SAFE CONTROL OF OPERATIONS SCHEME

Safe Control of Operations (SCO) provides a framework to support safe and legally compliant working practices on gas networks.

What is SCO?

Safe Control of Operations (SCO) provides a framework to support safe and legally compliant working practices on gas networks. This scheme enables individuals employed by the gas distribution networks to become a named Competent Person (CP) or an Authorising Engineer (AE) for the following range of permitry on the gas networks: Form of Authority, Permit to Work, Non-Routine Operation and Routine Operation, depending on their role in their employing organisation.

The introduction of IGEM/GL/6 Edition 3 has placed an increased emphasis on risk-based management of gas safety systems and gives gas distribution companies the flexibility to develop their own gas safety procedures based on meeting the common requirements of GL/6.

The SCO scheme is based around the requirements for meeting
GL/6 compliance.

Who is SCO for?

The Safe Control of Operations (SCO) scheme ensures that individuals working on the gas networks are trained on how to do so safely by understanding gas network procedures, the permitry used and when, and the specific roles and responsibilities of all of the individuals involved.

The SCO scheme has an initial training programme for newcomers to the industry and a renewal training programme for those with existing and current SCO registrations.

Redevelopment of SCO scheme

There are a number of reasons why the current SCO Scheme has been redeveloped, these include:

- GL/6 Edition 3 (2018) – bringing with it a revised approach to safety management systems; decentralising SCO and making key SCO decisions the responsibility of each gas network company.

- The need to redevelop the existing SCO scheme in terms of its content and the way in which it is delivered. This includes both the existing Energy & Utility Skills Initial scheme and the network-specific e-Learning/e-Assessment renewal scheme.

The gas network companies recognise the increasing importance of the SCO scheme, providing the essential knowledge and foundations for SCO competence development.

GL/6 Update requirements

The GL/6 Update is a self-contained presentation designed specifically for individuals that have been trained on SCO and hold a current and valid EUSR registration for SCO 1&2, 4 or 5. It consists of a series of slides together with a commentary that highlights the significant changes that the IGEM GL/6 (Edition 3) Standard brings to gas network SCO working practices and procedures from 2019/20. Completing this update is a requirement for all those currently trained on SCO to ensure they are working to the current Standard.

All those new to SCO will be trained under the new SCO scheme which incorporates the IGEM GL/6 requirements.

Benefits of the redeveloped SCO scheme

➤ Development by Energy & Utility Skills of both an initial and a renewal SCO training programme. Previously there was no renewal training programme in place.

➤ Ownership by Energy & Utility Skills of the e-Learning renewal route of SCO, as requested by the gas network companies, offering availability of the Energy & Utility Skills Register (EUSR) support.

➤ Development by Energy & Utility Skills of an e-Learning approach to SCO renewal, offering more flexibility to complete the scheme.

➤ New approach to scheme documentation – scheme specifications (for both initial and renewal SCO), refreshed slide decks, Programme Leader Guides (PLGs) to support delivery, revised practical assessments, making the scheme easy to follow.

➤ Revised and greater multiple-choice items to ensure more robust assessment.

➤ Support from IGEM to ensure that GL/6 Edition 3 is available for all individuals being trained and assessed.

SCO EUSR Registration

A SCO EUSR registration lasts for five years.

Pre-requisites and Additional Training

Under the new scheme:

➤ Module 1: 'SCO Core' must be taken before any other modules and is a pre-requisite for achieving all other modules.

➤ Module 2: 'Permit to Work' must be taken before individuals take Module 3: 'Non-Routine Operations' and Module 4: 'Routine Operations'. It is a pre-requisite for achieving these modules*.

➤ GL/6 Update is a pre-requisite before individuals can take the renewal modules (rather than completing the full initial training modules).

*Note: equivalents of modules under the old SCO scheme e.g. SCO 1 and 2 are also permitted as pre-requisites. So, for example, where an individual has an in-date, existing SCO 1 and 2 registration, it would be permissible for them to take the new Initial module for Routine Operations.

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