

**ALES Health and Safety Committee meeting  
October 18, 2023, 10:30am-12:00pm**

Attendees- Urmila Basu, Jay Willis, Dianne Payeur, Victoria Sandberg, Aman Powar-Grewal, Habibur Rahman, Jen Beverly, Jane Batcheller, Kelvin Lien, Allie Dunlop, Ross Lowe, Stephanie Ramage, Rim Maamouri, Kim Schaerer

Regrets- Sarah Gooding, Sandeep Mohapatra, Devin Dittmer, Zyre Aubrey Hebert

**Executive Summary**

1. In response to security concerns in the Ag/For and LKS buildings, hours of operation for the buildings have been changed. Effective October 11<sup>th</sup>, building hours have modified for the Ag/For building in order to coincide with Engineering and GSB. All buildings will have one door as a “celebrated entrance” and other perimeter doors will be locked earlier. LKS is now secured full time, card access only.
2. All students/staff should follow the work alone protocol and submit an incident report if there is any incident.
3. For the Fall term, the faculty-wide Lab safety information seminar offered by Dr. Urmila Basu was attended by 75 students/staff. In addition, the lab-specific and task-specific training needs to be completed by students/staff.
4. A new onboarding program document (released by HRHSE) has a lot of good information which can be used and customized by the unit supervisors, and ensures that core mandatory safety training is prioritized early in a new staff member’s employment. [U of A Onboarding Program | Human Resources, Health, Safety + Environment \(ualberta.ca\)](#).
5. [New ALES Work-Related Travel Form](#) - This is a new ALES safety initiative meant to bring ALES into compliance with emergency management within the OH&S Code and the UofA standards of practice.
6. HSE is updating the off-boarding Protocol and a new form will be released on October 26, 2023.
7. HSE will be organizing a safety symposium on January 24, 2024 which will be an in-person event.

## Welcome to new members and Introductions

Urmila welcomed the new members to the committee. The TOR for the committee has already been shared with the committee members. The committee members play an important dual role by bringing safety questions or issues from their departments or different work areas to the committee, and also help in communicating important safety messages from the committee to their departments. Jay mentioned that members can always bring safety concerns to the attention of the committee, without waiting for the committee meeting.

## Last meeting minutes-additions, corrections, approval

### Action Items from the last meeting:

- **Stocking of Epipens** in the AED cabinets after reviewing with Emergency Management  
Just for the background of this item for the new members- Stephanie Ramage brought up this issue in our last meeting that Food Allergy Canada has introduced recommendations for post-secondary institutions to consider having autoinjectors in public spaces on campus. One of these spaces could be gym as people can get exercise-induced anaphylactic response. Stephanie has received an email from HSE that there is an interest in stocking the Epipens on Campus locations and will be done in the coming months.
- **Security Concerns in Ag/For and LKS Buildings - Uncontrolled Access Points- Dianne Payeur**
  - Dianne Payeur - There are campus wide issues of security concerns in all buildings within the UofA. The hot spot locations seem to be centralized around the LRT stations and medical facilities at this time.
  - Emergency preparedness is an important factor to take into consideration.
  - Hours of operation have changed in Ag/For as of October 11th in order to coincide with Engineering and GSB. All buildings will have one door as a “celebrated entrance” and other perimeter doors will be locked earlier. The signs have been posted around all areas in order to indicate these changes.
  - LKS is now secured full time, card access only, based on the heat map and reports from UAPS that the homeless community sees this as a good place to go.
  - It is important for everyone to stay vigilant and follow work alone protocol.
    - Please ensure you update and are following the most recent template released by HSE.
  - Whenever there is an incident, it is important to submit an incident report. Jay mentioned that the UofA Safety and Security committee allocates resources to the buildings depending on the need indicated from these reports.
  - Dr. Rahman mentioned if there is any scope of having surveillance around the buildings – what prevents someone from entering and hiding before closing? Is there capacity for security staff in buildings. This is an acknowledged gap;

Dianne noted that staffing levels and presence from UAPS campus-wide is noticeably greater but is not a perfect resolution. Please keep reporting and this will help the heat maps highlight an accurate picture of the UofA's current situation.

## **New Business**

- **ALES HSE Committee Annual Plan/ Lab Safety Information Seminar – Urmila Basu**
  - The ALES Health and Safety committee annual plan (which was shared with the committee) was submitted at the end of August. Thanks to Jay for his input and to Vicky for her many additional items and finalizing the document before submission to HSE. Submission was completed on August 29th, 2023.
  - The lab safety information seminar is now offered Faculty wide. It provides an opportunity to get familiar with new students/ staff who will be working in the labs. New students/staff are also introduced to Vicky who also attends the seminar and answers any questions directed to her.
  - The seminar covers different lab safety aspects; including the training modules which need to be completed by students before they start working the lab. It also covers that it is important to have SOPs/HA, be aware of the PPE required for work, chemical management/work alone policy, emergency preparedness, incident reporting and researcher offboarding. For the Fall semester, the seminar was attended by 75 students/staff.
  - Urmila also highlights the important factor that is Seminar is not a training session but an educational moment in order to seek out the appropriate training across the UofA. Students also need to complete the lab-specific and task-specific training.
  - More information on Chemical Management and researcher offboarding will be passed on once available.
  
- **Research Stations Safety – Jay Willis**
  - Thanks to Vicky and Emma for establishing a facility inspection process at the research stations; all units have had an initial inspection and a second/third round is now starting. Victoria, Emma, and staff are working at correcting these noted deficiencies as time and resources allow.
  - Jay used a new onboarding program document (released by HRHSE) for a new staff member at the SRTC. It has a lot of good information which can be used and customized by the unit supervisors, and ensures that core mandatory safety training is prioritized early in a new staff member's employment. [U of A Onboarding Program | Human Resources, Health, Safety + Environment \(ualberta.ca\)](https://www.ualberta.ca/human-resources/health-safety-environment/ualberta-onboarding-program)

- Jay inquired about the lighting situation on 118 street which continues to be an issue. Dianne mentioned that fixing these lights is on the F&O list along with getting the gender-neutral washroom functional in GSB and Ag/For.
- Jay is trying to encourage staff with Vicky's support to report incidents at research station units. Vicky is providing additional support during incident investigation, corrective action implementation/resolution, and conversation with the HSE Incident Triage team.

- **ALES Safety Updates - Victoria Sandberg**

- FAPs completed and reviewed as of October 18th/2023 = 134
  - Great uptake with this new process that started in April
  - Great uptake of the new [ALES Trip Notification Form](#) as well
  - Please pass along this message to those who complete these items on a regular basis as it functions as a great example of the hard work being put in by ALES PIs to ensure their compliance with OH&S Code and the UofA standards of practice.
  - This has been demonstrated many times, when Vicky has been asked by HSE/FRO (Kim) to share the current locations of ALES PI's actively in the field in a timely manner.
  - Kim noted that ALES is at the forefront of this process in comparison to other facilities and to continue this type of work.
- New [ALES Work-Related Travel Form](#)
  - This is a new ALES safety initiative meant to bring ALES into compliance with emergency management within the OH&S Code and UofA standards of practice. The intent behind this google form, which is available on the ALES safety webpage, is to ensure Supervisors/PI's (etc.) report their location when traveling for any reason outside of Field Activity Safety Plans. This is meant for conferences, seminars, etc.
  - This should be completed in conjunction with the [UGo platform](#) at the UofA for international travel and by itself for travel within Canada.
  - A faculty wide email will be sent out once the appropriate individuals have reviewed the information from the ALES Dean's office and approved the messaging.
- Additional Training:
  - ALES will host another round of [First-Aid Training in January 2024](#) on the 29th & 30th at AFDP on South Campus
  - It is strongly encouraged that those that were not able to attend previous sessions attend this one and those who still need first-aid trained individuals for Field Activity Plans complete these courses.
  - ALES is also looking into hosting its own Wilderness First-Aid course for those completing remote work. Please notify Victoria Sandberg if you have any additional interest in this.

- FRO will be hosting an additional Wilderness First-Aid and chainsaw courses as well - This will be made publicly available in the FRO messaging and HSE "What's New Slide".
- [HSE How-To Safety Series](#)
  - Lab Close-Out Process - October 26th 2023
    - A new lab close-out protocol will become available on the date indicated above and will be widely shared across ALES in order to maintain compliance with HSE initiatives as they are released
  - Ergonomics Training Needs Assessment - November 9th 2023
  - This is a great opportunity to attend sessions hosted by HSE in order to understand this process more fully and ask any questions you may have.
- [Unit Emergency Action Plans:](#)
  - This has been successfully completed in many labs and departments and has resulted in identifying deficiencies within ALES buildings
    - Human Ecology does not currently have an AED. One was ordered on October 18th 2023 in order to resolve. This will be installed, added to the heart secure webpage, and tracked and monitored by the Faculty Safety Advisor & OEM in order to ensure it stays in compliance.
    - It was also noted that the GSB AED is behind a locked door on the fourth floor of GSB. Dianne reached out to James Allen in order to open the locked door or move the AED to a publicly accessible location. Dianne and Victoria will notify the committee and departments once this has been rectified.
- [South Campus Inspection Program Implementation:](#)
  - Has successfully implemented the inspection program for all of South Campus (DRTC, MET, SRTC, PRC, Crops, Compost) and Kinsella.
    - Next planned inspection - Mattheis Ranch, Breton Plots, North Campus buildings (Ag/For, GSB, SAB, ESB, HEB).
  - These inspections are now all heading into second / third month completion and deficiencies are being identified and rectified as needed.
  - The MET unit and DRTC have started to have items purged from the facility that are no longer required and PIs are notified and asked about historical items.
    - A large thank-you to Drs. Masahito Oba, Divakar Ambrose, Anne Laarman, Olva Rueppell, and Ruurd Zijlstra, Marcos Calazo and Allison Mark for making the time to walk through core areas and identify items that can go and what needs to stay.
  - SRTC has a planned chemical list compilation for October 25th 2023 in order to report to CHEMATIX and remove.
  - This is also helping to identify missing / outdated paperwork = Hazard Assessments, Crisis Management Plans, Unit Emergency Action Plans, etc.

- **ALES Incidents Report Review**

- ALES incidents from 2021 and 2022 are currently being actively closed by Victoria Sandberg
- There were 73 open incidents as of October 16th spreading across the past three years.
- All incidents that need to be closed will be.
  - Please bear with Victoria Sandberg as she reaches out in regards to any historical items. The hope is that this can be quickly resolved and a new successful process put in place by the HSE & the Faculty Safety Advisor to ensure this does not occur again.
- Major Incidents of Note:
  - DRTC Incident: Has had an uptick of incidents in regards to cow-kicks, cow-crushing, and other cow related injuries. Some of these incidents remain open as ALES looks into additional means of resolution. In the meantime, the Victoria and DRTC Manager (Devin Dittmer) have updated the Animal Behaviour SOP and will provide a training session to all staff once he is back in order to refresh on warning behaviors leading up to cow-related incidents. This resolution will lead to the closure of many current DRTC incidents (~6)
  - SRTC Incident: A drop down feeder resulted in a slight electrical shock to the operator following cleaning of the room. This cleaning takes place on an annual basis. The problem was identified and rectified by reviewing the manual, ensuring the feeder will be covered during spray-down, allowing 24 hours to air-out, and using compressed air to blow out the machine before it is re-hooked up.
  - Bear-Spray Incident: An incident occurred while a student was out on a trip associated with a Field Activity Safety Plan. The bear spray was moved around “a lot” during the hike and this resulted in the canister and locking mechanism to loosen and spray two individuals in the face. The resolution implemented by the PI was to ensure bear-spray is always carried in an approved secondary canister and checking it before and after all major hikes.

- **Health, Safety, & Environment (HSE) Updates – Kim Schaerer**

- Unfortunate incidence of the passing away of Dr. Maya Bhatia. OHS (Nunavut) initiated the investigation as this is where the fatality occurred. Danny Mah and Michelle Rooker from the UofA are participating in this investigation. The report will be handed over to Nunavut Safety Commission on October 27, which will then be reviewed and lead to corrective actions being implemented across the UofA. The complete report will not be shared due to confidentiality but the

Corrective Actions as needed will be noted by HSE for needed changes across the UofA.

- Off-boarding Protocol is being updated and a new form will be released on October 26 / 2023.
- Monthly “[How-To Series](#)” Safety sessions are continuing.
  - Please attend as this is a great opportunity to learn about these key initiatives and ask questions.
- January 24th / 2024 is a safety symposium which will be an in-person event.
  - This is a changing process and will be a full-day event with workshops, key-note speakers, and many other activities.
  - Please view the HSE What’s New Slide in order to register for attendance
  - Everyone is welcome but attendance will be prioritized to leaders and Supervisors if needed

- **Campus Safety & Security Committee**

- Dianne and Jay are both on the Campus Safety and Security committee. Victoria Sandberg now sits as a delegate on this committee for when Jay Willis is not able to attend the meetings and will be coordinated between the two of them.
- Victoria noted that there are many upcoming action items for November from the Safety and Security Committee that will be made publicly accessible within the U newsletters, Employee Digest etc. in regards to the changing campus hours. There will also be a Safety and Security survey being released at the end of November and it is strongly encouraged everyone completes this in order to achieve an accurate representation of the current situation across North and South Campus facilities.

- **Other Items for Discussion:**

- Ross Lowe noted during this time the ALES Work Related Travel Form is incredibly easy to use and was very fast (less than 5 minutes)
- Aman Powar-Gerwal asked about the offboarding Process for LKS
  - Victoria Sandberg noted that the new off-boarding document will be available on October 26th and she would send it as soon as available. Additionally, she noted that she only takes the 2nd floor of LKS into consideration as this is where the HNRU sits. The rest of LKS is overseen by the FOMD Faculty Safety Advisor Dan Daerdinger - the contact information for this individual was provided to Aman following the meeting.
- The ALES safety committee adjourned at 11:46am (14 minutes early) due to no further questions / comments from the committee members.

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