

Dear Joanna Whittington

Michael Knowles has very kindly allowed us to make a late response. I do apologise for missing the deadline but we are very busy and I do most of the work and it can be overwhelming.

I am most grateful to Michael and Angela Rourke for drawing our attention to the relevant parts and to explaining what is intended in order to allow us to make a response.

The paras we have had drawn to our attention are: -
3.40, 3.71 and 7.15-7.24.

There is to be an incentive scheme. Gas Distribution companies can undertake work, for example to raise awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) and in this case may be allowed to receive an award, which will be recovered from the consumers who have benefited.

A panel will decide which company or companies is or are to receive the reward/s. We do ask who would be on this panel and who would make sure it is impartial and free of business interests?

3.40 We approve very much of this. The HSC recommended that the gas emergency service carry and use equipment to test appliances for CO in 2000. This was never implemented.

We are grateful that this is being considered at last. However, we have recently learned that there are many other products of combustion which can cause physical and neurological damage and should be tested for so we ask you to consider adding a requirement that these be tested too. There is also the protocol to be worked out. For example, will every appliance be tested on every visit? If not what are the terms on which tests will be undertaken? How can an invisible odourless deadly gas that cannot be sensed using human senses be ruled out as not being present to be tested, unless it is tested?

What will the consumer/victim be told if high levels of CO or other products of combustion are found either being emitted or being emitted into the domestic living space?

Will monitors be left where there is some evidence or risk of CO from another property, (e.g. next door through a joint chimney or from a flat above or below)? If so, there needs to be a protocol drawn up for this. Will the monitors only test for CO? If so could the consumer please be made aware of this and the fact that the monitors will not test for other products of combustion?

We support the gas distribution networks being paid/compensated to undertake this work.

3.71 We have been told that the money for any reward is to be £4 million a year and will be awarded with regard to three aspects: -

1. Gas Safety
2. Environment impact.
3. Facilitating network extension.

In our opinion £4 million is not nearly enough.

Also, we consider that Gas Safety is by far the most important of these three and should have the most funding. A mere £1 per household per year would yield at least £22 million. The Health and Safety Commission recommended a levy on the gas suppliers (we would prefer the whole industry) to raise awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning in 2000 but this was never implemented.

Please note that where the Gas Distribution Company receives a reward it will be allowed to charge its consumers more so the companies will recover whatever they spend.

7.24 This discusses whether the three aspects are to have the sums fixed from the outset or not. We consider that the sums should be fixed from the outset and the majority should be on gas safety awareness.

Panel

Drawing an analogy from the panel set up to decide incentives with regard to electricity, (kindly explained to me by Angela Rourke) we consider that the electricity panel lacked a representative for victims and their families and this should be remedied with regard to gas from the outset. As time is so pressing I am sending this response to you now.

If any of our directors or board of reference or other interested parties wishes to comment on this response, please do contact me as soon as possible.

Thank you again for very kindly receiving this late response.

Yours Sincerely

Stephanie Trotter
Stephanie Trotter, OBE, (Mrs.)
President & Director
CO-Gas Safety
www.co-gassafety.co.uk
Tel. 01372 466135/466112