

Safety Review Committee
October 21, 2005
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Minutes

Committee Member	Representing	Present
Ager, Joel W.	Materials Sciences Division	X
Banda, Michael J.	Computing Sciences Directorate	
Bercovitz, John H.	Mechanical Safety Subcommittee	
Blodgett, Paul M.	Environment, Health and Safety Division	
Feinberg, Benedict	Advanced Light Source Division	X
Fletcher, Kenneth A.	Facilities Department	
Hugenholtz, Phil	Genomics Division	X
Kadel, Richard W.	Physics Division	X
Kennedy, Burton Mack	Earth Sciences Division	X
Lucas, Donald	Environmental Energy Technologies Division	X
Macchiavelli, Augusto O.	Nuclear Science Division	X
Mueller, Robert	Electrical Safety Subcommittee	
Ramorino, Karen B.	Directorate/OCFO/Human Resources	
Rao, Linfeng	Chemical Sciences Division	X
Schoenlein, Robert W.	Laser Safety Subcommittee	
Seidl, Peter A.	Accelerator & Fusion Research Division	X
Smith, Linda K.	Emergency Preparedness Safety Subcommittee	
Taylor, Scott E.	Life Sciences Division	X
Thomas, Patricia M.	Safety Review Committee Secretary	X
Wong, Weyland	Engineering Division	X
Yokota, Hisao A.	Physical Biosciences Division	

Others Present

Richard DeBusk, Joe Gray, Carol Ingram, Eugene Lau, Peter Lichty, Tony Linard

CLOSED SESSION

Life Sciences Division MESH Response – Joe Gray

OPEN SESSION

Chairman's Comments – Don Lucas

The minutes of the September meeting were accepted.

MESH Status

- Life Sciences report and presentation are complete.

- EH&S and Genomics reports are complete. Presentations planned for November meeting.
- Computing Sciences and Directorate reports are being written.

Berkeley Site Office ES&H Reorganization – Carol Ingram

Carol Ingram is the new ES&H Team Lead for the Department of Energy Berkeley Site Office. She is the senior safety advisor to Aundra Richards. Carol has master's degrees in mechanical engineering and education. She has had a variety of work experiences, from Peace Corps volunteer to packaging supervisor. She has worked for DOE for over 20 years, mostly in facility safety and environmental management. She has been involved in mixed waste management negotiations at several labs.

Carol's management approach involves cutting through the red tape, focusing on results, and open communications. She wants to implement the new policy of increased notification to DOE headquarters in a way that promotes trust and does not impede open communications between BSO and LBNL. A 2004 DOE memo highlighted safety as the #1 management challenge, and discussed the importance of encouraging people to report safety problems without fear of negative consequences. The new BSO performance plan calls for a reinvigorated and refocused ES&H team. Carol wants LBNL people to feel free to contact her to discuss concerns about safety. The coming 10CFR851 requirements will have an impact on our time commitment to safety compliance. We should not let bureaucracy get in the way of safety. Carol wants to focus on improving systems and resolving issues at the lowest level possible.

A committee member asked why there is an incident reporting path through BSO in addition to the ORPS system. The different reporting requirements are confusing. Carol explained that Ray Orbach reviews ORPS reports on Fridays and he wants advance notice of events before he sees the reports. We should inform EH&S and our DOE counterparts of safety incidents. EH&S (Phyllis Pei or Eugene Lau) will decide which events need to be reported to BSO using agreed upon guidelines. Information obtained informally does not need to be reported to DOE headquarters. When a report is submitted to BSO on a Notification Form, it will be discussed with LBNL EH&S management, the BSO ES&H team, and the program field representative to determine what is significant enough to require a report to headquarters. Information about minor events may be reported later in summary form rather than requiring immediate notification. LBNL experience has been that reports to DOE headquarters have not resulted in any helpful response that would improve our safety. The human performance factors course taught that the way to improve performance is to get away from blaming individuals and look at organizational weaknesses. Carol would like to see more incentives for doing things right instead of just focusing on negative consequences for failures. She wants to establish achievable, practical performance measures.

EH&S Survey Results – Peter Lichty

EH&S Division conducted a survey of LBNL's safety culture and EH&S performance. The survey was a contract requirement. People were invited to respond through a Today at Berkeley Lab article and communications through Division Directors. The identity of responders, other than their home division, was anonymous. 777 responses were received. The largest category of responders was staff people. The questions were adapted from a semiconductor industry survey. Opportunities for improvement were found in: communicating lessons learned to appropriate people, supervisor participation in safety (providing feedback to employees on performance and inspecting work areas), and ensuring employees feel comfortable they can report safety problems without negative repercussions. The scores were high most in other areas, including finding EH&S and Division safety coordinators helpful and knowledgeable, understanding and using the stop work policy, and attending EH&S training. There were a few questions that could be improved to provide better understanding of responses next time, including understanding of ISM and use of databases. It was possible for people to respond more than once, or for people outside the Lab to respond. There were 118 comments received, most regarding specific safety concerns, such as leaves on a particular walkway. EH&S is sorting through the comments and taking action where appropriate.

Integrated Functional Appraisals (IFA) – Richard DeBusk

An Integrated Functional Appraisal is a review of a division's compliance with safety rules by EH&S staff. The reviews are usually scheduled at 3-year intervals and take about a month to complete. There are 6 IFAs scheduled for 2006: Chemical Sciences, Material Sciences, Genomics, Life Sciences, Physics, and EH&S. IFAs are usually done toward the end of the performance year. EH&S would like to advance the schedule to earlier in the year, November – January. The pending 10CFR 851 regulations are expected to require logging of instances of OSHA non-compliance. It would be better to find and fix the instances before reporting is required. There has been increased emphasis on electrical safety because we have two electrical safety contractors available to help with the inspections. IFA findings are tracked on LBNL's LCATS system. IFAs are most useful if they are completed just before the divisions have their MESH reviews, so that the MESH team can review the IFA results. Richard is going to check to see how much flexibility we have in scheduling the IFAs. Pat Thomas should send records of the recent MESH review schedules to Ross Fisher so the IFA schedule can be updated.

Richard also mentioned that the Division Self-Assessment Performance Criteria are in the process of being updated for 2006 and will be available soon. He offered to discuss the criteria at the November SRC meeting.

Total Recordable Case (TRC) Reduction Plan – Richard DeBusk

Richard prepared a presentation on LBNL's safety performance for Dr. Chu and shared it with the SRC. Based on the rate of recordable accidents per hours work reported to DOE, LBNL ranked 9th out of the 10 DOE labs; however, discussion with other labs has revealed that no two labs are producing their statistics the same. Fermi lab and possibly some others are counting user hours in their hours worked. We don't know how postdocs, students, guests, etc. are being counted at other labs. There are significant differences in what types of contractors' hours and accidents are counted. DOE issued the same directive to all the labs, but different field offices are interpreting it differently. The lab EH&S directors are meeting to discuss the problem and will try to standardize the reporting criteria.

The Office of Science has told their labs they are expected to have safety records in the top 10% of similar research labs. There are 10 Office of Science labs and we believe there are about 40 similar commercial research labs, so it would not be statistically possible for all 10 national labs to be in the top 10%. Our estimate of the total number of research labs is based on Census Bureau numbers, because the Office of Commerce, Bureau of Labor Statistics does not have data available, so we don't know exactly how large the group is. We don't know how commercial labs in our SIC code are counting their work hours or accidents. It is not an apples-to-apples comparison.

LBNL's accident rates over the last 10 years shows a trend of improvement. The rate of injuries has decreased by about half over 10 years ago. Contractors and service divisions have the highest rates but they are also improving. 2005 was our second best safety year ever; however, we still did not meet the DOE goals. The goals for 2006 are the same as for 2005; then there will be a significant drop in 2007. We need to accelerate our improvement rate. Our most common types of accidents are ergonomics (computer use) and material handling. We are studying how to reduce these injuries in our higher risk areas, such as Facilities, Engineering, and the Joint Genome Institute, and making changes to how tasks are performed. Engineering Division has initiated a Safety Accountability Program for supervisors and is providing training adapted from the WOW program on how to talk to employees about safety. We need to continue to encourage early reporting of symptoms so ergonomics injuries can be addressed before they become serious.

Richard offered to make the presentation available for Division meetings. Committee members thought it would be useful information for Division Directors and Building Managers.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 PM
Respectfully submitted,
Patricia M. Thomas, SRC Secretary