

6/23/09 Minutes for the SRC Subcommittee on Laser Safety

Present: Ken Barat (EH&S), Xianglei Mao (EETD), Marcus Hertlein (ALS), Joel Ager (MSD), Jerry Bucher (CSD), Eddie Ciprazo (UCB), David Littlejohn (EETD), Paul Blodgett (EH&S), Mike Carr (BSO), Junko Yano (Physical Biosciences), Missy Durham (intern in EH&S)

Agenda:

- (1) Update on Laser Corrective Action Plan
- (2) Feedback on new laser safety training
- (3) Laser pointers - are they safe?
- (4) Laser inventory update by Ken's intern
- (5) Other business

Minutes

Ken reported that there were about twenty corrective actions generated by the laser safety audit last fall. Nearly all of the corrective actions have been implemented by now. A couple of the issues were not specific to laser operation, such as oxygen deficiency and bracing of liquid nitrogen dewars. The corrective actions will be complete before the Sept. 30 deadline.

The laser safety training has transitioned to the new system. EH&S 302 (on-line) and 303 (live class) now replace EH&S 280 (3 hour class). The response so far has been positive. Ken offers EH&S 303 once a month, and makes it available at other times when there is interest.

The issue of the safety of laser pointers was discussed. Some institutions have greatly restricted use of laser pointers, while others have no restrictions. Ken has updated the sheet on safety guidelines for laser pointers, which provides a measured approach to the use of laser pointers. The safety guidelines will be distributed for posting in conference rooms, and a link the guidelines will be added to the laser safety web page.

Ken has a summer intern, Missy Durham, who is working to update the laser inventory. She will be visiting the laser labs over the next few weeks to compare the lasers with the information in the database.

Ken provided an update on door keypad access control for laser labs as a less-expensive alternative to the standard laser door interlock. The keypad has been approved by the fire marshal and emergency responders. Ken also showed a low voltage laser warning sign that could be displayed in additional locations besides the standard laser warning sign to improve awareness of lasers in use. The signs are about \$250 and operate on 24 volts.

Ken reports that a laser safety advisory committee for DOE has just been formed, and the first meeting will be at the University of Pennsylvania. It is hoped that this will improve communication between laser users and DOE.

Eddie Ciprazo reports there are now about 750 laser users on campus. He has had issues with implementing restrictions on laser use in undergraduate labs.