under way but held up due to rain
- Library renovations complete except for the lift which has been delayed
- Geology/SHES/ - behind on discussions with the Transitional Head of School. The rain is delaying the relocation, however the last of the furniture is arriving today
- A3 lecture theatre completed
- Animal House carpark all but complete – 1 coat of seal to be done but delayed by rain.

#### **5 WORK GROUP REPORTS**

##### **5.1 WORK GROUP 1**

Members noted there was nothing to report.

##### **5.2 WORK GROUP 2**

Members noted there was nothing to report.

##### **5.3 WORK GROUP 3**

Members noted the report attached to the Agenda

##### **5.4 WORK GROUP 4**

Members noted the report attached to the Agenda

##### **5.5 WORK GROUP 5**

Members noted there was nothing to report.

##### **5.6 WORK GROUP 6**

Members noted the report attached to the Agenda.

##### **5.7 WORK GROUP 7**

Members noted there was nothing to report.

##### **5.8 WORK GROUP 8**

Members noted there was nothing to report.

#### **6 WORKERS' COMPENSATION OFFICER REPORT**

Members noted the report attached to the Agenda.

#### **7 AWARDS**

Members noted the report in the Agenda.

#### **8 TRAINING**

Members noted the report in the Agenda.

The edges of the step/stairs in the courtyard amphitheatre are now painted and the handrails are now erected.

## 9 MATTERS AWAITING REPORT

### \*9.1 SITE SPECIFIC INDUCTION (Item 7.1 of Minutes of 21 June 2007)

Daphne McCurdy advised members that she was successful in gaining funding of \$54,000 to produce a CD ROM introduction to lecture theatres for students, specific to OHS and safety issues. This funding will be used to assist in producing a multi-media map for use as an induction tool.

Daphne reported on the attachment to the Agenda, explaining the different sections of the proposed Storyboard. She advised that there will be more updated and relevant photos used and that a decision is still to be made on who will film and produce the media. Ms McCurdy also highlighted where the storyboard allows for site specific input and variations.

Committee members were requested to make an OHS representative or nominee available for the filming process. It is hoped to be available on CD ROM by midyear and then available on the web and will be expected to run for approximately 3 minutes.

### 9.2 COURTYARD REDEVELOPMENT (Item 4.6 of Minutes 21 June 2007)

Mike Quinlan reported that this item is now finalised.

### 9.3 OHS RELATING TO RESEARCH IN THE FIELD (Carried over from 11 October 2007 meeting)

Professor John Gibson, Transitional Head of School of Environmental and Rural Science reported to the meeting on the 4WD incident and strategies being put in place to prevent further incidents occurring.

Professor Gibson advised that many issues resulted from this incident and that through consultation with the OHS Officer, a working party has been set up to address some of these. He also advised that at the recent Faculty Management meeting other Transitional Heads of Schools expressed their support and willingness to contribute to this.

Some of the issues resulting from this incident include:

- liability of the University through lack of consistency with policies and forms requiring signature
- training of staff and students – in this case in the use of 4WD vehicles and also an induction as to dangerous situations and what are the appropriate responses in any given situation
- requirement of first-aid training for at least one of the persons in the field
- the appropriateness of delegating responsibility – where does this apply and where does it stop – what are the guidelines? The Head of School or Supervisor should always ultimately be the person in control.
- Supervisor should be aware of the capabilities of his/her student in the situation in which they are placing them
- Forms should be more specific in their request – outlining particular purpose, level of competency, sign-off by Supervisor, any training needed, any qualifications needed (e.g. current driver's licence – provide proof)

Daphne McCurdy advised the members of the working party discussing these issues consisted of a range of issues that impact on fieldwork including

- Safety culture

- Risk a management process
- Fieldwork forms
- School administration and policies
- Motor vehicle policies and administration
- Travel and insurance administration
- Induction Training
- Training, experience and level of skill of staff and students

McCurdy thanked Professor Gibson for his co-operation and interest in the OHS issues of his School and Faculty and noted that it was through the motivation of Senior Management that OHS will be adequately addressed.

Professor Gibson responded that he felt it was a timely exercise and that it is proving to be very beneficial identifying these issues.

The Chair thanked Professor Gibson for attending the meeting

## **\*10 OTHER BUSINESS**

### **\*10.1 PROVISIONS FOR EMERGENCIES**

Daphne advised that she had sent out a request to all working groups to identify the emergency personnel.

When she has received the information she will send a summary to Scott Norton so that he can arrange emergency warden p training. Daphne noted that FMS are issuing vests for all emergency wardens. There had been some concern about hygiene u issues related to caps

### **\*10.2 INSURANCE COVER FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Daphne advised that for some time a number of people had expressed concern about the status of volunteers. She explained that there is a necessity to ensure that volunteers have adequate inductions, facilities and insurance cover. Daphne requested that the Working Groups identify volunteers within their area, the tasks they undertake and the potential risks. Daphne noted that volunteers who use aeroclub aircraft while volunteering would not be covered by insurance.

Rowan Webb requested that it be formally recorded that for 9 years he had been unsuccessful in his efforts to get volunteers recognised by UNE.

## **11 NEXT MEETING**

Professor Ray Cooksey advised members that he was unavailable to attend the April, June and August meeting and asked that members be canvassed as to their availability for the third Thursday in the month for April, June and August. The next meeting of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee will be advised.

*PS For the information of members meeting dates will remain on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday :*

*April 10 2008*

*June 12 2008*

*August 14 2008*

*October 9 2008*

*December 11 2008*

MEETING CLOSED 10:50 A.M.