**JOINT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 12:00 –1:00

B250 R308 OR [Virtual (Teams)](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NjA0ZjljM2QtZjFmMy00ODQ5LWE5ZTYtNWVkYmY2N2M0ZjNj%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22128dfef5-fdd5-4cfc-be19-3679ed0271ce%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22a849f3bc-e6aa-4d30-b6c7-156320608cbc%22%7d)

# Notes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Present* | *Regrets* |  | *Present* | *Regrets* |
| Derek Mann (Admin) |  | X | Robin Boxwell (VIUFA) | X |  |
| Robert Okashimo (Admin) | X |  | Mathews Tharakan (VIUSU) | X |  |
| Dale Baumel (BCGEU) | X |  | Kim Sharpe (HSS) | X |  |
| BCGEU - Vacant | -- |  | Erin Bascom (HSS) | X |  |
| Jannine Grant (CUPE) | X |  | Kordell Bergen (HSS) | X |  |
| Ashley Faulkner (CUPE) | X |  |  |  |  |
| Amber Hieb (VIUFA) | X |  |  |  |  |

### Approval of Agenda

### The agenda was approved as circulated.

1. **Approval of Minutes from February, 2025**

The February agenda was approved.

**3. Earthquake Update –** Erin – An earthquake occurred on February 21st and was felt locally in Nanaimo. Health and Safety Services received 10-12 emails with questions or feedback from employees, all emails have now been responded to. An update on VIU’s earthquake response was posted in last week’s digest, with additional information coming this week (listed under #11). Employee feedback noted surprise with the lack of and delay of emergency notification systems, , evacuation inconsistencies, and people not following evacuation instructions. The general observation was that many building occupants were waiting for instructions or directions and they were delayed, which caused confusion, therefore more education will be provided around ShakeOutBC about what to expect in a real earthquake. Follow up information will also be shared when internal process is revised.

VIU’s mass notification is not automated. In a real event there will be a delay in the messaging going out as the people that manage the messaging are evacuating themselves.

Erin has met with Facility Services and reached out to other post-secondary institutions to further fine tune our emergency response procedures.

Dale – the earthquake was a good practice for community. Erin - will follow up with the wardens and provide feedback on people returning to buildings, inspections, etc.

Amber – Is the Safety App separate from Alertus? Yes, the Safety app, Alertus, and the Voice Annunciation System (VAS) are all independent of each other. Alertus and the Safety App can be deployed on a phone or laptop outside a building on wifi or data. The voice system can only be deployed from inside a building. The committee also noted that there has been full turn over in Facility Services management, with the direction to be less involved in emergency responses going forward.

Amber – Is there an order of hierarchy that employees should follow during and emergency? Are the Emergency Sign Boards still being used? Employees report being confused as to where to look for information (Safety App, Alertus, VAS). There is no hierarchy on use. Ideally this would happen all at the same time, but the reality is that the person or system may not be able/functional during an emergency situation.

A suggestion was put forward from the Cowichan Safety Committee that we pull the fire alarm to evacuate during an earthquake. This is not recommended since this automates a response from the Fire Department and would cause additional confusion for internal staff on situatioal status (e.g. is there a real fire due to an earthquake, is it a false alarm etc.)

Amber – Does H&S connect with Facility Services to determine when people go back into buildings. Yes and No. for a minor earthquake there will be a reasonable time of approximately 10 minutes prior to the all clear to make sure there are no immediate aftershocks or reports of gas leaks or broken windows. If reports come in then there would be additional delays. There is no current procedure for Facility Services to structurally review our buildings after an earthquake. VIU does not inspect buildings annually for earthquake damage.

Amber – Reminded everyone that the safety app needs to be updated periodically, and that push notifications need to be enabled. H&S reminded the committee that reminders are sent throughout the year instructing users on how to ensure the app can send push notifications (enable push notifications).

Jannine – Confirmed that MARCOMM sent out earthquake information and updates in student newsletters.

Dale – Confirmed that all trades students are instructed to install the safety app during their orientation.

Amber – Reiterated that people need to take personal responsibility during an emergency; listen for announcements, look to the Safety App for guidance.

Jannine – Noted concerns around the recruitment and training of wardens with the current level of employee turnover. Many people work remotely, it is difficult to staff enough wardens and to manage employee schedules.

Mathews – Asked is the messaging and response is the same on other VIU campuses/site? The process is the same.

### Business arising from previous Minutes

JOHSC meeting day and time – keep the same

JOHSC inspection day and time – Move to Tuesday’s @ 2:30

1. **Follow-Up on Action Items**

N/A

1. **Updates from the Local Health and Safety Committee**

Cowichan **–** The committee discussed the earthquake, one side of the campus felt it, the other side didn’t report feeling anything. The CTC had a sewer flooding caused by a failed pump, this will be an insurance claim. There were follow-up questions from the January JOHSC inspection. Concerns were raised about the opening and closing procedures at the CTC, Kim has been working on this issue for quite some time.

Trade and Technology – Hairdressing had concerns about the state of the Nanaimo campuses phone system and inaccurate information that the IT Department sent in an all employee email for requesting and receiving first aid on the Nanaimo Campus. Kordell connected with IT and provided them with the correct first aid information. IT has since sent an all employee email containing the correct first aid information.

1. **Report from Health and Safety**

**Kordell** – I have been working on a planning document for VIU’s inaugural first aid drill. An annual first aid drill is a new WorkSafeBC requirement. We will plan to hold the drill in the next month. I will share the first aid drill document with the JOHSC before we hold the drill, let me know if you would like to take part in the first aid drill.

The JOHSC inspected B480 in February, we had a few questions about ventilation and the quantity of flammable materials being stored in a room, we have followed up with the Dean of Sciences.

JOHSC inspected B190 last week, there were far fewer hazards noted than three years ago, this is a positive sign.

The Trades and Applied Technology Safety Committee inspected the Heavy Mechanical Trades portion of B110 yesterday. Overall, the shop was in very good shape with very few concerns. Next month’s inspection will be B310.

**Kim** – Has been working with Rob on event safety and security planning. There are questions that need to be addressed for all events on campus.

**Erin** – Has been working with Rob and IT on cyber security. Erin conducted a fire drill for residence on February 19th and has been working on the action log items from the drill. The first fire safety meetings will occur the first week of April.

1. **Jurisdictional Reports**

BCGEU – Members report concerns around VIU’s phone system.

CUPE – Jannine – Received feedback from members about the February 21st earthquake, discussed above.

* Jannine – received concerns from members regarding recruitment and training for volunteer emergency wardens, discussed above.

VIUFA – Amber – Concerns were raised by members around the lack of soap & toilet paper in the washrooms in B345. The QR code on the contact poster for the janitorial providers does not work. Discussed best way to bring forward these concerns (call local 6500 or email [facility@viu.ca](mailto:facility@viu.ca)). Better yet, continue to report hygiene concerns to your Managers - Managers can bring forward collective departmental concerns to Facilities for action under the Janitorial contract.

* Robin – Food security is moving in a positive direction on campus. VIUSU is doing a great job with food security initiatives.

VIUSU – Mathews reports that the gas line did not shut off in the student pub during the February 21st earthquake. Mathews was asked to have the pub manager follow up with Facility Services, this may be addressed in the B193 lease agreement.

### Review of Reports

* 1. Incident Report – February
  2. Injury Report – February
  3. Investigation Corrective Actions Report - February
  4. Inspection – Building 480

### New Business

### The committee reviewed the Briefing Note for the Fire Drill Implementation. The briefing note has been submitted to Emily Huner to take to Presidents Council. The fire drills are a legislative requirement for all our site. Drills will begin in April.

### Information Items and Correspondence

March 12, 2025 – Digest Article

**Get prepared for an earthquake**

The first sign of an earthquake may be a loud bang, roar or an [alert on your phone, TV or radio](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.earthquakescanada.nrcan.gc.ca%2Feew-asp%2Fsystem-en.php&data=05%7C02%7CKordell.Bergen%40viu.ca%7C9f11bc8408cf454ccdb908dd61a4eb2e%7C128dfef5fdd54cfcbe193679ed0271ce%7C1%7C0%7C638774083133371458%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=KO9vwUiRW%2Fr1zCTC1g0G30cMfXGQsmr8VjlYWHz5qIY%3D&reserved=0)[.](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.earthquakescanada.nrcan.gc.ca%2Feew-asp%2Fsystem-en.php&data=05%7C02%7CKordell.Bergen%40viu.ca%7C9f11bc8408cf454ccdb908dd61a4eb2e%7C128dfef5fdd54cfcbe193679ed0271ce%7C1%7C0%7C638774083133384300%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=o8CbkwQEDym%2BkwgZ8tKksGYEjvbi2gy5tG5X4CTJGB0%3D&reserved=0) You may then feel the ground shake and roll for several minutes. Aftershocks, or smaller earthquakes, can continue for many hours, even days.[Learn more about preparing for an earthquake](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww2.gov.bc.ca%2Fgov%2Fcontent%2Fsafety%2Femergency-management%2Fpreparedbc%2Fknow-your-hazards%2Fearthquakes-tsunamis%2Fearthquakes&data=05%7C02%7CKordell.Bergen%40viu.ca%7C9f11bc8408cf454ccdb908dd61a4eb2e%7C128dfef5fdd54cfcbe193679ed0271ce%7C1%7C0%7C638774083133408315%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TgEdppfZjJop%2Bu5lmwW9TpFw5MgF3RCs%2BS0QL7haEEo%3D&reserved=0).  
   
[Earthquakes Canada, Natural Resources Canada uses Earthquake Early Warning (EEW)](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.earthquakescanada.nrcan.gc.ca%2Feew-asp%2Fsystem-en.php&data=05%7C02%7CKordell.Bergen%40viu.ca%7C9f11bc8408cf454ccdb908dd61a4eb2e%7C128dfef5fdd54cfcbe193679ed0271ce%7C1%7C0%7C638774083133423837%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=7aKiXCzgWcDUr8AZ2wGLYE%2FB2rWoIhSZ7I66wWlJI4U%3D&reserved=0) monitoring throughout the province to provide as much warning as possible (seconds to tens of seconds). When an [earthquake is over magnitude 5.0](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.earthquakescanada.nrcan.gc.ca%2Feew-asp%2Ffaq-en.php&data=05%7C02%7CKordell.Bergen%40viu.ca%7C9f11bc8408cf454ccdb908dd61a4eb2e%7C128dfef5fdd54cfcbe193679ed0271ce%7C1%7C0%7C638774083133436466%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=82uEIhFXnNglfANl0iFy%2BkJf3ZxtSJbsoClW1ujpPvo%3D&reserved=0)notifications to the public will automatically be sent through the [National Public Alerting System](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.publicsafety.gc.ca%2Fcnt%2Fmrgnc-mngmnt%2Fmrgnc-prprdnss%2Fntnl-pblc-lrtng-sstm-en.aspx&data=05%7C02%7CKordell.Bergen%40viu.ca%7C9f11bc8408cf454ccdb908dd61a4eb2e%7C128dfef5fdd54cfcbe193679ed0271ce%7C1%7C0%7C638774083133448226%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2CJAd%2BQSKt%2FmfpiLlRGPMB3PVY9VjaF1SV4Y7I%2Fpop0%3D&reserved=0). [Alert Ready](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.alertready.ca%2F&data=05%7C02%7CKordell.Bergen%40viu.ca%7C9f11bc8408cf454ccdb908dd61a4eb2e%7C128dfef5fdd54cfcbe193679ed0271ce%7C1%7C0%7C638774083133460777%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=whA7qsaj7ZV9ogL6xn8VdGlNTayeqz3f5iWZZOEcots%3D&reserved=0) is Canada’s emergency alerting system. Alert Ready delivers critical and potentially life-saving alerts to Canadians through television, radio and LTE-connected and compatible wireless devices.  
   
The Alert Ready system did not function as expected on February 21. The federal government is aware of the inconsistencies and is working to improve the system for future events.

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March 05, 2025 – Digest Article

**What's shaking?**

Coastal BC is a seismically active zone – more than 1,200 earthquakes occurred in 2024, most of which go unnoticed. On February 21, an earthquake near Sechelt was felt across much of the South Coast and Vancouver Island, including at Vancouver Island University. A couple of reminders about safety procedures during a real earthquake (as opposed to a ShakeOutBC drill) from the Health and Safety team:

* People in different buildings and areas of campus experienced the earthquake differently – many people initiated the drop, cover, and hold and then evacuate response while some did not feel any shaking at all so didn’t. Respond to all situations according to your own experience during an emergency, [be familiar with all emergency procedures on campus](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fviu.us8.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D3c78d54a555df251bc0d050e3%26id%3D5230e9304d%26e%3D7d830c829f&data=05%7C02%7CKordell.Bergen%40viu.ca%7C9f11bc8408cf454ccdb908dd61a4eb2e%7C128dfef5fdd54cfcbe193679ed0271ce%7C1%7C0%7C638774083133334577%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=imMxTExyw6FgKj7pmBSyWd4CVtqJfSYP%2BDun3e5nxUI%3D&reserved=0) and take the lead in your own personal safety, but make sure you follow any instructions provided.
* While the mass notification systems (Safety App, voice messaging, Alertus) are all activated during a ShakeOutBC drill to test these systems, in a real earthquake expect a delay in messaging. These systems require a dedicated person to deploy them, and during an earthquake those individuals are also following emergency procedures. Do not wait for technology to provide instructions. [Follow the emergency procedures,](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fviu.us8.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D3c78d54a555df251bc0d050e3%26id%3D4924382c23%26e%3D7d830c829f&data=05%7C02%7CKordell.Bergen%40viu.ca%7C9f11bc8408cf454ccdb908dd61a4eb2e%7C128dfef5fdd54cfcbe193679ed0271ce%7C1%7C0%7C638774083133359085%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=dRzNaFmgEtJslMok5fB0f1Cb2oyh8zOy9VVppnjgSvs%3D&reserved=0) directions of Emergency Wardens and any instructions provided through mass notification systems.
* All-clear: after evacuating, it may be some time before you are allowed back into your building during a real earthquake.

The Health and Safety team has heard feedback from across the campus and is carefully reviewing it to fine-tune our institutional response.