

**HSS Safety Improvement Task Group**  
**April 27, 2009 9:00am – 11:30am**  
**20300 Century Blvd., Ste. 105 Germantown, MD**

Attendees:

Candy Sanchez  
Mary Haughey  
Ken Stein  
Dave Smith  
Bert Davis

Not Present:

Sherry Main  
Cecelia Kenney  
Mark Petts

***Call to order***

9:20am meeting started.

Candy called the meeting to order and roll call was taken. It was noted that a quorum was not present, so nothing could be voted on by members. A decision to proceed with the meeting was made so that necessary discussions could take place.

***Old Business***

Ken spoke regarding the letters he drafted. He forwarded the letters to Candy earlier in the morning after Cecelia had made several changes.

- 1.) Preventive Maintenance Letter
- 2.) Furniture in Hallway/Fire Code violation (NFPA applies). Question: Who handles logistics for DOE? Answer: Concerns should be addressed to Brian Costlow. It was agreed that a phone call needs to be placed prior to sending the letter.

It was asked whether or not Bert should include ADA information regarding spatial requirements in the letter, and it was decided that that was not necessary in the letter. The ADA requirement (a.k.a. Life Safety Code) is a minimum standard. Ken will make changes to the letter and send to Candy.

Mr. Roeger's discussion was put on hold. HS-1 plans on meeting with him on Tuesday, 4/28 @ 11:30am.

Re: Mary's water quality issue/report, there was nothing further from her.

Dave and Bert to check on charter status. It has gone to HS-1.

Mary joined call @ 9:30am.

Discussion began about the top 3 issues and goals.

### ***Communication***

Ken stressed that he felt we needed to make it relevant to the office setting to be effective.

Candace received feedback re: education. FEOSH website info re: ergonomic info was very helpful, in the opinion of her co-workers, and they felt that a pop-up box, displaying safety messages would be a good idea.

Ken thought a reward system would be a good idea for employee involvement.

Dave Smith mentioned that many people have shown an interest in being on a standing safety committee. Their reservation is whether or not they'd be given time to participate in it. Dave believed Glenn Podonsky would support that. This is the most supported activity for a FEOSH program since 1991, per Dave's experience.

### ***Education/Training***

Trouble finding info is a major problem. One recommendation the group came up with is to improve the search engines. Bert is looking into this .

We also need a button for FEOSH. It was agreed that the button should go on the HSS page for now, and depending on how it goes with tracking traffic through the link, possibly also on the main energy.gov webpage. It was discussed that, perhaps people don't know what FEOSH is. A question was raised about the existence of a FEOSH logo, and Dave informed us that one does not currently exist.

It was decided that a quick reference section was necessary for the new webpage that will be an "employee safety info" webpage related to VPP. We may be able to use "Buzz." Each member is to come up with a logo (with the help of their co-workers) that represents employee safety within 1 week, and send their suggestions to Vicki so she can compile and distribute them to the group. Then, if we need to do a contest with employee participation to come up with a logo, we can.

Everyone is to come up with a list of things to include on the employee safety website, similar to a table of contents. Items discussed include:

- FEOSH training link
- SharePoint database system-incident search (status: has to be beta-tested for a couple of weeks)

- Health page (nursing station, various flu etc.)
- Action plans – pandemic response
- General info
- Consumer Product Safety
- Ergonomic Evaluation Request
- How do I submit a safety or health concern?
- If there is an accident, how do I respond and how do I report it?
- Flowchart for handling accidents
- I have a concern/There's been an accident
- HS-30 Safety Bulletins
- Links to other safety regulations, etc. – have a webmaster do this.

Have DOECAST point people who need Annual FEOSH training to the new webpage.

HSS webpage – where would we place our logo/link? Beneath the red banner, on the right hand side. The National Safety Council uses a green cross for safety, and we just because members, so we would have the rights to use that logo.

Dave would like to have the green cross, or whatever logo we use, easily copied to the desktop so you could click on an icon and go right where you need to go.

Everyone will email a list of things that should be included in the table of contents and send them to Vicki after 5 working days. Vicki to compile the list and send to group members for review.

10:10 call dropped and everyone got back on.

Candy: Drills and Lessons Learned--how do we get that implemented?

Mary: AED drills would be a good place to start. She recommended having a drill where people physically walk to the AED, etc.

We could always hand off to management to flesh out the actual plan and implementation aspect of implementing these drills and training for so-called “perishable skills.”

### ***Facilities Management***

Mary spoke regarding the Germantown asbestos cleaning/removal. She stated that floor tiles have asbestos, and there have been build-outs of rooms. They hired a contractor and scheduled work for last week in multiple places. The Building Manager sent an email to Sherry Main that work was to start Wednesday evening. Sherry was out on sick leave and the Union didn't get word until AFTER asbestos work had begun. Mary said it was discovered that some work had been done that shouldn't have been done by contractors who shouldn't have done it. There was a discussion on measuring before and after work to check levels to ensure that it's a safe place for workers to work.

Asbestos removal took place in G-wing in the Basement and on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, A-wing on floors 1, 3, and 4, and B-wing on floor 3. People have to walk through hallways near where work was done. Rooms are not sealed off, nor do they have notices warning people to stay out. Dave and Bert will look into this.

10:30am Mary stated that there was nothing further on the Germantown water issue.

Dave mentioned that when the water was tested, there were high lead readings in the water fountains in the basement at Germantown. Ken thought we should discuss with facilities management that maybe DOE should also follow local requirements, rather than continuing to be able to avoid local codes and standards since it's a federal building. Dave mentioned that the government holds contractors to a higher standard than it holds itself. Contractors are held to the OSHA or consensus standards where those are more protective than OSHA standards, so why wouldn't we have the same standards for our own staff that we require of contractors? A discussion about local codes and standards followed.

A recommendation was made to have the DOE management reconsider standards for buildings. We should have a statement that we will meet all OSHA standards and make every effort to achieve National Consensus Standards where they better protect the employee. If it's not possible to meet the NCS, they should have to provide an explanation as to why it can't be met. We can suggest to management that standards need to be improved as one of our recommendations.

Mary brought up a concern about the restrooms at DOE in Germantown. She said they don't carry sanitary products for women. Mary stated that she had been told it was because the building managers expect women to go to the snack bar, where they are available for purchase. Mary felt that if we asked men to go to the snack bar to purchase toilet paper that we'd have a much different response than what the women get. She thought we could maybe raise a suggestion to have a vending machine for such products directly in the bathroom, as many other public restrooms have.

We need to develop a preventive maintenance program. We have to get Cherylynn to the table, per Ken.

Dirtiness of blinds, etc. requires a thorough cleaning of all offices. Blinds may never have been cleaned. Could there be a build-up of carcinogens on the blinds?

### ***Employee Involvement***

#### **Safety and Health Committee**

##### **Rewards system**

Mary mentioned that for 2 years running, the NTEU228 gave members something that is health/safety related such as a crank radio or a first aid kit. Both were big hits. Things

like that seem to be more appealing to people, so maybe we should consider things like this with our rewards system. An Award ribbon on nameplate of the office of the person who wins might be a good idea, as well as Glenn Podonsky delivering a letter to the employee's personnel file and to the recipient during an all-hands meeting. It was mentioned that we should add a nominating option to the webpage and show a list of winners.

Mary recommended doing a safety share when the award goes out to explain what the award was for.

Bert is developing a safety message for each of the summer months.

Next meeting to be held Thursday, May 14, 2009 from 9-11:30am in Germantown. Call-in number will be forthcoming. The agenda will be circulated for comments/changes.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25am.