



BCGA 2018 review

At the forefront of best safety practice

The BCGA Annual Conference 2018 drew to a close in Leeds, UK, having provided attendees with a wide-ranging and very interesting speaker programme that explored the latest developments and current issues facing the industry.

Oulton Hall in West Yorkshire was the venue for another impressive gathering of the BCGA (British Compressed Gases Association), with around 140 delegates understood to be in attendance at this year's conference.

The event is the association's opportunity to once again promote safety in the use, transportation and handling of gases across a plethora of applications. In the words of BCGA Chief Executive Doug Thornton, "The whole purpose of [the] BCGA is to encourage safety in the handling, use, transportation and storage of industrial, medical and food gases, which we do, not only through the guidance documents we write and our website content, but also by proactively engaging with and hopefully influencing everyone involved with gases, including our regulatory authorities."

President-Elect Tim Hulbert echoed this in his opening address, commenting, "The BCGA truly represents our industry, and it's our industry in the full sense of the word. It's the full supply chain, the diversity of all the companies that come together to enable our industry to safely

offer the products, the services and the expertise that the UK plc depends upon."

He continued, "In our day-to-day lives, we're each other's suppliers, customers, even competitors, but when we meet as the BCGA and we walk through that door, we leave our company affiliations behind and we come together to make sure that we stay at the forefront of best safety practice."

Broad and deep agenda

From there, the day's progressive agenda began to unfold, beginning with a Technical Committee (TC) report from BCGA Technical Manager, Jake Lake.

This section provided an overview of the key changes from the various technical and sub-technical committees and their important achievements made over the last 12 months. The BCGA has been involved in a number of significant projects this year, including continuing the promotion of its 'Invisible Industry' campaign which aims to make the public aware of the positive work carried out by the gases industry and highlight how industrial, medical and food gases are essential to the existence and wellbeing of thousands of people every day.

To this end, it's estimated that, to-date, BCGA articles have been reproduced in around 200 trade magazines and websites.

Ian Davies, Managing Director for The Industrial Gas Projects House,

then took to the stage to get the day's progressive agenda topics underway and discussed biomethane – production, applications and incentives for producers and users. With an ever-growing demand for environmentally friendly, alternative energy, Davies' presentation explored the viability of biomethane as one of these potential sources. He provided an interesting statistic, "The UK produces more than 62 million tonnes of manure per year which is about 40 KW hours per tonne. Forecast electricity generation from this source from 2020, is somewhere between 3,000 and 5,000 GW."

Sport physical therapist for ProCare, Pat Viroux, then stepped up to explain how wholebody cryotherapy (WBC) – which utilises cryogenic liquid nitrogen – is an effective and safe treatment method. He explained, "Wholebody cryotherapy is a non-invasive therapy consisting of short bursts of extreme cold to the outer surface of the body to stimulate physiological reactions."

WBC is now entering the beauty, medical, and sports and fitness markets and is being used for faster athletic recovery; reduction of pain and inflammation; beauty and anti-ageing; decreased stress; libido boost; full body detox and accelerated metabolic rate for weight loss – among many other uses.

Up next, was Philip Lapczuk, Product Specialist for the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency, presenting current enforcement activities, common prohibitions, and latest figures for the current year. He said, "A quarter of the vehicles out on the roads (23.52%) that carry dangerous goods, have some form of prohibition." The top 5 offences include:

- None or inadequate fire extinguishers
- No instructions in writing
- Load in scope, no markings
- Fire extinguishers not readily available

Lapczuk continued, "85% of prohibitions are driver related and all of these are preventable. With the right systems and procedures in place, there won't be any problems. If a driver does a proper walk round check, to check his

extinguishers, to check his equipment, to make sure he's got the proper documentation, then there shouldn't be a problem."

"What can we do together? Firstly, it is important that drivers are correctly trained and that employers know their responsibilities. What can we do? Next week, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency is launching 'Road Recognition'. This is where, as part of the audit process, the agency makes sure that when the drivers are going out, that the operators have systems in place ensuring that they have all the equipment there. If there's any problems this can then be reported."

It was then over to Simon Medhurst, Consultant for Source Testing Association, who gave an overview of stack-emission monitoring and the need for reliable data. He explained the reasons for performing stack-emission monitoring, the applicable legislation, regulations and standards, and practical issues such as typical equipment, working environments and the use of compressed gases in the field.

Transport and alternative fuels

TSC4 Chairman Darren Pick, Praxair Gases UK Ltd, discussed planes, trains and trucks. TSC4 is responsible for all matters relating to transport where it involves the carriage of gases. This includes the design of vehicles, their operation, and all matters relating to transport legislation.

Pick stated, "We aim to promote and establish common best practice on all matters relating to transport among our member companies, and the gases industry in general."

"It's a very difficult and risky work environment. 90% of the accidents reported last year involved transport. Most of us have driven on those roads to be here today. You can see the challenges it poses with much of our infrastructure going into B roads and A roads that are running beyond their designed capacity."

He continued, "It's very important that we consider the design of the vehicles, the training of the people that operate this piece of equipment and how we approach that in the day-to-day transportation of those cash products."

This dovetailed neatly with a presentation from Steve Corner, BOC-Linde and member of TSC6, the committee responsible for all matters related to hydrogen and other alternative gaseous fuels. Corner explained that TSC6 is in the process of developing a new document on the safe and responsible use of gases and help to counter many of the concerns the industry has about those who misuse and abuse gases.

David Hurren, BCGA Chairman of TSC9 and CEO of Air Liquide's Advanced Business and Technology UK business, then returned the focus to biomethane and gas-to-grid projects, providing an overview of the work activities within TSC9 that are expanding on the building blocks established through the BCGA in encouraging the transition to gaseous fuels in a safe and sustainable way to power all our future's.

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Brexit and beer gas

Matt Hinde, Director of Energy for FleishmannHillard Brussels, turned the focus to Brexit, asking the question what does it look like from the EU perspective?

This discussion took place approximately 12 months after the triggering of Article 50 by the British government and examined the latest situation, and how this will impact on the industrial gases sector in the future. In particular, the session covered how the rest of the EU views the situation, and the potential implications for the industrial gases sector across the EU.

From Brexit to beer gas, and with a number of serious incidents involving gas cylinders in the hospitality industry in recent years, it was important that Amanda Cockton – Senior Inspector for HSE – gave some attention to the typical problems encountered by the industry and how compliance could be improved.

She said, "It's so important that cylinders have clear identification markings. The concern isn't theft, it's how the cylinders are treated after they've left their owner."

Vision of the future

Delegates reconvened after lunch to hear Toyota's Fleet Marketing Manager, Jon Hunt, give an overview from the car manufacturer's perspective of the growing use of hydrogen in the automotive sector and beyond.

Hunt covered how the company sees technology, regulatory and market developments to date and over the coming years, as well as reflecting on the importance of government strategy and support, both for vehicles and filling infrastructure. An example of the Toyota Mirai FCEV car was also present at the conference for delegates to view.

Finally, media medic and GP Dr. Pixie McKenna stepped up as the finale speaker for the 2018 conference. Best known as the presenter of Channel 4's primetime, BAFTA-winning medical series *Embarrassing Bodies*, Pixie has seen every condition imaginable...and unimaginable. Pixie has become something of a UK media guru of ailments and conditions that are somewhat outside the ordinary, and shared some of her most memorable stories as well as some practical advice for spotting symptoms and plucking up the courage to book a GP appointment.

It was then down to Hulbert to provide the President's closing remarks and officially bring the curtain down on the day's events. He said, "I have been astounded by the breadth of presentations that we've heard here today. It's been an incredible opportunity for all of us and I think we've probably all learnt at least one new thing that we didn't know before. I think we've also had a vision of the future regarding alternative fuels that are both exciting and challenging. As an industry, I think we have a lot of expertise, tools and people that will allow us to really make a difference in a lot of areas."

The BCGA confirmed that next year's event will be held on 11th April (2019) at the Marriott Hotel and Country Club at Worsley Parkin Manchester, UK. 