

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1436-11

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	All members
Date	18 th Oct 2011	Circulation Date	10 th Nov 2011
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Website & email

Attendees

John Saffell - Alphasense
Leigh Greenham - CoGDEM
Jonathan Gilby - City Technology
Tom Gurd - City Technology
Peter Walsh - HSE/HSL
Andy Burnett - Kidde Safety
Bernard Thomas - Kidde Safety
Paul Basham - Crowcon
Martin Ling - Global Tech Fire
Richard King - Honeywell Analytics
Colin Hydes - Honeywell Analytics
Steve Hamilton - Honeywell Analytics
Adrian Keats - Honeywell Analytics
Mike Byrne - Ei Electronics
Colin Mitchell - Ei Electronics
Tony Banfield - EXL/31/1 etc
Paul Branton - Analox
Stephen Keyzor - Detector Electronics
Peter Philpott - TPI
Jonathan Kane - Kane International
John Walsh - Sprue Safety
Paul Walton - Shawcity
Tim Wilkes - Crowcon
Paul Jordan - Testo
Zoe Forman - Mandeville Marketing

Apologies

Kevin Brown - e2v technologies
Jeff Regan - JMS Consultants
Dean Kavanagh - Geotech
Phil Wild - Duomo
Peter Upcott - Linde/BOC
Stephen Attwood - Heraeus
Kevin Honner - Draeger
Arthur Burnley - Alphasense
John Sonley - JMS Consultants
Stephen Mellor - Cryoservice
Noor Ali - Cryoservice
Nigel Hasted - Linde/BOC
Andy Avenell - Crowcon
Teresa Curran - Crowcon
Louise Early - Crowcon
Ian Ballinger - Sprue/BRK/Dicon
Clive Tester - Sira Test & Cert
Andy Eptlett - Scientific & Tech Gases
Neil Perdell - Aico
Mark Westerman - Intl Mining & Marine
Ian Robertson - Analox

Agenda

- 1) Apologies and member introductions
- 2) Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
- 3) Lobbying activities (inc. All Party Group sponsored meeting, Ofgem, HHIC)
- 4) CO-Be Alarmed campaign (Zoe Forman)
- 5) CO alarms Standards review (including EN 50291-1 & -2, EN 50292 update)
- 6) Flue Gas Analysis (inc. EN 50379 update, BS 7967 and new Euro version)
- 7) Merseyside & West Midlands CO project
- 8) CO alarm reliability (US report, false alarm reports)
- 9) AOB (including updates from HSE, GISG, Gas Safe Register, BSS, NCC, helpline)
- 10) Dates of 2012 meetings – Tues 21 Feb 2012, Tues 26 June 2012, Tues 16 October 2012

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1436-11 meeting minutes 18-10-11 draft

1 Apologies and member introductions

The above list of apologies was read out. Members introduced themselves, and special mention was made that although they couldn't be present today, Aico (Neil Perde) and International Mining & Marine (Mark Westerman) had joined CoGDEM since the previous meeting.

2 Approval of previous minutes and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting (21st June 2011) were read and accepted (Doc no. CO1435-11). Matters arising were covered during the rest of the agenda.

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

All Party Parliamentary Gas Safety Group (APPGSG): CoGDEM had been asked to fund an APPGSG event, which our 7 FGA manufacturers/suppliers all agreed to support, as well as 2 alarm manufacturers and 1 sensor manufacturer. A very successful event was held in Westminster in mid-July, focussing on skills in the gas industry and the contribution these can make to gas and carbon monoxide safety.

Since then, the APPGSG has concentrated on its far-reaching inquiry into low-level CO poisoning, gathering evidence from many in the industry, including CoGDEM. The report following this enquiry has just been launched, and made 17 recommendations, several of which mention gas detection equipment, CO alarms, FGAs and personal protection equipment for emergency workers. The launch of the report was followed by a 30-minute debate in Parliament, where Barry Sheerman asked Chris Grayling (Minister for Employment, covering gas safety and the HSE) to accept and enact the recommendations. Through CoGDEM's membership of GISG, we indirectly helped to fund the report.

The next APPGSG event is on 14th Nov, a short meeting to discuss helplines that are available to consumers. LG and Zoe Forman will attend and give details of the CoGDEM helpline. Immediately following this event, LG has been requested to visit Barry Sheerman's office to talk about funding opportunities. The APPGSG's ongoing finances are looking shaky, as Gas Safe Charity has withdrawn its support.

Ofgem CO Working Group: Ofgem recently announced the results of this year's Discretionary Rewards Scheme, and each of the four Gas Distribution Networks were awarded cash to help recompense the various CO-related activities that they had each 'volunteered' to do. These included giving free CO alarms to the vulnerable (in trial regions), equipping their field workers with CO detecting instruments, and holding CO awareness campaigns. We continue to push Ofgem on the subject of emergency callouts, especially the actions taken after a CO alarm activation has been reported (see item 8 below). The Price Control Review (RIIO) is looking at how the GDNs budget for the costs of such visits, and Jonathan Kane pointed out that Ofgem may be subject to a legal judgement on whether they should be insisting that CO instruments are carried, as they may be breaching their own conditions of safety if they do not do so.

HHIC: there appears to have been little progress on the project to upgrade the Benchmark scheme which records the commissioning procedure of new gas boilers. However a big step forward was made at the meeting that CoGDEM attended at the HHIC HQ in October with HSE, BIS and Gas Safe Register to look at the situation with gas-fired condensing boilers and incorrectly set air/gas ratio valves.

Despite a position paper put together by HHIC's boiler manufacturers, the HSE/BIS/GSR/CoGDEM all found fault with them not requiring a combustion check during the commissioning of a new boiler, despite this being required during subsequent service operations. HSE convinced them that engineers would not be following the Approved Code of Practice if they do not do this, so the HHIC guys had to back down and agreed to change their instructions from next year. We now hope to get HHIC to back an awareness campaign, picking up on the CPA1 deadline of April 2012 (see item 6 below).

Charities: CO-Awareness has asked us to remind members that they are looking for funding, sponsorship or donations for this year's CO-Awareness Week, commencing 21st November.

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

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1436-11 meeting minutes 18-10-11 draft

flues cannot be fully inspected. There is to be an update meeting in mid-December, coordinated by GSR, but involving HSE and DCLG amongst others. LG will attend and report back.

4 CO-Be Alarmed campaign

Zoe Forman gave the meeting an update on the imminent CO-Be Alarmed media campaign, having already given the CO alarm manufacturers a full briefing previously. There will be three fathers as case-studies, each having lost a grown-up daughter as a result of CO poisoning. This includes the American Ken Hansen who, after his daughter died, successfully lobbied for Amanda's Law in New York State, making CO alarms mandatory in domestic housing. Ken will be speaking about why he considers that the UK should adopt similar regulations, and Zoe will accompany him to a meeting with the DoH. She will also be making a separate presentation at an HPA regional event. Zoe's notes on the coming campaign are reproduced below:

CO Be Alarmed Campaign Autumn/Winter 2011

How Big is the problem ?

*As yet we are still to establish number of incidents and people affected
No comprehensive & verified national data base
Confusing data presented in reports*

Is Regulation an Option ?

*Over 50% US states have CO related codes
No appetite in Westminster but promising in NI
Strengthen Gas Safety Certificate with HSE & GSR an option*

Approach

*Maintain consistent message - Get an Alarm
Continue with focus on victims stories
Engage with more MP's
Develop 3rd party links - GP's Nurses,
Local & regional media key for local interest*

Case Studies

*Fathers of victims - Amanda Hansen (instigated Amanda's law in NYC), Chris Anderson, Zoe and Gordon Sammuels, Katie Haines
Stacey, Melissa, Adele & Vikki*

Medical

*Dr Chris Steele, ITV & Dr Rob Hicks
Royal College of General Practitioners
Chief Medical Officer*

Media

*National TV & radio on launch day
Local and regional with case studies and MP's support
National newspapers and magazines Nov to March
Online - twitter & facebook dedicated campaign sites*

Parliamentary / Assembly tour

*Westminster, London
Scotland, Edinburgh
Wales, Cardiff
NI meet ministers*

Intermediates Programme

*Energy retailers - promoted via staff, engineers
Alarm Manufacturers - retail promotions
House builders
Housing Associations (the largest 13% of Registered Social Landlords own over 80% of all the sector's homes)
Safety organisations with member/public communications
Charities working with the elderly / disabled / vulnerable in their homes
Landlords and their associations
Heating engineer companies / associations*

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1436-11 meeting minutes 18-10-11 draft

5 CO alarms Standards review (including EN 50291-1 & -2, EN 50292 update)

As reported at our last meeting, a new European Working Group (WG9) has been 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. Two meetings have now taken place in Dublin, with CoGDEM being represented by Mike Byrne, John Walsh and Richard King, who report that the draft of the modified EN 50291 standard will be circulated soon. John commented that the scope of the work has extended beyond the original 'end-of-working-life' feature into areas such as IP rating and RF links to other alarms. The next meeting is scheduled for Feb 2012, when formal comments should have been received. Post meeting note: the draft has now been circulated to relevant members.

Comments were made about BSI's ability (or inability) to test to the new EN 50291-2 (caravans/boats) and members had received conflicting information from BSI.

Peter Walsh and LG met at the end of September to successfully put the finishing touches to the update of EN 50292 (guide for use etc. of domestic CO alarms). This included a new diagram showing the relationship between the EN 50291 alarm thresholds and the 2.5 and 5% COHb curves of exposure versus time. Mike Byrne thought this was "an elegant presentation" of a difficult subject, and members thought this could be a very useful tool, once it has been approved. Peter has submitted the draft standard to CENELEC; it will be translated into French and German then circulated around Europe for comments in the next couple of months.

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

EN 50379 is the standard that governs the performance of Flue Gas Analysers, and a Working Group is active to update this standard, Jonathan Kane and Paul Basham represented CoGDEM at the September meeting convened by Dieter Wenker in Frankfurt. This meeting successfully ran through all of the points relating to extra (or modified) tests that are applicable to infrared sensors, including agreement on the thorny issue of relative humidity testing. A new draft will be circulated in time for this to go through the UAP (Unique Acceptance Procedure) at the March 2012 TC216 meeting in Dublin.

BS 7967 is the UK guide for the use of FGAs, and there has been no progress on the update since the May meeting, when the implications of the proposed European version were discussed (see immediately below).

A new European version of BS 7967 was tabled at an 'officially informal' meeting in Frankfurt, the day after the EN 50379 meeting referred to above. Although this was a productive meeting (with the UK heating appliance manufacturers represented by John Beer of HHIC), there was concern over the strategic question of how to list action levels for appliances across Europe.

The 'political' wrangling over this proposed standard continues, and at a UK shadow meeting chaired by Tony Banfield, the individuals who lay claim to BS 7967 (on which the new EN standard will be based) made clear their dissatisfaction with the new proposal. Some of this stems from the historic creation of the BS, but there may be some vested interests which are getting in the way of agreement.

CPA1 and CMDDA1 are the two relevant ACS assessments that registered gas engineers can take, establishing their competence to use FGAs for servicing or investigating heating appliances. CPA1 is becoming mandatory from April 2012, and there are concerns that too few engineers are currently taking the assessment, which may lead to a shortfall next year, or a rush of applicants to training centres in March, leading to a skewed demand for FGA servicing, recalibration, spares or supply of new instruments. Gas Safe Register is aware of the issue, and is prepared to run articles in their Registered Gas Engineer magazine from December onwards. However we discussed a more general awareness campaign that CoGDEM could run, with endorsement from GSR, HHIC, EU Skills etc, consisting of magazine ads, posters and flyers that could be distributed at trade counters etc. LG showed an early draft poster idea, members were in agreement with the principle, and the next stage is to get agreement from the other endorsers and a rough outline of costs.

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1436-11 meeting minutes 18-10-11 draft

7 Merseyside & West Midlands CO project

An update meeting was held in Birmingham in October to give an overview of the latest findings in the project being run by MFRS, Liverpool John Moores University and West Midlands FRS to add CO to their fire safety checks. Over 20,000 home safety visits have now been undertaken, and the population of CO alarms is even lower than previously reported, currently running at 10-11% of homes on Merseyside. Some 50 non-zero CO readings have been detected during the actual visits, and this has been predominantly in the summer months when heating has not been on. The domestic alarms and USB CO dataloggers generously provided by CoGDEM members are now to be used in the second phase of the project starting 17th Oct 2011, so we should hear useful data at the next project meeting before year-end. It is intended to complete the project next Spring, and hold a dissemination event, to which all contributing member companies will be invited.

8 CO alarm reliability (US report, false alarm reports)

This subject was triggered by a couple of recent events, firstly the publication in August of a report by the American Journal of Public Health, stating that more than half of the domestic CO alarms tested did not work. This report is being used by John Stones (Detectagas) as evidence of why his product must be used, yet the report is seriously flawed, for example:

- Only 30 detectors were taken from the field for testing, some were between 10 and 14 years old, well beyond their 'use-by' dates, and manufactured when tin oxide sensors were still in common use. All the tested alarms came from one single US community, where the residents were encouraged to send in their old alarm for a shiny new one.
- To pass these tests, the alarms needed to meet all the relevant criteria from the US standard UL 2034 which, amongst other things, states that no alarm must ever be triggered within the first four minutes of exposure to CO, no matter how high the concentration. Due to tin-oxide sensor drift, it was predictable that some alarms would go off early (e.g. 2 to 3 minutes after exposure to gas) but these were classed as failures by the researchers, because they felt that an early alarm would put the emergency services lives at risk as they raced through red lights to attend the site of an alarm activation!

Secondly, manufacturers' helplines occasionally get calls from users whose CO alarms have activated, yet the attending Gas Emergency Service Provider finds no obvious source of CO and declares that the alarm unit must be faulty. In most cases, manufacturers send out a second alarm, and this too then subsequently activates, possibly due to migration of CO from a neighbouring property, or some other faulty appliance that the ESP has failed to notice. Even the CoGDEM helpline has taken such calls, and we always unearth a valid reason for what someone has been told is a false alarm.

Discussion ensued as to whether some ESPs are attending the CO alarm activations with a pre-determined opinion on the cause of the activation. LG agreed to take this up with Ofgem, and attempt to discover what statistics are provided by the GDNs to Ofgem about emergency call-outs.

With regard to John Stones, it was mentioned that he is also quoting results from an interim report written during the HSE alarm trials project, even though this data was later found to be erroneous and was corrected in the final HSE report, which he has had sight of. One member company is taking legal action against him for false claims he is making about their products.

LG's view from evidence from the CoGDEM helpline, other helplines and the HSE report itself, is that probably 95% of CO alarm activations are genuine and require some form of investigation or action to be taken. LG also informed members that Arctic Products have started to re-promote colour patches (black spots) alongside a Chinese CO alarm that is claimed to be compliant to EN 50291, but only by a Chinese test lab. He has been in touch with a Director of Arctic Products to investigate this.

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1436-11 meeting minutes 18-10-11 draft

9 AOB (including updates from GISG, Gas Safe Register, BSS, NCC, helpline)

a) GISG and funding the Gas Safety Trust's CO Hotspot report

The recently released CO hotspot report from the Gas Safety Trust had just been launched, accompanied by press releases stating that UK CO fatalities had more than tripled, from 7 the previous year to 25 in the current year. However this year's report was based purely on press clippings gathered by an undergraduate, rather than using the DIDR, HSE or CO-Gas Safety figures. This makes the report not directly comparable with last year's report, which was itself heavily criticised at the time for under-reporting (other figures suggest that there were probably 25 CO fatalities last year as well). Other statistics in the report were also questioned on-line by an independent statistics watchdog organisation, leading to the report becoming discredited. As well as complaining directly to Nigel Dumbrell of GST, CoGDEM also complained to the GISG Chairman that our membership money had gone towards sponsoring this report. We are promised that action will be taken.

b) Gas Safe Register and Gas Safe Charity

Although CoGDEM members had not seen much direct publicity related to Gas Safety Week in September, Gas Safe Register claims it was highly successful, with national and regional TV appearances, 60 radio interviews (40 with competitions to win a CO alarm), and posters in DIY stores and on bus shelters. At a recent Stakeholders' meeting, LG was told by GSR that they will continue to target gas safety messages at the elderly. We were also told that the Competence Review report would be forwarded to HSE in Nov/Dec, and that Jeff Learman will leave GSR at year-end to take up another Capita position for Government (pension reform), his successor is from outside GSR but inside Capita, Nick Terry.

With CoGDEM having pestered GSR several times to get an update from the Gas Safe Charity at the Stakeholder meetings, we have now heard from a new Trustee, Simon Ayres (confusingly a GSR employee!) that the charity is getting its act together and is "starting to have a better direction in making progress". A number of initiatives are being followed up, but more suggestions are requested. The charity hopes to work with industry to achieve behavioural change on gas safety, particularly amongst the over-65s gas consumers. Consequently, ZF and LG had a meeting with a commercial organisation which has been contracted to deliver such a targeted campaign (Gemserve).

c) Boat Safety Scheme

The long awaited CO leaflet for boat owners has still not appeared. Graham Watts of BSS is apologetic. On our behalf, he has told BSI that the new ISO standard for CO detection in small craft should not receive a positive vote from the UK, as it does not take into account the EN 50291 family of standards, purely UL 2034.

d) Caravan and camping

New guidance from the NCC (National Caravan Council) to manufacturers has now become a regulatory requirement for 2012 model year caravans (started in September 2011). This covers the requirement for CO alarms in all caravans and motorhomes, with guidance on location and mounting in awkward situations.

After the three deaths this summer linked to the use of barbecues inside tents, LG had suggested performing some quick tests to assess the amounts of CO that could be generated. Thanks to those manufacturers who agreed to loan equipment (particularly Crowcon), but the need for such tests diminished after the camping and barbecue supply trade agreed to take instant action themselves. Interestingly, this was picked up strongly in the APPGSG report (see 3 above) in which Government is tasked with ensuring that better labelling and warnings are applied, and CO alarms are available in camping shops and campsite receptions.

e) GASG seminars

The next Gas Analysis and Sensing Group seminar will be on 1st December at the Institute of Materials in London, with the title 'Gas Detection for Fire & Other Hazards'. Some CoGDEM members will be making presentations, check the GASG website for details.

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1436-11 meeting minutes 18-10-11 draft

f) CoGDEM's CO Helpline

LG gave an update on recent calls to the helpline, including a pregnant lady in Aviemore whose oil-fired boiler was giving off fumes, leading to a complaint to Oftec about their poor inspection regime. A new CO alarm that we sent showed 75ppm in the house. Another unusual call came from Northern Ireland after a CO alarm activation in someone's home, despite them having no gas appliances there. Only after some verbal detective work did it transpire that 1.5 hours before the activation, they had lit their peat-burning stove for the first time this season and were running it with the doors open as the damp peat was not getting hot enough to combust properly.

g) CoGDEM members' questionnaire

The questionnaire that was sent out after the AGM in June had some interesting responses, but mainly from the Industrial Sub Group members, so the results will be discussed in this afternoon's ISG meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

h) Damp-proofing materials

EI Electronics had received word of a CO alarm activation while the next door neighbour's house was having damp-proofing materials applied. Mike Byrne and Peter Walsh investigated this and found that quantities of hydrogen and/or alcohols could be driven off as the siloxane materials cure, leading to a response from an electrochemical CO sensor that can subsequently take some time to recover.

i) Chimney Sweeps' event

CoGDEM and its members have been invited to attend and sponsor the National Association of Chimney Sweeps gala dinner and trade show next April in Kenilworth. See their website if interested.

10	Dates of 2012 meetings –	Tues 21 Feb 2012, Tues 26 June 2012, Tues 16 October 2012
-----------	---------------------------------	--