The European voice of refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pumps contractors

ANNUAL REPORT

2014

April 2015

Foreword by the President

"With the Fgas Guide, AREA is giving contractors a practical tool to understand, measure and apply the new Regulation"

Last year's activities had both a European and an international dimension.

At European level, most of the association's resources were spent on preparing our sector for the new requirements resulting from the revised Fgas Regulation. It was very important for us to provide timely information and explanations to our members, thereby fulfilling one of our basic and yet fundamental missions towards our contractors. Therefore, we worked on a comprehensive guide that would serve as a tool that explains and clarifies the new rules, their impact and their practical application.

Time was of the essence and even before our guide was released, we explained the key changes the Regulation would bring and advised on actions that had to be taken in anticipation. Thanks to the mobilisation of many AREA experts, we were eventually able to release our guide at the Chillventa exhibition. This was a tremendous effort we can be proud of.

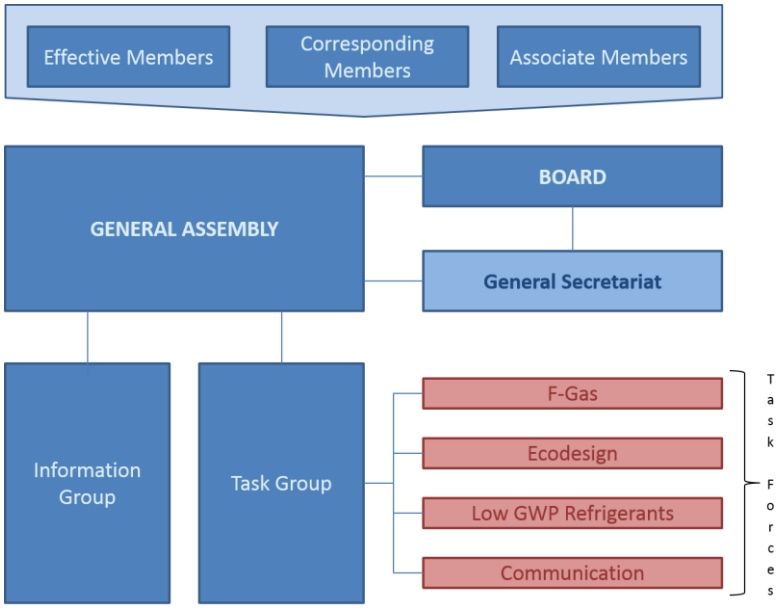
Meanwhile, AREA raised its international profile by presenting its views and experience on competence and skills at several international conferences organised by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Such a level of cooperation with UNEP is only possible because of AREA's acknowledged expertise and professionalism. I take this opportunity to thank our Vice-President Marco Buoni for his time and commitment to international matters.

Future prospects look exciting. Our activities will follow the work plan we presented in our Vision & Strategy 2020 with one overarching objective in mind: ensuring that our sector embraces the challenges posed by technological evolutions and regulatory changes whilst maintaining excellence.

Per Jonasson

ORGANISATION

Working bodies



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Seamus Kerr
(IRI, Ireland)

Chairman Task Group
Wolfgang Zaremski
(VDKF, Germany)

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INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

Per Jonasson becomes AREA President

AREA members elected a new Board of Directors for 2014-2016 at the General Assembly meeting on 9-10 May 2014 in Padua (Italy). After serving for 4 years, Graeme Fox stepped down President of AREA and was replaced by Per Jonasson, from the Swedish association KYL. Mr. Jonasson had been in the Board as Treasurer.

Coen van de Sande (NVKL, Netherlands) and Wolfgang Zaremski (VDKF, Germany) joined the Board as Treasurer and Member, respectively, whilst Philippe Roy (SNEFCCA, France) left after 4 years.

The new President Per Jonasson warmly thanked Graeme Fox for his close involvement, tremendous work and overall success in the past four years, notably with the revision of the F-Gas Regulation. He considered his new task as both challenging and exciting and looked forward to representing the sector to his best.

Left to right: Peter Bachmann, Marco Buoni, Graeme Fox, Per Jonasson, Coen van de Sande and Wolfgang Zaremski

AREA presents its midterm Vision & Strategy

On 5th December 2015, AREA presented its ***Vision & Strategy 2020: maintaining a high standard in a changing world.*** The paper concluded a process that started a year before and that was aimed at ensuring that AREA's objectives and activities reflect the industry's needs and challenges.

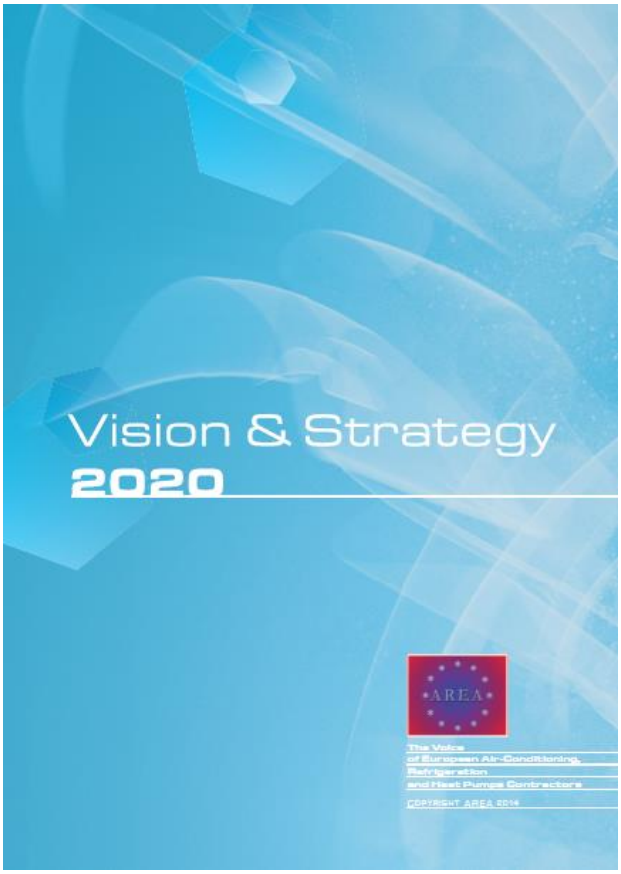
The world of refrigeration and air conditioning is changing: alternative refrigerants are increasingly used, energy efficiency has become an essential requirement, the regulatory environment is ever more varied and complex, new technologies are emerging. These changes are reshaping contractors' job. They must adapt to technical innovations and regulatory evolutions whilst maintaining high competence to ensure a safe, reliable, performant and overall qualitative service to their customers.

"*Innovations and regulations make refrigeration and air conditioning more exciting but also more complex. Users rely on expert contractors more than ever*" notes AREA President Per Jonasson.

Proactively following this evolving environment, AREA has identified 6 key priorities:

1- Sensible standards and regulations that support rather than obstruct our sector's development;
2- Minimum education and certification requirements on low GWP refrigerants to ensure safe and competent handling;
3- Energy efficiency as a key driver in refrigerant and system choice;
4- Guidance on technological developments to ensure up-to-date knowledge;
5- Exchange of information and best practices within the sector through the AREA network;
6- European and international cooperation at both industrial and institutional levels.

"*These priorities will guide AREA's activities in the years to come. AREA will mobilise its structure and its network to work on each objective through tangible contributions"* concludes Per Jonasson.



TASK FORCES

Review of the F-Gas Regulation

By Graeme Fox (RACGHP/B&ES, UK), TF Chairman

In 2014, the Task Force spent most of its time on the preparation of the AREA Fgas Guide. Work started as soon as the Parliament and Council found a compromise. In order to ensure efficient and timely production, work was divided into chapters, each under the responsibility of one AREA expert and with overall coordination of the Secretariat. This made it possible to present a first draft in the spring. After comments, a final draft was ready at the beginning of the summer and it was submitted to the European Commission so as to ensure harmonised views and common understanding. After 9 months of hard work, the guide was eventually officially launched at the Chillventa exhibition.

Meanwhile, we felt it important to warn not only our members but also our customers about important changes brought about by the new Fgas Regulation and applicable from 1st January 2015. In September, AREA published a **press release** pointing out 3 key obligations which required immediate preparation by contractors and operators: leakage checking, leakage detection systems and delivery of fluorinated greenhouse gases.

Pressure Equipment

By Coen van de Sande (NVKL, Netherlands), TF Chairman

The TF is focusing on the current revision of standard EN 378 part 1-4 - Refrigerating systems and heat pumps. Safety and environmental requirements. Coordination is ensured with Stig Rath, who is active in CEN182 Working Group 6. It will also work on the harmonisation of part 1-3, 4 with the Pressure Equipment Directive (PED) since part 2 is already harmonised. When the revision is finished the TF will draft practical guidelines for contractors which will support them in working with the revised standard.

Ecodesign

By Coen van de Sande (NVKL, Netherlands), TF Chairman

The TF worked on the review of the Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Directives. It specifically worked on two issues: the installer label and third party certification. A comprehensive position was prepared on both issues and contacts were taken with fellow organisations, notably those representing electrical and mechanical/building contractors. A joint action is under preparation.

The TF is also monitoring 4 Ecodesign lots, each of which is under the specific responsibility of one member:

- ENTR Lot 1: professional refrigerated storage cabinets, blast cabinets, condensing units and process chillers
- ENTR Lot 6: Air-conditioning and ventilation systems
- ENER Lot 12: Refrigerated commercial display cabinets
- ENER Lot 10: Room air-conditioning

Low GWP refrigerants

By Marco Buoni (ATF, Italy), TF Chairman

The Task Force coordinated a comprehensive survey within the AREA membership on training provided on low GWP refrigerant systems. This resulted in an update of the AREA **Guidance on minimum requirements for contractors' training & certification on low GWP Refrigerants.** It now includes a list of training centres in countries covered by AREA members. The list specifies whether training is theoretical and/or practical and provides relevant web addresses.

In addition, it was decided that AREA would produce a guidance note on equipment to use with A2L refrigerants. Work will start in 2015. Finally, the TF is monitoring new refrigerant developments and will update its guidelines when necessary.

UNEP

By Marco Buoni (ATF, Italy), TF Chairman

AREA and UNEP are collaborating more and more closely on the issue of RACHP contractors' competence. In 2014, AREA was invited to speak at UNEP events in several countries (Ethiopia, Rwanda, Dubai) to promote professionalism and competence for contractors in developing countries, which are moving from HCFCs to other refrigerants.

AREA also published an article about "*Certification in the safe and efficient use of refrigerants*" in the **Ozone Special Issue** (p12) published by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and distributed to the delegations that took part in the Conference of the Parties of Montreal Protocol MOP26.

EVENTS

AHRI Symposium
20th January 2014, New York

AREA President Graeme Fox spoke at the first AHRI "Symposium on the global HVACR industry's supply chain's refrigerant training & education". The event was held during the AHR Expo in New York.

Mr. Fox addressed the audience about "European experience in certification of competence in ODS substitute: Fgas and alternative refrigerants"

TERRE Policy Center
5 March 2014, Pune

AREA was involved in an expert roundtable meeting titled "*Selecting and Best Service Practices for Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Equipment Using Next-Generation Refrigerants for Energy Efficiency and Climate Protection*" in Pune, India on 5 March 2014. The event was organised by TERRE Policy Centre in collaboration with Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development. It was attended by about 30 invited experts from 16 Organizations including private Sector, national and international organisations, civil society and Academic institutes. Key points of the discussions included ozone-safe, low-GWP, energy-efficient Room Air Conditioning (RAC) and Mobile Air Conditioning (MAC).

Mr. Rajendra Shende, former Secretary General of UNEP, gave a presentation on behalf of AREA Vice-President Marco Buoni on the European experience in certification of confidence in ODS substitutes. More information is available **HERE**.

XVI EU Conference on refrigerants
20 March 2014, Milan

AREA Vice-President Marco Buoni took part in a conference on "The refrigerant revolution: a 79% reduction– technological innovations in refrigeration and air conditioning". The meeting took place on 20 March 2014 in Milan within the framework of the 16th EU Conference at the Mostra Convegno Expocomfort fair.

Mr Buoni emphasised that the final text of the regulation (approved by both the European Parliament and Council) that will phase down 79% of fluorinated refrigerants up to 2030, eliminates certification in alternative refrigerants. He added that the failure to include the section on the mandatory certification of alternative refrigerants could cause a shortage of trained and competent technicians, potentially increasing the risk of accidents which could lead to a negative shadow being cast on both the success of the regulation itself and on trust within the entire industry.

Mr Buoni's presentation is available **HERE**

UNEP 17th Joint African Meeting on ozone-depleting substances

28 March 2014, Addis Ababa

AREA Vice-President Marco Buoni attended the UNEP 17th Joint African Meeting on ozone-depleting substances, which was held in Addis Ababa on 28 March 2014.

AREA was invited to this event in order to present the achievements in Europe following the revision of the F-gas regulation 842/2006.

Mr Buoni confirmed that AREA will take the lead in promoting the homogeneous implementation of certification and training in EU Member States.

Mr Buoni's presentation is available **HERE**

Day One of Certification of RAC Technicians in Africa

13 June 2014, Kigali

Thanks to his strong cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), AREA Vice-President Marco Buoni was invited to share his experience and to be the assessor of the certification session during this important workshop for the future of African RAC technicians. On this occasion AREA, the leading Refrigeration European Association for technicians, supported the certification of 11 technicians on the basis of the European scheme.

Click here to see the report.

Chillventa
14-16 October 2014, Nuremberg

AREA, which has been a partner of the Chillventa for many years, took part in the 2014 edition. The event attracted more than 30,000 trade visitors from over 110 countries and 984 exhibiting companies. AREA shared a booth together with one of its German member (BIV) and ZVKKW.

On 15th October, AREA held its second Cocktail Reception. The event encountered a large success and attracted many participants. It is now set to become a tradition.

AREA also held its autumn general assembly meeting in Nuremberg, immediately after Chillventa.

The next edition will be on **11-13 October 2016** www.chillventa.de

Alternative refrigerants in high-ambient countries
28-29 October 2014, Dubai

AREA Vice-President Marco Buoni took part as speaker in the 4th Regional Symposium on Alternative Refrigerants for High-Ambient Countries - Risk Assessment of Future Refrigerants in Production, Installation, and Service. The event took place on 28-29 October 2014 in Dubai. AREA was invited by UNEP. Mr. Buoni presented AREA's work on "*Certification in the safe and efficient use of alternative refrigerants*".

ACRIB Fgas Conference
14 November 2014, London

AREA Past President Graeme Fox presented the main novelties introduced by the new Fgas Regulation and their impact on refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump contractors.
See "**Service and maintenance practice in the future**"

PROJECTS

AREA is involved in the REAL Alternatives project, the aim of which is to develop training materials for improving workforce skills in the refrigeration and air conditioning sector in alternative refrigerants (Carbon dioxide, Ammonia, Flammable and Low Flammables). The focus is on carbon dioxide, ammonia, hydrocarbons and HFO refrigerants. It will improve knowledge in the service and maintenance of these refrigerants in new systems from the point of view of safety, efficiency, reliability and containment.

In 2014, the materials for the REAL Alternatives e-learning course was put together. Then, the piloting and testing was a critical stage in the development of this new multilingual blended learning approach. 63 individuals from 12 European countries took part in a pilot exercise in October representing a wide range of stakeholders – from technicians to manufacturers and trainers. The general conclusion was that the e-learning will provide a much needed solution to skills shortages – particularly in view of the introduction of the new F Gas Regulation in 2015 and future restrictions on HFCs.

The project team incorporated the consolidated detailed feedback from the pilot into a final version of the programme which will be launched in Spring 2015.

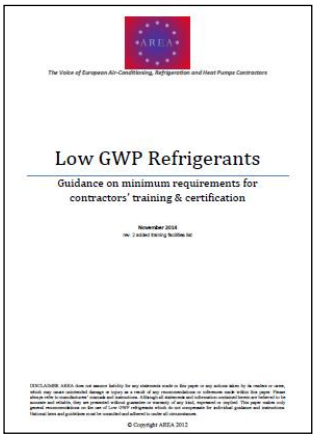
The complete REAL Alternatives programme will take a blended learning approach and includes eight e-learning modules (detailed below Note 2), supplemented with learning booklets, interactive tools and spreadsheets. An e-library of user-generated industry information about alternative refrigerants is available at http://www.realalternatives.eu/e-library and includes over 100 reference documents that will support the e-learning.

The project is funded under the Leonardo da Vinci scheme. It officially started on 1st October 2013 and will last until 30th September 2015.

For more information, please see http://www.realalternatives.eu/

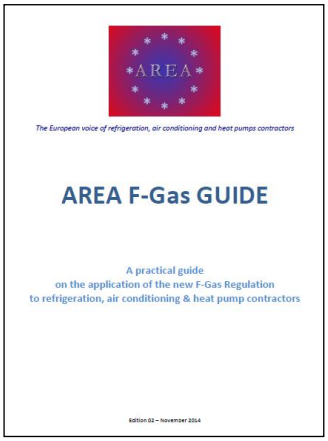
PUBLICATIONS

Guide on training & certification on low GWP refrigerants



In November 2014 AREA updated its **Guidance on minimum requirements for contractors' training & certification on low GWP Refrigerants**. The revision includes an Annex II, which lists training facilities in AREA countries. The list provides website addresses and information on the type of training (theoretical and/or practical) by type of low GWP refrigerant. This update is the result of a comprehensive survey carried out with the **20 national associations** from **17 European countries** represented by AREA.

Guide on the new Fgas Regulation



The new F-Gas Regulation applies since 1st January 2015 and give RACHP contractors a new set of requirements to deal with. The **AREA Guide on the application of the new F-Gas Regulation to RACHP contractors** explains the new rules, their impact and their practical application. It also includes useful tools, such as a conversion table weight-CO_2-eq for the most commonly used refrigerants, a flow chart on leak check frequency and a table summarising certification requirements. The guide is a living document that will be updated and completed following experience and after the adoption of relevant implementing legislation.

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AKB - www.koeleteknik.dk

FINLAND

www.skll.fi

FRANCE

www.snefcca.com

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www.biv-kaelte.de

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IRELAND

www.instituteofrefrigerationireland.ie

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www.associazioneatf.org

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www.nvkl.nl

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