

## Minutes of the 76<sup>th</sup> NERSAP Meeting

Microsoft Teams 10am 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026

### Attendees:

|                         |           |                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Paul Wragg (PW)         | PowerOn   | <a href="mailto:paul.wragg@poweron-uk.co.uk">paul.wragg@poweron-uk.co.uk</a>                                           |
| Paul Costelloe (PC)     | LRQA      | <a href="mailto:paul.costelloe@lrqa.com">paul.costelloe@lrqa.com</a>                                                   |
| Kevin Freiter (KF)      | LRQA      | <a href="mailto:kevin.freiter@lrqa.com">kevin.freiter@lrqa.com</a>                                                     |
| Karl Miller (KM)        | LRQA      | <a href="mailto:karl.miller@lrqa.com">karl.miller@lrqa.com</a>                                                         |
| Matthew Crittenden (MC) | UKPN      | <a href="mailto:matthew.crittenden@ukpowernetworks.co.uk">matthew.crittenden@ukpowernetworks.co.uk</a>                 |
| Ephie Chalakateva (EC)  | NGED      | <a href="mailto:ephie.chalakateva@nationalgrid.com">ephie.chalakateva@nationalgrid.com</a>                             |
| Robert Brakes (RB)      | Last Mile | <a href="mailto:robert.brakes@lastmile-uk.com">robert.brakes@lastmile-uk.com</a>                                       |
| Fergus Kaye (FK)        | EUSR      | <a href="mailto:fergus.kaye@eusr.co.uk">fergus.kaye@eusr.co.uk</a>                                                     |
| David Ellis (DE)        | Power On  | <a href="mailto:david.ellis@poweron-uk.co.uk">david.ellis@poweron-uk.co.uk</a>                                         |
| Bob Fearnley (BF)       | Leep      | <a href="mailto:bfearnley@leeputilities.co.uk">bfearnley@leeputilities.co.uk</a>                                       |
| James Barker (JB)       | UCCG      | <a href="mailto:jbarker@etl.ltd">jbarker@etl.ltd</a>                                                                   |
| David Jones (DJ)        | HEA       | <a href="mailto:david@joneslighting.co.uk">david@joneslighting.co.uk</a>                                               |
| Simon Watton (SW)       | Fulcrum   | <a href="mailto:simon.watton@fulcrum.co.uk">simon.watton@fulcrum.co.uk</a>                                             |
| Jevan Laxen (JL)        | SSEN      | <a href="mailto:jevan.laxen@sse.com">jevan.laxen@sse.com</a>                                                           |
| David McDonald (DMcD)   | AEN       | <a href="mailto:david.mcdonald@advancedelectricitynetworks.co.uk">david.mcdonald@advancedelectricitynetworks.co.uk</a> |
| Cherelle Tooley (CT)    | Harlaxton | <a href="mailto:cherelle@harlaxton.com">cherelle@harlaxton.com</a>                                                     |

### Apologies:

Apologies had been received from:

|                |           |                                                                                            |
|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Symon Gray     | IDCSL     | <a href="mailto:symongray@idcs.co.uk">symongray@idcs.co.uk</a>                             |
| Louis Elia     | MUA       | <a href="mailto:luayelia@muagroup.co.uk">luayelia@muagroup.co.uk</a>                       |
| Tracey Taylor  | SP-ENW    | <a href="mailto:tracey.taylor@enwl.co.uk">tracey.taylor@enwl.co.uk</a>                     |
| Mel Swift      | GTC       | <a href="mailto:mel.swift@gtc-uk.co.uk">mel.swift@gtc-uk.co.uk</a>                         |
| Paul Thomas    | SPEN      | <a href="mailto:paul.thomas@spenergynetworks.co.uk">paul.thomas@spenergynetworks.co.uk</a> |
| Keith Montague | Matrix    | <a href="mailto:keithmontague@matrixgroup.co.uk">keithmontague@matrixgroup.co.uk</a>       |
| Mick Beeby     | Last Mile | <a href="mailto:mick.beeby@lastmile-uk.com">mick.beeby@lastmile-uk.com</a>                 |
| Matt Anderson  | ESP       | <a href="mailto:matt.anderson@espug.com">matt.anderson@espug.com</a>                       |
| Will Cass      | EA        | <a href="mailto:willcass@energyassets.co.uk">willcass@energyassets.co.uk</a>               |

## 1. Introductions

Introductions were made and PW advised that this would be his last NERSAP meeting as he is due to retire at the end of March 2026.

## **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from those identified above.

## **3. EUSR 'Right Card' Scheme**

PC introduced Fergus Kaye (FK) and invited him to give a presentation on the proposed CSCS card scheme. The slides presented will be circulated with the minutes of this meeting. DE asked if with regards to the NERS competency framework, an 'in-date' certificate of competence issued by ICPs would be acceptable evidence.

## **4. Review of Minutes & Actions from NERSAP Meeting 25th November 2025**

### **4.1 SPEN Express Safety Bulletin**

PC advised that the SPEN Safety Bulletin concerning the back-energisation of 11kV plant from an IDNO generator had been discussed, and that more recently a bulletin regarding Genie 'Evo' switchgear had been issued by UKPN. MC confirmed that he was happy on behalf of UKPN for the bulletin to be circulated with the ICP Forum and NERSAP meeting minutes.

### **4.2 Content of NERS Requirements Document v11**

PC had invited comments from the ICP community on v10 and any suggested areas that needed addition/revision/deletion or clarification for the future version v11. No comments were received. PC extended the invitation for comments to the NERSAP meeting and JB advised that clarification was needed concerning Project Management scopes, in particular whether a customer should hold PM scopes when they are simply introducing a client to a primary provider and not materially affecting the execution of the works or entering into an adoption agreement with a network operator. It was suggested that a decision-making flow-diagram may assist. PC confirmed that where a primary provider holds an adoption agreement directly with a network operator there is no need for that provider to be project-managed by their client. EC confirmed this and DE confirmed his understanding that the requirement for an ICP not holding an adoption agreement does not fall under the project Management requirements of NERS. DJ agreed that a flow-chart would be beneficial.

### **4.3 NERS Staffing**

PC advised that a new starter had commenced with LRQA in January 2026 and that Dave Ellis had left LRQA in March 2026. LRQA were therefore still looking to recruit an additional Assessor.

### **4.4 INA Substation Earthing**

PC advised that the INA had been seeking a meeting with LRQA to discuss their concerns about the standard of design and construction competence with regard to substation earthing but had cancelled the arranged meeting the day before it was due to take place. PC invited DMcD to comment and he responded that the INA

were keen to discuss this, and BF advised that standards were found to be questionable and that LRQA don't have a NERS scope that is specific to substation earthing and suggested that LRQA should specify that earthing standards should be to the incumbent DNO standards. PC advised that LRQA were not a utilities design appraisal organisation and close evaluation of designs would require a fundamental change in how NERS is managed. PC asked if BF knew why the proposed meeting had been cancelled and BF responded that he did not but would attempt to find out. JL suggested that a standard specification across all DNO/IDNOs would be beneficial. BF confirmed that the standard is produced by the ENA but there are deviations and it would be easier to specify the standard based on the incumbent DNO standard.

#### **4.5 Substation Construction**

PC had advised ICPs that substation construction (i.e. the 'bricks and mortar') of a substation, was not presently a NERS scope, but that consideration would be given to this in future.

#### **4.6 EUSR "Right Card" Scheme**

PC advised that a more detailed EUSR presentation had been given at the ICP Forum and questions had been taken away by EUSR for a comprehensive answer.

#### **4.7 Memorandum of Understanding**

PC advised that there were only two outstanding signatures required (UKPN and Harlaxton). **\*Post meeting note – Leep are also yet to sign.**

### **5. Review of Minutes & Actions from NERS Providers Forum Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

PC summarised the content of the meeting as follows:

#### **5.1 UKPN Bulletin re Genie 'Evo' Switchgear**

This was discussed at the ICP Forum and MC gave a brief overview of the issue.

#### **5.2 EUSR "Right Card" Scheme**

PC advised that a more detailed EUSR presentation had been given at the ICP Forum and questions had been taken away by EUSR for a comprehensive answer.

#### **5.3 Work Commencing Before Design Approval Obtained**

EC confirmed that pressure exists from developers on ICPs to make connections quickly but believed that a mandatory step in the NERS Requirements document of obtaining design approval before construction starts would be helpful, but that starting before approval is obtained would be at the ICP's risk. JB confirmed that he had seen this pressure a lot but that his company would not start construction work without first receiving design approval and supported a mandatory step of obtaining design approval before construction work commenced.

## **5.4 Network Operator Audit Failure Rates**

PC confirmed that he had sought permission from UKPN to circulate their '10 Steps to Compliance' document and that this permission had been granted. This was circulated with the minutes of the last ICP Forum.

## **5.5 NERS Requirements Document v11**

PC advised that he had invited comments for change at the last NERS ICP Forum and invited members of this meeting to come forward with any suggested changes, additions or clarification for v11.

## **5.6 Acceptance by DNOs of Designs from Design ICPs**

PC advised that following two ICP complaints to him, he had raised this with the CiCCoP Panel as a potential change to the CoP to make it clear that Design ICPs should be treated as Construction ICPs in that designs should be accepted from them even if they were not also the construction provider. PC had been asked by the CiCCoP panel to provide more detail but only one of the two ICPs who were complaining had provided evidence to substantiate their respective complaint. The DNO involved with one of the substantiated complaints had changed their processes accordingly and PC considered the matter closed as the minutes of the CiCCoP meetings were a point of reference confirming that all DNOs accept designs from 'design-only' ICPs in case of any future complaints.

## **6. Update on NERS Strategy Working Group**

PC advised that the last meeting had been cancelled due to member's lack of availability, but it was a good idea to re-establish member's interest in remaining on this group. Proposed membership is DE, MC, TT, EC, MC, BF. PW agreed to update on Mel Swift's intentions to continue as a member. Subjects for discussion include the Requirement Document v11

## **7. Update on Management of Design Competency Review**

PC advised that he was due to meet with EUSR with a view to obtaining details of the comments made when the document was sent out for consultation, and an editable copy of the document to use as the basis for review / amendment. The previously arranged meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> March was cancelled by EUSR, and this is now rescheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026.

## **8. Letter from INA re substation earthing competency**

Discussed at (4.4) above.

## **9. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**

PC reported that signatures were awaited from UKPN and Harlaxton and MC and CT respectively agreed to expedite this without delay. **\*Post meeting note – still awaiting signature by Leep Utilities.**

## **10. NERS Report**

PC presented the data concerning visits and findings and this will be circulated with the minutes of this meeting as they contained quite detailed data which can be scrutinised by members.

KF advised that lack of supervision of ICP operatives was a concern of his as well as the detail of task instructions.

PC advised that there are now in excess of 500 ICPs with NERS accreditation.

## **11. Installation of new Chairperson and election of new Deputy Chairperson**

PC confirmed that Ephie Chalakateva would be installed as NERSAP Chairperson with effect from the July 2026 meeting. BF and DE advised that they were happy to be nominated as Deputy Chairperson and PC advised that he would seek a vote from each NERSAP member to indicate their preferred candidate as having two Deputies would require a change to the MoU.

## **12. AOB and dates of 2026 meetings**

EC asked about the suspension of ICPs due to financial issues. As a DNO when NGED sees that an ICP has been suspended they need to think about whether to halt any work in their respective areas. PC advised that the DNO would have to make a decision taking into account the reason for suspension (i.e. an unpaid LRQA invoice as opposed to a major safety breach). EC advised that more guidance to DNOs would be beneficial. JL advised that SSEN are currently stopping works where ICPs are suspended and that perhaps there should be more sanctions against ICPs who are suspended e.g. by suspending for say 3 months. KM commented that the period of suspension might be a good idea. JB commented that the required clarity could be in v11 of the NERS Requirements Document. KM commented that any sanctions against non-paying ICPs would have to be consistent over NERS, WIRS and GIRS.

PC commented that a protocol is needed for dealing with ICPs being taken over by other organisations who see the NERS accreditation as part of the attractiveness of buying that ICP.

KM extended his and LRQA's thanks for the work Paul Wragg had done with the NERSAP over many years and that he would be missed by all.

PW extended his best wishes to everyone as he would be retired by the time of the next meeting. PW advised EC that PC would be a great support to her as Chairperson as he had been during his own Chairpersonship and that of his predecessors.

PC thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and closed the meeting.

Dates for the remaining 2026 meetings are:

NERS Provider Forum 14<sup>th</sup> July, 10<sup>th</sup> November

NERSAP 28<sup>th</sup> July, 24<sup>th</sup> November