



PROJECT REPORT LPG Safety Project Inspection of Mobile Catering Units February 2010 – March 2010

Version 25-5-10ac

Summary

This project was carried out to assess the safety of LPG (handling/storage/usage, etc) in all mobile catering units registered or trading within Chichester District Council's administrative area. The following guidance was referred to: (i) Guidelines for the Safe Use of LPG in Mobile Catering Installations and Vehicles <http://www.lpg-portable-heaters.co.uk/Guidelines-for-the-safe-use-of-LPG-in-mobile-catering-units.pdf> and (ii) Small-scale use of LPG in cylinders <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/chis5.pdf>. An inspection form (*annex 1*) was produced for officer's to complete and to record findings and an aide memoir (*annex 2*) was also produced for inspecting officer's to refer to.

A list of all mobile catering businesses was produced. Some businesses were then contacted, firstly to establish if LPG was used in connection with their business, and then allocated to a team of officers to arrange a visit to carry out an assessment of LPG safety in each unit. The number of mobiles identified requiring a visit totalled 39, however, several new mobiles were added during the project as new businesses were identified.

Method

Due to the nature of these businesses, ie, moveable and some seasonal, contact was not made with all; 21 vehicles using LPG were inspected, four were found not to use LPG upon inspecting and several had ceased trading. (Several units remain requiring a visit, which will be picked up during the Summer).

The project was explained to the Food Business Operator (or representative) and officers used the inspection form using a simple ticking the box process and recording further findings on the reverse of the form. It was explained at the time of visits that all the information and photographs taken would be collated and the findings discussed amongst each officer involved with the project, and any actions required sent to each business after this process. It was also explained that no action was required to be taken by the business, unless there was something serious requiring immediate action.

A meeting between all officer's on this project is to be arranged within the next month to discuss all findings, photographs and actions required, with letters and information being sent to each business.

Resources

Including training and drafting of the inspection form and aide memoir, the equivalent of approximately two weeks of inspector's time was spent on this project.

Matters observed during visits

During the visits the following points were observed:-

- It was common that operator's had not received any training in the handling, changing, dangers, etc of LPG;
- The majority of compartments housing LPG containers did not indicate the presence of LPG;

- Visual inspection of LPG containers, pipe work, appliances, etc were not being carried out either daily, before setting up, before taking a vehicle out or after parking up;
- Most businesses did not have any written safety information or warning notices for (i) action in the event of a gas leak, in case of a fire, how to change cylinders or any general safety precautions;
- Apart from two or three, businesses had never had or had not had a gas safety inspection by a competent (and gas safety registered) person in a long while;
- Compartments were being used to store other items other than the cylinders, regulators, change-over devices and pipe work – items included, baking trays, pieces of wood, old oil containers, plastic bags, etc).



Compartment being used to store equipment other than cylinders, regulators, etc

Actions to be taken

- Meeting to be organised amongst all staff involved with the project to discuss how to address issues;
- Letters/reports to be drafted and sent to each business identifying issues and actions required to comply;
- Guidance documentation, ie, how to change cylinders, general safety precautions, etc to be drafted to assist businesses

Report by Adrian Cook, Environmental Health Technician, 13 May 2010

Approved by Ian Brightmore, Environmental Health Manager, 21 May 2010

References

- (a) Chichester District Council Health and Safety Enforcement Service plan for 2009/10;

- (b) HSE Section 18 directions on planned interventions: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/section18/commitment.htm>;
- (c) The HSE local authority service delivery plan for 2009/2010: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/fit3street/atalgance.htm>;
- (d) Guidelines for the Safe Use of LPG in Mobile Catering Installations and Vehicles: <http://www.lpg-portable-heaters.co.uk/Guidelines-for-the-safe-use-of-LPG-in-mobile-catering-units.pdf>; and
- (e) Small-scale use of LPG in cylinders <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/chis5.pdf>.

Additional Photographs



Example of good pipe work secured and grommeted at entry points



Example of cylinders being secured in the upright position during trading



Example of a safety/warning notice (in the event of an emergency)