

Torbay Gas Safety in Catering Establishments Project 2012-13

Background

This report is based on data collected as a result of Interventions through the “Gas Safety In Catering Establishments” project currently run as part of the Devon Chief Officer Health and Safety Sub Group 2012/13 work plan. Data was collected through a standardised pro forma and covered the 2012/13 financial year. Gas Interventions were to be undertaken at all primary Food Safety Inspections. The project was commenced in June of 2012 due to the need to undertake officer training prior to initiating the project

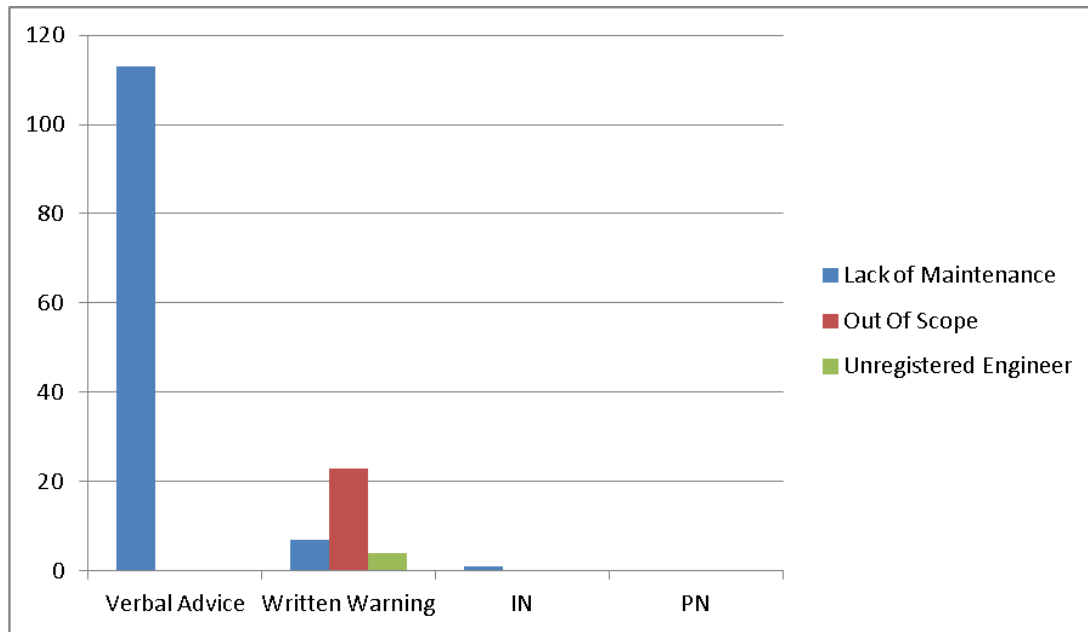
Results

Between 1st June 2012 and the 31st March 2013 248 Gas Safety Interventions were undertaken. Of these there were 121 instances of “lack of maintenance” where the equipment at the business was in poor condition and the business was unable to demonstrate that the equipment and installation were being inspected by a competent person in accordance with current standards. These were primarily dealt with by carbonated inspection report, but required the service of an Improvement Notice in one instance.

A further 23 instances were recorded where the engineer who had certified and/or installed the system had done so “out of scope”. In the majority of cases this involved engineers qualified for domestic work, undertaking maintenance/installation work on commercial systems.

More seriously 4 instances were recorded where the engineer had undertaken work without any recognised qualifications. Given that this could result in serious personal injury, and that peripatetic work is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive, these matters were referred immediately to the relevant authorities. The affected businesses were then faced with commissioning a qualified engineer to certify their gas systems. See Figure one.

Fig 1. Gas Safety Intervention Outcomes



Conclusions

Given that the data covers only a single 10 month period, it is apparent that serious issues with regard to Gas Safety in catering establishments exist. Of particular concerns are the lack of maintenance of gas systems by businesses, and their apparent failure to adequately examine the qualifications of those contractors working on their gas equipment. This clearly indicates a need for continued intervention in this field to improve Gas Safety awareness within the business community and to identify those engineers operating illegally and out of scope.