



POSITION PAPER 4

THE USE OF ATMOSPHERIC MONITORING EQUIPMENT AT AUTHORISED TESTING FACILITIES

Background

An authorised testing facility (ATF) tests heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), trailers and public service vehicles (PSVs), like buses, to ensure they are roadworthy and meet safety and environmental standards.

If a vehicle designed for the carriage of dangerous goods has been purged and declared safe for inspection, it can be tested at any ATF.

If a vehicle designed for the carriage of dangerous goods still contains dangerous goods then it has to be tested at an ATF approved and designated for dangerous goods – a dangerous goods ATF.

An ADR inspection and / or annual test is a specialist test for a vehicle carrying or having carried dangerous or hazardous goods in bulk by road. These inspections are normally completed in conjunction with an annual test.

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) approves the operation of an ATF.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/authorised-testing-facilities-atfs-guidance-forms-and-updates>

As part of the requirements of setting up an ATF, DVSA require the Operator to:

- ensure compliance with health and safety regulations;
- provide and maintain testing equipment, ensuring the premises are adequately stocked and all equipment is in good working order.

Testing dangerous goods vehicles

BCGA members routinely use a dangerous goods ATF to test their vehicles, often while they still contain product.

There have been occasions where they have been asked to provide their own atmospheric monitoring equipment (also known as gas detection equipment). BCGA members have complied with this request, but with reluctance.

Under the requirements of the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act* and its supporting Regulations, the Employer has a duty to provide all necessary safety equipment, to ensure his Employees are competent to use that equipment, and to inspect and maintain the equipment, keeping it in reasonable working order.

The Employer has a duty to ensure they operate a safe work place. A risk assessment has to be carried out to determine foreseeable hazards and to provide appropriate control measures to manage any risks.

The leakage of gases (from dangerous goods) into the local atmosphere is a potential hazard which may create a hazardous atmosphere. The use of atmospheric monitoring equipment is one of the acceptable control measures that can be utilised to monitor exposure. Where atmospheric monitoring equipment is in use then the following requirements shall be met:

- atmospheric monitoring equipment is chosen and installed for a specific location;
- the sensor on the detector is compatible with the product in the vehicle;
- the monitoring equipment meets recognised standards of design, performance and quality, is serviceable, and is within date for calibration;
- the monitoring equipment has been set up correctly, including appropriate warning notices, safety signs and displays, it is connected into warning / alarm systems. It may be connected with local exhaust ventilation systems;
- all persons entering the work space where the hazardous atmosphere may exist are authorised and competent to do so and have been given all necessary information, instruction and training, including on using the monitoring equipment, and are aware of their actions in the event of an alarm sounding.

BCGA provide guidance on atmospheric monitoring equipment, refer to BCGA Guidance Note 11, *The management of risk when using gases in enclosed spaces*.

Problem

BCGA consider it to be inappropriate that its members are being asked to provide their own atmospheric monitoring equipment. The Operator of the ATF will have no, or limited, knowledge of the quality, testing or serviceability of equipment provided by a 3rd party. The staff working in the ATF will not have the necessary competence to operate atmospheric monitoring equipment provided by a 3rd party.

A variety of different equipment, provided by different vehicle owners, can only lead to confusion, increasing the likelihood of an incident.

In the event of an incident, where will the liability lie?

Solution

We suggest DfT puts out a recommendation that:

- The Operator of each ATF shall provide suitable atmospheric monitoring equipment, as determined through risk assessment;
- The Operator of each ATF shall ensure all those within that work space are, as necessary, competent to use the atmospheric monitoring equipment, and that all are fully aware of their actions in the event of an incident;
- DVSA should mandate the requirement for the Operator of the ATF to provide suitable atmospheric monitoring equipment.

Reference

1. BCGA Guidance Note 11, *The management of risk when using gases in enclosed spaces*.

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