BUSINESS PLAN

CEN/TC 236
NON INDUSTRIAL MANUALLY OPERATED SHUT-OFF VALVES FOR GAS AND PARTICULAR COMBINATIONS VALVES-OTHER PRODUCTS

1 BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT OF THE CEN/TC

1.1 Description of the Business Environment

The following political, economic, technical, regulatory, legal, societal and/or international dynamics describe the business environment of the industry sector, products, materials, disciplines or practices related to the scope of this CEN/TC, and they may significantly influence how the relevant standards development processes are conducted and the content of the resulting standards:

The standardization activity of CEN/TC 236 aims at defining product standards that have a great impact on the realisation of installations that are used both by the community and by single users.

Specifically because of the particular feature of the products and of their direct contact with the final user, the relevant standards shall necessarily deal with all the aspects concerning their functionality, their correct installation, their handling easiness and safety, and their duration under the intended use conditions.

The interested parties in these standards are: producers, gas companies, designers, installers, national and local authorities, materials distributors and, to some extent, the final user, too.
The major socio-economical impact expected from CEN/TC 236 standards is the safety, as a consequence of the standardisation of requirements and test methods on the whole EU and EFTA territory, and, through this, of the long term impact on the gas industry itself.
Due to the possibility for individuals (users or installers) to purchase products freely in the EU and EFTA, the cross border traffic of the products within the TC scope may not be controllable in the future and the risk of accidents may increase in relation to an incorrect choice and putting into practice of products not in line with their intended use.

Although in different countries there are national laws specially conceived for the safety of domestic installation, in gas installation there is a tendency by the consumer to act in the spirit of “do it yourself” and the installer is not always properly trained to recognise and to use only products in compliance with a specific technical standard. This way, European standards in this field are very important and socially indispensable as the same performance requirements for all products in Europe will lead to a common and minimum safety level in all EU and EFTA countries in the context of the specific gas installations covered by CEN/TC 236.

Another social aspect is related to the vandalism, which could be a risk for gas valves located outdoor, where anybody can interfere and manipulate; in relation to that, a technical definition of minimum temper proof characteristics is very important for safety reasons.

With reference to what explained above, availability of standardised technical requirements and test methods on the whole EU and EFTA countries will help removing technical barriers to trade and enhance free circulation of products.

Furthermore, the standards resulting from CEN/TC 236 work are drafted in conformity to the requirements of European Directives and Regulations covering the products considered in these standards in the harmonisation context .

It is also to be considered that a European standard is not only a factor of “inside Europe” homogeneity in safety and functional requirements, but it also allows European companies to promote their technical culture and know-how, based on European standards, which are very well accepted in many other countries off EU.

1.2 Quantitative Indicators of the Business Environment

A list of quantitative indicators describing the business environment is not included, due to the frequent changes in the valve market values, that in any case is currently estimated more than 2 billion thousands Euros for the ball and plug valves.

General data on imports, exports, market and production of this market in the most recent years are reported by Eurostat. See http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/ for complete information.

These data report the statistics of the total production in various sectors of ball and plug valves. No distinction is given as far as the sector of use concerns.

2 BENEFITS EXPECTED FROM THE WORK OF THE CEN/TC

The European Standards issued by CEN/TC 236 are expected to provide the following benefits:

a) to allow "in EU and EFTA countries" a standardisation conformity in functional technical requirements;
b) to help overcoming technical and national regulatory barriers;
c) to enhance the free circulation of the concerned products within EU and EFTA;
d) to increase safety, as a consequence of the standardised requirements and test methods on the whole EU and EFTA territory and to lead to a common and minimum safety level in all EU and EFTA countries for the products within CEN/TC 236 scope;
e) to limit consumers' tendency, in gas installation, to act in the spirit of “do it yourself”;
f) to ease installers' proper training;
g) to support European Directives and Regulations;
h) to allow manufacturers some economic savings;
i) to be tools for companies for promoting their technical culture and know-how, based on European standards, which are very well accepted in many countries off EU.

3 PARTICIPATION IN THE CEN/TC

All the CEN national members are entitled to nominate delegates to CEN Technical Committees and experts to Working Groups, ensuring a balance of all interested parties. Participation as observers of recognized European or international organizations is also possible under certain conditions. To participate in the activities of this CEN/TC, please contact the national standards organization in your country.

4 OBJECTIVES OF THE CEN/TC AND STRATEGIES FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENT

4.1 Defined objectives of the CEN/TC

CEN/TC 236 has published and is working on European Standards providing the requirements for fitness for purpose (for design, performance, testing, marking, packing, instructions for installation

and use) of manually operated ball valves and closed bottom taper plug valves for gas installations for buildings (ref. EN 331:2015) and of safety gas connection valves for metal hose assemblies used for the connection of domestic appliances using gaseous fuel (ref. EN 15069).

The safety hose assemblies and safety gas connection valves within the scope of the TC are suitable for the connection of domestic appliances inside or outside a dwelling, using gas up to a pressure of 20 x 10^5 Pa. The term "gas" relates to the first, second and third family as referred to in EN 437 – table 1. These gases are commonly referred to as manufactured gas, natural gas and petroleum gas (LPG).

4.2 Identified strategies to achieve the CEN/TC.s defined objectives.

- Focus on the real need for standards and priority addressed to these;
- activity carried out by a specialistic working group (i.e. WG1 dealing with the revision of existing standards;
- standards covering all the relevant aspects: terminology, classification (if any); dimensions, requirements, characteristics, test methods, etc.;
- focus within Sector Fora GAS on technical issues in the specific field;
- periodical consideration of the existing standards for their confirmation, updating or revision;
- reception of proposals for new topics to be standardized and/or any prenormative work for proper analysis and actions;
- liaison with the following European Associations: AEGPL (Association Européenne des Gaz de Pétroles Liquéfiés), AFECOR (Association Européenne des Fabricants d'Appareils de Commande et de Régulation) and MARCOGAZ (Technical Association of the European Natural Gas Industry).

4.3 Environmental aspects

Two main issues have been found as potentially applicable to the products covered by the standards of CEN TC 236:

- the use of material;
- the risk to the environment from accident or unintended use.

The check list included in CEN Guide 4 will be used to verify that these aspects have been duly covered in the standards.

CEN TR 16388 *Gas-Specific Environmental Document - Guideline for incorporating within standards to minimize the environmental impact of gas infrastructure across the whole life cycle* prepared by Sectorial Gas Forum Infrastructure is also considered.

5 FACTORS AFFECTING COMPLETION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CEN/TC WORK PROGRAMME

The following factors could have negative impact on the completion or business community acceptance and use of the CEN committee's standards:

- Till 2012 the TC’s standards have been harmonized under the Construction Products Directive (89/106/EEC). The current scope of Gas Appliance Directive (2009/142/EC) does not include the products considered in the standards of TC 236, but the compliance to the essential requirements of this directive can be granted by the standards of TC 236. Even considering that from 2013 the European Regulation 305/2011 (CPR) has superseded the Construction Products Directive, the gained experience and formal and informal consultations among the stakeholder suggests that the most appropriate legal

framework to consider the products of TC 236 should be the new edition of the Gas Appliance Directive. It is important for TC 236 to obtain as soon as all possible information about this possibility; addressing their efforts in this direction.