

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1421-06

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	CO Sub Group
Date	24 th October 2006	Circulation Date	
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Web Site

Attendees

Jason Perrins – Dicon (Chairman)
Jonathan Gilby - City Tech
David Riddle - Crowcon
Derrick Jepson - TSI
Doug Longstaff - Drager
Jon Shine - Drager
Leigh Greenham - CoGDEM
Adrian Keats - SF Detection
Peter Bratt - RAE Systems
Colin Mitchell - Ei Limited
Mike Byrne - Ei Limited
Robert Kyle - MSA
John Saffell - Alphasense
Arthur Burnley - Alphasense
Fiona Rees - FireAngel
Peter Walsh - HSE
Dave Kerfoot - Baseefa
Andrew Was - FM Global
Nigel Talbot - UL UK (visitor)
John Sonley - JMS Consulting
Zoe Forman – CFA, PR Consultant

Apologies

Jonathan Kane - Kane Int.
Andy Burnett - Kidde
Gerald Jones - Kidde
Bernard Thomas - Invensys
John Wilson - MSA Europe
Richard Whiteside - Land Inst.
Nigel Lock - Analox
Noor Ali - CryoService
Ron Sinclair - Baseefa
Rob Poulsen - Sensotec 4-warn
George McGregor - GMI
Ismail Mansoor - Invensys
Stefan Kukula - Crowcon
Paul Shields - CryoService
John Walsh - FireAngel
Ken Dawson - Trolex
David Woods - General Monitors
Laszlo Vukitsevits - Sniffer Technologies

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Review of previous minutes
3. HSE: gas safety sub committees and new Government sponsored review
4. HSE: long term reliability 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 (Zoë Forman's Project)
10. Charities and recent meetings with Government
11. Web Site Update Preview
12. AOB

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: Draft CO1421-06 meeting minutes 24-10-06.doc

1 Apologies

The above list of apologies was read out. Attendees introduced themselves around the table, with three new members being welcomed; Baseefa, FM Global and GfG Europe.

2 Review of last Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and accepted (Doc no. CO1420-06). Actions arising were covered during the rest of the agenda. The Minuted comments about “black-spot” detectors were discussed, with Leigh Greenham pointing out that CoGDEM’s position on these continues to be very ambiguous, as we will not condone or recommend their use, but our members continue to market them. Ei pointed out that their’s is a multi colour change detector, and if they didn’t market them, someone else would, most likely a cheap Chinese import.

3 HSE: gas safety sub committees

The HSE’s major review of the “Domestic Gas Safety Regime” has been conducted throughout the summer months by Frontline Consultants. Working Groups were established to break the subject down, and CoGDEM is represented on two of these: Installer Competence (Jonathan Kane) and CO Awareness (Leigh Greenham).

At an HSE stakeholder forum held in London on 2 October 2006 (details already sent to CoGDEM members), Frontline presented their thoughts so far, and hinted at what will be in their final report back to HSE to be compiled in the next couple of months. Of interest to CoGDEM members are the points that Emergency Service Providers and responders should carry some form of CO detecting instrument (probably not an FGA), and that there is a lack of joined-up thinking at the Governmental level regarding how to raise more awareness of the CO hazard, particularly amongst the medical sector. A major part of the whole picture is whether CORGI will remain the only organisation that registers gas installers and checks on their safety knowledge, or whether another registration body will be approved by the HSE (NAPIT).

As an input to this review, the All Party Parliamentary Gas Safety Group (led by Barry Sheerman MP) held a two-day enquiry into CO poisoning in July. Their report (circulated to CoGDEM members last month) was hard-hitting and recommended more widespread use of domestic CO alarms, less complacency from the gas suppliers and ESPs, greater training of medical staff of the symptoms to look out for.

Statistics gathered by Ben Croxford of UCL during his research this summer into the prevalence of CO leaks in domestic dwellings, have really worried the HSE, who sponsored this research. 23% of a random sample of 600 homes had a problem gas appliance or installation. 8% had faults that could lead to CO being emitted into the ambient air. 3 properties had excessive CO present in the air while the surveyors were in the dwelling, leading to immediate action being taken to “make safe”. This has reinforced the message that “chronic” CO poisoning is more of an issue than the previous statistics show, and that “acute” CO poisoning (leading to ~50 fatalities per annum in the UK) is not the only statistic that should be viewed by the regulators. The report will recognise that CO alarms would have detected and alarmed in these 3 cases.

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: Draft CO1421-06 meeting minutes 24-10-06.doc

4 HSE: long term reliability of CO alarms

Peter Walsh confirmed that he and his HSL colleague Allyn Jones had written to Bill Callaghan (Chairman of HSC) to express their view that modern CO alarms are considerably more reliable than units in production when the 1999 Advantica report was published. 5 year life and 5 year guarantees are commonplace, and the new European standard is more demanding than the old BS.

The meeting discussed the practicalities of long-term reliability testing, and John Saffell mentioned that most of the reliability issues would probably relate to the longevity of the electrochemical CO sensor, rather than the electronics of the instrument. Therefore, if a series of accelerated life tests of the sensor could be agreed upon, this could give the test-house a chance to ascertain the likely chance of the sensor surviving for many years. This technique is well established for pellistors in industrial flammable gas detectors. Peter Walsh asked if John could put some thought into this and then discuss with him.

5 Gas Industry Safety Group (GISG)

Jonathan Kane attended the June meeting of the GISG as CoGDEM's representative, and commented that the use of FGAs is still on their agenda, as is the general awareness of CO poisoning within the gas supply industry. However, the group doesn't appear to have achieved much, other than discussing the subject. The GISG has established an Industry Liaison Group (ILG) to attempt to ensure that any recommendations from the 2006 HSE review do get carried out. CoGDEM is a part of the ILG, with Eddie Quigley attending two meetings that JK could not make. Again, the correct use of FGAs by competent staff is a focus of the ILG.

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 draft is available if required by CoGDEM members. The BSi committee will be meeting on 31/10/06, and will also be discussing Part 5, concerning carbon dioxide measurements.

Work on the new British Standard for the performance of handheld CO₂ instruments has progressed well, thanks to the input from a core of CoGDEM members, and a working draft should be available in November for review by all CoGDEM members. The standard will be numbered BS 8494, and has taken into account all of the comments submitted by individual CoGDEM members earlier this year.

Catering canopy testing and gas interlock systems remain very topical, and CoGDEM has been approached by several companies who want to link gas detectors to their systems or to solenoid valves. Details have been passed to relevant members for them to follow up as required.

7 Standards Review

The BSi committee that deals with gas detectors is GEL/31/19, chaired by John Sonley, and CoGDEM is well represented, with Jonathan Gilby, Jason Perrins, Leigh Greenham and Peter Walsh as members. A meeting was held in July. On the domestic side, activities divide into CO and flammable gas.

As recorded at our last meeting, 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 (awaiting re-draft and harmonisation by German delegates)

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: Draft CO1421-06 meeting minutes 24-10-06.doc

Jason Perrins received little feedback from CoGDEM members who manufacture domestic CO alarms about these drafts, but submitted what he had received.

It was pointed out that BS7860 is now obsolete, and was withdrawn in April 2006, now that EN 50291 has become firmly established. No new devices must have been manufactured to the old BS after April, although stock already in the pipeline can still be sold. It would appear that all CoGDEM members except one have moved to the EN some time ago, and the BS marked product should be consumed early in this new heating season.

On the domestic flammable gas detector side, the Germans continue to work on the harmonisation of EN 50194-1 (officially awaiting comments) but a draft of the new standard for domestic flammable gas detectors that have removable sensors or are used in recreational vehicles has just been released and is available for comments if required (EN 50194-2).

The TC216 meeting will now take place in Feb 2007.

8 Results of the Market Survey

Our estimate of the number of domestic CO alarms sold in the UK is around 750k per annum. It is no longer possible for CoGDEM to receive actual figures from manufacturers with US parents, but if members feel that our estimate is inaccurate, they should let us know.

9 Publicity

Zoë Forman's project to provide PR services to the CO sub group kicked off at the end of July, with 8 member companies signed up to take advantage of this project. She presented her activities so far (attached to these Minutes) and talked of the December press conference being organised by the CO charities at the House of Commons.

10 Charities and recent meetings with Government

CO-Gas Safety (Stephanie Trotter) has invited CoGDEM to participate in several of their meetings with gas industry personalities during the summer months. We have attended these meetings, but we have been careful to assert our independence from the charity during sometimes stormy meetings with British Gas, CORGI, MPs etc. Lynn Griffiths' charity CO Awareness continues to ask CoGDEM for financial support, and these contacts are now routed through Zoë.

11 Web Site Update Preview

Jonathan Gilby has completed the development of the new website, and is now organising its transfer to a new host server which supports the Windows environment in which the new site has been constructed. We hope to go live during November. A sub-section of the website will be dedicated to CO awareness issues, and Zoë will liaise with JG to provide this.

12 AOB

12.1 Gas Detector Functional Safety Presentation

The lunchtime presentation was provided by Martin Lloyd (Farside) and Paul Reeve (Sira) and covered the new standards that are becoming more commonly requested by customers of industrial gas safety systems. For more details, see the ISG meeting Minutes (ISG1169-06).

12.2 Date of next Meeting Tuesday 20 February 2007, 10:30am, Hitchin.