Welcome to the first issue of the EHSS newsletter. This issue explains how we can assist your School or Unit, and introduces our key staff. Future issues of The Safety Wire will be published at least twice per year and will highlight current risk-related topics and concerns.

What do we do?

‘Health and Safety’ is often seen as an excuse to stop people doing the things they want to do. In fact, we aim to do the opposite. EHSS exists to help you conduct your everyday business, and special events, with as little uncontrolled risk as possible. Our traditional role therefore includes environmental services such as radiation protection and hazardous waste management, as well as the provision of training, safety inspections, health surveillance and advice on health and safety law and practice.

Over the past few years, however, we have expanded upon this compliance-assurance role to engage actively with Schools and Units, both to raise awareness of traditional health and safety issues and to facilitate controls over wider risks that might impact on the School’s, Unit’s or the University’s core activities. Accordingly, the range of services the Unit offers now includes risk management, business continuity and insurance.

We welcome contact from all staff, students and visitors in the University who would like assistance in any of these areas. Our first newsletter introduces our team members and highlights their particular areas of responsibility.
Angus Clark – Director
Angus began his career as an Environmental Health Officer in West Lothian, and led on Health and Safety enforcement in Aberdeenshire in the 1990s. He then spent seven years in process, offshore supply and construction industries worldwide before joining Robert Gordon University in 2003, and becoming Director of EHSS in St Andrews in 2007. Here, Angus leads on policy, governance and audit, and matters relating to fieldwork, placement and travel to hostile or unstable areas.

Paul Szawlowski – Deputy Director
Paul’s background is in biochemistry, with a career spanning thirteen years of research in the activation of the immune system. He joined EHSS in 1995, and is responsible for:

- General health and safety advice
- Specialist advice on radiation protection and work with radioactive materials
- Specialist advice on the safety of biological organisms (including genetically modified organisms)
- Specialist advice on chemical safety

Unsurprisingly, Paul acts as our main liaison with the Science-based Schools.

Brian Kennedy – Risk Adviser
Brian worked for fifteen years as a business consultant for a multinational insurance broker and risk management consultancy, before joining the university in 2009. He has formal qualifications in risk management and Health and Safety, and is directly responsible for corporate risk management processes, business continuity planning and crisis management. He has a particular interest in the benefits of information technology, and likes to look for new ways to deliver information or rationalise processes within his areas of responsibility.
Nina Buschman – Occupational Health Adviser
Nina joined us in November 2010. She is a Registered Nurse with the Nursing Midwifery Council, and holds a specialist qualification in Occupational Health. She has worked in hospital and community environments, and also with NHS Boards to promote health and the reduction of health inequalities.

Nina’s role in the University is to advise on:
- An employee’s fitness for his/her role
- The support employees need at work as a result of medical issues
- Health surveillance
- General health issues, when employees self-refer to her
- The prevention of work-related ill health

Employees may refer themselves to Nina or be referred by their managers. This service is strictly bound by medical confidentiality.

Larry Fortune – Fire Safety Adviser
Larry has 29 years’ experience with the Fire Brigade, and has spent 11 years as Fire Safety Adviser in the University of Dundee. At St Andrews, he carries out fire risk assessments and gives general fire safety advice. Larry currently works on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Christine Linton – Fire and Training Officer
Christine began her career in tax and accountancy, but then completed a PhD with the School of History in St Andrews. She has also worked in the Library and in the Admissions and Business Improvement Units, and still tutors for the School of History. She is our main liaison with the Arts-based Schools, and she specialises in the provision of health and safety training, including fire safety, the use of fire safety equipment, manual handling, risk assessments and food hygiene. Christine currently works on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
Beth Robinson – Health and Safety Officer
Beth is the newest face in the Unit, in a post that is shared between EHSS and Estates. She has previously worked in industry, specialising in health and safety aspects of construction and cleaning. Beth is currently updating the Estates health and safety management system, trying to make it as user-friendly as possible. She emphasises the importance of working closely with the Estates team to ensure their active involvement at every stage of this task – ensuring that they have the training and understanding to carry out their work safely.

Kenneth Stewart – Insurance Officer
Kenneth will be familiar to many staff as a member of the Finance Unit. However, as insurance issues are often closely linked to risk and safety, he brought his portfolio to EHSS in 2010. The growth of all areas in the University, including teaching and research, means that there is a greater need for adequate insurance cover. In keeping up to date with changes, Kenneth relies upon information from Schools and Units, and welcomes enquiries about any policies that might need to be arranged, renewed or extended. Insurance policies at present include travel for University journeys, motor (University owned or hired vehicles), computer (worldwide cover for University owned laptops), marine and goods-in-transit.

Emma Harbour – Unit Secretary
Emma has spent nine years as a secretary in Estates, and moved to EHSS about a year ago. Her duties include the organisation of occupational health appointments and hazardous waste uplifts, liaising with First Aiders, assisting with Fire Safety Training and general financial and administrative work for the Unit.
Seasonal Influenza

As you will be aware, seasonal influenza vaccinations are prepared annually and offered by the NHS to registered patients in “high risk” groups (over 65, pregnant, or you have a qualifying medical condition). You will be contacted by the NHS directly if you fall into this category. Those of us who are not in a “high risk” group, but who want to be vaccinated against seasonal influenza, will need to make our own arrangements. Some GP practices and many local pharmacies can offer this for a fee. This year, for the first time, there will also be an egg-free vaccine available. We regret that the University cannot fund vaccinations for all staff and students, but we are aware that many staff and students used Boots on South Street last year, and that they are offering the service again for £12.99. The University has negotiated a further 15% off this price, whereby you would pay £11.04 on presentation of a voucher. Vouchers are available from:

- Student Services at the Student Union building;
- The ASC, 79 North Street;
- Occupational Health/EHSS in the Bute Building; and
- College Gate Reception.

Although labelled as an “employee wellbeing scheme”, the vouchers can be redeemed by both staff and students and are valid until 31 December 2011.

Whilst the seasonal flu vaccine remains unchanged from last year, the government advice is to repeat the immunisation annually. We will publicise other vaccination services in St Andrews as we become aware of them.

Free Beer!

The Unit’s name, ‘Environmental, Health and Safety Services’, is no longer an accurate indication of what we do. With our increasing emphasis on risk management and contingency planning – in addition to the traditional health and safety advisory role – we think a new name is in order. We are having trouble thinking of one, though! Please help us out. Suggestions for a new Unit name to ehss@st-andrews.ac.uk by 30 November 2011. The person who supplies the suggestion we use will receive a free case of beer!