

3/25/10 Minutes for the SRC Subcommittee on Laser Safety

Present: Ken Barat (EH&S), Joel Ager (MSD), Paul Blodgett (EH&S), Jerry Bucher (CSD), Joe Dionne (PBD), Marcus Hertlein (ALS), David Littlejohn (EETD), Ben Sandmann (PBD)

Agenda:

- (1) Development of a generic restart plan
- (2) Laser hazard awareness chart
- (3) Revisions to the AHD system in response to DOE audit
- (4) Potential for vibration generated by laser beam enclosure
- (5) Outcome of the safety seminar presented by Newport
- (6) Another laser safety eyewear presentation
- (7) Laser training
- (8) other

Minutes

1. There was continued discussion on the idea of developing a generic restart plan in the event of a laser accident. The plan would provide a framework for responding to an accident and would provide a roadmap for return to normal operation. Ken and David will develop a draft of a generic plan, and the draft will be circulated to the committee members for comments and improvements. The draft will be reviewed at the next laser safety committee meeting for continued refinement.
2. Ken is continuing to improve the laser hazard awareness chart. Once it is ready, it will be made available to laser users and posted on the lab's laser safety web page:
www.lbl.gov/ehs/ih/lasers/index.shtml
3. The AHD system has been modified in response to the safety audit findings. Printed copies of the AHD now include text to indicate that the official version of the AHD is the on-line version.
4. Ken reported that some enclosed laser systems have experienced vibration issues generated by building ventilation air directed at one of the enclosure surfaces. The laboratory environment, especially in older buildings, is not always ideal for laser systems.
5. The safety seminar presented by Newport in February was well attended.
6. Ken reports that a laser eyewear vendor is interested in visiting the lab to show their laser eyewear products. He also plans to arrange another laser products fair in the coming year. On-site demonstrations provide an opportunity for laser users to communicate with vendors regarding new products and safety items.
7. While the lab has a good laser safety training record, we are considering ways to make it more effective. There was discussion of hands-on training for new users. Currently Los Alamos and SLAC have training with a low-powered laser on an optical breadboard. Another possibility is to expand on-the-job training to instruct new users on the functions and hazards of optical components in the labs where they will work.
8. Ken noted that this year is the 50th anniversary of the laser. He attended the Laser ANSI meeting earlier this month. The ANSI laser safety standards are being revised, and will be finalized within 1 to

3 years. The NFPA code has a section on lasers that is outdated and not well documented. Many people in the laser safety community believe that it would be better for the NFPA to rely on ANSI to maintain laser safety standards.

Ken will have student assistants this summer to assist in implementing laser safety tasks.

Paul reports that there will be a high level EH&S peer review in May. This should not significantly affect laser users.