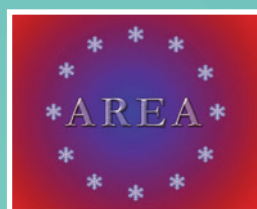


# 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

THE EUROPEAN VOICE  
of  
refrigeration  
air conditioning  
& heat pumps  
contractors



May 2016

# FOREWORD BY THE PRESIDENT



*“We are also preparing the transition to low GWP refrigerants, notably by ensuring that the necessary competence of our contractors is addressed in a consistent and uniform manner.”*

After a few years during which the revision of the Fgas Regulation monopolised a large share of AREA's time and resources, 2015 marked the beginning of a transition towards more diverse activities.

In the coming years, AREA's work programme will be largely based on our Vision & Strategy 2020. We will notably reinforce our guiding role towards our industry. This process has actually already started and our Fgas and Low GWP guides are widely known and used. Work is ongoing on additional guides that will touch upon other aspects of our business, e.g. record keeping under the Fgas Regulation, tools and equipment for flammable refrigerants, EN378.

We are also preparing the transition to low GWP refrigerants, notably by ensuring that the necessary competence of our contractors is addressed in a consistent and uniform manner. We can already be satisfied with our achievement on the revision of Regulation 303/2008. In the absence, for the time being, of a European scheme on competence on low GWP refrigerants, AREA has taken its responsibilities by setting minimum requirements. We have also taken a step further with our involvement in the REAL Alternatives project that has resulted in a comprehensive e-learning scheme. Meanwhile, we continue our efforts at European level and we have also gone one step further by taking part in international initiatives on a competence scheme. There is still a long way to go but we will maintain our efforts and commitment.

Finally, we can be proud to see AREA still growing. Two new EU countries have joined us. AREA now represents 18 EU countries and Norway. For a sector association, this is remarkable and it certainly illustrates both the strength and value of our association.

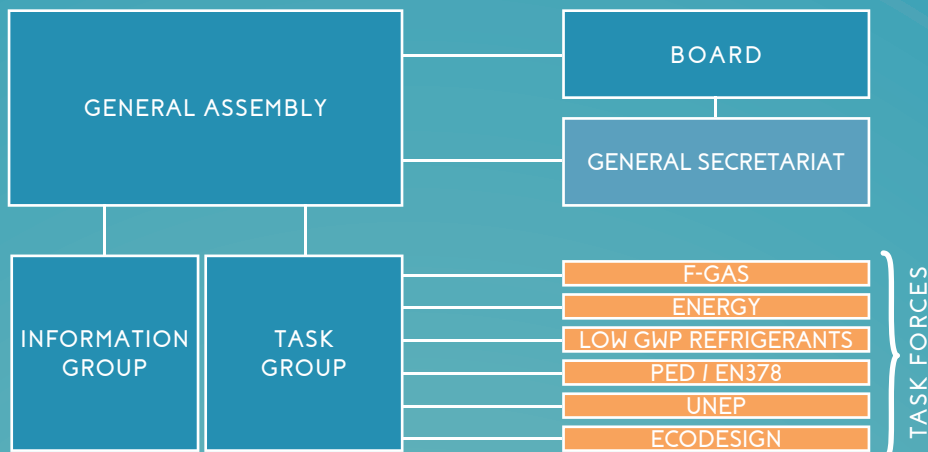
■ Per Jonasson

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CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



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 ■ **Seamus Kerr**  
 (IRI, Ireland)



Chairman Task Group  
 ■ **Wolfgang Zaremski**  
 (VDKF, Germany)



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# INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

## CROATIA & ESTONIA JOIN AREA

CRACA, the Croatian Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Association, and EKL, the Estonian Refrigeration Association, became members on 9th May 2015 on the occasion of the AREA General Assembly spring meeting in Stockholm.

CRACA was created 3 years ago with the mission of contributing to the improvement of the HVC&R and heat pump sector in Croatia, where technology and legislation are developing considerably. CRACA working areas include collaboration with public authorities on regulations and standards, lifelong learning, fgas certification, technical support, international collaboration...

Tonko Curko, President of CRACA, said: "AREA and CRACA share a mission and objectives. AREA is the best forum to exchange ideas, knowledge and experience and also to be at the source of market information."

EKL counts 30 members and is active on standardisation (Estonian Centre for Standardisation), qualifications (Estonian Qualification Authority) and education (Tallinn Industrial Education Centre). It also cooperates closely with the Estonian Ministry of the Environment. After taking part in the AREA 2014 autumn meeting in Nuremberg, EKL decided to apply for membership. "Membership in AREA will enhance EKL's international profile", said Imre Soorand, President of EKL.

AREA now counts 22 members in 18 countries of the European Union plus Norway.

## AREA GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

AREA members met twice in 2015. In the spring, the general assembly meeting took place on 8-9 May in Stockholm, organised by our Swedish member SKVP. In the autumn, members gathered on 13-14 November in Brussels.



**AREA General Assembly, 14 November 2015, Brussels**



# TASK FORCES



## F-GAS

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

Although the Fgas Regulation started applying on 1st January 2015, a number of implementing acts were (and for some of them, are) still to be adopted. This was notably the case for the secondary legislation on minimum requirements for training and certification on stationary equipment (former Regulation 303/2008), which needed to be revised to include refrigerated trucks and trailers and information on alternatives.

AREA supported the intended approach on refrigerated trucks and trailers and made proposals for a modification of the Annex of Regulation 303/2008. AREA suggested adding safe handling, advantages/disadvantages by application and necessary tools to the list of requirements that come under section 5 "Environment-friendly handling of the system and refrigerant during installation, maintenance, servicing or recovery". After much effort and notably strong support from AREA members at national level, our requests were eventually taken on board in the final text that was published later in the year. A remarkable achievement for our industry.

AREA was also asked to use its network to provide feedback on a study on refrigerant prices. This study was mandated by the European Commission and its purpose is to assess the impact of the new Fgas Regulation on HFC prices. Thanks to members' efforts, we were able to find a number of companies from different countries that volunteered to take part along with manufacturers and distributors, thus enabling us to provide a better picture of the situation, notably at the low volume end of the market.

The TF also worked on a couple of publications. We started the update of the AREA Fgas Guide. A new version should be published mid-2016. In the meantime, several members translated the guide which is now available in 5 languages. Another guide, dedicated to best practices on record keeping, is also in the pipeline.

Finally, together with the Low GWP Refrigerants TF, the Fgas TF is involved in the international discussions on minimum competences of installers.

## PED / EN378

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



The Task Force is monitoring the review of the EN 378 standard "Refrigerating systems and heat pumps - Safety and environmental requirements" in which several AREA members are directly involved at national level.

At the same time, the TF has started working on some guidelines on the application of EN 378. This work is split among different TF members and takes as a basis the excellent work done by the national member association ASSOFRIGORISTI. The AREA guidelines will be made available once the new EN 378 is published, so hopefully towards the end of 2016.



## ENERGY

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

The Task Force concentrated its activities around two main topics: the review of the Energy Labelling Directive and the preparation of a Heating & Cooling Strategy.

On the review of the Energy Labelling Directive, AREA provided its comments in early 2015. In order to further strengthen its messages, AREA coordinated a joint industry position together with electrical and plumbing contractors (AIE and GCP-Europe) and refrigeration and air conditioning manufacturers (EPEE). The partners reiterated their support for and commitment to improve energy efficiency. They also outlined strong reservations about the concepts of labelling of professional equipment and the Dealer/Installer Label. Finally, the signatories called on keeping the effectiveness of the energy label during the review.

On the preparation of a Heating & Cooling Strategy, AREA had the opportunity of presenting its views at the European Commission conference on Heating and cooling in the European energy transition held on 27 February 2015. In the framework of the Energy Union, this conference looked at the challenges of making heating and cooling efficient and sustainable. AREA President Per Jonasson presented the installers' views on the technology challenge. This was complemented by a reply to the public consultation that followed, in which AREA highlighted the key role of contractors and their complete neutrality towards technology. In addition to technologies, AREA mentioned other aspects to be duly considered in the upcoming strategy, notably the role of refrigerants and the need to maintain contractors' skills and knowledge. These comments were repeated on the occasion of the consultation meeting that took place in September.

## LOW GWP REFRIGERANTS

### ■ By Marco Buoni (ATF, Italy), TF Chairman



Low GWP refrigerants were in the spotlight of a study in the framework of the European Commission's obligation to publish a report according to the new Fgas Regulation. The study was divided into 3 parts: standards & codes that constitute barriers to the take-up of low GWP refrigerant technologies, availability of training for technicians, and green public procurement.

AREA provided input, notably on the training part on which we already had considerable information (e.g. AREA minimum requirements, including a list of training facilities). We were then invited to attend the first Fgas consultation meeting that took place in September and was entirely dedicated to the study. There, the AREA President notably restated our position on the need for mandatory certification to ensure uniform minimum competence across the EU.

The TF is also closely following international discussions on minimum competence, both in the context of the United Nations Environment Programme ("Refrigerants Driving Licence" (RDL) initiative) and at industry level ("Global Refrigerant Management Initiative", GRMI). These initiatives are linked and aim at setting a minimum competence scheme not only for synthetic refrigerants but also for natural refrigerants. AREA has notably been appointed to the Steering Committee of the GRMI. In the absence of a European scheme on natural refrigerants, an international one could indeed be a useful tool to ensure safe and efficient handling of low GWP refrigerants, the use of which will dramatically increase in the coming years under the combined effect of the Fgas phase-down and the gradual application of bans.

# EVENTS

## HEATING & COOLING CONFERENCE

■ 27th February 2015, Brussels

AREA President Per Jonasson spoke at the conference on **Heating and cooling in the European energy transition** organised by the European Commission. In the framework of the Energy Union, this conference looked at the challenges of making heating and cooling efficient and sustainable. In his presentation, Per Jonasson presented the **installers' views on the technology challenge**.

## PROCLIMATE

■ 4 March 2015, Warsaw

AREA President Per Jonasson spoke at the PROCLIMATE 2015 conference on 4 March 2015. The conference looked at trends and technologies of tomorrow in the refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump sector. In his presentation "**2020 is already here**", Per Jonasson presented the installers' perspective during the session dedicated to "Challenges and Opportunities for Industry".

## ATMOSPHERE EUROPA

■ 16-17 March 2015, Brussels

AREA Vice-President Marco Buoni spoke at the **Atmosphere Europe** conference held on 16-17 March 2015 in Brussels. Mr Buoni took part in the policy session dedicated to "implementing the F-gas Regulation". He presented **AREA's vision and recommendations on training & certification on low GWP refrigerants**, as well as the ongoing REAL Alternatives project the federation is involved in.





## OEWG35

■ 21 April 2015, Bangkok

The thirty-fifth session of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG 35) of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer opened in Bangkok, Thailand on 22 April 2015. On 21 April, AREA took part in the Workshop on HFC management - technical issues, and more specifically Session 5, part 2 on energy efficiency, safety and industry's response to low GWP policies.



AREA Vice-President Marco Buoni addressed installers' competence on low GWP systems in his presentation "Training and Certification schemes to ensure the safe and environmentally friendly handling of Low GWP alternative refrigerants". Mr Buoni presented AREA's work on minimum training & certification requirements (see **section on professional guidance**), as well as the ongoing **REAL Alternatives project**, which provides free blended e-learning for alternative refrigerants in new equipment. AREA is a partner in the project.

See Mr Buoni's presentation on AREA website.

For highlights of the conference, see [www.iisd.ca](http://www.iisd.ca)

## XVI EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON THE LATEST TECHNOLOGIES IN REFRIGERATION AND AIR CONDITIONING

■ 12-13 June 2015, Milan



AREA President Per Jonasson gave the installers' perspective on the impact of the new Fgas Regulation at the XVI European Conference on the latest Technologies in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning held on 12-13 June in Milan. Mr Jonasson's presentation "**The new Fgas Regulation from a contractor's perspective: don't wait - act now**" insisted on the need to prepare now for upcoming bans. This was summarised in the last slide: "2018 was yesterday - 2020 is here!" dramatically increase in the coming years under the combined effect of the Fgas phase-down and the gradual application of bans.



## MOP27

■ 31 October – 5 November 2015

Marco Buoni represented AREA at 3 events during the MOP27 Summit of the Montreal Protocol of the United Nations Environment Programme on 31 October – 5 November 2015 in Dubai.



He notably addressed **“Blended Learning for Alternative Refrigerants in High Ambient Countries”** during the Technical Forum on Research Projects for Alternative Refrigerants in High Ambient Countries on 31 October, and **“Establishing and implementing the certification scheme - the development process, the enforcement, registration/certification and monitoring mechanisms, training component”** at an event addressing the challenges of the RAC servicing sector on 2 November.

## PROJECTS



AREA was involved in the REAL Alternatives project, the aim of which was to improve knowledge in the service and maintenance of alternative refrigerants in new systems from the point of view of safety, efficiency, reliability and containment.

AREA played a role in both technical advice on the content of the e-learning materials and the dissemination of the project's developments through its membership and network.

AREA officially launched the REAL Alternatives project on the occasion of its general assembly meeting on 9 May 2015 in Stockholm. Vice-President Marco Buoni **presented the project** and its outcome to some 25 delegates representing 16 national air conditioning, refrigeration and heat pump contractors' associations from 14 European countries.

The project came to an end in October 2015 and it achieved its objectives: e-learning materials have been developed and are available in several languages (English, German, French, Italian and Polish). They were taken up by both the industry (close to 1,000 registered users by the end of 2015) and the authorities. The project was notably presented to the European Commission, Member States and industry stakeholders on the occasion of the first Fgas Consultation Forum in September 2015 in Brussels, where it was very well received. The materials are also promoted at international level, in the context of discussions on contractors' competence at the level of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Although the EU funding scheme came to an end in October 2015, the REAL Alternatives project continues and partners agreed to remain involved in its promotion and development. AREA has also agreed to maintain its role on a non-financial basis. Indeed, the project certainly contributes to achieving AREA's objectives in terms of competence of the RACHP contracting sector on alternative refrigerants by addressing the theoretical part of training.

For more information, please see [www.realalternatives.eu](http://www.realalternatives.eu)

# PUBLICATIONS

## FGAS GUIDE AVAILABLE IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

The **AREA Guide on the application of the new Fgas Regulation to RACHP contractors** was published in October 2014, a little more than two months before the Regulation became applicable. The guide explains the new rules, their impact and their practical application. It also includes useful tools, such as a conversion table weight-CO<sub>2</sub>-eq for the most commonly used refrigerants, a flow chart on leak check frequency and a table summarising certification requirements.

In the course of 2015, several AREA members made translations of the guide and it is now available in Czech, Dutch, English, Italian and Spanish.

## FGAS: NATIONAL REGISTRIES OF CERTIFIED COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS

AREA has published the results of an internal survey on the existence of national registries of certified companies and individuals under the Fgas Regulation. The survey covers 16 countries and provides links to national registries. It is available for free download from the AREA website.

## JOINT INDUSTRY POSITION ON THE ENERGY LABEL REVIEW

In early 2015, AREA issued a position paper on the review of the Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Directives. The European Commission tabled a legislative proposal to review the Energy Labelling Directive but the Ecodesign Directive will not be reviewed.

On this basis, AREA built an alliance with electrical and plumbing contractors, respectively represented by AIE and GCP-Europe, as well as RACHP equipment manufacturers, namely EPEE. As a main result, a joint industry position paper was put together and submitted to the European Commission.

# CONTACT

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## CZECH REPUBLIC

SCHKT - [www.chlazení.cz](http://www.chlazení.cz)



## CROATIA

CRACA - [www.hurkt.hr](http://www.hurkt.hr)



## DENMARK

AKB - [www.koeleteknik.dk](http://www.koeleteknik.dk)



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[www.kylmaliit.ee](http://www.kylmaliit.ee)



## FRANCE

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## GERMANY

[www.vdkf.de](http://www.vdkf.de)



## IRELAND

[www.instituteofrefrigerationireland.ie](http://www.instituteofrefrigerationireland.ie)



## ITALY

[www.associazioneatf.org](http://www.associazioneatf.org)



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[www.assofrigoristi.it](http://www.assofrigoristi.it)



## NETHERLANDS

[www.nvkl.nl](http://www.nvkl.nl)



## NORWAY

[www.vke.no](http://www.vke.no)



## POLAND

[www.kfch.pl](http://www.kfch.pl)



## PORTUGAL

[www.apirac.pt](http://www.apirac.pt)



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[www.szchkt.org](http://www.szchkt.org)



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