

29 March 2024 (by email)

**Minutes of the meeting of the Smoke Control Association
on Wednesday 27 March 2024
at the offices of FETA, Hare Hatch**

Present

David	Mowatt	Chair	IFC Certification Limited
Conor	Logan		Colt International Ltd
Phil	Kirkham		Elta-UK Limited
Chris	Yates		FETA
Simon	Sheldon		Fire Design Solutions Limited
Craig	Manley		Novenco Building & Industry UK Ltd
Nick	Gray		Powrmatic Ltd
Colin	White		Smoke Control Dampers Ltd
Anthony	Munn		Ventec 100 Ltd (TA) Vent Engineering
Simon	Plummer		Nuaire
David	Brown		Windowmaster Control Systems Ltd
Chris	O'Connor		D+H UK
Matt	Dye		Delta Ventilation t/a Delta Smoke Control
Michael	Duggan	Secretary	FETA

Attending via Zoom

Samsud	Wadi		ADCB Limited
Chris	Shepherd		Adexsi UK Ltd
Adam	Clare		Air Design Systems Ltd
Paul	Coxen		Air Pressure Solutions
Andy	Bartlett		Belimo Automation UK Ltd
Robin	Fraser		Belimo Automation UK Ltd
Christina	Kebbell		BK Fire Ltd T/A LINK Smoke Control
Barry	Corcoran		Crossflow Airconditioning Ltd
Andy	Cardy		Flakt Woods Ltd t/a Woods Air Movement
Matt	Evans		GEZE UK Ltd
Roy	Jones		Gilberts (Blackpool) Ltd
Ricky	Cook		JLA Fire & Security Limited
Alan	Zandie		Nationwide Specialist Projects Ltd
Tony	Breen		Nuaire
Lee	Carter		Nuaire
Stuart	Wheeldon	Guest	OPSS
Andrew	Mowat		Parking Ventilation Equipment Ltd
Robert	Davison		PSB (UK) Ltd
Richard	Yeadon		PSB (UK) Ltd
Jacque	Williams		SCS Aftercare Ltd
Will	Perkins		SE Controls
Lorenzo	Jones		Ventec 100 Ltd (TA) Vent Engineering
Paul	White		Ventilation Fire Smoke Limited
Andrew	Glover		WEG (U.K.) Limited
Karen	Andreassen		Windowmaster Control Systems Ltd
Granville	Harris		Fire Design Solutions Limited
Dan	Foster		Fire Design Solutions Limited
Michael	Crane		Keystone Communications Ltd
Mike	Backham		BSB Engineering Services Ltd
Rob	Davies		Adexsi UK Ltd
George	Ward		JLA Fire & Security Limited

Mathew Beavington
David Slater
Muhammed Jaffer
Arjan *No last name recorded*

BSB Engineering Services Ltd
Nomico Electrical Co. Ltd
No company name recorded
No company name recorded

1 Welcome and introducing any new members or guests

If joining remotely members were asked (in the agenda) to please ensure their name was correctly displayed as we use that for the minutes.

The **FETA Competition Law Guidelines** and the **Guidelines to FETA committee procedures** are available on <https://www.feta.co.uk/members-area/competition-law-and-committee-guidelines>. Attending the meeting will be taken as members' acknowledgement of the guidelines' existence.

2 Minutes from last meeting on 25 Jan 2024.

The minutes are prepared in accordance with the Guidelines to FETA committee procedures.

2.1 Approval for accuracy

Minutes are available to view/download at <https://www.feta.co.uk/members-area/committee-minutes>.

The minutes were approved and a copy signed.

2.2 Matters arising not on this agenda

3 SCA consultancy by Keystone / Public affairs / Promotion / Social Media / Webinars

3.1 Update from Michael Crane on his consultant's work for the SCA since October.

A report from MC was circulated by email ahead of the meeting and MC attended remotely to go through main points at the meeting.

We can have an article in Fire Safety issue and MC feels there are more we can have.

With training taking centre stage in 2024 in SCA, the decision was taken not to continue with the regular CIBSE columns which will be a saving of around £10,000 which can be spent on training.

Fire safety event coming up.

Anthony Munn volunteered to help man the stand.

Social media is going well. LinkedIn is up to over 2000 followers.

MC will set up the stand the day before and dismantle on the final day.

Anthony Munn said the maintenance guide may be ready then.

The two agreed speakers at the Fire Safety Event have now sent MD their finished presentation slides. The presentations are:

- An Introduction to Stack Effect & Wind Impacts in Relation to Natural & Mechanical Smoke Ventilation Systems - Steven Attrill
- Common Mistakes in Smoke Ventilation (blocks of flats) – Sam Wadi

As they have not done one of these “SCA branded” presentations before we told the speakers their presentation would now be reviewed/approved by the SCA Technical Enquiries Committee (TEC).

Action: MD & TEC

3.2 Approving committee to review articles/presentations.

The Marketing WG is assisting Michael Crane with reviewing articles (CL will ask the Colt Marketing person to join). The committee is working well.

4 SCA guides

4.1 Enquiries into the SCA

The Technical Enquiries Committee is in place and answering the technical enquiries we receive. We still get enquiries asking for design advice on specific projects. For those, we refer to the Members’ Directory where there is a “design” column.

The members of the technical enquiries committee are a great help to the secretary in answering the many queries we are get.

4.2 SCA WG Powered SHEVs and VSDs

Will Perkins updated members on testing at BSRIA via email to Mike Duggan

The first test of the 30kw (36kW AOM) fan and drive was completed on 13th March. Anecdotally, the equipment performed as expected with no issues.

The test date for the 5.5kW fan set is expected to be completed in the next couple of months.

Once the second test is completed and BSRIA have issued the reports to the SCA, the intention is for the WG to reconvene and start to produce an output report and agree message format to promote the work carried out by the SCA.

4.3 Smoke Control Application Guide

The WG has stalled a bit. BSI has launched a new standard BS which cover the same topics. Conor’s proposal is that we send BSI all the work that has been done so far. It was agreed to disband the WG on Smoke Control Application Guide and for Conor to offer the draft so far to the BSI technical Committee.

Action: CL

CL, ID, PW and other SCA members are on the BSI technical committee.

4.4 Service & Maintenance WG

The WG convenor, Lorenzo Jones, sent the final draft to Mike Duggan just before this meeting. It was agreed MD should circulate the draft to members for a two-week comment period, requesting comments by Monday 15 April (email sent 2024-03-24)

Action: MD

6.2 SCA Complaints procedure

We received a complaint against a member on 7 February regarding non-compliant products/systems being offered in online platforms. Using the [SCA Complaints Procedure document dated Jan 2022](#), the “Administration Officer” contacted the SCA member company and at the time of sending the agenda the “complaint” was being worked on by them with a resolution expected during early March and before the 30-day deadline (20 March) before escalation would be required.

On 19th March we received another complaint relating to level of service and that is ongoing.

7 Grenfell Tower Inquiry

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry’s monthly Newsletters are available on <https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/>. In the November newsletter it reported that “*the report will not be published before April, but the Panel hopes to be able to send it to the Prime Minister before the next anniversary of the fire with publication soon thereafter.*” There were no Grenfell Inquiry newsletters at the end of Feb or March.

7.2 OPSS and Damper Discussions

Update from David Mowatt on OPSS project with assistance from SCA. The Dept of Business & Trade is leading on this. It came out of the Grenfell Inquiry.

8 The Scottish Market

David Mowatt and Michael Crane met on 20 February to develop a plan for Scotland. Michael Crane has set articles in progress about the situation and lack of SDI 19 take up in Scotland.

9 Training

Chris O’Connor, Christina Kebbell and Morwenna Vinall can update on progress.

Meeting last week. Chris O’Connor updated work.

On Tuesday 2nd April all members will get a Survey Monkey survey which we want all members to complete. Surveys back by 10th April.

The feedback will set us on 2 potential paths. About to set up SCA training company. This will be scoped out after the feedback. This will be a level 2 qualification and will enable Skills Cards.

Conor Logan, Simon Sheldon, Paul White, Lorenzo Jones and Anthony Munn offered to review the course content.

10 Standards/Regulations

10.1 BSI/CEN reports

Will Perkins submitted the following update on standards ahead of the meeting

BSI FSH/025 Committee Update

FSH/025 meeting took place on 20th February 2024

- BS 7346-7: Components for smoke and heat control systems - Part 7: Code of practice on functional recommendations and calculation methods for smoke and heat control systems for covered car parks

New business case being prepared, to be submitted.
Committee lead [ID]

- BS 7346-8: Components for smoke control systems – Part 8: Code of practice for planning, design, installation, commissioning, use and maintenance

Comments now received, collated and submitted to BSI for review.
Committee lead [WP]

- BS 7346-9: Components for smoke and heat control systems – Part 9: Smoke control for escape routes in apartment buildings

Committee lead [NG]

The group had their first ad hoc meeting in advance of BSI appointing an editorial project manager (imminent). The meeting was very constructive whereby every member put across their thoughts on what the scope, relevant aspects needing inclusion and outcomes should be or aim for. The group agreed the standard should become the 'go-to' document for smoke control systems in residential buildings to the point that fire engineers specify in their strategies that smoke control system be designed in accordance with this standard. The group aims to essentially standardise the SCA guide and also include calculation methods as consistent with the 7346 series.

- BS 7346-10 : Specification for powered smoke and heat control ventilators (Fans) working in conjunction with Frequency converters over a range of operational speeds.

New business case submitted, awaiting approval from BSI.
Committee lead [WP]

- CEN TC191/SC1/WG2: EN12101-2

No Progress

- CEN/TC191/WG7: prEN12101-9 and EN12101-10

The working group continues to meet to develop schedules of Essential Characteristics in preparation for a standardisation request under the CPR Acquis process. It is likely to be several years before we see any standards.

- FSH/25/-/5 Smoke Fans Group

Simon Plummer is the new chair and will be approached to address the questions raised by the Smoke Control Association regarding the extract fan maintenance document.

- Revision of BS 8524 Active fire curtain barrier assemblies Part 1 and Part 2

Both parts have now undergone a final edit and all technical checks by the panel and comments arising from that check have been resolved. All drawings and modifications have been finalised. The drafts will be circulated for approval and in accordance to the BSI standards process, will then be subject to a ballot.

The Door Hardware Federation questioned whether active fire curtain barrier assemblies fall within the scope of EN 13241. No conclusion was reached.

10.2 Mechanical Smoke Shaft Performance

MD wrote to the 4 member companies of GPDA with the question on Testing of gypsum walls for use as a smoke ventilation shaft on 17 January. We have had replies from SAINT-GOBAIN and Etex Group and both David Mowatt and Colin White are meeting with Knauf on 11 March for discussion.

Update on approach to GPDA and their 4-member companies on testing of smoke ventilation shafts

The SCA wrote to the Gypsum Products Development Association (GPDA) as the SCA had become aware that gypsum walls may not be tested for use as a smoke ventilation shaft, including the two primary types of fire-resistant gypsum walls used in UK construction; symmetrical walls (e.g BG GypWall A206312) and asymmetrical shaft walls (e.g BG GypWall Shaft G306035). These are often used to construct one or more sides of a smoke shaft.

The GPDA replied asking that we contact the 4 members individually as they felt they would not wish to discuss in front of their competitors.

I wrote in January asking if the company has tested their own gypsum walls, or shaft walls, to withstand the negative pressures generated in a mechanical smoke extract shaft? Typical thresholds for mechanical smoke extract ducts in fire conditions are -150Pa, -300pa, -500pa & +500pa. Typical thresholds for mechanical smoke extract ducts at ambient temperatures are -500pa, -1000pa & -1500pa.

We received replies from Saint-Gobain Interior Solutions and Etex Building Performance Ltd. We also received an offer to meet with Knauf and that meeting took place with Mike Duggan and Colin White on 11 March 2024 with Mandeep Bansal and Neil Brewer.

The suggestion from that meeting was:

- Mandeep suggested this is a GPDA matter as all GPDA members systems will function in a similar way.
- It was felt "industry guidance" produced by SCA/GPDA was needed.
- Mandeep will mention to GPDA he had a direct meeting with the SCA
- We need to make contractors aware that these products are not tested or designed to be used in pressurised systems and should not be used.
- MD to go back to GPDA to say from our approaches to members we have found a lack of evidence to support requirements. There is an issue of systems being proposed that are not suitable and we need to work together to create industry guidance. SCA needs GPDA help to notify the relevant stakeholders not to use untested products.

In addition, on 13 March I received an email from Irek Starzyk from Crown House Technologies in Kent who raised similar concerns, and concluded saying within BESA they are considering to create a bulletin to emphasise this serious issue – and would SCA be interested to contribute?

David suggested Colin White have a discussion. CW has explained that we will get back in touch once the GPDA has developed a draft.

11.1 SCA Consultants Fund

All current SCA members have paid their subscription.

	Income	Expenditure
Balance brought forward as at 01.01.2023	-£8,458.11	
Subscriptions Income 2023	£58,286.25	
Consultants		£18,540.50
Events		£2,344.48
CIBSE		£9,904.00
Promotional		£3,510.00
Website		£542.80
IT Costs		£254.28
Other		£99.53
Totals	£58,286.25	£35,195.59
Balance as at 14.12.2023	£14,632.55	

There have been a few enquiries to join the SCA but none have yet progressed to a full application. Most of these need to do additional preparation before becoming eligible to apply.

11.2 Estimated Budget for 2024

Because of the healthy position the fund is in, the SCA decided at the October '23 meeting to leave the Consultant's fee unchanged for 2024.

If costs for the training set-up are more than the surplus for this year, FETA can "bridge" the SCA until the training company becomes self-sufficient in 2025/26.

Training providers. The survey will be asking if SCA companies would be prepared to offer their trainers. Trainers need to be qualified to level 4 to deliver level 3 training.

12 Update on OPSS progress

Stuart Wheeldon, the Operational Policy Manager at the Office for Product Safety and Standards is attending to give an update on OPSS progress and a discussion with members.

The Hackett report was the driver for OPSS becoming responsible for construction products regulations from April 2021.

OPSS have reviewed 7 businesses on smoke control dampers. They got cooperation from all seven, but they did find non-compliance in some areas of CoPs. The non-compliances were found to be non-critical in nature, but were noted nonetheless, and reported back to the 7 businesses.

They are planning a programme of testing of smoke control dampers in the coming months.

There was a request in the Q&A for contact details for reporting allegations or to request advice on guidance on the .gov.uk site. Contact details are as follows:

- **Email:** opss.enquiries@beis.gov.uk

- **Telephone:** 0121 345 1201
- **Post:** Office for Product Safety and Standards, Cannon House – 4th Floor, 18 Priory Queensway, Birmingham, B4 6PH

13 Managing Director Forum and FETA annual lunch

13.1 Managing Director Forum

The SCA MD Forum will meet on 11 April 2024 at the FETA lunch venue in London. 21 are expected to the meeting.

13.2 FETA annual lunch

Places are just about full for the [annual lunch](#) taking place on 11 April 2024 at The Brewery in London. Places are allocated on a “first come” basis. One space available on the SCA table.

14 Dates of meetings in 2024

Wed 19 Jun, Wed 2 Oct

Placeholder invitations were issued in December/January to allow members to get the dates in their calendars. The agenda and final meeting arrangements will then be issued as an “update” to the Outlook invitation closer to the actual date.

The view from the SCA MDs Forum meeting in April 2023 was to hold at least one meeting a year as a “physical only” meeting hosted by a member company without any remote participation, but this hasn’t been agreed yet.

Members should check the notice/agenda for meetings which will be circulated three to four weeks before the meeting as dates (and format) sometimes change.

Andy Bartlett of Belimo has offered to host a meeting at Belimo’s new Experience Centre at their Belimo UK Offices in Shepperton (near Chertsey) for the 2nd October meeting. Andy would like to offer a one-hour tour of Belimo’s Experience Centre after lunch.

15 Any other Business

CL reported that the new draft of BS 9991 now has a definition of an AOV. CL will provide an extract.

Chair

Date

(for approval at next meeting)

Information for Item 4.9

----- copy of email from a member of the SCA to the Chair on 5 Feb -----

I have today discovered a post on LinkedIn which was hugely positive about the SCA's Guidance on Smoke Control to Common Escape Routes in Apartment Buildings (Flats and Maisonettes) guide which they scanned and posted in its entirety (is this allowed). However, the poster highlighted the smoke control switch heights, recommendations being 1.8-2.0 metres to deter tampering. He agreed. However, I have not picked this up in the guide before and it prompted me to reflect on our Switch height and a potential issue.

We consistently install these switches at no more than 1.6 metres off the ground and normally at 1.4 metres. Our decision is rooted in ensuring that firefighters, and those responsible for testing and maintaining these systems, can access them easily. It's a practice that not only meets practical needs but is also in line with accessibility standards outlined in various disability acts. Beyond regulations, it simply makes sense.

Given that the fire service does not impose height restrictions anymore and considering the potential for SCA legal issues, I believe we should revisit these guidelines. Our aim should be to enhance both safety and inclusivity. A firefighter at 5ft 5 I believe could struggle if a switch is fitted this high.

There's also the issue of false activations by residents, which affects those firefighters who need to use the system. This brings me to a critical point: if a smoke control system isn't designed to prevent unintended activations (something many current systems account for), doesn't the responsibility fall on the designers and installers for implementing a solution not fit for purpose? In my view, addressing the root cause is more practical than placing switches out of reach to some.