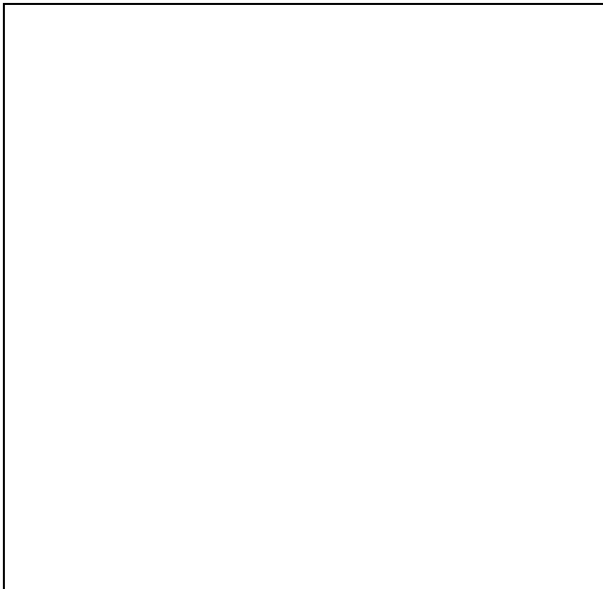


# Safety Matters

Health and Safety Services Newsletter | Oct 2011| Issue number 69



Here's a summary of recent events:

Combined chemical /flammable liquid fire initiated by sodium hydride coming into contact with moisture. A student suffered minor burns. The building was out of use for 24 hours.

---

# Overseas travel and fieldwork

Icelandic ash cloud, Japanese earthquake, armed holdup, broken ankle, students 'missing' ... These are a few of the events that have befallen University of Reading travellers in the last couple of years. So a new Safety Guide 38 Overseas Travel draws on the advice previously given in SG32 Fieldwork, plus national guidance from the Universities Safety and Health Association, and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). SG 32 Fieldwork now concentrates on the management aspects of undertaking fieldwork for groups of students and staff.

Work undertaken by its staff and students overseas is an essential element of University life. It follows that some colleagues and students may wish to travel to countries where there may be significant risks to personal safety. The University has a duty to ensure that a) the benefits of the work justify any risk, and that b) everything possible is done to reduce the risks and provide support to travellers.

Therefore, all travel to countries where the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advise against all travel, or essential travel only, must be approved in advance by the Vice-Chancellor, or in his absence, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or a Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

Proposals must be submitted in good time, with an explanation of the proposed work, how it will benefit the University and an outline of the arrangements to keep the traveller safe. The University Insurance Office must also be contacted to check insurance arrangements and to obtain specialist travel advice.

Most travel is uneventful, but occasionally emergencies arise and the traveller needs help. In most cases the University travel insurers, Zurich, will be the first point of contact. All overseas travellers should have a note of the Zurich emergency number:

Zurich Travel Assistance: 0044 (0) 1875 829000 or 0044 (0) 1875 829001

---

# Lift safety

## What to do if a passenger lift breaks down

Following two incidents when lift doors were wrongly forced open to release persons stuck inside a broken down lift, here is a reminder of what to do if passengers are trapped inside a lift.

If you are stuck in a lift

Press the lift alarm button. You will need to hold this in for at least 3 seconds until the alarm sounds.

Use the lift emergency phone or intercom system to contact Security Control.

Remain calm. Sit or stand at the back of the lift away from the doors.

Maintain contact with Security Control – use the emergency phone/intercom. Security will also come to the building and keep you informed of progress.

Wait for a lift engineer to release you.

Staff – if the lift breaks down in your building, with passenger(s) in it:

Use the indicator panel to identify where the lift has stuck.

Go the nearest floor and check if there is someone stuck in the lift by calling out - or call Security Control on extn 6300 and ask them to dial the lift emergency number and make contact with anyone in the lift.

Reassure the trapped person(s). Encourage them to maintain contact with Security Control via the emergency phone/intercom.

Call Security on extn 6300 and check that they know that the lift has broken down. Make sure that Security are arranging for the lift engineer to be called out.

Some lifts are only designed as goods lifts. These must not be used to carry passengers.

n[(FM)2(D)( n)6(2(e)7)9(n)(e)0.851 scn 421 Tf102.36 244.32 18(re f\* Be)0 scn Tw 0

---

# Audit programme

Health & Safety Services' audit programme for 2011-2012, including a number of specialist audits, has been published. The Schools and units involved are listed below.