

Safety Review Committee

October 15, 2004

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Minutes

Members Present

Joel Ager, Michael Banda, John Bercovitz, Sharon Doyle, Ben Feinberg, Richard Kadel, Mack Kennedy, Don Lucas, Augusto Macchiavelli, Karen Ramorino, Pat Thomas (for Peter Seidl), Linda Smith, Scott Taylor, Hisao Yokota

Members Absent

Dennis Collins, Ken Fletcher, Peter Lichty, Linfeng Rao, Weyland Wong

Others Present

Steve Abraham, Paul Blodgett, Ross Fisher, Larry McLouth, Phyllis Pei

Minutes of September Meeting

The minutes of the September meeting were corrected to note Hisao Yokota's attendance, then approved as revised.

Comments from the Chair

EH&S Organization Changes

The Safety Group will report directly to Phyllis Pei. Paul Blodgett is the acting group leader. A job opening for a permanent group leader has been posted. Industrial Hygiene and Health Services will continue to report to Peter Lichty. The reason for the changes is to give greater attention to the safety program.

MESH Review period for divisions reviewed in FY04

Safety Review Committee MESH Review teams completed reviews of five divisions during FY 04:

- Earth Sciences Division's report noted 12 noteworthy practices, 6 observations, and 2 concerns. The division's performance was greatly improved since the last review. The Committee recommends a 4-year review period. The next review will be in 2008, pending the ISM report.
- Facilities Division's report noted 5 noteworthy practices, 3 observations, and 8 concerns. There is some concern as to whether additional training is needed for new Journeyman-level employees. The ISM Panel will be asked to evaluate this issue. There is a new Director and changes in the organization and safety system are anticipated. The Committee recommends a 2-year review period. The next review will be in 2006, pending the ISM report.
- Accelerator and Fusion Research Division's report noted 7 noteworthy practices, 3 observations (1 institutional), and 3 concerns. The review team's greatest concern was the condition of space occupied by the division. The Committee recommends a 4-year review period. The next review will be in 2008, pending the ISM report.

- Engineering Division's report noted 7 noteworthy practices, 7 observations, and 1 concern. There is a new Director and changes in the organization and safety system are anticipated. The division decided to rely on line management and not have a safety committee. There is some uncertainty as to whether this will be as effective. The Committee recommends a 3-year review period. The next review will be in 2007, pending the ISM report.
- Nuclear Science Division's report noted 6 noteworthy practices, 4 observations, and 4 concerns. The incomplete documentation of action items in LCATS made it difficult for the review team to accurately assess performance. The Committee recommends a 3-year review period. The next review will be in 2007, pending the ISM report.

There was a request to add accident/incident rates for the last few years for each division to the summary table.

Plan for FY05 MESH Reviews

Five divisions are scheduled for review in FY 05: Life Sciences, Genomics, Directorate, Environmental Health and Safety, and Computing Sciences. Ben Feinberg is working on recruiting review team leaders and team members. This will be discussed further at the November meeting.

Recent Laser Accidents

Don Lucas, chairman of the Laser Safety Subcommittee, discussed the impacts and implications of recent laser accidents. There have been 4 laser accidents in the DOE complex over the last two years, at UC, Brookhaven, Los Alamos, and Argonne. In response, other labs are doing more training and documentation. LBNL has started a Laser Safety Officer behavior observation pilot program in one division (EETD). The accidents are receiving increased attention and repercussions, including work shutdowns. The UC accident was classified as an LBNL accident in the Lessons Learned report. The continued lack of LBNL control over users in Appendix I space is a concern.

Another concern is how to deal with the cost of safety upgrades. LBNL researchers have been receiving cost estimates from Facilities that appear to be unreasonably high for the type of work requested. Some examples were \$650 to change door handles and locks, and \$11,000 for 4 days effort to install an interlock system, and \$4,500 in engineering changes to run a conduit across a room from door to door. The Laser Safety Subcommittee worked with the previous LSO to find a vendor that can provide interlocks that meet LBNL standards. Cost estimates for projects are also expensive. The Committee wants to understand the process for deciding what work is required. One problem is that records of previous utility installations are not reliable. Mahesh Gupta is involved in making electrical code decisions. It was suggested that he be invited to a future meeting.

OSHA Response Status

Paul Blodgett, acting safety group leader for EH&S, described the status of LBNL's response to the January 2004 OSHA audit. The OSHA visit resulted in approximately 2,303 instances (findings) and 55 recommendations. LBNL divided the findings into two categories – findings that can be easily fixed by operating divisions with no additional institutional funding (called “zero cost”, but actually requiring some divisional effort and funds) and findings requiring requests of additional funding (called “cost” items). LBNL estimated that about \$3.8 million in additional funding will be needed to fix deficiencies. \$930,000 has been received from DOE.

Approximately 32% of the findings have been abated. The goal is to complete all the “zero cost” items by January 2005. This will be about 53% of the total findings. The DOE risk-based prioritization process for non-capital funding was used to decide which projects should be funded first. The greatest number of findings were in the categories of electrical (742), exits and egress (398), machine guarding (234), materials handling (175,) walking/working surfaces (153), and eyewashes and safety showers (126). The highest cost was in walking/working surfaces, such as stairs and railings.

EH&S personnel have performed a site-wide evaluation of safety showers and eyewashes. Facilities personnel have been activating and flushing the units quarterly, but have not been evaluating their performance. Some of the units have too little or too much flow, or eyewash streams that are not aligned. Facilities personnel are not trained in ANSI standards. It is difficult for researchers to test the units because some are not plumbed to drains and require buckets. New units should be tested at commissioning.

John Seabury and Dan Lundsford are evaluating exit sign findings. There are several codes involved and some of our spaces have unusual configurations. We may not agree with all of OSHA’s findings.

The finding regarding Bloodborne Pathogens training for building emergency teams is being addressed by asking people who take the First Aid course to sign a statement acknowledging that their service is voluntary.

LBNL is hoping to receive some additional funding. Congress has requested that DOE allocate \$5 million from their budget for OSHA compliance, but we don’t know how it will be divided between the Labs or when it will be available. Divisions may have to pay to abate more findings in their areas if we do not receive enough funding from DOE. Phyllis Pei will meet with Division Directors and discuss which items they will be responsible for completing. DOE is requiring that all the items be abated within two years of receiving the punch list.

EH&S Databases

Steve Abraham discussed the history, current status, and future goals of the EH&S database applications. In 1998, EH&S applications were disjointed, separated from each other and from other related types of data, such as human resources and space. The data could not be accessed on the web. Recordkeeping processes were manual and paper-based. By 1999, systems were in the process of upgrading to Oracle and Access. Now information is being hosted on ITSD servers, and we are moving to web-based, automated processes. There are links to human resources and space data.

Steve wants to improve the integration and links between systems, and reduce redundancy. There are about 45 different databases now. Whenever the same type of data is stored separately on different systems, changes fall out of synchronization and the data becomes inaccurate. Client/server systems that require special software to be downloaded and stored on user systems are being phased out. A global EH&S reporting system would make it easier for researchers and managers to find the information they need. A single sign on to the HEAR system would provide links to other systems to access data. To make this possible, the AHD, Noise, Eyewash/Safety Shower, and other separate databases are being brought into Oracle. It will become possible to easily access current AHDs on line. If human resources information about employee/guest termination dates is linked to the chemical ownership information, supervisors and safety personnel could be notified before a chemical owner leaves the lab, so plans can be

made to properly manage leftover chemicals. Proxies can be established to allow other people to help Principal Investigators with data entry. To make the global reporting feature work, we need to look at the different ways “responsible person” is defined on different databases. EH&S is requesting funding from the Enterprise Computing Steering Committee (ECSC) to work on these improvements during FY 05-06. The Safety Review Committee would like to support these efforts. Ben Feinberg will write a letter to the ECSC endorsing the EH&S information technology project.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia M. Thomas
SRC Secretary