



## MINUTES

**Date: Tuesday, March 29, 2022**

**Time: 2:30p.m.**

**Place: online**

<u>Present</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Regrets/Absences</u>
Terri Lacourse, (Chair) Faculty Association	Ben McAllister, Manager Risk & Insurance	Tom Downie, Director CSEC
Amy Issel, CUPE 951	Darryl Huculak, FGMT Health & Safety Coordinator	Cliff Haman, PEA <i>alternate</i>
Greg Melnechuk, CUPE 4163	Rob Johns, Manager Emergency Planning	Ori Granot, PEA
Eric Segec, CUPE 917	Andy Mavretic, Director OHSE	Fiona Puszka, PSC & Acting Manager Security
Kane Kilbey, (Chair) AVP Human Resources	Elizabeth Errington, OHSE Administration Manager	
Leigh Andersen, Director FMGT		

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

**Motion:** to approve the agenda. *Carried.*

**2. Approval of the Minutes**

**Motion:** to approve the minutes from February 22, 2022. *Approved.*

**3. Business Arising**

a. Employer response to February 22 recommendation

Andy summarized the employer’s response of March 4 to the recommendation *that N95 masks be made available to all custodial staff whose duties include cleaning washrooms* (attached as an appendix to these minutes). Eric and Terri both provided comment that their recommendation remains that N95 masks should to be made available to custodial staff as there is a higher degree of risk associated with this work and the University should provide the best possible PPE. Andy acknowledged that washrooms in Residence with known COVID-positive users may represent an elevated risk, but that there was no public health reference indicating that washrooms are high-risk, or require N95 masks or specialized PPE for protection against COVID-19. Andy also stated that the employer is providing the best safety equipment to workers by continuing to follow the guidance and requirements of public health and regulatory authorities. If any members are not satisfied with the employer’s response, WSBC policy provides that a committee co-chair can bring the issue to WSBC for their consideration.

b. COVID-19 update

Rob advised that the Transition Team has concluded its role in the pandemic response (but can be reactivated as required), and that he is coordinating ongoing activities working with various units on campus as needed. Rob summarized the changes and updates that are occurring within society and on campus:

i. Masks

The use of masks has shifted from mandatory to strongly encouraged in indoor public settings, as the mask mandate was recently lifted by the PHO. Campus [signage](#) has been updated to reflect this change. Rob notes the UVic [Board of Governors](#) reinforced this decision in response to a Senate recommendation to re-instate the mask mandate.

ii. Rapid test kits

These kits were made available for pick-up at the Stadium (or delivery to departments by request) from Feb 24-Mar 4; which resulted in ~10K dispensed. Kits are now available at the Bookstore or via CSEC and ~13K kits have now been dispensed overall. Rob encouraged union members to help promote the kits.

iii. Further easing of restrictions

Rob reported the international [travel advisory](#) has shifted to level 2. On April 8, the [proof of vaccination](#) “passport” for events and certain businesses and services is expected to no longer be required by the PHO. Rob invited the committee to comment and offer feedback on “what’s next” as we work towards finding the new normal. The following topics were discussed:

- The mandatory self-declaration of vaccination status was implemented September 2021. Individuals who were not fully vaccinated or declined to declare then participated in rapid testing. The rapid testing program finished in January 2022 but the vaccine declaration program is ongoing, and all new employees are required to show proof of vaccination upon first hire. Darryl and Terri recommended the program continue and Kane agreed he likes the intent of the program. Kane further noted HR is reviewing whether the program is creating any hiring barriers. He also assesses what other universities are doing as well as what is happening both provincially and federally. Leigh noted that FMGT hires many employees and there have been no instances, that he knows of, where people couldn’t be hired due to being unvaccinated. Rob also mentioned that the cost of the Thrive app will be considered.
- Rob continues to participate in meetings with the medical health officer (MHO). The MHO has noted that the pandemic in Victoria (with a highly vaccinated population) has a different cadence than other locations around Canada and the world. The university will continue to be responsive to any changes. Rob encourages the USC to reach out to him with their input.
- The classroom ambassador program has been paused as of February 18. Terri conveyed the FA has recommended that individual employees be allowed to require that masks be worn in their own office and labs as these areas are not defined as a public space. The FA would like to see that employees can make these requirements as needed. Rob will review and discuss with VPAC.

c. OHSE training (field safety)

Elizabeth advised that an additional wilderness & marine first aid training session is being offered at the end of April for those students who were waitlisted or unavailable to join the previous two sessions held in February. Andy reviewed that the topics covered in this first aid “package” help meet the diverse needs of students working in the field. Students achieve three recognized certifications upon successful completion of the training: (1) remote first aid with CPR & AED, (2) standard first aid, (3) marine first aid as recognized by Transport Canada.

d. Department Incident & Investigation Report (DIIR) revised draft

Elizabeth reviewed a summary of key changes to the DIIR which includes updated formatting to provide increased space for text, the addition of name/signature/date fields, as well as general housekeeping edits. Thanks to the committee for their feedback and questions regarding the revised DIIR. Eric inquired whether more space may be

required for the corrective actions section. Elizabeth will monitor this section as DIIRs are submitted and revise the section if required.

e. WSBC annual claims summary

Andy presented an overview of the university's WSBC insurance costs, injury rates and other key metrics in comparison to the industry. Andy confirmed that although there have been some recent fluctuations with injury durations, they have dropped significantly relative to prior to 2016 and are relatively static when considering the overall "complete" durations (as compared to the "short-term" injury durations).

#### 4. New Business

a. Indoor air quality: scent-free workplaces

On behalf of CUPE 951, Amy enquired about the university's scent-free policy, signage and promotion on the digicaster. Andy noted there are [scent safety guidelines](#) and a [sign](#) currently available on the OHSE [occupational hygiene webpage](#). Andy will follow up with UCAM regarding content on digicasters. Terri recommended that awareness be increased about the guidelines. Kane recommended awareness could be raised with students at orientation and in their welcome packages. Andy will also review the health and safety orientation training for new employees to ensure this content is included. Terri would like this topic brought back to the USC for an update in the months ahead.

b. Consultation topic: respirators

Andy reviewed the [respiratory protection](#) program at the university. OHSE continues to support units who require assessments and fit-testing. Train-the-Trainer Fit Testing is also offered as a course to departments to fit test their own staff and recently, Proteomics and MEDS were trained. Fit-testing for 64 employees at UVic was also completed in 2021 by OHSE. Darryl fit-tested 22 FGMT employees in fall of 2021 for ½ face respirators. He notes he will likely offer training twice a year going forward.

c. USC annual evaluation

Andy reviewed the evaluation that Kane and Terri completed on March 24. For Part 1, the co-chairs requested input from all worker reps regarding question 1.2(b). (CUPE 951 and PEA were emailed as they were not present at this time in the meeting).

Action items from the evaluation include:

1.5 - a recommendation process for the USC

2.1 - Terms of Reference (ToR) to be reviewed and updated including committee composition, recommendation processes, conflict resolution, decision-making procedures, and the USC committee evaluation form.

2.2 – Strategies to improve engagement and participation from the full membership to be considered.

2.3 – Draft minutes to be circulated 2 weeks prior to next meeting.

2.4 – Informing USC members of optional training opportunities.

Part 3 – include signature line for VPFO.

Terri invited members to send any comments or suggestions about the above items to the co-chairs, who will then coordinate edits and bring back to USC for review.

**5. Emergency Planning Update (EP)**

Rob reported he has been checking with his counterparts in government about province-wide plans for extreme heat and air quality this summer. He will bring forward to the committee what he learns. Terri and Eric confirmed they are seeking more information on specific thresholds/action levels when working in those types of conditions. Rob also reports the first new building for student housing should be opening this August with the second one opening in February 2023.

**6. PSC Update – no update at this time.**

**7. WorkSafeBC**

a. February claims reports

Elizabeth reviewed the report that reflected two time loss claims submitted to WSBC.

b. New inspection reports

There were no new inspection reports received from WSBC.

**8. Other Business - none**

*Meeting adjourned 4:00pm. Next meeting Tuesday April 26, 2022.*



DATE: March 4, 2022  
TO: Terri Lacourse and Eric Segec  
FROM: Andy Mavretic

**RE: Employer Response to Recommendation – February 22, 2022 USC Meeting**

Terri Lacourse, FA representative, and Eric Segec, CUPE 917 representative submitted the following recommendation at the USC meeting of February, 22, 2022. Note: the wording of the recommendation was provided in a follow-up email to OHSE.

**Recommendation**

That N95 masks be made available to all custodial staff whose duties include cleaning washrooms.

**Employer Response**

The employer will not be providing N95 masks (respirators) to custodial staff for COVID-19 protection, including settings where the duties include washroom cleaning, for the following reasons:

BC CDC, Health Canada and WorkSafeBC advise that N95 respirators are used primarily in healthcare settings, and may be required by health care workers for specific applications, (e.g. when working with vulnerable patients/residents (long-term care) or during aerosol-generating clinical procedures based on a risk assessment), for COVID-19 protection. There are no references from these authorities that recommend or require N95 respirators for custodial staff for COVID-19 protection.

- [BC CDC](#)
  - *In settings where a large proportion of the population is at risk for severe outcomes of COVID-19 (e.g. long-term care facilities, shelters), respirators and medical masks may provide better protection than other masks when worn correctly and consistently.*
  - *All types of masks help reduce transmission of COVID-19 when they fit comfortably over the mouth and nose with no gaps around the face.*
- [Health Canada](#) provides similar guidance to BC CDC for masking in public settings, and for workplace settings they recommend employers consult occupational health and safety acts and regulations, and local public health authorities for masking requirements.
- WorkSafeBC
  - ***FAQ: Are workers or members of the public required to [wear masks in the workplace](#)?*** *COVID-19 Safety Plans include a number of measures that may be used at a workplace to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, including the use of masks in certain circumstances. In addition, employers are advised to follow the direction of Public Health with respect to the use of masks in the workplace. This may include guidance, requirements, or recommendations for both workers and members of the public.*

- [Medical N-95 respirators](#)
  - *Used primarily by health care workers where there is a significant risk of exposure to very small airborne particles and aerosols*
  - *Most often used during and after aerosol-generating procedures performed on patients infected with COVID-19 or other infectious agents*
  - *Should not be used by non-health care workers*
- The post-secondary [Return-to-Campus Guidelines](#) also state: *“Any one of the following devices can be used for masking in post secondary settings: cloth masks, non-medical disposable masks, and medical masks. While N95 respirators may be used based on personal choice, they are not required in post-secondary institutions”.*

The university has reviewed the relevant regulatory authorities in making this decision, and consulted with leaders in Facilities Management (Leigh Anderson and Peter Cassar) and Residence Services (Chad Dalrymple) for their review and input, all of whom concur with this decision.

Both FMGT and RESS advise that all custodial staff are provided with non-medical reusable or disposable masks. RESS also has a supply of disposable medical grade/surgical masks available, and FMGT a supply of KN95 disposable masks, for any staff who wish to have a higher-rated mask for general custodial use or certain tasks (i.e. washroom cleaning). Where required based on a risk assessment, N95 respirators are provided to custodians for non-COVID-19 applications (e.g. blood-borne spills, high particulate/dusty environment, etc.) in accordance with WorkSafeBC.

In summary, UVic continues to follow sector-wide COVID-19 masking guidance from public health and WSBC. As an employer, we have also provided appropriate disposable and reusable mask options to custodial staff, recognizing that employees may wear different type of masks, as a personal choice, for COVID-19 protection.

On behalf of the employer,

Andy Mavretic,  
Director OHSE

