WHS report

To the Medicine Faculty Board

As at 24th March 2020

Category 1: Risk Profile

1. External news:
   a) COVID-19
      As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, Safe Work Australia has published updated information for employers on managing the risks from COVID-19. Under the model work health and safety laws, employers must have measures in place to eliminate or manage the risk of exposure to COVID-19. The Coronavirus (COVID-19): Advice for Employers web page includes information on what an employer should do to protect workers and others at a workplace. Employers should keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 information and advice to ensure that any action taken is appropriate. While employers will not be able to completely eliminate the risk of workers contracting COVID-19 while carrying out work, they must do all that is reasonably practicable to minimise that risk.

   b) WHS Amendment (Review) Bill 2019
      In November 2019 The Work Health and Safety Amendment (Review) Bill 2019 was introduced to the NSW Lower House with the view to expediting reforms based on recommendations emanating from the national review of the Model WHS laws. The reforms focus upon breach deterrence and the need to ensure WHS legal risks are mitigated via the implementation and maintenance of a health and safety management system (HSMS) that enables the management of hazards and associated risks, appropriate consultation practices, effective contractor management, execution of investigations and audits, and the timely reporting and management of incidents. Transparency and oversight of UNSW’s compliance with WHS duties and obligations will become a primary focus for UNSW Officers and will be dependent upon access to timely and accurate data, and appropriate HSE decision making tools.

      Key proposed reforms include:
      
      - Insurance against WHS fines will be prohibited
      - Gross negligence will be included as an alternative fault element to a Category 1 offence, making it easier for prosecutors to commence proceedings
      - Penalties for offences will increase on an annual basis following the CPI resulting in an increase of the maximum fine for a Category 1 offence committed by an Officer amounting to $692,500 and individuals amounting to $346,500.
      - SafeWork NSW Inspectors will be able to exercise investigative powers for up to 30 days after entering a workplace
      - Clarification that the death of a person at work may also constitute manslaughter and may be prosecuted under the Crimes Act attracting a maximum penalty of 25 years imprisonment

2. Risk update
   a) WHS Replacement Project for SafeSys
      In late November four of the eight providers contacted via the Procurement process responded to UNSW’s Request for Proposal (RFP). Responses were reviewed and rated by a number of user representatives across UNSW including from Medicine. All respondents were invited to showcase their system and to demonstrate how their system addressed a number of HSE scenarios. This process witnessed the emergence of preferred providers and Procurement are in the final stages of contract negotiation. Once this process is finalised, a detailed planning
process will transpire with the intent of reinforcing system suitability and strengthening implementation assumptions/requirements. Over the past four months, information has been gathered to assist Business Case completion and various iterations of implementation models and approaches have been explored. The Business Case was endorsed by the Information Technology Program Board last week and will be submitted to Management Board for final approval. It is expected that the detailed planning phase will be finalised May 2020, and implementation will commence Q1 2021.

Consultation: Level 3 H&S committees are currently undertaking their annual compliance checklists for 2019 and identifying any required corrective actions. The one outstanding issue from level 3 H&S committees (PC2/airflow issues in the Strasser laboratory - SWCH) has now been resolved.

Incident reporting and investigations*

Medicine Hazards, Incidents, Workplace Inspection from 12 month reporting period up to 29/01/20:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% completed/closed</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hazards reported</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidents reported</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplace Inspection corrective Actions</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Worker’s compensation performance:

- Nil worker’s compensation claims recorded since last Faculty Board meeting

Category 2: WHS compliance

- A possible exposure to formaldehyde during rodent perfusions was reported to SafeWork NSW following receipt of an external consultant’s advice about a potential issue with a recirculating fume cabinet being used for rodent perfusions with fixatives (Ref #2-153914). Air monitoring has been conducted by CETEC and has verified that exposure levels were well below current (and proposed future) exposure standards for formaldehyde.
- There were six significant safety incidents in the reporting period 13 November 2019 - 14 February 2020. Only two of the incidents, required a notification to SafeWork NSW. For each notification the regulator has advised they are satisfied with the action taken by UNSW to report, investigate and implement appropriate corrective actions.

Category 3: WHS verification

Training

Training statistics from PiMS report run 29/01/20:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>New staff (target 100%)</th>
<th>All Staff (target 80%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>2144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% completed HSE Awareness</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% completed HSE Ergonomics</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% completed Responsible Employee</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>% completed SM&amp;R</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>45</td>
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Reports to be sent to Head of School bimonthly with feedback required on progress towards targets at Faculty Board meeting.

*source data from PiMS online Health & Safety reporting system for the period 29/01/19 – 29/01/20