

Minutes of Meeting

Document No CO-1447-15

Subject	CO Sub Group	Circulation	All members
Date	16 th June 2015	Circulation Date	13 th July 2015
Location	CoGDEM offices Hitchin	Circulation by	Website & email

Attendees

Leigh Greenham - CoGDEM
Mike Byrne - Ei Electronics
Colin Mitchell - Ei Electronics
Louise Early - Crowcon
Tony Banfield - EXL/31/1 Chairman
Adrian Keats - Honeywell Analytics
Colin Hydes - Honeywell Analytics
Jane Howitt - Honeywell Analytics
Damian Cairns - Anton
Ian Ballinger - Sprue Safety
Jonathan Gilby - City Technology
John Darby - City Technology
Graham McKay - BSI Global
Jason Perrins - FireBlitz
Brendan Simpson - FireBlitz
Kevin Mileson - GES
Peter Philpott - TPI
Kevin Honner - Draeger
Billy Mitchell - Smart Compliance
Neil Perdell - Aico
Paul Walton - Shawcity
Freddie Collins - Kidde Safety
John Saffell - Alphasense

Apologies

Jonathan Kane - Kane International
John Sonley - JMS Consultants
Jeff Regan - JMS Consultants
Neil Gwinnutt - A1-CBISS
Terry Brown - SGX Sensortech
Mike Murley - Testo
Martyn Walley - Aico
Peter Walsh - HSL/HSE
Mike Hemingway - HSL/HSE
Andy Burnett - Kidde Safety
Andy Avenell - Crowcon
Andrew Keenan - CSA Group (Sira)
Roger Davies - DD Scientific
John Saffell - Alphasense
Arthur Burnley - Alphasense
Richard King - Honeywell Analytics
Dean Kavanagh - Geotech
John Walsh - Sprue Safety
Zoe Forman - Mandeville Marketing

Agenda

- 1) Apologies and member introductions
- 2) Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
- 3) Lobbying activities (inc. All Party Group, GSR, CFOA, Boat Safety, Ofgem)
- 4) Publicity update, inc. CO-Be Alarmed, Public Health Wales and Europe
- 5) CO alarms standards review (inc. EN 50291-1 & -2, proposed standard for test gas)
- 6) Flue Gas Analysis (inc. BS 7967 update, anniversary of FGA usage, sampling points)
- 7) Non-compliant CO alarms testing, inc. BBC filming and Trading Standards Partnership
- 8) AOB (including LJMU project, updates from HSE, midwives, helpline)
- 9) Date of next meeting – Tues 13 Oct 2015

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1 Apologies and member introductions

The above list of apologies was displayed, and members introduced themselves around the table. Although they couldn't be present today, Sira has informed CoGDEM that they have now been re-branded as CSA Group.

2 Approval of previous minutes and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting (24th Feb 2015, CO1446-15) were read and accepted, although John Darby pointed out that he represented City Technology 'alongside' Jonathan Gilby, not 'in place of'. LG informed the meeting that the proposed GISG awards event had been shelved, the gas cooker 'problem' had been resolved, and the CMDDA1 query raised by Damian Cairns had been answered off-line. Other matters arising were to be covered during the rest of the agenda.

3 Lobbying (inc. All Party Group, GSR, CFOA, Boat Safety, Ofgem)

All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group (APPCOG):

LG gave an update on the Group's recent activities, reminding the meeting that some member companies had agreed to provide funding for the Group, so they were more involved with activities and updates than the general CoGDEM membership.

The manager of the APPCOG secretariat Haley Bowcock has left and been replaced by the promotion of Dominic Gillan, who would himself be replaced (post-meeting note: Richard Denham now in place). During the run-up to the General Election, the Group could undertake no Parliamentary activities, but both co-chairs were re-elected as MPs (Barry Sheerman and Jason McCartney) and a post-election reformation meeting has taken place.

Items of relevance to the Group are the major inquiry report produced by Baroness Finlay earlier this year, and following up the report's many recommendations. There are also meetings of the CO Helplines sub group and the Science and Technology sub group soon, both of which CoGDEM would be attending.

Updates were given from the recent Steering Group meeting which followed the first ever meeting of the new Advisory Board which aims to focus the activities of the secretariat. A key activity pushed for by CoGDEM is highlighting the shortcomings of the Private Rented Sector Review publicised by DCLG, that will make CO alarms mandatory in some rented properties from October 2015. Despite the initial publicity, this regulation will not have the impact we first thought, as it only applies to those rented properties that contain solid fuel appliances, which is thought to be only 8% of the total.

We also want to push the working group on campaigning, so that the gas suppliers and distributors can use their respective trade associations (Energy UK and ENA) to pool resources on future consumer awareness campaigns.

Gas Safe Register

GSR will be running another summer safety campaign, highlighting leisure activities that can catch people out with the incorrect use of bottled gas appliances and charcoal barbecues. They are also preparing for media coverage during this year's Gas Safety Week, which will be 14th to 20th September, and everyone is encouraged to commit to safety awareness activities during that week. We are frequently in touch with Mark Rolfe to answer queries on gas appliances and installation regs, and any reports of appliance hazards that we hear of through the helpline.

UK Fire & Rescue Services and CFOA

LG represents CoGDEM on the Chief Fire Officers Association's CO Advisory Forum, which met in March to keep Chief Fire Officers in touch with CO initiatives being undertaken by others. This was the first meeting attended by Gary Oakford of Merseyside FRS who is the new CFOA home safety committee representative. We were told that the Blue Watch scheme continues to struggle to meet its business plan, and John Walsh of Sprue had informed us that the Blue Watch branding has been replaced by the original FireAngel branding on the alarms supplied by Sprue as this was more recognised by the target audience.

CFOA may need to change shape as Government funding and control may become closely aligned with the existing framework of Police & Crime Commissioners. CFOA is keen to promote the prevention activities that the FRSs undertake, and to emphasise that a lot more can be done, as they only use 15% of their time in active work.

A separate meeting had recently taken place between CoGDEM's CO alarm manufacturers and Scotia Gas Networks' Chris Bielby, who was suggesting use of the FRS as 'fulfilment agents' in the provision of CO alarms

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when SGN's own field engineers come across an unprotected home. Ofgem has imposed strict rules against selling to consumers during emergency or inspection visits, but it is thought Ofgem may be happier if a scheme involving all the alarm manufacturers was arranged. Existing contractual supply arrangements with Blue Watch and many of the FRSs will need to be considered before a full proposal can be made to Ofgem.

Boat Safety

A funding proposal had been submitted to Gas Safe Charity by Boat Safety Scheme and CFOA to work together on promoting CO awareness amongst boaters, the decision is expected soon. Separately, BSS has approached CoGDEM for assistance with two projects related to boat safety inspectors, a CO training course, and a project to equip the inspectors with leased multi-gas detectors to assess the level of unsafe atmospheres they come across in recreational boat cabins (CO, CO₂, LPG or fuel fumes, low O₂). LG is liaising with Kevin Miles on of GES on these projects, and BSS will approach the Gas Safety Trust for funding for the research part of the project.

Ofgem

The four gas distribution companies, regulated by Ofgem, are encouraged to take initiatives that improve consumer safety and reduce fuel poverty. Under their new supply agreements, they can apply for certain reimbursements as part of the Discretionary Reward Scheme. An independent judging panel has been formed for the 2015 DRS awards, and LG has been asked to be part of the panel which will interview the applicants before it make its decisions in July.

4 Publicity update, inc. CO-Be Alarmed, Public Health Wales and Europe

The shape of this coming winter's '**CO-Be Alarmed**' campaign is yet to be determined, but it may be merged with a larger campaign between Energy UK and ENA, as mentioned above.

Public Health Wales – CoGDEM continues to support and attend their regular meetings in Cardiff: Zoe took part in a teleconference call in April, and she has reported back to her publicity sub group. A recent query from the Welsh group concerned advice about combined smoke/CO alarms.

Europe – As Zoe couldn't be present today, LG gave an update on the new European project. For some years, Honeywell had used an organisation called ADS Insight to promote CO issues within the European Parliament, but some activities could not be achieved by a single commercial company being the only sponsor. However, CoGDEM has been able to support a much wider range of activities and lobbying. The focus in the first half of this year has been the amendments to the Gas Appliance Regulations, and there has been much support from MEPs for carbon monoxide to feature in those Regulations. Jonathan Kane has been able to represent CoGDEM at perhaps a dozen meetings in Brussels arranged by ADS with various European nations' representatives, and even the UK Government has become supportive despite its earlier resistance to change.

Colin Mitchell of Ei spoke enthusiastically about the great outcomes that the project is already achieving in its first year, and asked if other FGA manufacturers would get involved, as the changes to GAR could impact them more than the alarm manufacturers. Anton and TPI expressed interest in talking to Zoe about possible involvement.

The recent Corfu inquest decision and the media interest in the Thomas Cook reaction has helped the European discussions. CoGDEM and ADS put out a press release in Brussels that pointed out that the child victims could have come from any European nation and the incident could have taken place in any of the European holiday destination countries where there is no gas appliance inspection regime and no regulatory framework or competence assessments or registration for gas engineers (such as GSR in the UK).

ITV 'Loose Women' opportunity – the Corfu incident was also to be picked up by the lunchtime TV programme, with Chris Bielby as their go-to expert on CO, so he had asked if CoGDEM's alarm manufacturers would donate a total of 1000 CO alarms to be given away as prizes, which was agreed. ITV would show logos and promote the need for alarms quite heavily. A subsequent request for a further 200 alarms to be given to the studio audience was also agreed. Post-meeting note: the show aired on 30 June and 1 July and gave the alarms good coverage. Some 56,000 people applied for one of the free alarms.

5 CO alarms Standards review (including EN 50291-1 & -2, proposed standard for test gas)

EN 50291-1 – Tony Banfield and Mike Byrne updated the meeting. It is still hoped that the new version of the standard might appear before year-end, although any delay in translation of the final draft might scupper that. Mike said that a meeting in March had completed the final draft including the relevant changes from the 180 comments which had been reviewed and acted on during a meeting in January.

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As we were told at our previous meeting, this updated version of the EN 50291-1 would not include the necessary Annex to allow it to be used as a harmonised standard under the Construction Products Regulations, this will have to wait until a later edition can be reviewed by the yet-to-be appointed EC Consultant. Post meeting note: the European committee has agreed a further extension to the publication date of the updated version in the hope that this will allow the Annex to be created and agreed prior to publication.

There has been no progress with the project to update EN 50291-2 to include EMC tests that would be more suited to boat use. Spain had the concerns, so is the convenor of the WG, but Richard King has agreed to look at other aspects of -2 that may also need updating so as to align it with -1.

New standard for combined smoke/CO alarms – Jason Perrins confirmed that there has been no action to form a Working Group by the two relevant CENELEC committees TC216 (gas detectors) and TC72 (smoke detectors). Perhaps this work is not so urgent now that BSI has found a route to use the 2012 amendment to get battery-powered alarms Kitemarked. However, it is guidance for users of combined alarms that needs to be made consistent, so perhaps section 7.3 of the guidance standard BS EN 50292 needs to be expanded from its current form:

7.3 Some CO alarms may have additional detection capability, for example combined CO and smoke alarms for warning of toxic and fire hazards respectively. It is particularly important that the manufacturer's instructions on siting should be followed as the optimum location for smoke detection may not be the same as for CO detection.

Proposed new PAS standard for CO gas testing kits – LG informed the meeting that he had been contacted by BSI after John Stones of Detectagas/Gas Safe Europe Ltd approached them about creating a standard for CO test gas kits. BSI explained that this would not be a BS, it would be a PAS (Publicly Available Specification), which is defined on the BSI website as follows:

The PAS provides a sponsored route to standardization, created to serve a market need. Potentially, any organization can commission a PAS. A PAS can provide product specifications, codes of practice, guidelines and vocabularies or be used as an assessment benchmark. It offers a quicker route to standardization, typically taking just nine months from launch to publication.

Despite the commercial sponsorship of the PAS (likely to cost John Stones £35k), the full rigour of normal standards-writing would be applied. I suggested to BSI that if they decided to go ahead with the project, the Working Group should consist of experts from all relevant sides of the industry, including CoGDEM and its CO alarm manufacturing members, large CO alarm user organisations (such as British Gas), Gas Safe Register, the British Compressed Gas Association, HSE and possibly others. BSI pointed out that if it went ahead, the PAS would just cover the kit itself, and not whether it should be used or recommended. BSI will conduct more research with affected parties; they are aware of what we consider to be some of the technical deficiencies of the Detectagas product as it is currently supplied.

6 Flue Gas Analysis

Standards: The new version of **BS 7967** is now published, covering the previous Parts 1 – 4, but Part 5 will continue to exist as a separate document.

The proposal to widen the scope of **TS 50612** (European guidance on the use of FGAs) from gas boilers to most gas appliances has been accepted and an updated draft was circulated to relevant CoGDEM members in mid-March with a two-month period for comments; none were received.

Anniversary of boiler commissioning FGA requirement

Members had placed a couple of articles in relevant trade press about the first anniversary of compulsory FGA usage during boiler commissioning, including a reminder of the need for annual calibration/service of the FGA. CoGDEM worked with HHIC to compile an article on the subject for them to publicise amongst their members and trade press. CoGDEM's website now contains the text from our recently created statement on calibration and competence.

Boiler probe test caps

LG had gone back to HHIC to inform them that some FGAs already display reminder messages to replace the cap on the boiler's flue test point. We have recently heard that an innovative flap valve test point is being developed and offered to the boiler manufacturers via the HHIC.

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7 Non-compliant CO alarms testing inc. BBC filming and Trading Standards Partnership

Market surveillance of CO alarms – We have not received any further feedback after the release of the PROSAFE test results after the project conducted at BSI. The PROSAFE text was less than helpful with its comments about the Construction Products Regulations not being the right 'home' for EN 50291.

BBC Fake Britain - Peter Philpott of TPI had brought to the previous meeting an unbranded non-compliant CO alarm that a TPI employee had purchased via the internet, this being the circular unit with the blue backlit LCD that we have tested several times before. The same alarm (plus one other non-compliant type) had been purchased online by researchers for the BBC Fake Britain series of consumer programmes, and taken to BSI's Loughborough labs for testing. Although both alarms had a basic level of performance, they failed the 5000 ppm test, their long-term reliability was likely to be poor, their instructions and packing box labelling were extremely shoddy and contained potentially dangerously misleading information. Graham McKay of BSI told us that he was interviewed as part of the filming at Loughborough and was able to make points about the reliability of truly compliant CO alarms. Date of broadcast not known as yet.

Primary Authority Partnership between CoGDEM & Trading Standards - At our February CO Sub Group meeting, Andy Burnett of Kidde Safety had introduced the concept of Primary Authority Partnership schemes that can be established between Trading Standards and commercial organisations, especially trade associations such as CoGDEM. LG has been in contact with the relevant Government department who had given him useful contacts, and two meetings have been held with Oxfordshire TS and one with Milton Keynes TS.

Either of these two TS departments would be good partners for CoGDEM, but it was felt that Oxfordshire had the edge due to a close link with their local Fire & Rescue Service, so it would be easier to establish expertise within the Partnership on CO and other gas detection products. They are also geographically close to LG, which will be helpful for training and other meetings.

Once established, we can use the Partnership to deal with relevant issues that any CoGDEM member company has which need the input of a Trading Standards department. The partnership is likely to cost CoGDEM around £500 per annum depending on the number of hours spent by the TS, but various pricing arrangements can be considered without us having to make a long-term commitment at this stage.

New potentially non-compliant CO alarm – Brendan Simpson and Jason Perrins of FireBlitz told us of a new CO alarm being offered by City Electrical Factors (CEF) Dublin branch. This rectangular unit with three-digit LCD is apparently supplied by AVSL Group, branded as the Mercury COD100B and stating full compliance with BS EN 50291-1:2010. FireBlitz will get a sample for testing before we investigate further.

8 AOB (including LJMU project, updates from HSE, midwives, helpline)

a) Liverpool John Moores University Project

We had asked Dr Andy Shaw of LJMU for an update, but none has been received, so the previous update is repeated below:

"We have just been granted an extension to the project from GST with further funding that will take us to April 2016. With this funding we are in talks with 2 further FRS to bring them on board and generate more data for us (West Yorkshire and Humberside FRS). So far each of the FRS are generating data but not all of them have the resources to upload the files so I'm using the new fund to issue each of them with tablet/laptops that can be dedicated to the project and upload the files from the lascar loggers.

The funding has also secured a secondment of a Fire Officer to liaise directly with each FRS to better help with the lines of communication to each of the FRS that are involved. I have also piloted placing data loggers in houses with occupants who smoke indoors to get a baseline CO level for smoking and the results are really interesting but a more scientific study needs to be conducted before we can announce the results.

I now have a PhD student started (academic staff from nursing background) who is looking into the lived experience of acute poisoning from CO. I may need more loggers & alarms when the new FRS come on board."

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b) HSE

Neither Peter Walsh nor Mike Hemingway could attend today, but Mike kindly sent the following notes:

- *The project that HSL is conducting for IGEM/Gas Safety Trust. There is the potential of increased health risks from carbon monoxide in modern dwellings because of increased use of flueless gas appliances and lower ventilation rates. Testing is due to restart this month after the delay from IGEM about uncertainties in the scope of appliance types to be tested.*
- *The work on the safe storage of wood pellet and wood chip fuel and carbon monoxide generation has now finished. A HSE report is due for publication.*
- *Although Pete Walsh is retiring this month he will remain working for HSL effectively as a consultant primarily so that he can attempt to finish his standards work. I've not yet had an update from him but suspect you probably know more than I do about his current standards work.*

c) GASG

The next meeting of the Gas Analysis and Sensing Group was being organised by John Saffell and will focus on materials for gas sensors, to be held at Cambridge University on Thursday 2nd July. This year will see a transition from GASG's current chairman Prof Joe Watson of Swansea University to Dr Jane Hodgkinson of Cranfield University.

d) IGEM

In each of the last two years, IGEM has organised dedicated conferences on the subject of CO, although some delegates found that last year's did not contain much new material. This year they have broadened their conference's scope to downstream gas utilisation, which will of course include CO. It is to be held on 21st Oct 2015 at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham, and LG has been asked to speak on behalf of CoGDEM.

e) Midwives project

LG had attended a meeting of various parties looking into the effects of CO inhalation by pregnant women. Although the project was primarily started to convince pregnant women to cease smoking, the breath monitors occasionally gave positive reading from non-smokers due to ambient CO in their homes. This has led to a proposal to inform midwives more about the causes of CO, the availability of CO alarms (some with low concentration displays), and the need for appliance servicing. It was said that of the 650k pregnancies annually in the UK, 12% of the pregnant women will continue to smoke. It is thought that 1 in 3 of the sudden unexpected deaths of young children (including 'cot deaths') occur where the mother smoked during pregnancy. An application for Gas Safety Trust funding will be made.

f) CoGDEM's CO Helpline

LG highlighted some of the more unusual calls received in the last few months, including a CO alarm activation due to a new gas fire which uses a baffle plate to reduce the flow of the hot products of combustion into the chimney until as much heat as possible has been extracted into the room. The plate had been fitted into a chimney with a restricted diameter, and CO had spilled into the room. BSI helped to resolve the problem with the manufacturer after CoGDEM pointed out the opportunity for this to happen again.

A paramedic rang while attending a 90-year old man after he had left his gas hob on without lighting the flame. Although he had no symptoms, his GP had been contacted by a family member, and the GP arranged for a blue-light paramedic due to the likelihood of CO poisoning. Fortunately the paramedic was more aware of the difference between burnt and unburnt gas leaks, but was diligent enough to check her knowledge with us.

g) Smart Compliance

Billy Mitchell of Smart Compliance informed the meeting that they had received innovation awards for their communicating CO alarm system, from UK Energy and Housing Innovation.

9 Dates of next CoGDEM meeting – Tues 13 October 2015