

UNIVERSITY STEERING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the University Steering Committee on Environment (USCE) held on Thursday, March 22, 2001 at 2:30 p.m. in Room 128, Science Centre, North Block

Present : Professor Chan King-ming (Chairman)
Professor Ho Wing-shing John
Professor Wong Po-keung
Mr. Louis Heung, representing the Bursar
Mr. Jeremiah K.H. Wong, representing the Director of Student Affairs
Mr. Richard Ma, representing the Director of Administrative Services
Mr. Vincent Chen
Mr. Andy Cheung, representing the Director, Estates Management Office
Miss Chan Kit-man
Mr. Leung Chi-man

Apologies: Mr. Jonathan H. Amies
Professor Lim Wan-fung Bernard
Ms. Amanda Chan

In Attendance: Professor Jimmy C.M. Yu
Mr. Jack Yung
Mr. S.S. Tam (Secretary)

1. Minutes

USCE CONFIRMED the minutes of the 2nd meeting held on Monday, November 27, 2000.

2. Matters Arising

(a) *Annual Environmental Report*

Arising from M3(b)/2, USCE DECIDED that future Annual Environmental Reports would be bilingual, in Chinese and English.

(b) *Inter-Institutional Meeting*

Arising from M3(c)/2, USCE NOTED that Mr. Jack Yung represented the University in speaking at the Meeting held on Friday, December 8, 2000, mainly on wastes reduction matters.

3. Report on the Environmental Protection Week

(a) USCE CONSIDERED the Report on the Environmental Protection Week for the period February 9 to 15, 2001 (paper circulated).

(b) The Chairman THANKED all members for their hard work and support in making the Environmental Protection Week a success. He APPRECIATED especially the input and work of the Estates Management Office and the University Safety and Environment Office(USEO).

(c) USCE OPINED that it would be highly desirable to involve more students and keep them better informed, for their fuller participation.

(d) Financially, USCE NOTED that with some items of expenditure still to come, the total expenses of the Environmental Protection Week would amount to about \$150,000. USCE REQUESTED Mr. Jack Yung to help in preparing a budget for the future Environmental Protection Week to be held in USEO.

.../P.2

(e) USCE NOTED that the organisation of the Environmental Protection Week was against a tight

schedule. Early planning and a longer lead time for future would be helpful in ensuring even better effect.

- (f) USCE DELIBERATED on further improvement on publicity, including more through e-mail and other use of IT, to maximise the effect.

4. Progress Reports

(a) *Task Force to Improve on Environmental Black Spots*

- (i) Mr. Jack Yung REPORTED that in February and March 2001 the Task Force CONTINUED to inspect and do the necessary work.
- (ii) USCE DELIBERATED on the materials left in construction sites and NOTED that they were more complicated than they looked. USCE NOTED that wastes other than construction wastes would not be put or allowed to be dumped at construction sites, and that the bigger contractors usually had little problem dealing with and handling them.
- (iii) USCE REVIEWED at length the current wastes handling procedures, including the hitherto depot for building/household garbage the use of which was sometimes abused because of some irresponsible users.
- (iv) USCE DISCUSSED recycling initiative, including education needed against the use of plastic bags.
- (v) USCE NOTED that because of legal requirements and the University's own schedules and activities, as well as contractual terms with the respective contractors, unavoidable restrictions and interruptions, deadlines, etc., there were often undesirable conditions at and near the various work sites. USCE REQUESTED USEO to liaise closely with and consult CDO and EMO on cleanliness, hazard and other related important issues for the overall benefit of the campus community. USCE AGREED that it would be highly desirable to prepare construction schedules in such a way as not to affect classes, where practicable.

(b) *Canteen Hygiene Action Team*

- (i) Miss Amanda Chan SUBMITTED a written report on the work of the Action Team (paper tabled). USCE NOTED that the Action Team usually had regular inspection of various Canteens about every 2 weeks. Pest control, energy conservation, lighting and air-conditioning efficiency, use of LP gas, use of food utensile, (including study on the reduction in the use of disposable food utensils) as well as wastes reduction and disposal matters had been competently handled.
- (ii) USCE NOTED the difficulties the canteen caterers faced, particularly in terms of the costs they had to spend against the volume of business likely to be generated, for keeping their business viable.
- (iii) USCE NOTED that the Environmental Protection Department of the Government had been studying which food utensils were most environmental friendly and would likely make an announcement soon, possibly in April 2001. The University could certainly make reference for future planning and use.
- (iv) USCE DELIBERATED on the ways and means of educating and encouraging students to identify with environmental protection, and WOULD suggest to Colleges and the Office of Student Affairs to consider giving students environmental conservation items, such as environmental mug/cup, environmental bookmarks, etc., during their coming O' Camps or other commemorative events,

.../P.3

- (v) USCE REQUESTED the Canteen Hygiene Action Team to follow-up on ways and means to discourage the use of disposable food utensils.

- (vi) USCE NOTED that the University had been allocated about 50 to 60 sets of waste disposal boxes by the Environmental Protection Department, which were not enough to cater to all needed areas (says not enough to allocate 1 for each hostel), so the University campus community would have to share the use.

(c) *Air Pollution Action Team*

- (i) Professor Jimmy Yu REPORTED that members of the Action Team had just been finalised and that he would proceed with the following initiatives:-
 - to check with the contractor bus companies whether they had also installed or at least planned to use the diesel oxidation catalyst converters to reduce air pollution, now that our University buses had already installed the same;
 - to look into the smoke-free initiative on campus;
 - USEO to help with testing of indoor air quality, mainly in small and big classrooms, lecture halls, offices, etc against guidelines issued by the Government;
 - EMO to follow-up on the use of external paints to buildings that were environmental friendly and would help to freshen air;
 - EMO to monitor the temperature of lecture theatres to ensure an appropriate and not excessive level.

5. Annual Environmental Report for the Year 2000-2001

- (a) USCE CONSIDERED other formats in addition to the conventional written hard copy form: electronic form, web, etc.
- (b) USCE HOPED that the Annual Environmental Report for the year 2000-2001 could be published, in Chinese and English, by November 2001. The contents should include all the activities of the year under review, such as
 - (i) Orientation Day for 6th Formers;
 - (ii) Environmental Protection Week;
 - (iii) wastes reduction facts and figures;
 - (iv) O' Camps activities;
 - (v) reasons for not having taken action on identified problems, so that all would know what more to do and how and why;
 - (vi) environmental "tips" to remind all about the message.
- (c) USCE REMINDED members to put in their ideas to Mr. Jack Yung and USEO to enrich and improve the coming Annual Environmental Report.

6. Environmental Performance (HK) Award for Industry held by the Business Environment Council

- (a) USCE NOTED the above Award and DELIBERATED on the use of participating, especially on the good external reference point gained as to how the University was performing when measured against agreed standards.
- (b) USCE RESOLVED not to enter the said Award because the nature might not suit the University's context.
- (c) USCE would continue to look out for useful external activities on environmental protection, to explore whether to take part to improve further on our work.

.../P.4

7. Any Other Business

- (a) *Student Work*

- (i) USCE WOULD write to the Colleges to explore if they might wish to include in their weekly assemblies and/or other regular feature activities talks on environmental protection and conservation, to be given by members of USCE.
- (ii) USCE REQUESTED the Office of Student Affairs and USEO to explore how best to provide new students (perhaps at O' Camps again) with simple but a useful environmental protection checklist.
- (iii) USCE REQUESTED members to open up more channels (including something close to a hotline or the Web) to encourage students to talk about the topic on environmental protection, and to explore the possibility of organising simple exhibitions on environmental issues from time to time to keep the momentum.

(b) *Environmental Protection Week*

USCE WOULD look into other also attractive activities for the next Environmental Protection Week, including essay competition, other contests as well as involving students' Departmental Societies, so that more promotion would reach students early.

(c) *Green Office*

USCE WOULD look into how best to promote the Green Office idea.

(d) *Environmental Improvement*

- (i) USCE was concerned about unleashed and stray dogs from outside campus coming into the University, apparently attracted by the various canteens. The Security Unit was requested to look into that, though it was not an easy problem to solve.
- (ii) USCE was concerned that sometimes the noise level at night time during O' Camps and other special functions (particularly those organised by the Colleges) would disturb the nearby residents, in or outside the University, and would advise students to be more restrained and considerate.

8. Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed, most likely to be held after the start of the 2001-2002 academic year.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.