

## Peter Dunlop Memorial OHS Award 2007



### *Valerie Odewahn receives OHS award from Bob Kotic*

The winner of the Peter Dunlop Memorial OHS Award for 2007 was Valerie Odewahn from Sydney College of the Arts. Presentation of the award was made by COO and DVC Bob Kotic at a ceremony held in the Darlington Centre on 10 December 2007.

The Peter Dunlop Memorial OHS Award recognises outstanding contributions to OHS in the University by an individual or group. Congratulations and thanks are extended to the five nominees put forward for this year's award:

- Sam Carroll-Bell (Faculty of Science)
- Jasmine Feeney (Veterinary Science)
- Peter Loxton (Conservatorium of Music)
- Valerie Odewahn (Sydney College of the Arts)
- Carlo Piscicelli (Faculty of Chemistry)

The judging panel unanimously agreed that Valerie Odewahn should receive the award in recognition of her sustained and ongoing twenty year commitment to the improvement of health and safety at Sydney College of the Arts. In receiving the award Valerie said that she was humbled to be considered in the company of the previous award recipients, several of whom were present during this year's presentation.

## Penalty for Unsafe Design

The University of South Australia has been prosecuted and fined \$37,500 in relation to an incident where a pressure vessel that was designed and assembled for use in research failed when it was pressurised for the first time.

A student was injured when she was struck by an object that was projected when the pressure vessel exploded.

The judgement concluded that:

- The University failed to conduct an adequate hazard identification and risk assessment in relation to use of the plant.
- The injured student had received no instruction or training on OHS issues.
- There was no system in place to ensure that the calculations, or the finished assembled product were independently checked before being put into operation.
- The designer was deemed to be appropriately qualified and competent, however he erred in his calculations and did not allow an adequate margin of error.

Since the incident the relevant school requires that a risk assessment and standard operating procedure be completed and forwarded to the School's Research Committee before any new pressure equipment is used.

The University of Sydney departments that are involved with the design and assembly of research (or other) equipment should be alerted to the legislative requirements for hazard identification and risk assessment, and seek independent/peer review of designs that have the potential for catastrophic failure.

## Travel Safety Assistance

A new University Travel Assistance Program has been established to provide University travellers with important safety, medical and travel information prior to departing on international trips. It will also aid The University of Sydney in locating and communicating with travellers during times of crisis, and to draw on International SOS's partnership with the University insurer, AIG, to provide 24/7 access to medical staff and International SOS's global network of clinics and alarm centres.

As an ongoing commitment to the personal safety and well-being of international travellers, the University of Sydney is proud to announce membership with International SOS, effective 19 September 2007. This membership includes:

### **Automated Travel Advisory Program**

Upon booking trips to prospective destinations, travellers will receive a country advisory by e-mail, containing information on security and medical alerts, personal and



driving safety, vaccinations and diseases, food and water safety, business and cultural etiquette, public holidays, demographics, and also how to contact medical staff or to attend one of International SOS's global network of clinics.

### Communications Portal

The University of Sydney International SOS Communications Portal is designed to provide travellers with important medical, safety, and travel information in addition to the Automated Travel Advisory email they will receive after booking. It contains country-specific information, worldwide emergency contacts and details on the University's International SOS Membership. This portal is accessible from the University travel intranet at [www.finance.usyd.edu.au/travel](http://www.finance.usyd.edu.au/travel), or by going to [www.internationalsos.com](http://www.internationalsos.com)

### Traveller Locator Service

Through an easy-to-use, secure web interface, the University of Sydney will have better real-time visibility of the location of international travellers who have booked flights and hotel stays via one of the University travel agents. Interfacing directly with the travel agents' reservation systems to obtain the necessary information real-time, International SOS builds, manages, maintains, and secures this database of information. This information is refreshed from global reservation systems on a 10 minute basis, capturing any changes made to the original booking.

How does it work? When an individual travelling on University business books an international trip through one of the University of Sydney travel agents, International SOS automatically retrieves the booking information and integrates it into their system. This allows the University of Sydney to react quickly to identify, communicate with, and if necessary, initiate appropriate recovery protocols, in the event of a developing adverse health/political/security situation. This information is never shared or otherwise transferred to any third-party outside International SOS.

For more information on Travel Assistance contact the University Travel Helpdesk at [travel@usyd.edu.au](mailto:travel@usyd.edu.au) or x69555.

## Biosafety - Gene Technology Regulations

The Office of The Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) released revised Gene Technology Regulations on the 1 July 2007. A number of the changes in the Regulations have an impact on researchers across the University dealing with genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

For those working in OGTR certified PC2 facilities, new, more detailed Certification Guidelines have been issued <http://www.ogtr.gov.au/pubform/certification.htm> and new updated Guidelines for the transport of genetically modified organisms have also been issued <http://www.ogtr.gov.au/rtf/handbook/gmotransportJuly2007.rtf>. It is the responsibility of facility managers and facility users to ensure that the new guidelines are being complied with. Compliance with the new guidelines will be monitored during the annual inspection of each of the University's PC2 facilities which are conducted by a member of the Institutional Biosafety Committee.

In addition to the revised Guidelines, there have been some changes to the classification of certain types of work involving genetically modified organisms. The changes are designed to offer more streamlined processes for lower risk dealings and more transparent processes for other identified activities. Details of the new classification scheme are available from the University's Biosafety website - See Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 within <http://www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/biosafety/docs/GeneTechnologyRegs2001.pdf>.

One of the more significant changes involves the classification of work with transgenic mice and gene-knockout mice. A new classification has been introduced and most work involving transgenic mice and gene-knockout mice is now classified as a PC1 NLRD. Any dealings with transgenic mice and gene-knockout mice must now be conducted in a certified PC1 or certified PC2 facility. A summary of the major changes to the Gene Technology Regulations can be found on the OGTR website at <http://www.ogtr.gov.au/rtf/ibc/regsummMay07v2.rtf>. An application form for all projects involving the use of genetically modified organisms must still be submitted to the University's Biosafety committee and work must not commence on the project until written approval has been granted by the Biosafety committee. Application forms can be found at <http://www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/biosafety/docs.shtml>. If you have any questions regarding the changes in Gene Technology Regulations, please phone the University's Biosafety Officer, Jenny Dawkins on x14126.

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This and other OHSIM Newsletters are also available on our website at [www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/news](http://www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/news).