

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1438-12

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	All members
Date	26 th June 2012	Circulation Date	31 st July 2012
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Website & email

Attendees

John Saffell - Alphasense
Leigh Greenham - CoGDEM
Jonathan Gilby - City Technology
Tom Gurd - City Technology
Gavin Boorman - GfG
Simon Jones - Kidde Safety
Tim Wilkes - Crowcon
Richard King - Honeywell Analytics
Adrian Keats - Honeywell Analytics
Mike Byrne - Ei Electronics
Colin Mitchell - Ei Electronics
Neil Perdell - Aico
Tony Banfield - EXL/31/1 etc
Peter Philpott - TPI
Kevin Honner - Draeger
Brendan Simpson - FireBlitz
Martin Ling - FireBlitz
Jonathan Kane - Kane International
John Walsh - Sprue Safety/FireAngel
Ian Ballinger - Sprue Safety/ BRK Dicon
James Whale - Testo
Mike Murley - Testo
Kevin Milesen - Gas & Env. Services
Gary Sumption - Shawcity
Jeff Regan - JMS Consultants
Zoe Forman - Mandeville Marketing

Apologies

Arthur Burnley - Alphasense
Roy Taylor - Testo
Grant Bleakley - Anton
Noor Ali - Air Products
Clive Tester - Sira
Bernard Thomas - Kidde Safety
Paul Basham - Crowcon
Terry Brown - e2v technologies
Peter Walsh - HSE/HSL
Mike Hemingway - HSE/HSL
John Sonley - JMS Consultants
Roger Riley - Geotech
Steve Billingham - Geotech
Phil Wild - Duomo
Andy Burnett - Kidde Safety
Andy Avenell - Crowcon

Agenda

- 1) Apologies and member introductions
- 2) Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
- 3) Lobbying activities (inc. All Party Group funding, Ofgem/Nat Grid, HHIC, DCLG, GAD)
- 4) CO-Be Alarmed campaign and other publicity (Zoe Forman)
- 5) CO alarms Standards review (including EN 50291-1 & -2, EN 50292 update)
- 6) Flue Gas Analysis (inc. standards, CPA1 campaign, new boiler testing)
- 7) Merseyside & West Midlands CO project, spin-off with CFOA initiative
- 8) Non-compliant CO alarms update
- 9) AOB (including updates from HSE, GISG, Gas Safe Register, helpline, barbecues)
- 10) Date of next meeting – Tues 16 October 2012

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1 Apologies and member introductions

The above list of apologies was read out. Members introduced themselves, including new member FireBlitz, represented by Martin Ling and Brendan Simpson

2 Approval of previous minutes and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting (21st Feb 2012, CO1437-12) were read and accepted. Matters arising were covered during the rest of the agenda.

3 Lobbying (inc. All Party Group funding, Ofgem/Nat Grid, DCLG, HHIC, GAD)

All Party Parliamentary Gas Safety Group (APPGSG):

The APPGSG continues to be extremely active and effective. CoGDEM funded another APPGSG event, a large 'Spring Reception' on April 19th focussing on CO in the holiday industry. 9 member companies shared the costs. Another meeting on Green Deal requirements for CO alarms has taken place.

The Group will be changing its name to the All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group (APPCOG) to better reflect its focus on CO from any sources and any fuels. This is expected to be funded by Gas Safe Charity, Gas Safety Trust and GISG, but there will be a separate All Fuels Carbon Monoxide Awareness Forum subservient to the APPCOG and this will require separate funding. CoGDEM has 'volunteered' to co-fund the Forum to the tune of £5k, and members were asked to confirm to LG their acceptance of this, so far six members (5 alarm manufacturers and 1 sensor manufacturer) have agreed.

These new arrangements for the All Party Groups will be launched at a post-recess event in September.

Ofgem CO Working Group:

Ofgem is currently considering the four GDNs' business plans for 2013-18. CoGDEM was invited to meet National Grid in March, who explained their plans to equip their field workers with PPE and gas-leak instruments, as well as their campaigns to give CO alarms to the vulnerable. The other three GDNs had already made some similar commitments to Ofgem, but it seems that NG want not only to catch up, but overtake their competitors.

HHIC:

The boiler manufacturers are almost ready to publicise their compulsory combustion tests after the installation of a new boiler, and LG will be attending their meeting with HSE and BIS to explain the proposal to make the tests 'recommended' from 2013 and 'compulsory' from 2014.

DCLG – Building Regs

Pressure is still being applied to get the 2015 edition of Building Regs to recognise that CO is an all-fuels problem, so that the requirement for CO alarms is widened from its current remit of only solid-fuel appliance installation.

GAD

As reported at our previous meeting, the Gas Appliance Directive (GAD) is primarily involved with the design, safety and testing of gas-fired appliances, but Jonathan Kane had suggested it may be possible to get the Directive to state that combustion gas testing should be preformed after every installation, and that CO alarms should be recommended by the appliance manufacturers as an additional precaution. CoGDEM made a submission to the GAD consultation and subsequently arranged two meetings in Brussels on 25th June, the first with the EU Commission, and the second with the consumer safety group ANEC. The outcome was favourable from the point of view of the recommendation of combustion gas testing, but less favourable with getting the Directive to mention domestic CO alarms. The dialogue will continue.

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4 CO-Be Alarmed campaign and other publicity

Zoe Forman gave members a brief update on the plans that are already underway for this year's CO-Be Alarmed campaign, which will start in October. This will be the 5th year of the campaign, funded by the gas retail companies under their trade association Energy UK. In discussion, it was mentioned that Gas Safe Register's Gas Safety Week will take place in September and CO-Awareness Week will have its usual slot in November, with Lynn Griffiths asking CO alarm manufacturers to help fund this year's campaign.

BSS leaflet

For a couple of years, we have been working with the Boat Safety Scheme to produce a dedicated CO safety leaflet for boat owners and users, and this has at last been produced, perhaps helped by the APPGSG's focus on CO risks in the leisure industry. Five CoGDEM members had agreed to pay the printing costs, so that 30,000 copies can be available for distribution this summer.

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

The European Working Group (WG9) convened by the Irish National Standards committee to make amendments to EN 50291 continues its work. The amendment to EN 50291 covering the end-of-working-life and IP rating removal (for battery-powered alarms) has been completed.

The second stage of WG9's work is to draft further revisions to the EN 50291 standard, linking in various clauses and requirements of the smoke alarm standard for consistency and a draft has been circulated to the CO alarm manufacturers for initial comment. Ei, Kidde, Sprue and Honeywell are on the WG.

The final draft of the updated EN 50292 was presented at the March TC216 meeting, but a few late comments from other European countries have been received, which Peter Walsh will try to incorporate, with assistance from Tony Banfield.

LG had previously requested that CO alarm manufacturers inform him if any EN 50291-2 compliant alarms are forthcoming (suitable for recreational vehicles), yet it appears there are practical difficulties faced by BSi at their Loughborough laboratory in testing alarms for impact and dynamic orientation whilst exposed to gas. LG explained that he had several conversations with the BSi Test Manager about practical ways this could be achieved. He has subsequently arranged to meet the relevant BSi managers at the Loughborough lab in August to ensure that the stated progress is actually being made.

The requirement to harmonise the EN 50291 standard under a Directive is still being pursued, perhaps the GAD approach was wishful thinking, see above, but the Irish standards guys are still pushing for it to be listed under the Construction Products Directive (CPD, or CPR Regulations in the UK)

6 Flue Gas Analysis (inc. standards, CPA1 campaign, new boiler testing)

EN 50379 is the standard that governs the performance of Flue Gas Analysers, the 2012 edition has now been published.

BS 7967 is the UK guide for the use of FGAs, and the Working Group, chaired by Dave Bendle of British Gas, is now active again. As this is a 'user' standard, it was felt that CoGDEM's representation on the WG should be biased towards 'users', so it was suggested that Kevin Milesen of GES should join the WG, as he is a trainer, calibrator, repairer, and therefore a 'user' of FGAs. A meeting is scheduled for 7th Aug, and Kevin has been invited.

A new European version of BS 7967

Good progress has been made, an initial draft has been circulated, TC 216 and TC 109 are cooperating well, and the need for such a standard is now more widely agreed.

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CPA1

The CPA1 advert campaign sponsored by CoGDDEM's FGA companies was a great success, and we were thanked by the other organisations shown in the ad (E&U Skills, HHIC, GSR) for facilitating the six full page adverts in the technical press. Gas Safe Register told us at the end of April that over 90% of the registered engineers who needed CPA1 had successfully achieved it, and the remainder were coming in bit by bit.

It was the existence of CPA1 that allowed the HHIC to contemplate the move to compulsory combustion testing at the commissioning of new gas-boilers, as mentioned in section 3 above. Jonathan Kane reminded the meeting of the fantastic progress that this represents, 5 years ago this would have seemed an impossible point to achieve, although it was mentioned that the HSE had been somewhat involved due to fatalities which had occurred from CO emissions from apparently safe modern boilers.

7 Merseyside & West Midlands CO project

LG reported on the presentation event that was held in Liverpool in May. Full results and the statistical breakdown are due any day, but the highlights included a very low population of CO alarms, averaging <10% of homes, low awareness levels, and some incidents of CO exposure discovered during the Home Fire Safety Visit itself. Phase 3 of the project is now being discussed, including using Liverpool John Moores University as an academic centre of excellence for CO studies.

There has been more dialogue with the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), and it seems they are keen to act on the results of this project, endorsing CO preventative activities amongst all Fire & Rescue Services nationwide, rather than this being a region-by-region decision. LG is in contact with a CFOA representative.

8 Non-compliant CO alarms and colour-patch update

The GreenBrook alarm that had been under investigation for some months had not been subjected to a voluntary recall by the supplier, so LG was left with no option but to contact their local Trading Standards, who acted promptly and a recall notice has now gone out. A similar alarm has just surfaced in Ireland, and LG has been in contact with the importer.

Detectagas has started to promote a branded CO alarm, similar to that from Arctic Products, using the same Winsen CO sensor, but the unit may not be able to detect an open-circuit sensor condition as required by clause 4.4 of EN 50291. However, we have only seen an early version of the Detectagas product, so this may not be representative of full production units. This needs checking, so CoGDDEM members were asked to inform LG of relevant information.

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

a) HSE

Peter Walsh was intending to bring a colleague (Mike Hemingway) to this meeting, as Peter is moving to a part-time working arrangement at HSL. However, last minute travels meant that neither could attend.

b) GISG

CoGDDEM is a member of the Gas Industry Safety Group, and meetings are held every other month. GISG funds various safety initiatives, including the core costs of the APPGSG, see 3 above.

c) Gas Safe Register and Gas Safe Charity

CoGDDEM is still attending the regular National Stakeholder Group meetings to feed back information to GSR on alarms, FGAs and PPE, and hearing of the GSR campaigns and projects. At the most recent meeting it was announced that Jeff Learman had recently died of cancer. Gas Safety Week will take place in mid-September, and pledges of support are being sought from the wider industry, this usually involves a request for free CO alarms from CoGDDEM members that can be used in promotions as prizes.

The Charity is no longer chaired by Les Philpott of HSE, but Gordon Lishman, ex-Chief Executive of Age UK.

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d) CoGDEM's CO Helpline

LG reported on recent unusual calls, including a family taken unwell after a cooker incident (large stewpot causing flames to turn yellow due to lack of ventilation), and the daughter of a lady hospitalised in India after exposure to a faulty water-heater.

Gavin Boorman mentioned that Germany now has much more interest in domestic CO incidents, particularly from within the emergency services after some rescuers were injured inside domestic dwellings earlier this year.

e) Barbecues and camping incidents

Martin Ling gave a report on some testing that he had conducted in his garden in early May, following this year's second fatality on a campsite caused by CO emissions from a warm barbecue used inside a tent to heat the air. Martin found almost 1000ppm built up within seconds of placing a smouldering disposable barbecue inside a zipped-up tent. It was felt that CoGDEM could work with the Camping & Caravanning Club to conduct a whole series of similar tests to ascertain worst case conditions.

Much publicity has been generated on the subject, including campsite posters and leaflets, prime-time TV reporting, and firefighter inspections of campsites.

f) CO on the school curriculaum

Martin Ling also mentioned that he had written to two local schools enquiring whether CO was on the curriculum, and his MP had agreed to raise the matter with his Ministerial colleagues.

g) Research funds

John Saffell mentioned that research projects which involved the 'protection of people' could perhaps get funding assistance from a US source that he was aware of. He can be contacted for more details.

10 Date of next meeting – Tues 16 October 2012