

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1420-06

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	CO Sub Group
Date	16 th May 2006	Circulation Date	
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Web Site

Attendees

Paul Shields - CryoService
Jonathan Gilby - City Tech
Jason Perrins – Dicon (Chair)
John Sonley - JMS Consult.
Jonathan Kane - Kane Int.
Tom Tonkins - Testo Ltd
Leigh Greenham - CoGDEM
Ian Drennan - TPI Europe
Kevin Bishop - Kidde
John Saffell - Alphasense
Steve Lower - Sira Environmental Ltd.
Peter Walsh - HSE
Bernard Thomas - Invensys
Zoe Forman - PR Consultant (CFA)

Apologies

Gerald Jones - Kidde
Colin Mitchell - EI Limited
Claire Higgins - BOC
Stuart Askew - BOC
Derrick Jepson - TSI
Adrian Keats - SF Detection
Stefan Kukula - Crowcon
Rob White - City Tech
Rob Poulsen - Sensotec 4Warn
Peter Ball - Sensotec 4Warn
Peter Sullivan - Testo
David Riddle - Crowcon
Noor Ali - CryoService
Mike Byrne - EI Limited
Rene Nolton - BRK First Alert
Terry Brown - e2v technologies

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Review of previous minutes
3. HSE gas safety sub committees and new Government sponsored review
4. HSE long term testing of CO alarms
5. Gas Industry Safety Group (GISG)
6. Flue Gas Analysis and CO2 (including canopy testing)
7. Standards Review (including Calls for Experts)
8. Results of the CO alarm market survey
9. Publicity (including Zoë Forman's Presentation)
10. Charities and recent meetings with Government
11. Web Site Update Preview
12. AOB

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Document/ file: Draft CO1420-06 meeting minutes 16-5-06.doc

1 Apologies

The above list of apologies was read out. Martyn Judd has left the industry and emigrated to Russia; his former employer Invensys Controls will now be represented at CoGDEM by Bernard Thomas. One new member company was present at today's meeting: Testo Ltd, represented by Tom Tonkins (ex Geotechnical Instruments/Bacharach).

2 Review of last minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and accepted (Doc no. CO1419-06). Actions arising were covered during the rest of the agenda.

3 HSE gas safety sub committees

Peter Walsh advised that the HSE are attempting to compile accurate statistics on CO fatalities, and any interested parties should contact Nicola Wade. There is a concern that some oft-quoted figures may only cover incidents caused by gas burning appliances, rather than all fuels (including oil and solid fuels), so these figures may be understating the problem. HSE figures for 2003-04 show 12 fatalities from natural gas-related causes, although it is thought there were approx. 30 fatalities in total.

The HSE has commissioned a major review of the "Domestic Gas Safety Regime" and this is being conducted by Front Line Consultants. Working Groups have been established to break the subject down, and CoGDEM is represented on two of these: Installer Competence (Jonathan Kane) and CO Awareness (Leigh Greenham).

At the CO Awareness group meeting on 28 April 06, the first topic of interest to CoGDEM members was the lack of use of FGAs (or other CO detectors) by Transco's emergency response engineers. The Transco representative repeated the claim that there has never been a domestic incident where their staff found high CO levels on arrival (how would they know??), and their responsibility is only to deal with unburnt gas escapes. This is unlikely to be accepted without comment by the consultants, who voiced that it was surely only a matter of time before there was a CO incident involving a Transco worker. Ex-heating engineers present at this meeting commented that FGAs were too expensive to maintain, and that the manufacturers did not provide enough guidance on how to interpret the readings that they give. They were informed of the recent publication of BS7967.

The second relevant topic of the meeting was the promotion of domestic CO alarms. The representative from RoSPA expressed her surprise that the ODPM do not even mention the availability of such devices when talking of the need for regular servicing of fuel-burning appliances. The ODPM view seems to be that householders would fit a CO alarm to avoid having their appliances regularly serviced. The ex-heating engineers commented that, in their experience, the CO alarm manufacturers did not give enough guidance on the siting of alarms and the potential need for more than one device per dwelling. Black-spot type CO detectors were universally condemned by the meeting's attendees.

The next meetings convened by Front Line will take place on 8 June 2006; they will be submitting their report to Lord Hunt (Minister with responsibility for HSE) by October 2006 at the latest.

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4 HSE long term testing of CO alarms

Peter Walsh and Tony Banfield have drafted amendments to EN50291 and EN 50292, which are now posted on the BSI committee website. Jason Perrins is to act as the focal point for the CO alarm manufacturers within CoGDEM, so he will review these drafts, and gather comments as necessary. Jason asked for Mike Byrne to act as his “deputy” if he was unable to attend any relevant meetings.

More details of these drafts are in the Standards Review, later in these Minutes.

5 Gas Industry Safety Group (GISG)

With Martyn Judd's recent resignation, there was no update on recent GISG activities. However, it is clear that they are heavily focussed on being influential in the Domestic Gas Safety Regime review referred to above. The next GISG meeting is on 9 June 2006, and CoGDEM need to replace MJ.

Action: LG to seek a volunteer

6 Flue Gas Analysis and CO2 (including canopy testing)

Part 4 of BS 7967 continues to be worked on (how to interpret readings from an FGA), and the inclusion of direct reading CO₂ analysers is to become Part 5 of this standard.

It has been confirmed that Downstream Gas will indeed be creating a simplified guide to BS 7967 for CORGI to publish. DG has confirmed that CORGI has expressed their desire for FGA manufacturers to comment on the draft prior to its publication. LG has left a message with Frank Williamson (CORGI Publications) to express CoGDEM's willingness to coordinate this.

Some of the morning's ISG discussion of the new performance Standard for FGAs equipped with CO₂ sensors was repeated. The HSE has pushed for a new standard to be urgently created so that when Part 5 of BS7967 is completed in about one year's time, it can refer to a performance standard for instruments that give a direct reading of CO₂. CoGDEM created a quick draft by cutting and pasting from BS7927, but this requires modification now that comments have been received from many CoGDEM members. John Sonley explained that the “Bolby Procedure” allows such a draft (even with known weaknesses) to form a starting point for a Working Group to be convened, which will occur under GEL/31/19.

John has proposed Leigh Greenham to take the role of Convenor of this Working Group, and awaits confirmation from BSI (Karen Chambers) that this has been accepted. Then a Call for Experts will be made (LG will ensure that relevant expertise from the BS7927 drafting panel is not overlooked) and it is hoped to convene the first meeting of the WG in June.

The HSE's urgency stems from their concern over inadequate ventilation in commercial kitchens. There had been a meeting on “Catering Canopy” testing in March, and CoGDEM volunteered to create a flowchart similar to the generic CO investigation flowchart in BS7967. A CO₂ investigation flowchart was therefore drafted by Eddie Quigley and Ian Drennan of TPI, and this was submitted by CoGDEM for the meeting that the HSE had convened for Thur 18 May.

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7 Standards Review

As recorded earlier in these Minutes, new draft standards for domestic CO alarms are out for comment and placed on the BSI e-committee website. These standards are:

EN 50291-1: the original standard, now includes long term testing

EN 50291-2: covers boats, caravans and other leisure accommodation vehicles (LAVs)

EN 50292: guide for use

Jason Perrins to review these and feed comments to GEL/31/19 as appropriate. John Sonley may convene a meeting in September 06 in readiness for the November meeting of TC216. JP to attend if possible, or Mike Byrne of EI Ltd to act as his deputy.

Manufacturers' long-term testing results have been difficult to obtain, and Kidde, BRK and Dicon will be unable to supply data due to their US parents' restrictions. Kevin Bishop suggested that Canadian test data might be available, as alarms have always been required to be long-term tested in Canada to comply with CSA 6.19-01. See the following weblink for details:

<http://www.csa.ca/news/releases/Default.asp?articleID=7804&language=english>

The Germans continue to work on a new standard for domestic flammable gas detectors that have removable sensors.

8 Results of the Market Survey

As above, the US parentage of Kidde, BRK and Dicon precludes these companies from disclosing their annual sales of CO alarms. CoGDEM is often asked for figures relating to the annual UK demand for CO alarms, so with the available data, LG has estimated that the current figure is around 750,000 units per annum. Those CoGDEM members present felt this to be a reasonable estimate.

9 Publicity

The CO Publicity Sub Group (formed in late 2004) had previously announced that a large-scale and professionally coordinated PR campaign was the best way for CoGDEM and its members to highlight the dangers posed by CO poisoning. Such a campaign should see increased sales of CO alarms, flue gas analysers and associated products. Several PR companies have pitched for the work, but the CO Publicity Sub Group was not satisfied with the bids.

Until a few weeks ago, Zoë Forman was Sales & Marketing Director for BRK/First Alert, but has now left and joined CFA, a PR company. She had already made a pitch to the Publicity sub group, but was invited along to the main CO sub group meeting to make her presentation to all members who are likely to benefit from such a campaign. Not all members could be present, so Zoë's presentation is to be urgently distributed separately to all CO Sub Group members.

Zoë outlined the key points of a 12-month campaign costing £60k, of which £10k would be a donation to the CO-Gas Safety charity. Of the companies that have seen the presentation, Zoë had already received commitments from 5 manufacturers of CO alarms and 1 FGA manufacturer. It is hoped to get 10 to 15 members of the CO sub group to sign up, so each will receive the benefits of a £60k campaign for an expenditure of £4k - £6k per company. It was decided that participating companies would form a direct contract with CFA, as CoGDEM would be unable to sustain a contract worth over twice its annual turnover.

Members are to be encouraged to view Zoë's presentation, raise any queries directly with her, then inform LG of their decision whether to participate or not by the end of May.

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10 Charities and recent meetings with Government

Items covered elsewhere in these Minutes.

11 Web Site Update Preview

Jonathan Gilby continues to develop the new website, but has been delayed by the change of ownership of his employer.

12 AOB

12.1 Sensors Roadmap Presentation

The lunchtime presentation was provided by Roger Carline of MNT and Jonathan Luff of NPL (ex-Sira). Their presentations covered the initiatives undertaken over the last few months to allow the Micro and Nano Technologies (MNT) Forum to identify how the UK's expertise in this science could be of benefit to the gas sensing communities. The outcome of this work has been summarised in a matrix and a cluster of single page "roadmaps", all of which were presented but are also available online:

<http://www.gas-sensor-roadmap.com/>

12.2 Date of next Meeting

Tuesday 24 October 2006, time to be advised by e-mail.