

Carbon Monoxide Conference  
The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London

# Gascoseeker Rollout Programme

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## Background

- As the North of England's gas distributor, with 2.5 million customers across Yorkshire, the North East and northern Cumbria, we wanted to do more to protect the region from the dangers of CO.
- Evidence shows that in the home the most common causes are faulty heating systems, gas fires and other appliances such as wall heaters and generators, with the dangers exacerbated by poor room ventilation.
- Over 4,000 people are still diagnosed with CO poisoning by A&E departments each year – and the actual number affected is believed to be much higher.
- Our solution was to place ground-breaking new technology into the hands of our engineers

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## A New Approach to CO Detection

- NGN has around 200 engineers who are first on the scene when a member of the public reports a smell of gas via the National Gas Emergency Service telephone number.
- The existing Gascoseekers were due for replacement early in the RIIO-GD1
- An opportunity to both address directly instances of CO at customers' properties and the amount and quality of data available within the industry.
- NGN commenced an innovation funded project working with GMI and GL Noble Denton to develop both a new technology with the capability to undertake CO & Oxygen detection alongside natural gas and supporting processes.



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## Trial Details

- We focused the trial on the Bradford and Pennine areas, which encompass over 450,000 customers
- Historically this area has had a higher than average number of CO reports within the NGN network.
- Trial consisted of more than 40 colleagues over a 12 month period.
- The unit trialled by NGN was the 7B-500R provided by Gas Measurement Instruments (GMI)
- Technology deployed by engineers to look for CO every time they called to a property, even if a customer had not reported a suspicion of CO being present or a CO alarm had not been triggered.



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## Results: A Life Saving Solution

The number of Public Reported Escapes (PRE's)\*

16,216

The number of properties we were called to on suspicion of CO being present\*

546

The number of additional properties checked for CO\*

445

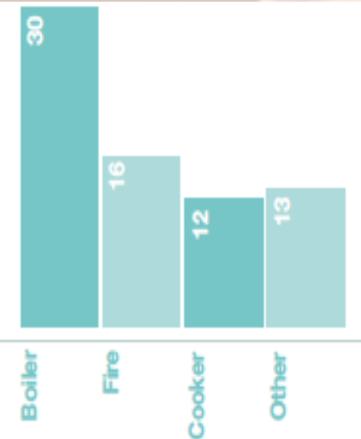
The number of properties where CO was detected\*  
(This figure includes the number of households who did not realise they were being exposed to CO)

62

The number of households who didn't realise they were being exposed to CO\*

22

Appliance types which were at fault when CO was present (multiple appliances may have been at fault)\*



\* all figures quoted were during the trial period of the new gas detection equipment 18 November 2011 – 22 November 2012

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## Results: Operational Perspective

- Our engineers welcomed the new technology, with not a single negative comment over 16,000 jobs
- The new gas detection units were judged intuitive to use, and had the advantage of a rechargeable battery – a more reliable, economical and environmentally sound alternative to the previous disposable batteries.
- The total time spent on each job rose by around 5-7 minutes, but engineers judged this to be time very well spent – given the benefits they experienced directly with customers.

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## Next Steps

- The trial has been so successful that we have committed to making the new gas detection equipment standard issue for all our engineers.
- Replacement of ~1200 Gascoseekers with this new technology
- The roll out will be complete by the end of September 2014 and will represent a £2 million investment in this technology and associated processes.
- The programme will continue to generate a valuable dataset that will inform and shape our strategy for addressing the issue of CO and will also continue to be shared across the industry and beyond.
- The journey does not stop here:

**NGN will continue to seek innovative in finding meaningful ways of addressing this issue through the use of technology, process improvements, education programmes that will help us achieve our aim of eradicating the impact of CO**

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