

## **Plan for improvement of work environment 2007**

### **Department of Bioorganic Chemistry (BOC)**

BOC has all the premises located in BMC, D9, D8, 5<sup>th</sup> floor and NMR premises are located in BMC, 0 floor. By 2007-05-31 BOC has 5 employees (1 prefect, 2 doctorands, 1 TA-personnel, 1 researcher) and 2 postdocs. The department provides education at the post-graduate level (doctorate) in Bioorganic Chemistry at the Faculty of Science and Technology, Uppsala University.

Work environment consists of two parts: physical part and psychosocial part. As BOC is a small department, there are good possibilities for not only official but even personal and unofficial contacts between all the employees and postdocs several times a day. Short distances between office rooms and the labs (except the NMR lab located on the floor 0) make the communication channels efficient. In case of a problem there is a good possibility to solve it quickly and very often as soon as something goes wrong. One does not need to look after the person in charge as all the people are located nearby. The ability to solve the problems with, for example, immediate repair of instruments as soon as possible makes the work and study processes at BOC effective.

Department staff has good opportunities to point out actual matters during the regular safety rounds by the department safety committee once a month. The main purpose with the safety rounds is checking up the conditions of the working environment to make sure that it is as it should be. In case of any deviation from the good working environment standards monthly safety rounds help to correct any fault a.s.a.p. Extra check up is usually scheduled to make sure that the safety round recommendations are being followed. Even spontaneous check ups are taking place if necessary. Routines with simple frequent and continuous controls of work environment maintain the good working and studying conditions for the department staff.

The department has a safety and work environment officer - Oleksandr Plashkevych . The department safety committee consists of Jyoti Chattopadhyia (prefect), Oleksandr Plashkevych and Jaana Evander (noting the minutes)

Postdocs who are not covered by the Uppsala university insurance are insured with GIF insurance from Kammarkollegiet.

Detailed information regarding scientific research activities and achievements, teaching and equipment at BOC can be found at our home page [http:// www.boc.uu.se](http://www.boc.uu.se).

### **Physical work environment**

Maintaining high standards of safety at the department has the highest priority. Many different chemicals are in use at the lab for synthesizing new molecules with designed functions and some of these chemicals are dangerous. Acceptable safety levels are

achieved by (1) regulating the quantity, condition and storage of chemicals; by (2) careful planning of working with all chemicals, enzymes and instruments; (3) by education of lab personnel in the safety matters; (4) by regular controls of condition of chemicals storage, lab, and safety, (5) by dissemination of detailed information regarding safety on BOC's home page and notice boards. For detailed instructions and regulations see Appendix 3.

Work environment and safety are controlled by a safety committee which consists of prefect, safety officer and administrator for keeping the minutes. The regular controls are made once a month. Safety related matters like suggestions for improvements/changes in lab procedures and issues regarding distribution of responsibilities among the lab personnel are discussed during the safety rounds. If something needs to be done in lab, the committee makes sure that the recommendations are followed within the next coming week. The minutes are noted during the safety rounds and the summary of observations and recommendations are sent by email to all people at BOC as well as set out on the B9 and D9 corridor doors 5<sup>th</sup> floor.

BOC's safety officer is working in the lab together with others and he has possibility to control safety during his working hours. He is also following and updating safety regulations in the department and they are updated regularly. BOC's safety officer is cooperating continuously with prefect in order to create and maintain good working environment where all the rules and regulations are followed. Updated information is available on the BOC's notice boards and on the BOC's home page.

BOC is using advanced instruments and equipment (NMR, CD, HPLC, IR, UV, etc) and people using those need to be experienced specialists while working with them. All new employees/postdocs get both written and spoken instructions from the safety officer before they can start using the equipment alone. All equipment has special manuals with detailed step-by-step operational and safety instructions. Furthermore every person has to keep up-to-date record of the instrument usage.

The person ordering chemicals checks the delivery and signs and accepts even the invoice according to the established procedure for purchase of the chemicals (see Appendix 1). Compound information and quantity of each chemical kept in the storage is always updated in the BOC's central database. Chemicals usage (ex alcohol) is logged in the log book located in the storage room with chemist's name, signature and date specified.

BOC purchases chemicals and lab products from different companies. Sigma-Aldridge, VWR, Pretech and Labora Bergman are some of them. BOC has performed specific negotiations with the most important suppliers to reduce total cost of the chemicals and transportation. Before the prefect finally signs the invoice for the order, the correctness of delivery and of invoice as well as proper following up of the established purchase procedure are checked carefully by several people.

Safety equipment such as gloves, glasses lab coats and facial masks are in use when working in lab. BOC also has first aid materials like eye shower, plasters and gas masks

strategically placed in easily accessible places in the lab. Computer equipments, screens and office furniture are regularly updated to provide comfortable working conditions and to reduce negative factors of long working hours in front of the computers.

Every person has not only her/his own working place in the lab but also a desk and computers in an office room. BOC has modern computers that every one may use.

### **Psychosocial work environment**

BOC is trying to give good introduction to new persons when they start their studies or work at the department. Many of the people come from different parts of the world with different background and they need to get help to adapt to a life in Sweden. Their experiences with working and studying conditions are often different from Swedish ones. It is not unusual that some of the students need to spend extra time to be able to complete their studies.

Employees and postdocs have discussions for planning their future in BOC together with the prefect. Many discussions even between the administrator and personnel take place. As it is mentioned above, BOC is a small department with people from different cultures and they are spending a lot of time with each other, like it or not. Conflicts cannot be completely avoided and solving or avoiding conflicts has a priority. No one is given priority before the others, and everyone has equal rights and obligations.

BOC has a coffee/lunch room with a microwave oven and refrigerator. There is coffee/tea/fresh water/mineral water/biscuits that all department personnel may take.

Many seminars with speakers from foreign universities and companies are given for the department's personnel several times a year. A couple of times per year all people at BOC give short presentations about their present research activities while all the others are listening and learning from each other. Sometimes after these presentations everyone is invited for a dinner arranged and paid by BOC.

BOC supports and follows UU's policy for psychosocial work environment.

Jyoti Chattoapdhyaya  
Prefect