

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1440-13

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	All members
Date	12 th Feb 2013	Circulation Date	7 th March 2013
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Website & email

Attendees

John Saffell - Alphasense
Leigh Greenham - CoGDEM
Jonathan Gilby - City Technology
Brendan Simpson - FireBlitz
Jason Perrins - FireBlitz
Richard Dunn - Crowcon
Simon Jones - Kidde Safety
Clive Tester - Sira
Jonathan Kane - Kane International
Ian Robertson - Analox
Julian Butler - Shawcity
Mike Byrne - Ei Electronics
Colin Mitchell - Ei Electronics
Neil Perdell - Aico
Jeff Regan - JMS Consultants
Peter Philpott - TPI
Tom Gurd - City Tech
Graham McKay - BSI (new member)
Tony Bleakley - Anton
Adrian Keats - Honeywell Analytics (Dom)
Jane Howitt - Honeywell Analytics
Ian Ballinger - Sprue Safety
Peter Walsh - HSL/HSE
Mike Hemingway - HSL/HSE
Mike Murley - Testo
Chris Nicholson - Testo
Ken McDermott - GMI
Frasier Mathieson - GMI
John Turnbull - GMI
Tony Banfield - EXL/31/1 etc Chairman
Kevin Mileson - GES

Apologies

Andy Burnett - Kidde Safety
Bernard Thomas - Kidde Safety
John Walsh - Sprue Safety
Noor Ali - Air Products
Richard King - Honeywell Analytics
Colin Hydes - Honeywell Analytics
Arthur Burnley - Alphasense
John Sonley - JMS Consultants
James Whale - Testo
Zoe Forman - Mandeville Marketing
Gavin Boorman - GfG
Hans Hubner - GfG
Philip Wild - Duomo
Eddie -Quigley - QMS

Agenda

- 1) Apologies and member introductions
- 2) Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
- 3) Lobbying activities (inc. All Party Group, HHIC, HSE, GAD)
- 4) CO-Be Alarmed campaign and other publicity, inc Coronation Street (Zoe Forman)
- 5) CO alarms standards review (including EN 50291-1 & -2, EN 50292 update)
- 6) Flue Gas Analysis (inc. standards, new boiler testing, new European initiatives)
- 7) CFOA Fire & Rescue Service initiative
- 8) Non-compliant CO alarms update
- 9) AOB (including updates from HSE, GISG, CIPHE document, helpline)
- 10) Dates of next meetings – Tues 4 June (date change), then Tues 15 Oct 2013

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1 Apologies and member introductions

The above list of apologies was read out. Members introduced themselves, and Graham McKay was able to attend his first meeting since BSI joined CoGDEM last year.

2 Approval of previous minutes and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting (16th Oct 2012, CO1439-12) were read and accepted. Matters arising were covered during the rest of the agenda (including the request for FGA maintenance info).

3 Lobbying (inc. All Party Group funding & launch, HHIC, HSE, GAD)

All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group (APPCOG):

As a sister group to APPCOG, CoGDEM is a partial sponsor of the Carbon Monoxide All Fuels Action Forum, which aims to coordinate industry activities related to domestic CO incidents and awareness, but across all fuels, not just gas. LG attended a Steering Group meeting in January, at which the following points were made:-

Oftec confirmed that the oil-fired boiler community are going to move to mandatory combustion gas testing on commissioning with a defined maximum CO limit, following the lead taken by the gas boiler industry (see report under HHIC below). They have an initiative to ensure recently calibrated FGAs are being used by their members (see FGA section below).

HETAS (solid fuel trade association) did not attend, and once again there was criticism of them for closing down their CO helpline during the entire Christmas/New Year period (including the Coronation Street episodes). A generic CO helpline for all fuels still needs to be established.

Gas Safe Register gave an update on the north-west pilot project on CO awareness raising that CoGDEM's CO alarm manufacturers heard about last year at the meeting held at GSR's HQ. Their Gas Safety Week this year will be 16-22 September 2013.

Coronation Street mentioned the words "carbon monoxide" in eight episodes, each viewed by an average 8 million viewers, almost 0.5 million of whom went on to follow the Twitter and blog follow-ups. Anecdotally, CO alarm sales have increased noticeably and bookings for boiler servicing went up immediately following the airings (see publicity section below).

Gas Safe Charity mentioned that it now has a fast-track grant fund available to enable the smaller CO charities to survive. Perhaps this might help Lynn Griffiths at CO-Awareness. After the meeting, LG heard that this fund is capped at £5k per organisation, which seems low.

Gas Safety Trust is preparing the next DIDR report for publication this summer (CO incidents across all fuels). The HPA considers that rather than the often-quoted "Accidental CO poisoning kills an average of 50 people per year in the UK", the industry should now be saying 40 people, based on their analysis of recent years and trends.

The "victims' charities" sub group had met before the Steering Group meeting, and Roland Wessling was the representative who stayed on to update the SG. He is the Forensic Scientist from Cranfield University who was poisoned when his girlfriend died in their tent from CO produced by a disposable barbecue. He intends to do some major project work at Cranfield on relevant subjects, with funding from the public and private sectors. He has been encouraged to liaise with Liverpool John Moores University. One of Roland's dreams is to see racks of CO alarms at campsite reception offices for temporary hire by visitors.

Some members of this sub group had a problem with the use of the word 'victims' and 'charities' for their members (e.g. Stephanie Trotter is not a 'victim', and some groups are Trusts not charities) so they have re-titled the sub group **CO⁺SAVi Sub Group** (pronounced as CO-savvy). This stands for Survivors, Activists and Victims, and the ⁺ superscript symbol is to recognise the other poisonous gases in combustion fumes (requested by Gareth Hughes, now back on the scene, apparently poisoned by oil-fumes not CO).

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John Arnold updated the SG on the **All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group's** focus for 2013, which will initially be getting CO into the Smart Metering and Green Deal portfolios, and persuading the domestic insurance industry to consider CO alarms and boiler servicing requirements. There has been a request from John for a donation of 60 alarms to be given to selected MPs who will attend a March event publicising the need for holidaymakers in their constituencies to be protected by CO alarms. The relevant CoGDEM members agreed this would be worthwhile.

The next Steering Group meeting will be in April, with a Smart Metering round-table event on 27th Feb, to be attended by LG. The APPCOG is also actively making CO-related submissions to the relevant Government departments on the Energy Bill and Fuel Poverty, the HSE consultation on high-risk areas that Local Authorities should be prioritising, and changes to Scottish Building Regs. Another meeting with DECC on the Green Deal's treatment of domestic CO alarms is being organised by Barry Sheerman MP.

HHIC:

HHIC (the gas heating appliance manufacturers' trade association) held a joint meeting with CoGDEM's FGA manufacturers and suppliers in January following the publication of an HHIC article in this month's Registered Gas Engineer magazine. The article announced the move to **compulsory checking for CO in the flues of domestic gas boilers** at point of installation and commissioning, which stems from the HSE and BIS investigations after several CO fatalities from brand new condensing boiler installations. All boiler manufacturers will be recommending use of an FGA from April 2013, but making it compulsory from April 2014. The article also contained a flowchart to aid the engineer in taking a combustion measurement, and some corrections were agreed. At today's meeting, Graham McKay (BSI) pointed out that EN 483 currently allows gas boilers to have up to 2000ppm of CO present in the flue, not 350ppm as the new HHIC guidance states

Boiler commissioning tests will be mentioned in the revised BS 7967 (due this year), a new Technical Bulletin to be published jointly by HHIC and Gas Safe Register, Appendix 1 of L56 (part of the HSE Approved Code of Practice ACoP for gas installations), a new FGA guide being written by Eddie Quigley, and various bits of PR and editorial which CoGDEM members will undoubtedly publish in technical journals and magazines.

The **Flues-in-Voids** Working Group held a meeting in January to discuss progress with writing industry guidance to allow CO monitoring systems to be installed in the void through which a hidden flue passes. A working prototype system was presented by a CoGDEM manufacturer, which was well-liked by members of the WG, which includes BG, GSR and HSE. HSE has subsequently pointed out that it is always 'nervous' if only one manufacturer puts any kind of new safety system on the market, and would prefer to see competitive products available.

GAD (Gas Appliance Directive)

Jonathan Kane continues his mission to get more mention of carbon monoxide in the relevant section of the GAD, and although initially drawing a blank in Brussels and subsequently with the EU's GAD 'consultant', things are now a little more positive, and JK has had a meeting with BIS to see whether support can be gained. JK has sent the following update:-

1. Despite the consultant's "negative" report, the fact our submissions were included and featured prominently within the report is good news.

The situation now becomes complicated - The final document must be agreed by the Commission before submission to Council and Parliament for separate and joint review prior to a "final" final document being agreed for implementation - this might take 5 years.

In the meantime, we will lobby the Commission to take account of our comments before the final document is submitted to Council and Parliament.

2. Given it may take a further 5 years, we can ask that GAD's advisory sheets - think of them as guidance documents - be updated to reflect our requests. This is managed by GADAC working group whose Chairman is Mindert Van Rij, also CEN TC109 Chairman, whom we can approach informally to see if this route is viable.

Merseyside FRS project. The CO alarm manufacturers held a separate meeting just prior to Christmas, and Andy Shaw from Liverpool John Moores University attended. Although he didn't give any more results from the existing project, he outlined some ideas for a possible 'Phase 3' which may benefit from funding by relevant

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CoGDDEM members. The MFRS emergency vehicles are now liveried with CO warning posters, and they have asked CoGDDEM if we can monitor for increased sales of CO alarms in the Merseyside region.

National Landlord Association (NLA). The NLA's Director of Operations (Richard Price) attended last week's BSI standards meeting, so LG took the opportunity to discuss CO alarms and gas appliance testing as part of the annual landlords gas safety check. He agrees that the checklist should mention CO alarms (test and check dates of existing alarms, or recommend fitting an alarm where one is not present) and there should be a recommendation of a full gas appliance service, not just a safety inspection. Tony Bleakley mentioned that this is all very well, but in many cases it will be the letting agent that has contact with the tenant, not the landlord, and he has experience of the difficulties in getting a copy of the landlord's annual gas safety certificate via the agent.

Post meeting note: LG has contacted the NLA and its sister organisation for letting agents, the ALA, and has received the following statement

"When managing a property on behalf of a landlord, it is essential that the letting agent visits the property at least every six months to check for any maintenance issues. However, they should always seek permission from the tenant first with 24 hours written notice. In addition, the letting agent legally needs to arrange for gas safety checks to be carried out every 12 months to ensure the property conforms to the required gas safety standards and provide the tenant with the certificate."

4 CO-Be Alarmed campaign and other publicity

Zoe Forman couldn't be present today, but had sent a PowerPoint presentation (available on request) to update everyone on this year's CO-Be Alarmed campaign, which started on 31st October. This was the 5th year of the campaign, funded by the gas retail companies under their trade association Energy UK. Kirstie Allsopp was the media spokesperson, although she made some unfortunate comments about the best position for CO alarms in the home. A new campaign video was produced, showing a Gas Safe Register engineer servicing a boiler using an FGA and installing a CO alarm. The media pick-up has been good this year, with lots of TV, radio, magazine and social media coverage.

Zoe also mentioned the EU Parliament initiative which had been kicked-off by Honeywell, but branded as CoGDDEM/CO-Be Alarmed. MEPs showed some interest in the subject at an event in January, and it was highlighted how the UK is far ahead of most European countries in the way it deals with the whole CO issue. Belgium has a particular problem with high levels of fatalities, thought to be influenced by the continued use of domestic open-flued gas water heaters of the type that were removed from the UK many years ago. The death of the Niger ambassador and his wife in their Brussels apartment was a high profile case just a week before the EU event.

Today's CoGDDEM meeting also reviewed the CO storyline in the ITV soap Coronation Street over the New Year period. Those manufacturers selling alarms through retail channels have already reported sales volume increases immediately after the episodes were aired. Trade channels are yet to report any such effects. The programme credits showed a link to a special Gas Safe Register webpage, which showed CoGDDEM as an organisation which could give more details on CO alarms. Surprisingly our helpline did not receive any calls as a direct result of this, although subsequent callers in the last month have been asked if they saw the programme, and several did.

Zoe is also involved with the Dominic Rodgers Trust campervan project, and she will help drive the CO-liveried vehicle to festivals, exhibitions and outdoor shows throughout the year. Any ideas on potential venues where the campervan could attend can be passed to Zoe. Stacey Rodgers has now released an excellent DVD telling Dominic's story with the help of young actors, and this deserves a wider audience, she will happily supply copies. Colin Mitchell mentioned that when such videos are branded with other manufacturers' logos, this makes it difficult for a competitor to widely circulate the video. Perhaps we should always use the CoGDDEM logo?

Zoe hopes to rework the CoGDDEM CO leaflet and update the website quite soon, and has asked the CO alarm manufacturers to supply with her up to date product samples for a group photo, and current weblinks.

LG mentioned two other items of publicity related to CO alarms, he had been interviewed by HVP magazine to answer questions from an industry agitator about the testing of alarms, and he had helped CIPHE (Chartered Institute of Plumbing & Heating Engineering) produce new guidance for their members on the subject.

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

There hasn't been much progress since our last CoGDEN meeting. We still await the circulation of the draft revision of EN 50291-1, put together by the Working Group convened by the Irish (WG9). The active person within NSAI who convened the WG, Fergal Finn, has now left the organisation, so some momentum has been lost. Some of the additions to -1 aim to make the standard more consistent with the domestic smoke alarm standard, including end-of-unit-life tests, long-life battery capacity tests etc.

With EN 50291-2 published in 2010 to cover the use of CO alarms in caravans, motorhomes and boats, concerns had been raised by BSI that some of the additional laboratory tests were almost impossible to conduct. However, this has now been addressed and products are now coming to market which are fully compliant to -2.

The EU has finally caught up with the ongoing concern that when non-compliant domestic CO alarms come from non-EU countries they often do not conform to the requirements of EN 50291, despite the manufacturers' claims. In December 2012 the EC's Standing Committee on Construction (SCC) had a meeting and issues were aired that could be included in the Construction Products Regulations (CPR). Ireland had submitted a proposal with UK's support, and the SCC agreed that EN 50291 should be a harmonized standard and the relevant extract from that meeting's minutes is included below. This has also been picked up by the General Product Safety Directive Standing Committee Meeting – Consumer Safety Network, who are supportive.

Although the wording is ambiguous, this could represent real progress in getting EN 50291 made a mandatory requirement for all CO alarms entering the EU, with appropriate third party testing by accredited test-labs:-

18.2 IE: Carbon monoxide detectors:

(CONSTRUCT 12/957)

IE explained in detail the reasons behind their request to develop harmonised EN under the CPD/CPR for these products including 3rd party product certification. UK supported the IE position.

The EC services consider that the existing mandate M109 to CEN/CENELEC covers in principle stand-alone carbon monoxide detectors as those mentioned in the IE request and foresees actually 3rd party certification for these products. Therefore the EC services asked CEN/CENELEC to send a revised reply to the said mandate in order to include the development as soon as possible of a harmonised EN on stand-alone CO detectors.

The standard for guidance on the use of CO alarms, EN 50292 has been further redrafted by Peter Walsh after receipt of all the European comments, including some late submissions from Ireland. It is hoped that the final draft will be able to be formally circulated soon, prior to it being voted on by the relevant committee(s).

6 Flue Gas Analysis (inc. standards, new boiler testing, new European initiatives)

EN 50379 is the standard that governs the performance of Flue Gas Analysers, the 2012 edition is published, so the Working Group has been 'stood down' and the standard will enter into the normal five-year 'maintenance cycle', when it will be decided if updates are required in a couple of years from now.

BS 7967 is the UK guide for the use of FGAs. The Chairman of the Working Group, Dave Bendle of British Gas gave the following update to his parent committee recently:-

"The review by GSE/30/-/21 of BS 7967 is continuing with parts 1 to 4 combined into a single document. To ease navigation it has been broken into specific work activity sections e.g. responding to a reported CO alarm activation or confirming correct combustion following work on an appliance.

.. A new sub clause is being added to allow an operative to use a flue gas analyser to 'sweep' the immediate atmosphere around flued appliances to test for spillage/leakage of combustion products reducing the requirement for room atmosphere testing and the associated time costs involved.

.. The review continues with the aim of simplifying the process of confirming a gas appliance is safe, leading to position where operatives use the described checks not only when investigating report of 'fumes' but also to help satisfy their requirements under 26(9) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations following any work."

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A new European version of BS 7967

Jonathan Kane advised the meeting that a draft had been circulated to relevant CoGDDEM members immediately after our last meeting, and no comments were received, although the Working Group has received comments from other nations. These will be reviewed when the Working Group meets in Frankfurt on 27th Feb. The amended draft standard will then go out for public comment towards the end of this year. TC 109 (the boiler standards committee) has requested that rather than this being published as a standard, it should be issued as a Technical Report (TR), but JK wrote to the TC 109 chairman outlining why he thinks that it should instead be a full EN standard. TC 216 (the gas detection committee) will make a decision on this when it meets in Brussels in March although a compromise may be to create it as a Technical Standard (TS), which could be acceptable.

Calibration

Earlier in the meeting it had been mentioned that Oftec field inspectors would always ask to see proof that any FGA was within its current calibration period. Tony Bleakley asked whether this was also the case with Gas Safe Register's field inspectors, and LG said he would investigate.

Post meeting note:- Mark Rolfe of GSR checked and they will normally ask to see proof of calibration when they conduct a field inspection, whether this inspection is a random competence check, or following a complaint or an incident. However, the GSR manager responsible for field inspections told Mark to mention to us that it is rare for the engineer to carry the calibration certificate with him. In such cases, the inspector will allow the engineer to demonstrate use of his FGA, but if the calibration status cannot be proven, the inspector will then use his own FGA to double check the result. Some FGA's have a dated calibration sticker attached, some have a date entered into the display software, but could CoGDDEM's FGA manufacturer/suppliers/service centres please come up with a consistent approach? The preferred option to GSR would seem to be a simple sticker.

Action: FGA manufacturers/service centres to advise LG

CMDDA1

Kevin Mileson reported that GES is now conducting one-on-one training and assessment on the use of FGAs for CO incident investigation. GES has run 8 people through the CMDDA1 courses so far, but 6 did not pass first time. He thought that 18 training centres would be offering the course by May, only 6 have it at present. There has been a lot of interest from contractors who do work in social housing. It is hoped that a list of CMDDA1-equipped engineers can be made available to those organisations such as CoGDDEM with help-lines which receive calls from people wanting their homes checked for CO emissions from appliances or migration from neighbouring properties.

Trade press adverts

Jonathan Kane asked the other FGA manufacturers whether they thought another advertising campaign would be worthwhile (similar to the CPA1 campaign last year), drawing attention to the forthcoming change to boiler commissioning testing. There was general agreement that this would be a good idea, once the Gas Safe Register/HHIC Technical Bulletin had been published and is downloadable, and closer to the time that the tests become mandatory.

7 CFOA Fire & Rescue Service initiative

Good progress has been made since the brief report in the previous minutes, leading to an imminent meeting with all CoGDDEM's CO alarm manufacturers (21st Feb). The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) aims to create a 'Fire Safe Register', administered by Capita who facilitate the Gas Safe Register. This new scheme will allow relevant tradesmen to receive basic fire safety training but to include an awareness of CO, with CO alarm fitting as an option. CFOA aims to have a webshop for related products, and the meeting will discuss ideas for a CFOA-branded CO alarm.

8 Non-compliant CO alarms update

LG had recently asked Arctic Products for an update on the EN 50291 compliance of their products (existing and new), to be told "*appropriate testing and certification is paramount to us and new products will not be launched until we are 100% satisfied with each project.*"

That same company is still supplying colour patches, which have recently been spotted at Morrisons supermarkets and Toys R Us.

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9 AOB (including updates from HSE, GISG, GASG, helpline)

a) HSE

Peter Walsh mentioned the HSE's concerns about CO production when woodchips or pellets are stored in unventilated confined spaces. LG had circulated the HSE warning notice to all CoGDEM members in November. Peter also mentioned that indoor go-kart arenas were also under the spotlight after some CO incidents caused by poor ventilation of the un-catalysed exhaust systems used by many karts.

b) GISG

CoGDEM is a member of the Gas Industry Safety Group, and meetings are held every month. GISG may organise an 'industry' Gas Safety Week this summer, potentially at the same time as the proposed IGEM event on CO, which CoGDEM has been asked to contribute to on 11th July.

c) Gas Safety Trust

LG mentioned that the GST is closing its Basingstoke office, and using Adrian McConnell of the ENA (Energy Networks Association) to conduct its administration. As Adrian (ex-All Party Group manager) also administers GISG, and Chris Bielby is Chairman of both, LG asked them to confirm they did not foresee any conflicts of interest, and he received such assurances. AM stated that GISG members will now receive regular updates about how the GST is using its funds to meet its stated objective of improving research into CO hazards across all fuels. He also mentioned (privately) that the errors which were prevalent in previous GST publications should now be a thing of the past.

d) GASG

The last Gas Analysis and Sensing Group colloquia held in London in December included Andy Humber of London Ambulance talking of their CO detection apparatus and its usage. Also presenting was London Fire Brigade, who incorrectly stated that CO alarms should be located low down due to the density of the gas! The next GASG meeting will be about gas sensing in healthcare, to be held at Cranfield University on March 21st, with at least one presentation by a CoGDEM member on exposure to low concentrations of CO.

e) CoGDEM's CO Helpline

LG reported on some recent unusual calls, including one from a couple poisoned and hospitalised after inhaling CO from a gas fire in a rented cottage attached to a luxury Cornish hotel. The hotel owners threatened the couple not to publicise the incident, LG got Cornwall Fire & Rescue to investigate, and their CO expert Mark Pratten, was also threatened! Other calls included people whose alarms had apparently gone off falsely, but after discussion found that one was being triggered by an unventilated gas cooker grill, another case where fumes were re-entering a property through an open window directly above the boiler flue terminal, and a worrying case where National Grid were called and would take no action as the detected CO was leaking through from the neighbour's open fire and chimney, not from a gas appliance.

f) Domestic flammable gas alarms guidance (EN 50244)

Although not a domestic CO issue, domestic natural gas alarms do not fit neatly into CoGDEM's afternoon meeting either, so LG mentioned that the guide for use of such products (EN 50244) was likely to be updated, and Richard King of Honeywell had volunteered to convene the Working Group if there were no other volunteers from across Europe. Within CoGDEM, it would seem that only Honeywell manufactures such devices.

g) Stolen FGAs

Immediately after the meeting, Kevin Mileson wondered if CoGDEM could maintain a database of the serial numbers of FGAs that were known to have been stolen. It is not unusual to see FGAs for sale on ebay that have a dubious provenance, and it would be good if there was a way to check their serial numbers. Kevin suggests that manufacturers and service centres be encouraged to send details of stolen units to CoGDEM, for them to be entered on a publicly visible table on the CoGDEM website.

Action: FGA manufacturers/suppliers to inform LG if they will take part

10 Dates of next meetings – Tues 4 June (date change), then Tues 15 Oct 2013