

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1422-07

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	CO Sub Group
Date	20 th February 2007	Circulation Date	19 March 2007
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Web Site

Attendees

Jason Perrins – Dicon/BRK (Chairman)
Jonathan Gilby - City Tech
Colin Mitchell - Ei Electronics
Jonathan Kane - Kane Int.
Adrian Beasley - Crowcon
Emma Ainsworth - CryoService
Leigh Greenham - CoGDEM
Adrian Keats - SF Detection
Bernard Thomas - Invensys
Roy Taylor - Testo
Kevin Dean - Honeywell Analytics
John Walsh - FireAngel
Rob White - City/Sensoric/Sixth Sense
John Sonley - JMS Consulting
Nigel Lock - Analox
Peter Walsh - HSE
Ismail Mansoor - Invensys
Arthur Burnley - Alphasense
Steve Lower - Sira Environmental
Stefan Kukula - Crowcon
Mike Byrne - Ei Electronics
Zoe Forman – CFA PR Consultant
Mike Smith - Gas Sensing Solutions
Alan Henderson - Gas Sensing Solns

Apologies

Fiona Rees - FireAngel
Dave Kerfoot - Baseefa
Andy Burnett - Kidde
Tom Tonkins - Testo
Kevin Stockwell - BW
John Wilson - MSA Europe
Gavin Boorman - GfG
Robert Kyle - MSA
Noor Ali - CryoService
Allan Stamper - Crowcon
Eddie Quigley - TPI Europe
Derrick Jepson - TSI
Doug Longstaff - Drager
Ron Sinclair - Baseefa
Dave Curtis - STA
Richard Whiteside - Land Instruments
Rob Poulsen - Sensotec 4-warn
Paul Shields - CryoService
John Saffell - Alphasense
Peter Bratt - RAE Systems
George McGregor - GMI

Agenda

- 1) Apologies
- 2) Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
- 3) HSE domestic gas safety review (CoGDEM's response)
- 4) All Party Parliamentary Gas Safety Group
- 5) Gas Industry Safety Group (GISG) and Industrial Liaison Group
- 6) Flue Gas Analysis and CO2 (including canopy testing)
- 7) PHIA membership
- 8) Standards review (including long term testing of CO alarms in EN50291)
- 9) Low range CO alarms for homes with pregnant women or babies
- 10) Boats and leisure vehicles (CO dispersion)
- 11) Publicity (Zoë Forman's project)
- 12) Web Site passwords
- 13) AOB
- 14) Date of next meeting – Tuesday 26 June 2007

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1422-07 meeting minutes 20-2-07.doc

1 Apologies

The above list of apologies was read out. We welcomed Gas Safety Solutions as guests who would make a presentation of their innovative CO₂ sensor technology to the afternoon's ISG meeting.

2 Review of last Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and accepted (Doc no. CO1421-06). Actions arising were covered during the rest of the agenda. A brief discussion on colour change CO patches was held, as CoGDEM had received a call from CSI's John Turnbull following the Corfu publicity, during which CoGDEM contested his claim that the children would not have died if the parents had used his patches (poisoning occurred overnight). Peter Walsh confirmed that the HSE's position was not to recommend colour patches.

3 HSE: domestic gas safety review

The HSE's major review of the "Domestic Gas Safety Regime" has been concluded, and a summary of the findings was circulated to CoGDEM members prior to it being presented to the HSE commissioners on 9 January.

There will be a third HSE stakeholder "workshop" to be held in London on 8 March 2007, and Zoë Forman will attend so as to represent the interests of the manufacturers of domestic CO alarms and Flue Gas Analysers. Then, a forum will be held on 4 April to announce the final conclusions and actions. The HSE is likely to pass some of its policing and enforcement responsibilities to the "franchisee" of a new five year gas registration scheme, which we assume is most likely to be won by CORGI, though others may apply. Ofgem has imposed a duty of care on gas suppliers to ensure the safety of the elderly and infirm, and it is unclear how this may be translated into the newly proposed arrangements. Also, the conditions attached to the granting of the franchise by HSE are yet to be created, as are the ongoing measurement criteria that will ensure the franchisee is meeting its safety responsibilities. Concerns over conflict of interest remain, as do questions of the funding of the CO awareness campaigns.

The statistics gathered by Ben Croxford of UCL during his research last summer into the prevalence of CO leaks in domestic dwellings, have been slightly misquoted in various company's press releases. 23% of a random sample of 600 homes had a problem gas appliance or installation. Some quotes state that a quarter of all surveyed gas appliances were faulty, whereas the actual findings were that many installations were faulty even though the appliance was fine (eg. gas water heater mounted right next to a shower, so water could be sprayed into the electric control panel).

4 All Party Parliamentary Gas Safety Group

The group of MPs led by Barry Sheerman has been criticising the Government (HSE, DoH) and the gas supply utilities for not doing enough to publicise the dangers of CO poisoning in the home. CoGDEM members attended and contributed to their meeting last summer, and were invited to their Jan 07 meeting which was cancelled at short notice. We await notification of the revised meeting date.

5 Gas Industry Safety Group (GISG)

This group is mainly for the major gas utilities to demonstrate that they can come together to discuss common safety issues, but they tend to just discuss rather than take actions. They recently surveyed their members and CoGDEM urged them to be more proactive on the issue of CO awareness and use of FGAs, rather than just focussing on the possibilities of the gas energy shortfall if imports of foreign gas fail or are of poor quality. Jonathan Kane could not attend the recent meeting of the GISG, so we are grateful to Eddie Quigley for attending as CoGDEM's representative. The minutes of the meeting will be sent separately.

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1422-07 meeting minutes 20-2-07.doc

6 Flue Gas Analysis and CO₂ (including canopy testing)

We continue to push the message through all available channels that the gas emergency response services (Transco et al) should carry some form of CO detecting instruments, possibly FGAs. It seems ludicrous that they still find spurious arguments to defend their continued stance of sending employees into homes that have reported fumes, without any form of CO detector, relying on the householder to have ventilated the property prior to their arrival.

FGA manufacturers have been approached with a view to CoGDEM funding the creation and development of the documents used by GSE/30/-/21 for Part 5 of BS7967, covering non-domestic uses of FGAs. Such applications include commercial kitchens, where new generation FGAs with direct reading CO₂ sensors will be appropriate.

To support this application, work on the draft of the new British Standard BS 8494 (performance of handheld CO₂ instruments) has been completed and has been sent by BSi to all interested parties for comment. CoGDEM members were urged to get their comments back to Leigh by mid March, so that they could be collated before the official deadline set by BSi for the end of March.

7 PHIA membership

The Plumbing & Heating Industry Alliance has asked CoGDEM to consider re-joining. We were members some years ago, when the subject of the use of FGAs for modern heating appliances was topical. This is now resolved, and it was felt that current PHIA issues are of little relevance to CoGDEM members, so we would not re-join.

8 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 (representing HSE) as members. A meeting was held in January, and Minutes have already been circulated to CoGDEM members. On the domestic side, activities divide into CO and flammable gas.

EN 50291-1: CO alarms, the proposal to include a mandatory long term testing protocol requiring manufacturers to have in place a test procedure and report any failures to the test house is being questioned by the Germans as to whether it should be voluntary. Jason Perrins will ensure that this is covered at the imminent meeting of the TC216 committee. The ideas of accelerated sensor-life tests will not be formally proposed as it could favour certain sensing technologies.

EN 50291-2: covers boats, caravans and other leisure accommodation vehicles (LAVs), see section 10 of these Minutes. A definition of LAV (does it include park homes?) is to be researched by Peter Walsh.

EN 50292: guide for use (awaiting re-draft and harmonisation by German delegates)

TC216 is the European CENELEC "parent" group to which GEL/31/19 reports, and there is a TC216 meeting in London on 22 Feb 2007, with Jason Perrins as the leader of the UK delegation. Peter Walsh and John Sonley will also be there.

Post Meeting Note: reports from our delegates at this TC216 meeting on 22 February 2007 state that the UK delegation was outvoted, so the long term testing protocol for domestic CO alarms will not be made mandatory within EN 50291-1.

Post Meeting Note: At the SC31-9 CENELEC meeting on 21 February 2007, the German delegation stated that it had been working on the concept of extending SIL ratings for all safety equipment based on categorising the application. There was general agreement that domestic alarms were likely to fall into the lowest risk category (SIL level < 1) and that this was unlikely to be a significant burden to the manufacturers.

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

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1422-07 meeting minutes 20-2-07.doc

9 Low range CO alarms for homes with pregnant women or babies

The CoGDEM CO Helpline has had a handful of calls from pregnant women and recent mothers who have been told by medical staff that standard CO alarms complying with EN50291 do not alarm at low enough concentrations to protect their babies. One caller had bought an alarm with a display, but was told that she needed to check for concentrations well below the 50ppm threshold that caused the display to start reading. FireAngel confirmed that their alarm that is marketed for this application actually starts to display at concentrations above 10ppm, and is stocked by Mothercare and other retailers.

The CO victims' charities continue to ask for lower alarm thresholds to be introduced, but manufacturers cannot introduce these without falling outside of the EN50291 requirements. It was suggested that this matter be raised at the imminent TC216 meeting by Jason. Perhaps manufacturers could come up with ways to implement pre-alarm "warnings" or "alerts" for low level monitoring that do not conflict with the requirements of EN50291?

10 Boats and leisure vehicles (CO dispersion)

The HSE and CoGDEM have both been approached by the Boat Safety Scheme's Graham Watts regarding a project to assess the dispersion of CO in boats, caravans and motor-homes. It is possible that the HSL will conduct some practical tests in Buxton. At January's GEL/31/19 meeting, David Fuller of the BSS led a discussion, stating that there had been 15 deaths from CO in boats in UK inland waterways over the last 10 years. They are keen to assess the performance of CO alarms in these environments, and to give better guidance on the siting of alarms, once dispersion studies have been conducted.

A proposed ISO standard for CO alarms in boats had been circulated to CoGDEM's alarm manufacturers for comment. Thanks to Adrian Keats for responding that to base this standard on UL2034 was not correct for the European market. It was stated that the US CO problem tends to originate from petrol engine emissions, whereas in the UK, the BSS are more concerned with emissions from cabin heating appliances.

The subject will be raised at the imminent TC216 meeting.

11 Publicity

Zoë Forman presented a report on the activities that she has undertaken on behalf of the member companies that signed up to her project. Shortly after the last CoGDEM meeting, publicity surrounding the deaths of two British children in Corfu meant a dramatic increase in the demand for information on CO. Zoë was well placed to provide data in the form of new leaflets, press releases, radio interviews, attendance at seminars and press conferences.

Manufacturers' estimates suggest that the extra publicity has created a demand for CO alarms which has led to at least a doubling of sales over a normal year. Stock shortages have stopped sales levels being even higher.

Supporting the various victims' charities is a thankless task due to the in-fighting between them, although CoGDEM's relationship with each individual charity is fine.

Many initiatives have taken place over the last four months, including the CO awareness week and its conferences at the House of Lords and Runcorn, a similar event in Kirklees, and a mass-e-mail to MPs. Imminent events include support and attendance at a medical conference, and a presentation at a landlords' forum in Warrington. An electronic newsletter is to be produced, and an attempt will be made to keep up the CO awareness momentum during the summer months, especially as manufacturers should have replenished their stocks of alarms by then.

A suggestion has been made for a CoGDEM CO Conference to be held next October as part of CO Awareness week. This will be further discussed at a meeting of Zoë's group to be held in April.

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1422-07 meeting minutes 20-2-07.doc

12 New Web Site

Jonathan Gilby has completed the development of the new website, and has incorporated the CO mini website that Zoë Forman produced. Members have access to edit their own contact details, and can also see a full set of documents that are not accessible to non-members. Passwords will be e-mailed to all members individually.

13 AOB

13.1 Reference to EN50292

John Walsh pointed out that all of CoGDEN's CO publicity makes reference to EN50291, but does not identify that useful information can be gleaned from EN50292. It was agreed to refer to EN50292 wherever appropriate.

13.2 UL Classification removal

UL (Underwriters Laboratories) has recently held an open forum with manufacturers to discuss their certification policy. In this forum, UL discussed their desire to discontinue the current "Classified" UL marking, offering strictly "Listed" markings, which will require performance testing. A date will be set where all current Classified marked products will have to go through a file review and become a Listed product if the manufacturer elects to do so. All Classified markings will have to be removed from products by the date that is decided.

Some members voiced concerns about the effects that this will have on the marking of components, and that the UL performance standard for gas detectors is flawed. It is hoped that UL will soon become members of CoGDEN so will be able to inform us directly about their operations and standards.

13.3 BSi Publicity

Jonathan Kane suggested that we might approach BSi's publicity people to see if they could help to publicise standards that are related to CO detection, particularly BS7967 for FGAs. This route was successful some years ago, when BS7927 was published.

13.4 Forced Ventilation

CoGDEN has been approached by Exhausto Ltd, who manufacture chimney fans and other forced ventilation apparatus. They wanted to see their techniques mentioned in our publicity about carbon monoxide poisoning. They claim that their products completely eliminate the potential for CO spillage into the home, but we have responded that if such systems are switchable, there is still a requirement for CO alarms. Perhaps an alarm supplier might like to form an alliance with them?

13.5 BS7860 Withdrawal

It was confirmed that the demand for CO alarms has cleared the shelves of all products that were marked for compliance with BS 7860, which was withdrawn in April.

13.6 Texas Instruments Presentation

The lunchtime presentation was provided by John Rogers and Bob Lee of Texas Instruments, who are proposing that a gas-sensor specific version of their MSP430 microcontroller could be developed if there was a significant demand from the industry. Their PowerPoint presentation is to be made available to all members via the website.

14 Date of next Meeting Tuesday 26 June 2007, 10:00am, Hitchin.