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Harmonisation of Safety Training in Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs)

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Introduction

A Working Group on Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) in Higher Education and Research Sector (WG HERs) was formed by the Workplace Safety and Health Council (WSHC) of Singapore in 2013, to improve WSH in research premises of IHLs.

Under the WG HERs, a Research Subcommittee which consists of safety representatives from National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University of Singapore (NTU), A*STAR and Singapore General Hospital / SingHealth IBC Office, worked together in 2014/2015, to harmonise the chemical safety awareness course conducted by these institutions by synchronizing the course topics, key learning points and approach to assessments.

Aim

The aim is to recognise safety training courses conducted by participating institutions under the WG HERs and to minimise repetitive safety training by researchers arising from cross-organisational employment or attachment due to collaborative research projects between IHLs.

Methodology

Existing training materials and contents for chemical safety awareness course, from key topics to subtopics, course duration and mode of assessment, were compared by the subgroup. The Research Subcommittee evaluated and harmonised the syllabus without standardising the detailed contents. Focus was made on key learning points and learning objectives. Final content is ultimately dependent on each institution's training emphasis tailored to respective needs.

Course curriculum for chemical safety

1. Introduction

2. Applicable Regulatory Requirements

3. Introduction to Chemical Hazards

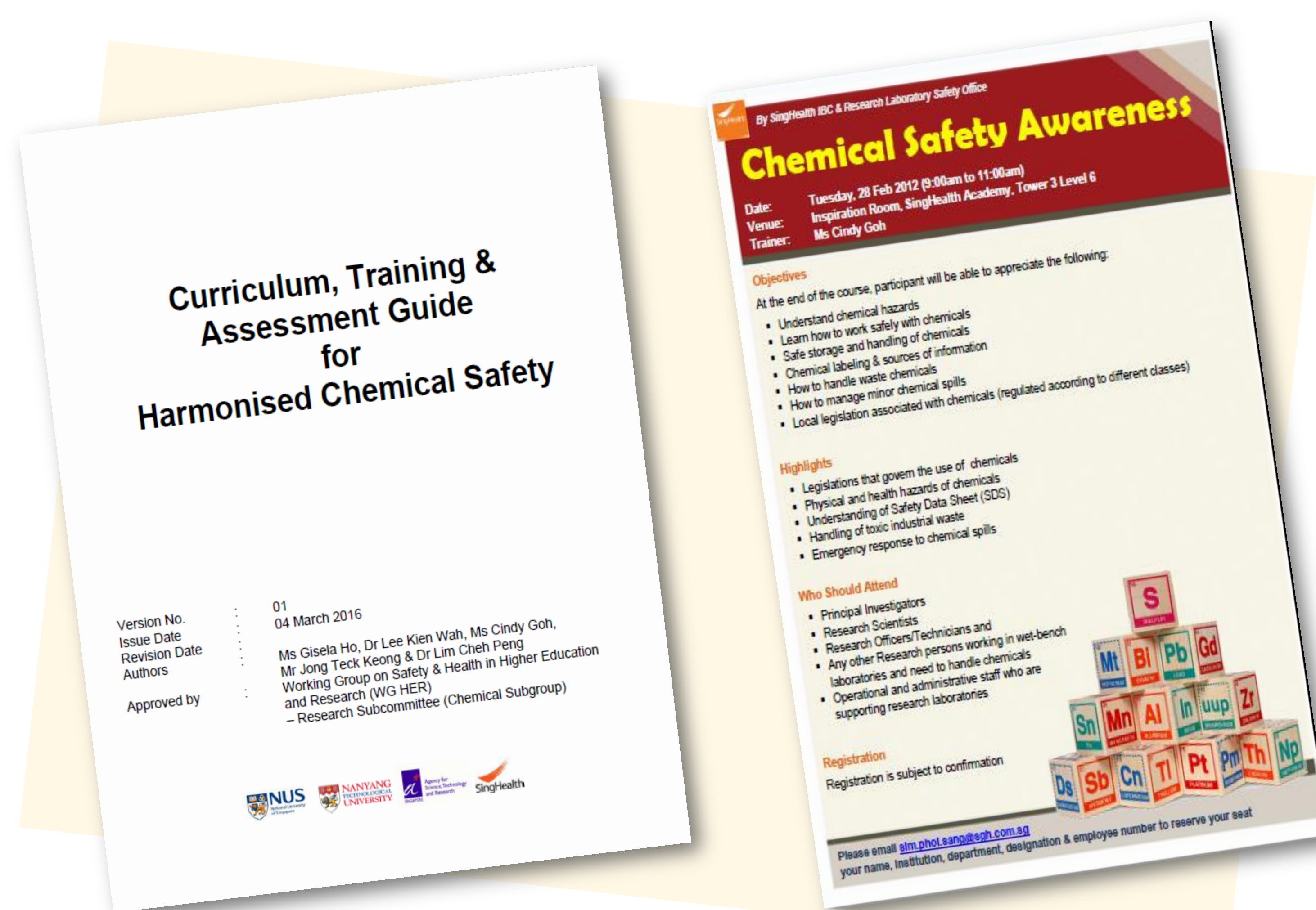
4. Management of Chemical Hazards / Risk Assessment / Safe Practices & Control Measures

5. Incident Management and Response

Harmonisation of five topics without standardisation of content

Results

A curriculum, training and assessment (CTAG) for chemical safety awareness was established as a reference point for curriculum developments, trainers and assessors of participating organisations in accordance with the competency standard and key learning objectives agreed by the Research Subcommittee of the WG HERs. New participating IHLs shall submit their training materials and assessments to the Secretariat of the Research Subcommittee of the WG HERs for review and authentication.



Conclusion

Harmonisation of training materials for chemicals safety awareness course will minimise repetitive safety training and assessment and this benefits research entities of IHLs where researchers tend to work at more than one institution due to the nature of cross-institutional collaborative research projects. The recognition of chemical safety training conducted by NUS, NTU, A*STAR and SingHealth takes effect from April 2016 onwards. The success of this first collaboration has led to the formation of another subgroup to work on harmonising biological safety awareness training in IHLs.

Future Works

The success of this collaboration has led to the formation of another subgroup to work on harmonising biological safety awareness training in IHLs.

Acknowledgement

Representatives from Safety Offices of NUS, NTU and A*STAR

