



Technical Standards and Safety Authority

Minutes of the Natural Gas Advisory Council

Meeting on February 22, 2018

Minutes of the Natural Gas Advisory Council meeting of the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) held in the Ontario Boardroom, 345 Carlingview Drive. Toronto, Ontario at 9:00 a.m. on the 22nd day of February 2018.

Present: Martin Luymes (Chair), Heating Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada (HRAI); Jon Dalton, Canadian Standards Association; Rick Delaney, Link-Line; Michelle George, Enbridge; Paul Goddard, Enercare Home Services; Dave Oswald, Kitchener Utilities; Alan Reitzel, Reitzel Heating & Sheet Metal Ltd; Mike Shannon, Union Gas Limited.

By Skype:
David Hammond, Hot Water Inc.; Martin Rego, Reliance Limited Partnership.

David Scriven, Acting President and CEO; Peter Wong, Vice President, Operations; Georgina Kossivas, Chief Financial Officer; John Marshall, Director, Fuels Safety Program; Zenon Fraczkowski, Engineering Manager, Fuels Safety Program; Robert Wiersma, Manager, Public Safety Risk Management; Steve Robinson, Manager, Communications and Advocacy; Denis Caza, Public Safety Risk Analyst; James Ban, Policy Advisor, Stakeholder Relations; Jessica Myrie, Safety Awards Committee; Consuelo Esquivel, Council Coordinator, Corporate Secretariat.

Guests: Sarah Jeffrey-Hampton, Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (by Skype); Elaina MacIntyre, Public Health Ontario.

Regrets: Dave McPherson, Rheem Canada; Elizabeth Nielsen, Consumers Advisory Council; Marek Kulik, Fuels Safety Program.

1. Welcome and Constitution of Meeting

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone including those participating through Skype, and guest, Elaina MacIntyre from Public Health Ontario. Mike Shannon and Jon Dalton will be leaving Council. The Chair thanked them for their dedicated service, particularly Mike who had chaired the Council for a couple of years.

He asked Council to affirm new Council members, Dave Oswald, Ian Ross, and Andy Vella. Council accepted the motion.

For the Safety Moment, in response to safety hazards identified by the Fuels program, two films were presented on the dangers of grease fires in the kitchen. TSSA is working with the restaurants association to promote the safety measures.

J. Myrie spoke about the upcoming Safety Awards, and directed information and nomination forms available on the website. She urged Council to nominate individuals from the Natural Gas industry.

2. Adoption of February 22, 2018 agenda

Council approved the agenda for the February 22, 2018 meeting.

3. Adoption of the minutes of September 14, 2017

Council approved the minutes of the September 14, 2017 meeting as presented.

4. Review Action Items from the last meeting



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J. Marshall referred to the pending action item on analysis of Carbon Monoxide data which will be discussed under item 8.

5. TSSA President & CEO's report

As part of the advanced materials for this meeting, members received the President and CEO's report regarding TSSA's key activities over the last quarter, which was treated as read.

D. Scriven provided updates to the report.

- Bonnie Rose has been appointed President and CEO beginning April 4, 2018. He gave a brief background on her experience.
- The Auditor General of Ontario has commenced a Value for Money audit of TSSA beginning January 2018. He stressed that this is not a financial audit, but rather an audit focused on economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of TSSA's operations.
- The Ministry of Government and Consumers Services (MGCS) released the findings of the Elevator Availability Study together with an Action Plan. The study is a response to a private member's bill and Cabinet direction to address elevator availability challenges in Ontario.
- The new Boilers and Pressure Vessels regulation obtained Cabinet approval in November 2017 and will come into force on July 1, 2018. In summary, the new regulation will provide broader oversight of insurers' work in the sector, compliance gaps (certificates of inspections (COI) have not been issued historically), and oversight of the attestation implementation process on records of inspection. TSSA will be moving from paper-based reports to a portal system which will allow owners to request and pay for a COI online.

6. FY 19 Fee Review

G. Kossivas, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), spoke to the item with her presentation slides distributed to Council in advance of the meeting. Fees of all programs will be reviewed in FY19, with a targeted implementation date of May 1, 2019. Fee reviews have already been completed in recognition of regulatory changes to the Boilers and Pressure Vessels and the Upholstered and Stuffed Articles (pending Cabinet approval). Prior to that, the review will entail consultation with various stakeholders, approval by the Board, and submission of a business case to the MGCS.

The CFO responded to questions, including the deficit in the fuels program, use of risk-based methodology for periodic inspection cycles and its impact on fees, and proposed fee review timeline.

7. Priority Issue: Carbon Monoxide

a) Update on Strategy

D. Scriven spoke to the item with presentation slides which were shared with Council beforehand. Carbon Monoxide risks (both in apartments and condominiums, and in private dwellings) continue to be a top priority focus of TSSA. TSSA is tackling the CO issue in partnership with various government and non-governmental stakeholders. An update of FY18 accomplishments will be provided at the next NGAC meeting.

J. Marshall stated that the risk of CO for apartments and condominiums is about four times higher than the acceptability threshold set by TSSA with the risks of CO in private dwellings at 2.5 times higher than the threshold. Most occurrences discovered in apartments and condominiums were the results of the poorly installed and maintained boilers, water heaters, and rooftop equipment.



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The main parts of TSSA's strategy to mitigate this top safety risk is to continue the award-winning advocacy campaign (with expanded outreach across the province) to reduce the risk in private dwellings, while engaging in discrete inspection and enforcement activities to reduce the risk in apartments and condominiums. With the primary cause of incidents due to poor maintenance, the preference is to help educate on mandatory maintenance. By the fourth quarter of FY18, TSSA plans to have conducted over 100 inspections at apartments and condominiums.

The CO strategy also includes discussions with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) regarding technological solutions to reduce CO risk at source, for example sensors that can automatically shut off the heating equipment. The challenges lie in finding research dollars and engaging other regulatory bodies.

b) Framing CO as a Public Health Issue

D. Scriven noted that the success of TSSA's CO strategy is based on increasing the number of stakeholders participating. In particular, TSSA is seeking to have CO recognized as a public health issue to significantly broaden the scope of participants. To that end, he reminded Council that TSSA hosted an international conference on Carbon Monoxide in November 2016. From that conference, the International Carbon Monoxide Research Network (ICORN) was established, which has recognized CO as a public health issue at a global level. In addition, TSSA has started to work with Public Health Ontario with the same objective. The current status of that partnership is presented at this meeting under a separate agenda item.

c) Advocacy Plans

S. Robinson provided an update on advocacy plans. In FY19, the strategy is to continue with the two promotional campaigns, The Silent Killer and the CO Safety House Tour. More TSSA and Fire Department personnel will be on site during the house tour to answer questions and improve consumer experience. In addition, TSSA has obtained radio spots on Moose FM. Following these, TSSA will review the effectiveness of the mass advertising campaigns, adjust the strategy and redirect the focus on compliance.

J. Marshall noted that TSSA must recover costs of any work that we do, such as communications and advocacy. These are tied to program budgets. In the upcoming fee reviews, with fuels facing significant deficits, we must be cognizant of the efficacy of our communications initiatives.

The Chair commended the materials that have so far been developed by the Communications team.

8. Carbon Monoxide – Public Health Profile

Elaina MacIntyre, Epidemiologist Specialist at Public Health Ontario (PHO), spoke to the item with her presentation slides. She provided a comprehensive overview of her organization, PHO's approach to carbon monoxide data analysis, the PHO-TSSA blueprint of collaboration, and graphs of health outcomes. PHO does not develop compliance policy and standards as part of its mandate. This would be for public health ministries and other stakeholders to address. She extended her appreciation to TSSA for the excellent data which was used in this report and sought continued collaboration with TSSA for more public health insights.

There were several questions which E. MacIntyre addressed. They related to emergency and ambulatory care statistics, weather factors, root causes, geographical areas, profiles of CO victims (including breakdown by income), population rates, and timing of incidents. Discussion fed into possible solutions from the Council such as data collection on CO detector ownership, amending inspection forms to include useful data points, preventative measures, and improving data collection beyond immediate health-related emergencies to chronic long-term effects.



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9. Priority Issue – Contractor Partnerships

J. Marshall shared with Council an information item about Contractor Partnerships. There appears to be a conundrum arising from the recently passed Bill 59 (Putting Consumers First Act). Bill 59 seeks to ban unsolicited, door-to-door sales of certain household energy appliances like water heaters and to put restrictions on the scope of work that a heating or cooling contractor could perform during visits. The Bill has caused some confusion about requirements under the Regulation and what Bill 59 limits.

Under Regulation 212/01, certificate holders are to report hazardous or unacceptable conditions during inspection. While certificate holders are expected to inspect the equipment in the immediate vicinity on site, Bill 59 restricts contractors from reporting other observations deemed hazardous. For example, a heating contractor on site to provide service on a water heater may notice that the ventilation for the furnace is not in accordance with the code. While he/she would have a responsibility to act on this non-compliance, the contractor will be limited by the new law to focus attention on the water heater.

The Chair commented on the potential for conflict. S. Jeffrey-Hampton said that Bill 59 falls under a different unit of the government, and as such she is unable to comment on it unless it pertains to the MGCS Technical Safety Unit's oversight. She suggested that Council and TSSA assist her in seeking clarity on Bill 59 on this concern with the relevant consumer protection leads on the issue.

Action: Council to seek clarification regarding Bill 59 through MGCS.

10. Future Emerging Trends

The Chair introduced the topic of climate change as an emerging trend. According to the Chair, there is an effort within the federal government to encourage the use of electric heat pumps in place of gas-powered heating options with an ambitious timeline of eliminating all fuel-burning appliances by 2050 in buildings and homes. Such changes can have a tremendous impact on TSSA and the industry members alike. For instance, should gas-powered equipment become obsolete, will TSSA and the industry shift the focus to regulating district heating plants, heat pumps installations and refrigerants? A member commented that this item may be a good idea to keep on the Council's radar as there is a strong interest between the safety regulator and the industry members of the council. Another member said that it deserves a more fulsome, structured discussion in the future.

It was decided to keep the subject as a standing item on the agenda.

Action: Include climate change trends as a standing item.

11. Safety and Compliance Report

D. Caza spoke to the presentation slides which were shared with Council in advance of the meeting. He spoke to a slightly revised version of slides, which was subsequently shared with Council.

D. Caza responded to questions, including clarification of the description of the priority risks, which include the primary causal factors.

12. Incidents/Issues Report

J. Marshall reported that there were seven incidents (3 explosions, 3 Carbon Monoxide releases, and 1 fire) from September 2017 to date. These were caused by poor user behavior.

The Statutory Director provided information, where available, on the cause. Council had no questions.



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13. Contractor Audit Process update

J. Marshall said that initially there was some industry resistance to certain elements of the new contractor audit process. As a result, TSSA now gives contractors two options when selected for an audit: the more streamlined process whereby the client provides administrative-related information (e.g. confirming the licensing status of certified staff) ahead of time; or the prior approach in which the administrative-related review is conducted on site during the audit.

The Chair offered, on behalf of HRAI, to disseminate communications to contractors.

14. Ministry of Government and Consumers Service (MGCS) updates

S. Jeffrey-Hampton spoke to the item, referring to the Bi-Annual Report to TSSA Industry Advisory Councils, which was distributed to Council in advance of the meeting and treated as read, and provided an update on matters not referenced in the report.

The MGCS, like TSSA, will be working with the Auditor General's Office as part of the value-for-money audit. The scope of work will be known in the latter calendar year 2018. The MGCS has already been requested to provide documents.

15. RRG and FS Engineering updates

Z. Fraczkowski spoke to the item, updating Council of the recent Propane RRG meeting scheduled on February 15, 2018. He discussed that there is a strong overlap in issues between the natural gas and the propane industries surrounding the issue of smart meters as a source of ignition, and the introduction of mandatory update training for Natural Gas and Propane certificate holders.

He reported that the new Oil & Gas Pipelines Code Adoption Document has been adopted. There have been no major issues associated with its adoption.

When asked about the frequency of RRG meetings, Z. Fraczkowski said RRGs meet once a year.

16. Questions and Answers/Other business

J. Marshall called Council's attention to an inspection initiative that sought to collect safety data on non-compliances at car wash locations. In early 2017, TSSA carried out inspections at 11 car washes, none of which passed inspection. In September, TSSA inspected 39 additional locations. More than 409 orders were written by TSSA's fuel inspectors. Only two facilities passed on a first inspection. The top non-compliance noted was the failure to protect piping and tubing followed by deficiency in the vent and chimney support.

S. Jeffrey-Hampton asked what prompted TSSA's interest in problems at car washes. J. Marshall stated that he was acting based on a safety gap that he was made aware of in the winter of 2016-2017.

17. Adjournment

There was no *in camera* session. Council adjourned at 12:00 noon.