

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1444-14

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	All members
Date	10 th June 2014	Circulation Date	8 th July 2014
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Website & email

Attendees

Leigh Greenham - CoGDEM
Mike Byrne - Ei Electronics
Colin Mitchell - Ei Electronics
Clive Tester - Sira
Peter Philpott - TPI
Mike Hemingway - HSL/HSE
Peter Walsh - HSL/HSE
Graham McKay - BSI Global
Tony Banfield - EXL/31/1 etc Chair
Jonathan Kane - Kane International
Mike Murley - Testo
Chris Nicholson - Testo
Billy Mitchell - Smart Compliance
Ian Ballinger - Sprue Safety
Kevin Milesen - GES
Bernard Thomas - Kidde Safety
Andy Burnett - Kidde Safety
John Balague - GfG
Hans Hubner - GfG
Neil Perdell - Aico
Andy Avenell - Crowcon
Kevin Honner - Draeger
Fraser Mathieson - GMI
Jason Perrins - FireBlitz
Julian Butler - Shawcity
Damian Cairns - Anton
Zoe Forman - Mandeville Marketing

Apologies

John Saffell - Alphasense
Arthur Burnley - Alphasense
Roger Davies - Senko Europe
Louise Early - Crowcon
Tom Gurd - City Tech
Jonathan Gilby - City Tech
Adrian Keats - Honeywell Analytics
Brett Skelton - Honeywell Analytics
Tim Jack - Honeywell Analytics
John Sonley - JMS Consultants
Jeff Regan - JMS Consultants
Ken McDermott - GMI
Scott Wallace - Smart Compliance

Agenda

- 1) Apologies and member introductions (inc. several new members)
- 2) Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
- 3) Lobbying activities (inc. All Party Group, HHIC, GSR, DCLG, IGEM, EHI)
- 4) CO-Be Alarmed campaign and other publicity update (Zoe Forman)
- 5) CO alarms standards review (inc. EN 50291-1 & -2, EN 50292 update, combined smoke/CO alarms, market surveillance testing)
- 6) Flue Gas Analysis (inc. new boiler testing & CoGDEM adverts, calibration consistency)
- 7) Non-compliant CO alarms update, inc. Black Spots at Toys R Us
- 8) AOB (including IGEM CO conference, updates from HSE, GISG, helpline)
- 9) Date of next meeting – Tues 14 Oct 2014

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1444-14 meeting minutes 10-6-14

1 Apologies and member introductions

The above list of apologies was read out, and members introduced themselves around the table.

2 Approval of previous minutes and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting (11th Feb 2014, CO1443-14) were read and accepted. Comment was made that the EU's Gas Appliance Directive (GAD) will become the Gas Appliance Regulations (GAR) and that carbon monoxide risks will be mentioned in these Regulations. Other matters arising were to be covered during the rest of the agenda.

3 Lobbying (inc. All Party Group, HHIC, GSR, DCLG, IGEM, EHI)

All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group (APPCOG):

LG and ZF gave an update on the group's activities. Relevant members had recently been sent the proposed work plan for 2014/15, and LG mentioned feedback he had given on CO helplines for non-gas consumers (i.e. solid fuel and oil-fired appliances) and the need for the group to lobby for mandatory EN 50291 testing of CO alarms. ZF mentioned the home-MoT event she recently attended, and updates were given on the holiday and medical initiatives that the group is involved with, as well as the Government's Private Rented Sector review.

This year's key activity will be the review of the major inquiry that the group conducted in 2010/2011 which produced the Baroness Finlay report. As well as addressing the previous recommendations, this review will look into behaviour change, and CoGDEM members may be invited to attend a smoke alarm/CO alarm knowledge transfer event, similar to the one that was held at Gas Safe Register a couple of years ago.

It is still hoped that the winter's CO-Be Alarmed campaign can become a joint effort between Energy UK, ENA and the All Party Group in the future.

HHIC:

LG displayed the printed version of the Registered Gas Engineer magazine advert that was co-sponsored by CoGDEM and HHIC (the gas heating appliance manufacturers' trade association), drawing attention to Technical Bulletin TB143 covering the move to compulsory checking for CO in the flues of domestic gas boilers at point of installation and commissioning from April 2014.

We are also trying to get HHIC to make more use of its membership of EHI (European Heating Industries) to call for other European countries to be more diligent with the training of engineers, installation of gas appliances, policing of the industry etc. Britain has lots of best practice to share, and this could lead to opportunities for CoGDEM member companies to export their experience and products. Our own communications to EHI's European HQ have remained unanswered.

The Flues-in-Voids project is still active, but with concerns that homeowners and landlords may not be fitting the necessary inspection hatches to enable hidden flues to be inspected. A proposal to use small FGA probe access holes is being discussed, but it must be recognised that this would be similar to an ambient air measurement (not a flue-gas measurement). Therefore, if a boiler's PoC does not contain CO but lots of CO₂, any leaks from a faulty flue into the void may not be correctly measured if being derived and calculated from the oxygen measurement in a conventional FGA.

IGEM

Mike Hemingway (HSL) confirmed that the HSL had completed the literature review part of the IGEM project looking into the effects of decreased ventilation in modern home environments, but the report has still not been formally released by IGEM or the sponsors (Gas Safety Trust). The practical test work will start in early July, with homes having simulated air-changes ranging from 1.0 down to 0.02 (air change units per hour). Mike mentioned the focus was only on flueless gas appliances, but this surprised Graham McKay who agreed to clarify with IGEM as he thought other appliance types were also to be investigated.

CoGDEM and many member companies will be attending the IGEM CO Conference in London on 9th July.

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1444-14 meeting minutes 10-6-14

Victims' charities

There has been continuing unsatisfactory correspondence with Molly Maher who runs Consumer Safety International, she is being advised by two retired gas engineers that CO alarms are unreliable, quoting the same flawed reports used by Detectagas in the past. A Westminster meeting has been arranged to discuss this, and LG will be attending to present the facts, the 2011 HSE report and talk about EN 50291 compliance.

CO-Awareness (Lynn Griffiths) has recently asked for assistance with survey equipment for a disabled lady who is in dispute with her housing association about smells in her home. From correspondence it seems this is very likely to be a damp problem, as a gas test has already been undertaken with no traces found.

Stacey Rodgers runs the Dominic Rodgers Trust, her son would have reached his 21st birthday in early May had he not been killed by CO from a neighbouring property when he was 10. Dominic's Day was commemorated throughout the gas industry with engineers wearing badges and a balloon launch, and this may become an annual event.

UK Fire & Rescue Services

LG represents CoGDEM on the Chief Fire Officers Association's CO Advisory Forum, which meets every few months so as to keep Chief Fire Officers in touch with CO initiatives being undertaken by others. Myles Platt, Deputy Chief of Merseyside FRS, is the CFOA Home Safety representative that the Forum has an interface with. The Blue Watch scheme to promote CO alarms (and other home safety apparatus) has changed shape since Capita pulled out as a partner a couple of months ago. The new limited company (CFOA Blue Watch Ltd) is still primarily engaged with the rented home sector, but has an enthusiastic campaign of awareness raising in other sectors such as students, boaters

Europe

A fourth CO Roundtable event was held in Brussels in February, chaired by Linda McAvan MEP, Zoe Forman is our representative. These events involve the sharing of best practice from European nations, Poland seems particularly active at present. We are lobbying that the lack of an equivalent to the UK's Gas Safe Register means that most other nations have no ability to carry out the large scale recommended improvements to gas appliances as they have no installation/competence assessment or registration schemes (see also HHIC section above for more).

Liverpool John Moores University Project

Relevant members were thanked for contributing CO alarms and cash for dataloggers for the project to investigate CO occurrences around the UK, with the help of six Fire & Rescue Services. Dr Andy Shaw was disappointed with the pace of the project but hoped to have some preliminary findings for presentation at the IGEN conference in July.

Consultations

CoGDEM submitted responses to DCLG's consultation on safety issues affecting the private rented sector, and also to NICE's consultation about the safety of children in the home.

4 CO-Be Alarmed campaign and other publicity

Zoe Forman gave a presentation of the various activities that she has been involved with since our last meeting, including the APPCOG and European events already mentioned above.

The shape of the coming winter consumer CO campaign is yet to be decided, but there are moves to get national TV air-time for the Katie Haines Trust video, see: <http://katiehaines.com/sounding-the-alarm-video.asp>

Public Health Wales – Zoe has attended several meetings with emergency service groups and the Welsh Government who are very active with awareness-raising initiatives.

Zoe continues to work with the HSE to give occasional 'Lunch & Learn' CO talks for larger companies, with between 80-300 employees attending.

Gas Safety Week will run from 15-21 Sept this year, CoGDEM will be supportive. Gas Safe Register fears that media coverage may be less this year due to the Scottish independence referendum that same week.

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1444-14 meeting minutes 10-6-14

Since the meeting with the Marine Accident Investigation Branch of the Dept for Transport to discuss the report on the double CO fatality on the Lake District boat ('Arniston') last Easter, the draft report was sent to LG who responded with some suggested amendments concerning CO alarms. The report is due to be published soon and will be well-publicised, especially as it has just been announced that the boat owner will face criminal prosecution. In the meantime, the MAIB has just published its report on the January 2014 double CO fatality on a small trawler ('Eshcol') moored in Whitby harbour, which concluded there is a need for workplace gas detectors on small working boats that have cooking and sleeping accommodation (domestic CO alarms are not necessarily certified for such usage). http://www.maib.gov.uk/cms_resources.cfm?file=/EshcolReport.pdf

As a follow up to these marine incidents, CoGDEM has been asked to assist with some practical tests of diesel powered appliances, so LG attended a planning meeting hosted by the British Marine Federation at which we volunteered to supply suitable detection apparatus and expertise for the tests.

A question was raised about the exact wording in the current English and Welsh Building Regulations Approved Document J concerning CO alarms. There was a particular concern about the use of the word 'should' in the opening sentence referring to sealed for life batteries, which states: *"Carbon monoxide alarms should comply with BS EN 50291:2001 and be powered by a battery designed to operate for the working life of the alarm. The alarm should incorporate a warning device to alert users when the working life of the alarm is due to pass. Mains-powered BS EN 50291 Type A carbon monoxide alarms with fixed wiring (not plug-in types) may be used as alternative applications provided they are fitted with a sensor failure warning device"*

The use of the word 'should' (rather than 'must') allows some ambiguity, so that CO alarms with replaceable batteries might still comply with the requirements. CoGDEM's position is that sealed for life battery CO alarms offer some distinct advantages, and this was why DCLG made specific reference to them in the Building Regs document.

CoGDEM is a member of the Gas Industry Safety Group (GISG), which has commissioned some cartoon strips to grab the attention of school age children about safety in the home. One draft storyline introduces a silent monster called 'Monox' who appears from faulty heating appliances, but the children in the house are protected by a superhero called 'Alarmo'. Preliminary sketches were passed around the meeting attendees.

5 CO alarms Standards review (including EN 50291-1 & -2, EN 50292 update, combined smoke/CO alarms, market surveillance testing)

EN 50291-1 – Tony Banfield and Mike Byrne reminded the CO alarm manufacturers that the period for comments on the latest draft is about to expire on 11th July, so they should not delay in getting any comments in. LG added that this standard is of vital importance to the manufacturers around the table, so they should ensure they were happy with the proposed content or submit comments and suggestions as soon as possible.

At our previous meeting we discussed Mandate 109 with the outcome of making EN 50291 a harmonised standard under the Construction Products Regulations. MB said the Working Group is writing the standard in such a way that it will include the compulsory requirements allowing for harmonisation.

At the March TC216 meeting, the Spanish delegate raised a question of the number of samples that needed to be tested for EMC performance, and it was agreed that only one should be necessary.

EN 50291-2 – Also at that TC 216 meeting, Spain raised a question about the severity of the EMC test in EN 50291-2 for conducted immunity, although this would only be relevant to wired-in CO alarms, not stand-alone types. They are worried about potential interference from marine electrical equipment when CO alarms are wired into the boats electrical supply. Currently there is no work underway on EN 50291-2. LG pointed out that the MAIB report into the boat fatalities would undoubtedly make reference to this standard in its recommendations for the use of CO alarms in boat cabins.

EN 50292 – It was again noted that the new edition was published in November 2013 and this is the version that should be referred to.

New standard for combined smoke/CO alarms - a Working Group is being put together by the two relevant CENELEC committees TC216 (gas detectors) and TC72 (smoke detectors).

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1444-14 meeting minutes 10-6-14

Market surveillance of CO alarms - Graham McKay of BSI updated us that eight EU countries were involved with the 'Prosafe' testing contract (Austria, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia & Turkey). BSI is now testing 3 samples of 26 different alarms from the retail chains in those eight countries. Testing should be complete by the end of July, Graham stated that BSI will be using its experience during the testing and report writing, for example any alarms which activate prematurely when exposed to gas will not be classed as 'failures'.

6 Flue Gas Analysis (inc. new boiler testing and adverts, calibration consistency)

Standards

Tony Banfield and Jonathan Kane reminded the meeting that the European Technical Specification **TS 50612** was published in December covering the use of FGAs for the combustion testing of gas fired central heating boilers. CENELEC is looking to expand the scope of this TS to also cover independent space heaters, water heaters, cooking appliances and gas-fired air heaters. This will require the European gas detection committee TC 216 working with the relevant Technical Committees for the other (non-boiler) heating/cooking appliances.

Kevin Milesen informed us that the commenting period for **BS 7967** expires in a few weeks time, so relevant comments should be submitted as soon as possible.

Although there is no current work being done by CENELEC on **EN 50379**, a question has been raised as to whether Parts 1 & 3 should be dropped.

The use of FGAs as a possible means of detecting leaks from '**Flues in Voids**' was discussed and recorded in the HHIC section of these minutes above.

Compulsory Combustion Testing

The requirement for the mandatory use of FGAs to commission new gas-fired condensing boilers came into force in April 2014. As mentioned in the HHIC section above our advert was placed in Registered Gas Engineer magazine thanks to those CoGDEM members who agreed to co-fund 50% with HHIC. There does not appear to have been any negativity from the trade to the compulsory requirement.

Calibration and competence

At the meeting, Kevin Milesen distributed a second revised version of the original document created by Jonathan Kane, taking into account the suggestions from Testo and TPI. These included assessment to ISO 17025 as an option to ISO 9001, references to EN 50379 and to authorised service centres, traceability and serial number labels and the requirement for appropriate suitability of any test gases used for calibration. All FGA members were encouraged to submit any additional comments by the end of June so the document could be completed.

Gas-handling parts and FGA availability

Chris Nicholson of Testo had raised the thorny issue of non-Gas Safe Registered engineers being able to buy parts for gas appliances (or FGAs) from trade outlets. This practice allows DIYers or illegal installers to carry out work on gas appliances, potentially leading to CO emissions if the work is not done competently. LG has raised this with HHIC and Gas Safe Register who last looked into this a few years back, but they were somewhat stymied at that time by concerns over restrictive trade practices, and breaking EU law. However both organisations agreed to look into the issue again, and CoGDEM has offered its support.

7 Non-compliant CO alarms update, inc. Black Spots

The 'Carbon Check' CO alarm previously reported has not reappeared, and no other falsely compliant EN 50291 CO alarms have been reported in the meantime.

Since our last meeting, Kevin Milesen spotted that 'Toys R Us' specialist outlet 'Babies R Us' were selling UniCom black spot CO indicator cards, unaware that the colour change can be inhibited by the presence of ammonia in the air (commonly found in baby's bedrooms). LG contacted them and received an unsatisfactory response, so got Trading Standards involved. Despite a spirited defence by UniCom, it seems that Toys R Us will not be stocking these products in future.

Minutes of Meeting

Document/ file: CO1444-14 meeting minutes 10-6-14

It was mentioned that Wilkinson hardware stores have started to stock £3.99 twinpacks of black spots, despite pressure applied from a CoGDEM member. Their HQ is in Worksop, so a contact with them might be required, or with their local Trading Standards 'Home Authority'.

8 AOB (including updates from HSE, helpline)

a) HSE

Mike Hemingway had already mentioned the IGEM/Gas Safety Trust project that HSE/HSL is conducting on sealed homes and the impact on CO production. This is reported in the IGEM section of the minutes above.

b) GASG

The next meeting of the Gas Analysis and Sensing Group will be covering noxious gases and particulates and is expected to take place at Nottingham University in September 2014.

c) CoGDEM's CO Helpline

LG highlighted some of the calls received in the last few months, including CO getting into car cabins from pre-catalyst leaks in the exhaust system, apparently prevalent in certain models of cars produced around 2003 due to poor steel in the exhaust. There was also a problem identified by an Environmental Health Officer, who rang to ask the safety implications of discovering 30+ppm CO in the basement of a shisha pipe café where the charcoal was being preheated in a garden chimenea with a blower attached.

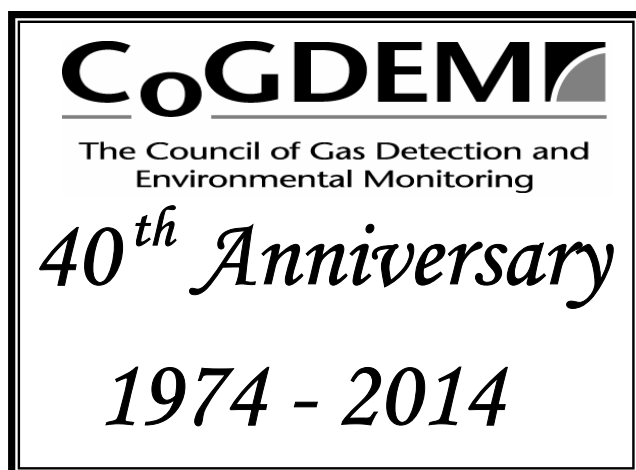
Callers with domestic CO alarm activations often wonder why an alarm may activate an hour or so after a heating appliance has finished being used, so there is often an explanation required about the way that time-weighted alarms work.

d) Sector Forum Gas

Jonathan Kane asked if anyone had access to Sector Forum Gas documents related to the work of the UK gas appliance committee GSE/30/4. Graham McKay offered to assist him.

e) CoGDEM's 40th Anniversary

As 2014 sees the 40th anniversary of CoGDEM's formation, all attending members received a commemorative gift, generously supplied by Dr Mike Byrne and Colin Mitchell of Ei Electronics. This was a 10-year life domestic CO alarm which will last up to CoGDEM's 50th anniversary in 2024, laser etched with the CoGDEM logo below. Members thanked Ei with a round of applause. Uncollected alarms will be available at our October meeting.



We are still encouraging all members to attend the WWEM 2014 Gala Dinner on 5th November 2014 in Telford. Members of the CO subgroup might be interested to tour the exhibition in the afternoon to see the types of equipment and technology offered by their colleagues from the Industrial Sub Group.

9 Date of next CoGDEM meeting – Tues 14 Oct 2014