

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1435-11

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	All members
Date	21 st Jun 2011	Circulation Date	21 st July 2011
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Website & email

Attendees

John Saffell - Alphasense
 Leah Greenham - CoGDEM
 Jonathan Gilby - City Technology
 Tom Gurd - City Technology
 Peter Walsh - HSE/HSL
 Kevin Honner - Draeger
 Arthur Burnley - Alphasense
 Tim Wilkes - Crowcon
 Paul Basham - Crowcon
 Teresa Curran - Crowcon
 Richard King - Honeywell Analytics
 Mike Byrne - Ei Electronics
 John Walsh - Sprue/FireAngel
 Ian Ballinger - Sprue/BRK/Dicon
 Stephen Keyzor - Detector Electronics
 Stephen Mellor - Cryoservice
 Jonathan Kane - Kane International
 Ian Robertson - Analox
 Gavin Boorman - GfG
 Colin Mitchell - Ei Electronics
 Paul Walton - Shawcity
 Michael Coleman - JMS Consultants
 Tony Banfield - GEL/31/19 Chairman
 Dieter Wenker - Guest
 Zoe Forman - Mandeville Marketing

Apologies

Chris Street - Scientific & Tech Gases
 Bernard Thomas - Kidde Safety
 Andy Burnett - Kidde Safety
 Kevin Stockwell - Trolex
 Louise Early - Crowcon
 Clive Tester - Sira Test & Certification
 John Sonlev - JMS Consultants
 Noor Ali - Cryoservice
 Nigel Hasted - Linde/BOC
 Peter Upcott - Linde/BOC
 Adrian Keats - Honeywell Analytics
 Colin Hedges - Honeywell Analytics
 Steve Hamilton - Honeywell Analytics
 Peter Philpott - TPI
 Mike Windsor - Anton
 Roy Taylor - Testo

Agenda

- 1) Apologies and member introductions
- 2) Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
- 3) Lobbying activities (inc. All Party Group sponsored meeting, Ofgem, OFTEC)
- 4) CO-Be Alarmed campaign, COCAA update (Zoe Forman)
- 5) CO alarms Standards review (including EN 50291 proposals, EN 50292 update)
- 6) Flue Gas Analysis (inc. EN 50379 update, BS 7967 and new Euro version)
- 7) Gas Industry Safety Group update (GISG)
- 8) Gas Safe Register update
- 9) Boats and leisure vehicles (no products certified to EN 50291-2?)
- 10) AOB (including updates from HSE, HHIC, helpline)
- 11) Date of next meeting – Tuesday 18th October 2011

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1 Apologies and member introductions

The above list of apologies was read out. Members introduced themselves, and we welcomed a few new faces around the table.

2 Approval of previous minutes and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting (15th Feb 2011) were read and accepted (Doc no. CO1434-11). Matters arising were covered during the rest of the agenda.

3 Lobbying (inc. All Party Group sponsored meeting, Ofgem, OFTEC)

All Party Parliamentary Gas Safety Group (APPGSG): The Group has had some good successes since our last CoGDEM meeting. A spring event focussing on ways to increase the population of CO alarms suggested lobbying for alarm inclusions as part of the Government's Green Deal initiative, so a meeting was arranged with the Minister in charge at DECC, attended by LG, John Walsh and Adrian Keats. The Minister was impressed with the points made and within weeks had announced that CO alarms would be installed in houses where the 'greening' process might change the building's ventilation.

The APPGSG's ongoing funding is looking shaky, as Gas Safe Charity may withdraw its support, so each activity (such as the current Inquiry into the reporting of low-level CO incidents) may need external sponsorship. CoGDEM was asked whether it would fund an event in mid-July to concentrate on skills in the gas industry and the contribution these can make to gas and carbon monoxide safety. This subject inevitably involves training and competence in the use of Flue Gas Analysers, so LG approached CoGDEM's FGA manufacturers/suppliers and all 7 agreed to co-fund the event, as well as 2 alarm manufacturers and 1 sensor manufacturer, splitting the £3k total cost into £300 per company.

Ofgem CO Working Group: At the recent meeting at Ofgem, National Grid outlined their trial project to distribute 2,000 free CO alarms to vulnerable customers in the Stafford region, and the positive response that they have received from this. The 3 other Gas Distribution Networks are considering similar trials, prior to hopefully submitting plans to Ofgem for a full-scale roll-out of alarms in years to come. It was also stated that Wales and West Utilities had taken CoGDEM's comments on board and have now ordered CO detection instruments for their field staff, these being Intrinsically Safe instruments usually seen in the industrial sector.

Charities: CO-Gas Safety had approached CoGDEM with an informal request to consider funding them, although it now seems that they may have secured funding elsewhere. Members shared LG's concerns that such a relationship could be counter-productive for both sides, and agreed that working with Stephanie Trotter is often difficult.

Stacey Rodgers has told us that the Dominic Rodgers Trust will be starting a new project in September producing some video-releases with local schools and colleges in the Huddersfield area. Also the CO-Angels will be running a '10 in 20' campaign, aiming for 10 million CO alarms to be in UK homes by 2020.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Project: CoGDEM is firmly involved in the project being run by MFRS, Liverpool John Moores University and West Midlands FRS to add CO to their fire safety checks, and to report various statistics on their findings. We have now attended three meetings at which updates have been given; over 10,000 home safety visits have been undertaken already, and the population of CO alarms is considerably lower than other studies have indicated. There have also been occurrences of CO being present during some of the visits, detected by the BW ToxiRAE instrument carried by the visitor. The project team requires a fleet of dataloggers, so CoGDEM's CO alarm manufacturers have agreed to fund a supply of the Lascar logger, together with a stock of standard CO alarms. Other partners in the project are HSE, HPA and Gas Safe Register.

Flues in Voids: CoGDEM continues to be part of the team tasked with publicising this problem area, so we have been ensuring the messages are correct about the need to provide CO alarms in premises where the flues cannot be fully inspected. The communications team wish to produce a dedicated leaflet to send to affected homeowners, as well as funding a database of relevant properties, so it is hoped that the

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organisations involved in the issue will stump up the cash. CoGDEM or its members are not currently being asked to help with this funding.

Oftec: after it emerged that a double CO fatality in Northern Ireland had been caused by a faulty oil-fired boiler, Oftec has finally had to concede that CO is a potential danger from such appliances, just as CoGDEM has been lobbying them for years. Oftec is now working with appliance manufacturers and other interested parties to assess the requirement for mandatory combustion gas testing at the installation and servicing of domestic oil-fired boilers. CoGDEM has been in detailed conversation with the head of Oftec as to the assistance that our members can offer in the creation of new guidance or regulations for that industry.

HHIC: we are still awaiting progress from the heating appliance manufacturers on the upgrading of the Benchmark scheme which records the commissioning procedure of new gas boilers. The use of Flue Gas Analysers for this activity is now demanded by most manufacturers, so it would be useful if the 'as-installed' combustion performance results could be automatically transferred into an electronic version of the Benchmark certificate directly from the FGA. The relevant HHIC Technical Panels will be considering this during their summer meetings.

4 CO-Be Alarmed campaign, COCAA update

Zoe Forman gave a brief update on this year's CO-Be Alarmed media campaign, having given the CO alarm manufacturers a full update at a separate meeting. There was slightly less impact than with the 2010 campaign, possibly due to the date change, the impact of the recent VAT rise and the use of lesser known media celebrities. Even the BBC EastEnders CO storyline in March did not produce much activity. Planning is already underway for next winter's campaign.

COCAA (Carbon Monoxide Consumer Awareness Alliance) remains in limbo currently, while the Gas Safe Charity decides whether to take over the administration, now that the Gas Safety Trust has been persuaded to release its hold on the Alliance. GSC trustees seem to be backtracking on their initial enthusiasm to 'run' COCAA once the old link to CORGI had been broken.

Zoe also mentioned progress with the Boat Safety leaflet (see item 9 in these minutes), as well as her attendance at the Gas Safety Trust's indoor air quality 'workshop' at BRE, which raised more questions about the reporting of low-level CO incidents in homes. She will also be working on a new CoGDEM CO leaflet and a web update in time for the winter.

5 CO alarms Standards review (including EN 50291 proposals, EN 50292 update)

The European TC216 committee met in Paris in March, chaired by Tony Banfield, but also attended by Mike Byrne, Peter Walsh, Jonathan Kane and Jonathan Gilby. The key items discussed relevant to CO alarms were the various proposals for new items to be included in the two standards, these being:

EN 50291:

- Consistent approach to the use of visual indicators for non-alarm events such as low battery, fault, end-of-working life.
- Improved battery testing to take into account sealed-for-life batteries
- Test of auto reset of alarm mute function
- Irish requirements for end-of-working-life alert to be mandatory, and the means to test this

EN 50292:

- Placement suggestions for CO alarms in boats and caravans, similar to those for bedsits
- Comments about the use of CO alarms with displays for those who need protection against low concentrations
- Inclusion of comments by Jamie Cooper of Gas Safe Register
- Inclusion of hydrogen to the section on interfering gases
- New comments by LG and Peter Walsh to help the Irish committee's concerns with automatic end-of-working-life feature

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The Paris meeting agreed that these suggestions were sensible, and set up a new European Working Group (WG9) to be convened by the Irish National Standards committee, due to their enthusiasm for urgent actions to be taken after a spate of CO fatalities in Ireland. The first WG9 meeting was to take place in Dublin on 29/30 June, but a pre-meeting had developed a SWIFT document for discussion at that meeting (Specification Written In a Fast Track). A Call for Experts to join WG9 was issued to CoGDEM members, with the result that Mike Byrne, John Walsh and Richard King asked to be nominated to BSi as UK representatives to attend the Dublin meeting. Other national committees were invited to participate or send comments. Minutes of that meeting will be distributed once available.

LG reminded the CO alarm manufacturers that with the two parts of EN 50291 now published, CoGDEM was being asked for recommendations of alarms that complied with -2 for boats and caravans. This was discussed more thoroughly under item 9 of the agenda, see that section of these minutes.

Dieter Wenker reminded manufacturers that the embedded software requirement for EN 50291-compliant CO alarms is to meet EN 50271, and the 2nd edition of EN 50271 will become mandatory from 2013.

6 Flue Gas Analysis (inc. EN 50379 update, BS 7967 and new Euro version)

Since the previous CoGDEM meeting in February, the FGA manufacturers held a separate meeting to discuss the three standards applicable to their products, and the progress with each of these has been reported back separately but was summarised today:

EN 50379 is the standard that governs the performance of Flue Gas Analysers, and a Working Group is active to update this standard, convened by Dieter Wenker who was with us today. All of the comments on the suggested amendments (including humidity tests) had been submitted in time for brief discussion at the Paris TC 216 meeting, and were viewed positively. The Working Group will be reconvened on 20/21st September 2011 in Frankfurt, with Jonathan Kane and Paul Basham representing CoGDEM.

BS 7967 is the UK guide for the use of FGAs, and the long-awaited second meeting of the BSI Working Group took place in May, chaired by Dave Bendle of British Gas. CoGDEM had submitted a list of comments which were positively received, but progress on re-writing the standard was put on hold until the situation with the new European version was discussed and agreed, see the next paragraph.

A new European version of BS 7967 had been suggested last year, and a working draft was produced by Gordon Anderson at the request of Jonathan Kane. This draft was submitted to the BSi gas detection committee GEL/31/19, and tabled as an agenda item at the Paris TC 216 meeting in March, where it was given the green light to be developed by a formal European Working Group.

However, the draft was based on BS 7967, which is under the control of a different BSi committee, GSE/30/21, who had not been consulted about the new project. This apparently small oversight has led to a parochial disagreement, with some members of the BS 7967 working group becoming concerned that their work may be in vain if a new European standard takes precedence. Gordon Anderson attended the BS 7967 meeting in an attempt to put their minds at rest, as the European Standard will still permit all existing National regulations and work-practices to continue.

The creation of the European standard will go ahead, and a Call for Experts will be issued by CENELEC soon, prior to the first meeting of the Working Group, during the same two-day gathering in Frankfurt in September as listed above. Any CoGDEM members wishing to be involved in that meeting can let LG know, in advance of the official Call for Experts. CoGDEM's manufacturers have already created a list of comments on the draft when they met in February, as mentioned above.

7 Gas Industry Safety Group (GISG)

The Gas Industry Safety Group continues to host bi-monthly meetings, but the relevant subjects covered recently are already known to CoGDEM members through CoGDEM's direct links, such as APPGSG and Gas Safe Register updates.

8 Gas Safe Register update

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CoGDEM attended the recent National Stakeholder Group meeting at which Gas Safe Register announced the 12-18th September 2011 Gas Safety Week. They are still formulating the events that will take place, but they have requested that stakeholders pledge their support for the week, CoGDEM has already formally done this on its members' behalf, but there is nothing to stop individual members making their own pledges if desired. There was also a brief update on the ongoing Competence Review, all comments and feedback has now been received, and this will be aired at a series of workshops, CoGDEM will be attending one on 18th July.

As has been reported previously, GSR still claims to have little knowledge of the intended project activities of the Gas Safe Charity, but Jeff Learman has agreed that it would be useful to invite one of the trustees to attend a future Stakeholder meeting to address the audience..

9 Boats and leisure vehicles (no products certified to EN 50291-2?)

It has been a good year for progress with CO detection in leisure vehicles. The National Caravan Council has now publicised its decision to enforce mandatory CO alarm usage in touring caravans and motorhomes from Sep 2011. This has led to some queries from vehicle manufacturers and suppliers on where to place the alarm if all of the requirements of EN 50292 cannot be met. A new leaflet from the NCC will highlight that as long as the alarm is not directly above a source of heat or steam, and is at least 1 metre from the appliance, then the other siting requirements are less critical in the confined space of a vehicle.

Similarly, The Boat Safety Scheme is producing a leaflet for boatowners. LG and ZF hosted a meeting with the BSS in April to review the first draft, especially as the printing costs are to be met by the alarm manufacturers. This will be a glossy leaflet, along the lines of the fire-risk version that was successfully produced by the BSS some years ago.

Graham Watts of BSS expressed some disappointment on behalf of his members that there are no CO alarms on the market yet that specifically comply with the new second part of the safety standard, EN 50291-2, covering the additional tests that alarms should undergo to ensure suitability for use in leisure vehicles. LG advised him that alarm manufacturers are likely to adopt the new standard as new models are tested, but that he had been told the existing models should pass the additional tests without modification. At today's meeting, Colin Mitchell voiced that manufacturers should adopt the new standard asap, stating that CoGDEM had been encouraging the boat and caravan sector to use alarms, and now that they had agreed, it would be foolish if the CoGDEM manufacturers did not produce alarms that complied with the specific standard for their sector.

10 AOB (including updates from HSE, HHIC, helpline)

a) HSE CO alarm tests

The finalised report has been published, and there has not been any feedback from the wider industry since, apart from John Stones complaining to HSE that their report was biased in favour of the alarm manufacturers due to HSL's 'membership' of CoGDEM. It has been made clear that HSL are 'invited guests' to CoGDEM meetings, having never been asked to pay a membership fee.

b) Kitchen ventilation (carbon dioxide)

Peter Walsh mentioned that a CoGDEM member (TSI) had highlighted an error in the HSE guidance that stated that the breathing air in a commercial kitchen should be monitored directly above the burners. It had been pointed out that the CO₂ concentration here will always be high, and the excessive air temperature was not conducive to using hand-held instrumentation. The guidance will be amended, most likely to say that the air should be checked close to the workers' breathing zones, or just to one side of the ventilation extraction point.

c) Non Compliant CO alarms

We have investigated a mains-powered alarm being supplied by Greenbrook, which appears unlikely to be compliant with EN 50291, using the Chinese 'King' sensor. A TÜV Rheinland certificate was supplied to CoGDEM by Greenbrook, but the typeface looked suspicious, so LG suggested that they should get hold of the referenced test report. Dieter Wenker and Arthur Burnely offered to use their contacts to check the validity of the TÜV certificate.

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It was mentioned that Proteam, the Kent based importer of the dangerous CO alarm who was heavily fined after Trading Standards took them to Crown Court several years ago, has gone into liquidation. CoGDEM had tested the alarm and passed the results to Kent Trading Standards, who then commissioned additional laboratory tests. The recent announcement of liquidation is apparently due to a £3 million debt run up with the Focus DIY chain, which has been in administration for some time.

d) Maternity CO packs

Essex and Basildon PCT had been giving out information packs on the dangers of cigarette smoking during pregnancy, also highlighting the other potential causes of CO around the house. Unfortunately they had included a free CO colour patch in this pack, but when the weaknesses of these products were pointed out to the PCT by CoGDEM, an instant decision was taken to withdraw them.

e) GASG seminars

The previous Gas Analysis and Sensing Group seminar covered gas detection on boats of all sizes, with Graham Watts from the Boat Safety Scheme giving a presentation on CO alarms. This was somewhat provocative, as he seemed to favour the American system for creating new standards, citing UL 2034 and not mentioning EN 50291 until challenged during questions. The next GASG event will be on 21st July at Kings College Cambridge, with the title 'Gas Sensors for New Energy Sources'.

f) CoGDEM's CO Helpline

LG gave an update on recent calls to the helpline, including the nighttime activation of a CO alarm in an all-electric property, caused by the scorching of some brand new storage heaters being powered for the first time. Similarly, another caller reported an activation as their washing machine was 'making a burning smell'.

A more conventional activation occurred in a child's bedroom that contained the property's boiler, found later to be faulty. There was also a question as to whether a Felixstowe beach hut should have a CO alarm fitted to protect the occupants who take a camping gas stove inside to make tea when it rains. This was prescient, as we have now heard of a recent fatality in a tent from the CO caused by a barbecue taken inside to avoid the rain.

11 Date of next meeting - Tuesday 18th October 2011, 10am start