EHS Office Communication Plan SOP

1. Introduction
This document consists of the Communication Plan for the EHS Office. This plan is developed by the Communication Services Team to assist with the process of identifying and facilitating communication needs and activities for the EHS Office and the Institute relative to EHS issues. This plan is reviewed and updated on a continual basis throughout the year. This plan consists of this written document, and three attachments, the “Annual Communication Plan Calendar”, “the Communication Planning Form, and information on proposed activities for the Communication Service Team and Communication Tool Development.

2. Objectives
• To assure the MIT Community is provided information to motivate and assist its members with understanding and complying with, and sustaining compliance with environment, health, and safety (EHS) regulatory requirements, as well as with the MIT Environment, Health and Safety Management System (EHS-MS) and supplemental EHS programs, plans, guidance, and positive initiatives so that MIT protects its students and employees, protects the environment, and serves as an EHS role model to the wider community.
• To inform the EHS Office staff and EHS Management System staff of EHS issues and EHS-MS development activities, and to assure that staff understand their responsibilities for the development, implementation, and ongoing support of the EHS-MS.
• To assure the EHS Office Staff is kept aware of and plans for communication needs and has resources to assist them with communication activities. Some of these resources include tools or mechanisms for:
  • Internal communication with each other
  • External communication to the MIT Community regarding regulatory requirements, positive initiatives, and the programs established to meet those requirements
  • External communication to the regulatory community regarding incidents as well as positive initiatives.
• To assure the Community at large is informed of positive initiatives and activities of the MIT Community for protection of the environment as well as its own human resources.

3. General Information
3.1 Communication Service team members
A list of the Communication service team members and the contact information is on the EHSNET under mailing lists. The team is available to assist EHS office staff with communication needs on request. In addition, the team oversees the development and publication of the quarterly EHS newsletter, and the Annual Communication Plan Calendar.

3.2 Stakeholders
The following is a list of stakeholders that the EHS organization considers regarding communication needs or opportunities. The priority concern is communication to the members of the MIT community and internal EHS Office communications.
3.2.1 Internal
  • Environment, Health, and Safety Office (internal communications)
  • Environmental Programs Office
3.2.2 MIT Community

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3.2.3 Larger Community
- Cambridge Community
- Greater Boston Area
- State of Massachusetts, especially communities surrounding MIT satellite labs
- Environmental Consortium
- Other Universities
- EHS Peers

3.2.4 Regulatory Community
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)
- Department of Energy (DOE)
- National Institute of Health (NIH) and Center for Disease Control (CDC)
- City of Cambridge Agencies such as Fire Dept, Public Health Dept.
- Massachusetts agencies such as MWRA, DEP, DPH

3.3 Communication resources
The following is a list of tools or resources for EHS staff to consider for communication needs.

3.3.1 EHS Web page
3.3.2 EHS Training program
3.3.3 EHS Quarterly Newsletter. The months that the newsletter is issued are on the Communication Plan Calendar, Attachment one.
3.3.4 Email. The EHS Director sends monthly emails to EHS Coordinators and Lead Contacts, and this is noted on the Communication Plan Calendar. In addition, a list of different email groups has been compiled and is available on EHSNET, the EHS office intranet.
3.3.5 Programs, Plans, Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs), Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) and other documentation. These are different types of documents that may be developed by the EHS Office to assure MIT has required written materials for regulatory compliance, or to assure the MIT community members have information to assist them with their responsibilities for EHS. There is an SOP, “Writing, Approving, and Updating SOPs, SOGs, and Other Documents”, (EHS-0044), describing the process the EHS Office uses to establish when and what type of SOPs, SOGs, or other documentation is required. The same SOP also describes the process used for developing and approving the written documents.
3.3.6 Other news providers within the MIT community, e.g. Tech Talk, The Tech, Medical & DLC Newsletters, Alumni newsletters, etc. The Communication Services Team works to establish contacts for the different newsletters
3.3.7 EHSNET is the intranet system and it is used for internal communication and communication with DLC EHS Coordinators.
3.3.8 Meetings. As noted in the introduction, there are two meeting calendars that are referenced by this plan. These calendars are available on the EHSNET. One Calendar is the EHS Events calendar. This is a calendar of committee meetings of the various groups involved with development, implementation, and maintenance of the EHS Management System (EHS-MS). The second calendar is in the EHS Activities Section of the EHSNET. This is a calendar of key meetings or dates pertaining to EHS Operations, including the operations of the EHS programs. Dates on this calendar include dates when regulatory reports are due, as well as dates of MIT committees pertaining to EHS such as the Committee on Assessment of Biohazards and the Radiation Protection Committee.

3.3.9 Forums. Forums are a means of communicating and exchanging ideas.

3.3.10 Annual Report to the President of MIT.

3.3.11 One on one conversation.

3.3.12 Information packets.

3.3.13 Central phone number and email address. EHS has a central phone number and email address that can be used to contact any program or individual in the EHS office, and this contact information is listed on various EHS publications.

3.3.14 Letters, memos, and reports. These are avenues for written communication that can be used.

3.3.15 Calendars. There are several calendars noting EHS activities that are maintained. They include a “Calendar of Events” on the EHS Website noting special seminars and programs at MIT related to the Environment, and two calendars maintained on the EHS intranet referred to as EHSNET. Those calendars are called the “Events Calendar” which notes meetings of committees and project teams that are involved in the EHS-MS development process, and the “EHS Office Activities Calendar”, a calendar of EHS activities, meetings, and deadlines within the EHS Office and on Campus.

4. Planning Communication

4.1 When communications are needed in support of the objectives noted in 2.0, EHS staff to help plan for the communication can use the “Communications Planning Form” in attachment 1. A copy of this form should be submitted to the communications team so that the communication activity can be included as part of the Communication Plan Calendar, when appropriate. This form is a tool for planning a strategy for communicating, and can help as a resource when other individuals or groups need to be involved in the process.

4.2 On an annual basis, the Communication Services Team will develop a calendar of EHS communication activities for the Calendar year based on information submitted by Programs, Service Teams, and individuals working as part of the MIT EHS Management System. This calendar is referred to as the “Annual Communication Plan Calendar”. The calendar will be updated, as needed, throughout the year.

4.3 Communication Tool development activities. Development of communication tools such, as the Web and the EHS intranet are ongoing. Attachment 2 contains information on the communication tool development activities for the current calendar year.

4.4 Projects of Communication Services Team. Each year the Communication Services team will develop a list of projects or goals for enhancing EHS Communications at MIT.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 The Communication Service Team is responsible for:

5.1.1 Development and update of the Communication Plan Calendar.

5.1.2 The EHS Newsletter, EHS News and Views.

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5.1.3 Helping identify communication needs for EHS Office.
5.1.4 Coordinating awareness outreach activities such as participation in fairs, etc.
5.1.5 Developing materials for promoting awareness of the EHS Office and the EHS-MS, and distribution of such materials.
5.1.6 Assisting members of EHS Office with communications, as requested.
5.1.7 Developing and completing goals for enhancing communications.
5.1.8 Updating this SOP.

5.2 The Director of EHS is responsible for:
5.2.1 Assuring adequate support and resources are provided for activities of the communication service team and all other communication activities of the EHS Office and staff.
5.2.2 Helping identify communication needs of the EHS Office.
5.2.3 Reviewing the EHS Newsletter.
5.2.4 Reviewing the EHS Communication Plan Calendar.
5.2.5 Completing assigned communications on the calendar.

5.3 DDs and STLs are responsible for:
5.3.1 Identifying their communication needs and informing the CST.
5.3.2 Reviewing and providing input for the Communication Plan calendar
5.3.3 Seeking assistance for communications, as needed.
5.3.4 Assuring communication activities assigned to their programs/teams on the communication plan calendar are completed.