

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1430-09

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	All members
Date	20 th October 2009	Circulation Date	4 th Nov 2009
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Website & email

Attendees

Jason Perrins - Dicon/BRK (Chair of COSG)
Jonathan Gilby - City Tech
Kevin Stockwell - Honeywell/BW
Adrian Keats - Honeywell SF
Ron Webb - FM
Jeff Regan - JMS Consulting
Leigh Greenham – CoGDEM (Administrator)
Paul Basham - Crowcon
John Walsh - Fire Angel
Peter Bringham - Fire Angel
Bernard Thomas - Kidde Safety
Tony Bleakley - Anton
Mike Windsor - Anton
Karen Baillie - CryoService
Richard King - Sira Environmental
Mike Byrne - Ei Electronics
Colin Mitchell - Ei Electronics
Roy Taylor - Testo
Arthur Burnley - Alphasense
Louise Early - Crowcon
Peter Wilbourne - Crowcon
Peter Philpott - TPI
Neil O'Reagan - Shawcity for Ion Science
Paul Walton - Shawcity for Ion Science
Eddie Quigley - Eurotron Sales
Rob White - City Tech
John Warburton - City Tech
Tony Banfield - GEL/31/19 Chairman

Apologies

John Saffell - Alphasense
Deborah Haisman - TSI
Gerald Jones - Kidde
Noor Ali - CryoService
Zoe Forman - Mandeville Marketing
George McGregor - GMI
Tim Wilkes - Crowcon
Rob Poulsen - Sensotec 4-Warn
Chris Dearden - Medem
John Sonley - JMS Consultants
Ron Sinclair - Baseefa
Dave Kerfoot - Baseefa
Stewart Forbes - Detector Electronics
Andy Avenell - Crowcon
Mark Rowland - Trolex
Nick Ludlam - FM
Martin Ling - Global Tech Fire
Lionel Witrant - ISC Oldham
Andy Burnett - Kidde Safety
Peter Walsh - HSE/HSL
Peter Sullivan - Testo
Philip Wild - Duomo

Agenda

- 1) Apologies and member introductions
- 2) Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
- 3) COCAA (CO Consumer Awareness Alliance) including all media campaigns - ZF
- 4) Lobbying activities (including Building Regulations, landlords, HHIC, HSE meeting)
- 5) Standards review (including EN vs UL)
- 6) Flue Gas Analysis (inc. condensing boilers, ACS) - JK
- 7) Gas Industry Safety Group (GISG) - JK
- 8) Gas Safe Register update, including open-day invitation
- 9) Update on non-compliant domestic CO alarms and black spots
- 10) Boats and leisure vehicles (CO dispersion, new BSS/NCC initiative, impact of 50291-2)
- 11) AOB (including updates on Detectagas, HSE, Advantica (GL), 'Wake-Up', helpline)
- 12) Date of next meeting – Tuesday 23 Feb 2010

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1 Apologies and member introductions

The above list of apologies was read out. Since the previous meeting, CoGDEM has been joined by National Semiconductor, Medem, Lascar and Eurotron, swelling our membership numbers to over 50.

2 Approval of previous minutes and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting (16 June 2009) were read and accepted (Doc no. CO1429-09). Matters arising were covered during the rest of the agenda.

3 COCAA (CO Consumer Awareness Alliance) including all media campaigns

Zoe Forman had prepared a PowerPoint update for this meeting, but could not attend in person, so LG presented this on her behalf (copies available to non-attendees on request). The previously announced plans for the 2009 'Carbon monoxide – Be Alarmed' campaign showed that it would have formally commenced on 1st October with a big TV and radio launch using Kirstie Allsopp as the celebrity spokesperson, but plans had to be changed at short notice after the publicity team were told of Gas Safe Register's similar campaign just a fortnight before. The TV/radio media identified that they could not carry two similar 'gas safety' campaigns so close to one another, so the COCAA winter campaign launch using these media will be held back until the New Year. Gas Safe's campaign, although targeting illegal installers, used CO as one of its focuses, and had CO case-study victims' family members in TV studios. However, many other aspects of the COCAA campaign will still be taking place this autumn, for example, magazine articles placed by the COCAA team were still published and have generated some feedback, and other 'lobbying' parts of the campaign have been active.

This lack of communication from Gas Safe to COCAA and the campaign's sponsors (ERA) may be mainly due to Gas Safe believing the 'alliance' is a CORGI-run affair. CoGDEM has a good relationship with Gas Safe, see item 8 of these minutes for details. However we feel that COCAA cannot continue in its current form, and we will be pushing for Gas Safe to become the key driver of CO awareness activities for the gas industry.

COCAA had a CO education stand at the InstallerLive show in September, sponsored by Curzon but manned by ZF and LG, and COCAA continues to unite the non-gas fuel industries to some extent.

4 Lobbying (including Building Regulations, landlords, HHIC, HSE meeting)

The review into proposed changes to Building Regulations which has been instigated by DCLG has led to the circulation of a consultation document on Part J which covers combustion appliances. It is pleasing that many of the comments made by CoGDEM have been included, although there are disappointments with some of the proposed statements. CoGDEM members are encouraged to submit their views to LG so that we can submit a formal response; so far, Honeywell, Kidde and FireAngel are the only CO alarm manufacturers to have given LG feedback.

LG stated that individual companies could of course make their own direct submissions to DCLG, but it was likely that the CoGDEM response would include issues such as the mandatory requirement for CO alarms to be approved to EN 50291, that the scope of at-risk new appliances should be widened from just solid-fuel, and that the cost benefit analysis was calculated using an alarm cost of nearly £25, when it should have been £10-£15 as a bulk trade price.

It was suggested that CoGDEM should attempt to see how OFTEC and HETAS/SFA were intending to respond so that similar language could be used. JP suggested that it would be good if CoGDEM's responses could be presented at a meeting with Brian Martin of DCLG, rather than just sent by email.

The pressure on landlords to have to undertake appliance servicing and to fit CO alarms in order to pass the annual gas safety check is mounting, and remains a key focus for the COCAA campaign outlined above. Gas Safe may support this point of view too. CoGDEM attended a recent event organised by the Chartered Institute of Housing and sponsored by FireAngel, which was attended by 175 'social landlords' (councils, housing associations etc) which covered gas and fire safety, CO and the Firebuy scheme, which now includes CO alarms at heavily discounted prices.

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The HHIC (Heating and Hotwater Industry Council) is the trade body for heating appliance manufacturers, and two CoGDEM companies (Kane and Anton) are members. They have been lobbying HHIC for more action over combustion gas measurement and the risks of CO spillage, see item 6 below. LG was approached by Chris Yates of HHIC about their response to the Building Regs consultation, so they are aware of our stance.

LG has organised a meeting with the HSE's Colin Connor on Wed 28th October at the Hitchin offices to cover the following items:

- The proposed testing of old CO alarms in peoples' homes (CO-Awareness/Detectagas project and/or Gas Safe Register project)
- Building Regulations consultation over proposed changes affecting CO alarm inclusions/recommendations
- CO alarm standard BS EN 50291, can we make it mandatory?
- Carriage of CO detectors by Gas Emergency Service workers
- Decline of black-spot indicator cards
- Caravan and boat CO issues

5 Standards review (including EN vs UL)

LG stated that he continues to hear complaints from members that our strong lobbying point that all alarms on sale in the UK market should be approved to EN 50291 is severely weakened by the two member companies who continue to bring in US product which complies with UL 2034. It was pointed out that one such product was being heavily promoted with packaging that carried the COCAA logo, although this was explained as being a genuine mistake and the logo had subsequently been removed. Both companies stated that these UL products are now EN approved, so the presence of UL product on the shelves should be resolved within a few months. Colin Mitchell remarked that he had researched the Minutes of previous CoGDEM meetings and had read similar comments last year, so he hoped for real progress this time.

LG reiterated that the problem could best be solved by a regulation making EN 50291 a mandatory standard under the CE marking Directive, but attempts to achieve this have fallen on stony ground with CENELEC and the relevant British Government department. We should raise this during the meeting with HSE (see above) and try through BSi channels too.

Even if we are successful, it would leave combination CO/smoke alarms unable to comply with European standards but able to comply with UL. JP suggested that Tony Banfield might consider whether a new work item could be suggested by his GEL/31/19 gas detector committee, covering combination alarms. The key areas of concern here would be the inconsistencies between smoke and CO alarms of IP ratings and alarm placements in the home.

EN 50291-1 and EN 50291-2: Revised Carbon Monoxide alarm performance standards. Tony Banfield mentioned that both have been finalised (and distributed), with a vote due this November. LG reminded members that with the recreational craft requirements of EN 50291-2, the relevant market sectors (caravans and boats) were hoping that products would be available that complied with this new standard before too long.

6 Flue Gas Analysis (including condensing boilers, ACS)

Jonathan Kane and LG updated the group.

The HHIC (Heating and Hotwater Industry Council, part of the SBGI) is conducting a members' survey, and will be told that they need to be more proactive with their messaging on CO risks, the need for combustion gas analysis and the need to recognise that installers should have a competency in the use of Flue Gas Analysers. We are hopeful that they have successfully coordinated their members' instruction manual updates (particularly for condensing boilers) to include these messages.

Regarding ACS, with the CPA1 assessment now being more common-place, we can report that the follow up qualification for CO incident investigation, CMDDA1, has made good progress. The assessment criteria and training courses are now ready at various colleges or training providers, and LG has been told that it is just a matter of UKAS updating the scope of these training providers before they can publicise and offer the

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qualification. It was mentioned that Testo's training DVD won an industry award for innovation in FGA training for engineers.

The review of the whole ACS scheme requested by the HSE has caused the responsibility for the scheme to pass from the Gas Safe Register to 'Energy and Utility Skills' (EUS). LG has made contact with EUS to suggest that CoGDEN becomes one of the trade bodies that it consults on relevant issues.

LG had taken a recent call from Gas Safe about the HSE's interest in pre-calibrated sensor modules for FGAs, and whether users would therefore assume that instruments no longer needed annual calibration if these were fitted. All FGA manufacturers present today stated that annual service and maintenance was still needed, and that a certificate of calibration could only be generated for the instrument if this activity was undertaken by an approved facility. JK pointed out that not all FGA manufacturers are putting their products through third-party testing to the relevant performance standard EN 50379.

JK reminded the meeting that another lobbying point is that the scope of the mandatory annual landlords' gas safety 'check' should be increased to include appliance maintenance and servicing together with a check of combustion gases. He also pointed out that under the gas mains replacement programme, the post-work check is only a gas tightness test before re-lighting appliances with an unknown history, shouldn't the gas appliances themselves be tested at this point? We will mention these points in our forthcoming meeting with the HSE.

7 Gas Industry Safety Group (GISG)

Jonathan Kane is the CoGDEN representative on the GISG and has attended some recent meetings, although LG attended their August meeting to give a PowerPoint presentation on the reliability of CO alarms. The GISG has become more proactive since their change of Secretariat, and has announced plans for a safety awards dinner event to celebrate their 10th anniversary next year. Leaflets were distributed to CoGDEN members.

JK has asked the GISG Steering Group to focus on three related areas:

- The use of CO detection instruments by the gas emergency service providers, as recommended by the HSE review of gas safety in 2000 and picked up by the Ofgem working group
- The need for a formal feedback mechanism after a Gas Safe engineer has attended a property as a result of a call to the ESP
- The lobbying point that landlords' gas appliances should require an annual service and not just a safety check

On the first of these points, Scotia Gas Networks is trialling some BW portable gas detectors, and the encouraging results should be picked up by the other networks, especially since Ofgem awarded Scotia a cash award to recognise this initiative. We aim to persuade the HSE to back this point.

8 Gas Safe Register update, including open-day invitation

CoGDEN's relationship with Gas Safe Register continues to build, although we were disappointed about the lack of communication about their consumer campaign which featured CO, as outlined in item 3 above. LG and ZF attended a meeting with Jeff Learman in September and agreed to a regular meeting every four months and just prior to CoGDEN meetings so that we can keep our members updated. At the September meeting we were told about:

- the Gas Safe Register's new cowboys campaign, focussing on illegal installers
- the new requirement to check before using the Gas Safe logo (relevant to some CoGDEN members!)
- the CO alarm testing project suggested by Detectagas/CO Awareness (see item 11 below)
- the soon to be established Gas Safe Charity (no links to CORGI Trust or COCAA)
- the Stakeholders' event on 21st Oct in London (report below)
- the series of open days at the Basingstoke HQ in November (see below)

At the Stakeholders's event on 21st Oct, the audience were updated by the Directors of GSR as well as Lord McKenzie, who welcomed the new initiatives to promote the risks from CO poisoning, the £1.7million injection into the Gas Safe Charity that Capita had announced (can be clawed back from GSR over the ten year contract?), and the challenge for the gas fuel industry to donate a similar amount. We were told that the TV ad has achieved 28 million equivalent views, there is 31% prompted awareness of the logo and that a big enforcement review is

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underway for illegal workers. They hope to further improve stakeholder relations by launching a 'National Stakeholder Group' and the 'Gas Safe Register Stakeholder Charter', which is full of promises on how important all stakeholders are, how our views will be listened to, but in return we should be ambassadors for the brand.

Three guest speakers were invited to give their opinions on the first six months of GSR's tenure, Stephanie Trotter (CO-Gas Safety), Tony Brunton (ARGI and CO-Awareness) and Simon Gordon (National Landlords Association). They each gave positive feedback, but with their own suggestions for future activities.

Regarding the open-days at the Gas Safe HQ in Chineham, Basingstoke, LG has asked for a dedicated CoGDEM members' day, and the date has been set for Tuesday 17th Nov from 11am to 2:30pm, lunch included. The inner workings will be on show, with the opportunity to listen in to some of the helpline calls. This will be restricted to an absolute max of 12 attendees, so names to LG as soon as possible please.

The next meeting between LG, ZF and Jeff Learman of Gas Safe has been set for 28th January 2010.

9 Update on non-compliant domestic CO alarms and black spots

We were contacted by the consulting arm of CORGI recently after they had conducted a CO investigation at a holiday residence in Lanzarote. We were told that a holidaymaker was concerned after a mains-powered CO alarm 'blipped' after a power cut. The alarm was made by Wizmart (not sold in the UK), and was sent to Sira for tests, and Richard King informed the meeting (with CORGI's permission) that the blip was caused by the lack of a back-up battery (despite provision within the alarm for one to be fitted), so the unit was correctly identifying the power-up condition. Sira's gas tests showed that the unit did have time-weighted-average calculations and did respond to gas, although slightly outside the timings dictated by EN 50291.

The steady decline in the availability and sales of black spots since the three relevant CoGDEM members voluntarily withdrew from the market was highlighted. In September, LG was asked to give some quotes to a South Wales newspaper after the inquest into the deaths of two teenage boys in a summerhouse the previous March. The parents had understood about the CO risk from a bottled gas heater, so had placed a black spot indicator near to it. However, the boys had modified the heater to keep it alight even when it kept going out, and they were found dead the following day, close to a blackened indicator card. This reinforces the severe weakness of the black spot indicator, and the likelihood that an audible alarm could have saved their lives. JK poignantly pointed out that the only benefit of a black spot indicator was to tell the coroner the cause of death.

There was also a recent BBC daytime DIY programme that showed a black spot indicator being placed in an external flue by the presenter as a test to show that CO would be present in the flue of a boiler. CoGDEM has complained to the production company, who stated that there had been experts working as part of the production team!

10 Boats and leisure vehicles (CO dispersion etc)

After a second meeting with the National Caravan Council, Boat Safety Scheme and HSE (Peter Walsh), several CoGDEM members (including Tony Banfield) were in agreement about some quick testing that could be achieved to look at the scope of CO build up within the confined space of a typical caravan. The NCC will set up a caravan with a deliberately faulty LPG appliance, and CoGDEM agreed to supply appropriate CO detecting apparatus for the trials. LG approached a member of CoGDEM's Industrial Sub Group and had the loan lined up, only to hear that the NCC could not undertake the testing as urgently as they had previously indicated. However, just prior to today's meeting, John Lally (Director General of the NCC) rang to update us that they were trying to bring the tests forward.

Regarding boats, CoGDEM has been asked for help with a new gas safety leaflet to be produced by the BSS for distribution to all boat owners in the UK. LG was told that this will cost £3k, and it was unanimously agreed by the five CO alarm manufacturers present (Ei, FireAngel, Honeywell, Kidde and BRK/Dicon) that they would share this cost evenly. ZF has agreed to liaise with BSS and help with text and logos etc.

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11 AOB

a) Detectagas update

After much prompting by LG, John Stones finally admitted that he did receive the letter that was sent in May, and that he will adjust the 'Approved by CoGDEM in 2005' wording in his next brochure update. He continues to include detrimental statements about CoGDEM and its members in his communications to CORGI Trust, Gas Safe Register and HSE, but LG has spoken to all organisations about the CO alarm field tests that he is proposing, and all three are already aware of JS's background and bias. GSR and HSE have stated that they will involve CoGDEM in the planning of any tests, and may use properly certificated gas if tests do take place. Tony Brunton, another CO-Awareness trustee, has told LG that JS will be asked to reconsider his position as a trustee in light of negative comments and veiled threats made to HSE about their protocol for the proposed CO alarm testing project.

b) CO-Awareness Week 2009

Lynn Griffiths' charity has again asked for financial support for this activity, week beginning 16th November 2009. We have heard that CORGI Trust has decided to make a financial contribution.

c) Advantica (Now renamed 'GL' - Germanisch Lloyds)

LG was sent a copy of the confidential report on CO alarm low battery and end-of-life alerts. The variability of the type of alert chosen by each manufacturer was identified, and a future change to the standard was suggested.

d) HSE Update

Peter Walsh could not be present today but confirmed that the 'burn hall' project mentioned at our last meeting had been given the go-ahead, but might take 6-12 months to complete.

e) Wake-Up campaign

FireAngel and Ei are active in this campaign and are coordinating the necessary actions themselves.

f) Helpline

As the weather turns colder, the helpline has started to become busier, with several calls recently after activation of CO alarms (smoke entering a home through floor vents from a neighbour's wood-burning stove, kitchen alarm after boiling large quantities of rice for a party, and a noisy Proteam alarm that missed the recall).

12 Date of next meetings: **Tuesday 23 Feb 2010, 10am start**
Then Tuesday 22 June 2010
Then Tuesday 19 October 2010