

## NEW YEAR, NEW NAME

Welcome to the first OHSIM Newsletter from OHS & Injury Management.

The Occupational Health and Safety, Workers Compensation and Injury Management functions are no longer part of the Risk Management Office. From January 2006 we became part of Human Resources in the Infrastructure Portfolio. Most of our staff have stayed the same and we haven't changed any of our programs. All the OHS, Workers Comp and Injury Management information you used to find on the Risk Management Office website has been transferred to our new website at [www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/](http://www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/). For the moment we are still located in the Margaret Telfer Building.

### STAFF CHANGES

We welcome back Anne-Maree Brookes from maternity leave. She is now job-sharing with Maryanne Baker in the Injury Management Coordinator role. Anne-Maree works Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, whilst Maryanne is available on Tuesdays and Fridays.

We also welcome Howard Ackland to our team. Howard is the University's Radiation Safety Officer. Howard is currently based in the Services Building, G12.

Contact details for all OHSIM staff are on our website at <http://www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/structure.shtml>.

## LABORATORY SAFETY TRAINING

The following laboratory safety training courses are being offered by OHS & Injury Management. Course details and application forms are available from [http://www.ssdu.usyd.edu.au/courses/semester\\_1/workplace\\_safety.shtml](http://www.ssdu.usyd.edu.au/courses/semester_1/workplace_safety.shtml).

### BIOSAFETY

Thursday 23rd March and Wednesday 29th March (half day). This course is for staff and honours and postgraduate students who work with microorganisms and other biological materials. Topics include: safe microbiological practice as per *Australian Standard 2243.3 Safety in Laboratories - Microbiology*, OGTR requirements and guidelines for genetic manipulation work.

### RADIATION SAFETY

Monday 27th March and Tuesday 28th March (whole day). This course is suitable for laboratory supervisors, technical and professional staff, and postgraduate and honours students who work with ionising radiation. Topics include: nature of radioactivity, radiological protection, shielding, containment and decontamination. Both theoretical and practical sessions are included.

### HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES IN LABORATORIES

Friday 24th March and Thursday 30th March (half day). This course is designed for staff and honours and postgraduate

students whose laboratory work involves hazardous substances. Topics include: assessing risks arising from work with hazardous substances, correct storage and labelling, dealing with spills and hazardous waste disposal.

### THE DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS WASTE

Wednesday 5th April (2 hours). This course is for departmental safety officers, laboratory managers and other staff involved in coordinating hazardous waste disposal procedures. The University's recently revised *Guidelines for the Disposal of Hazardous Waste* will be discussed. Other topics include waste avoidance and minimisation and disposal routes of various waste streams. The aim is to assist participants to develop practical waste management plans.

The closing dates for course applications are:

Biosafety - 17th March

Radiation Safety - 17th March

Hazardous Substances in Laboratories - 20th March

Disposal of Hazardous Waste - 29th March.

## WORKERS COMPENSATION INJURY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

WorkCover has introduced a new financial incentive for employers to report workplace injury details as early as possible. Early reporting is being encouraged because WorkCover research has confirmed that early treatment and workplace injury management can significantly improve return to work outcomes and cost of claims.

If a work area fails to report a known workplace injury promptly then costs equivalent to the injured staff member's wages for the first week of lost time will be charged back to the injured person's employing department.

If a staff member delays reporting their own workplace injury then WorkCover can allow the Insurer (WorkCover Agent) to apply greater stringency relating to the determination of a claim, which can mean that benefits might be delayed. It is in the best interests of all staff to report injuries immediately.

A staff member or their supervisor should report any work related injury within 24 hours of an incident via the University Occupational Injury, Illness or Incident Report form.

Once an injured staff member is identified to OHSIM as having a possible claim for treatment or lost wages then a notification of injury to the Insurer and a claim number can usually be arranged through the University Workers Compensation process within a few days.

Departments that **do comply** with early reporting to OHSIM within 24 hours **will not be charged** the WorkCover excess payment. Refer to the Incident Reporting Policy at <http://www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/policies/ohs/acc-rep.html>.

## ohsrm PROGRAM AUDIT 2006

The next ohsrm audit will be conducted between July and December 2006. The audit will examine implementation of the University's ohsrm Program at Department and workgroup levels. Each Unit will be expected to have improved upon the results of earlier audits, particularly in aspects that were previously found to be deficient.

The 2006 audit will include several improvements from the 2004/5 audit. Professional assistance will be provided for small Units, i.e. those with fewer than 10 staff. Whilst all other Departments will be required again to self-audit, improved auditor training will enhance auditor capability and reduce variability of results. A minimum number of audit elements will be included, with hazard-specific supplements for higher risk areas. The time frame for completion of the audit has been doubled to allow greater flexibility in planning with consideration for other demands.

## PETER DUNLOP MEMORIAL OHS AWARD 2005

The 2005 Peter Dunlop Memorial Award was presented to John Robinson of the School of Medical Radiation Technologies on 9th December 2005. John was nominated by his colleagues in recognition of his leadership in radiation safety matters, including membership of the NSW Radiation Advisory Council and as chair of the University's Radiation Safety Working Party during 2004 and 2005. He has been instrumental in laying the foundations for improved radiation safety management and future compliance with radiation legislative requirements across the University. This is symbolised by the recent establishment of a Radiation Safety Committee and the appointment of a University Radiation Safety Officer.



The photo shows John Robinson holding the award beside Howard Ackland, the new University Radiation Safety Officer.

## WORKCOVER VISITS

During 2005 and early 2006 WorkCover Inspectors visited several of the University's campuses to investigate selected incidents. The Inspectors usually seek evidence of a sound investigation to identify causative factors and a reasonable response to implement risk controls to prevent any recurrence of the incident. These inspectors can initiate legal action if they perceive that OHS risks are not being adequately managed. To avoid any such legal action and minimise the risk of workplace injuries, actively implement the University's ohsrm Program. Consult with staff in your workgroup to identify workplace hazards or jobs that have a risk of injury. Assess these risks and put in place effective controls to prevent injuries. Guidelines and templates to assist this process are available at:

[http://www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/ohs\\_manual/ohsrm.shtml](http://www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/ohs_manual/ohsrm.shtml).

If a WorkCover inspector visits your department, please cooperate with them and contact OHSIM without delay. Guidance on reporting and investigating work related incidents is available at:

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/ohs/policies/ohs/acc-rep.shtml>.

## DANGEROUS GOODS

In September last year we reported that the legislation relating to dangerous goods had changed. The storage and handling of dangerous goods is now regulated by the OHS Amendment (Dangerous Goods) Act 2003 and OHS Regulation 2001 (Chapter 6A). OHSIM is currently compiling and verifying dangerous goods data for reporting to WorkCover. Stage 1 of the notification process has just been completed. This included data for 31 of the largest dangerous goods depots on the Camperdown/Darlington Campus. We thank the departmental contacts who assisted us to gather and verify this data.

In the coming weeks we will commence a survey of all relevant departments to gather data for Stage 2 of the notification. Your prompt attention to these surveys will assist us to identify other areas of the University that are of interest to WorkCover and the NSW Fire Brigade.

We are also in the early stages of developing new dangerous goods guidance and associated resources. It is likely that the major priorities at an operational level in departments will be for the completion of thorough risk assessments and the review of standard operating procedures for processes involving significant volumes of dangerous goods (eg, distillation and decanting), the separation of ignition sources from flammable environments and the general security of dangerous goods.

## EXPLOSIVES & SECURITY SENSITIVE AMMONIUM NITRATE

It is now illegal to be in possession of explosives without a licence. All new license applications will require a probity assessment by Police and ASIO, etc. The new legislation also allows for the regulation of explosive precursors and other substances thought to be a security risk. These have been called Security Sensitive Dangerous Substances (SSDS). Ammonium nitrate is the first substance to be controlled as an SSDS. It is now illegal to possess Security Sensitive Ammonium Nitrate (any emulsion, gel, suspension or mixture with > 45% ammonium nitrate) without a licence. However, there is a 3 kg exemption limit for research activities.

All departments and research groups are required to review their chemical stocks and notify OHSIM immediately if in possession of any explosives, explosive chemicals or any volume of Security Sensitive Ammonium Nitrate.

Address Label

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