



Minutes of the NERS Provider Forum

Microsoft Teams Meeting on 11th March 2026 10:00am

Attendees:

Aaron Lee	Daniel Rouse	Jetmir Leka	Peter Coster
Adam Cook	Danny Asser	John Carden	Peter Salmon
Adrian Horwell	Danny Phillips	Jon Breeze	Philip Henderson
Alan Jones	Dave Ellis	Joshua Asobi	Rachel Dickinson
Alex Fornal	Dave Jones	Julia Cotogno	Rachel Thomas
Alex Parmley	Dave Massey	Julian Harris	Raymond McGuire
Alistair Head	Dave Zollo	Julie Tyrrell	Rebecca Mason
Andre Ceia	David Butler	Karl Miller	Rebecca Pollock
Andrew Oakes	David Daniels	Katie Drewery	Richard Gardiner
Andy Lund	David Todd	Keith Aggett	Richard King
Anthony Martin	Divyesh Jansari	Keith Montague	Robert Vernon
Antony Harding	Elena Gorman	Kevin Wilkinson	Robyn Southward
Arun Karunakaran	Emily Conner	Land & Power	Rupinder Sandhu
Ben Brownbill	Ephie Chalakateva	Lee Hewett	Russell Davis
Ben Feltham	Fergus Kaye	Lee Homer	Rutendo Chihota
Ben Wassell	Fionnuala Ward	Lee Onslow	Sam Polley
Bill Wilson	Fred Harrington	Lisa Sandle	Scott Cozens
Bob Fearnley	Gareth Davis	Mark Bryant	Sharon Coulter
Brendan Hoy	Gareth Walker	Martin Burns	Spencer Harrison
Byron Newsome	Gary Madgwick	Mica Robins	Stephen Potter
Callum Killen	Gavin Walsh	Michael Waller	Steve Abbott
Carl Blezard	Gerard Clark	Mick Beeby	Steve Davies
Charmaine Boddington	Graham Commons	Natalie	Steve Gain
Cherelle Tooley	Grant Murphy	Natasha Yates	Steve Mander
Chris Clark	James Barker	Neil Crawford	Steven Orton
Chris Mulrooney	James Burnett	Niall Bowler	Thomas Scott
Colin Lymer	James Powell	Paul Brunsdon	Tom Radford
Colin Taylor	James Windeatt	Paul Costelloe	Tracey Taylor
Craig Smith	James Zunda	Paul Dewan	Viki Woolcock
Curtis O'Connell	Janet Kynaston	Paul Hardy	Zach Bullock
Damien McGee	Jason Newman	Paul Ingram	Zoe Close
Dan Earwaker	Jason Reddin	Paul Swift	Zoe O'Neill
Daniel Miller	Jenny Nelson	Paul Wragg	

1. Introductions

Paul Costelloe (PC) of LRQA introduced himself, Karl Miller (KM) the LRQA Utilities Business Unit Manager Paul Wragg (PW), NERSAP Chairperson, Ephie Chalakateva (EC) NERSAP Deputy Chairperson and Dave Ellis (DE), Senior Assessor at LRQA,. PC thanked everyone for their attendance and reiterated that due to the number of attendees, formal introductions were foregone. The agenda was reviewed and the arrangements for this Teams Meeting were described. PC advised that the meeting was being recorded on Microsoft Teams for the purposes of accurately capturing discussions for the meeting minutes.

As this was a Teams meeting and there were no restrictions to numbers, 614 invitations had been sent and there had been 103 acceptances and 34 declined. With 131 attending on the day, due to the nature of the open invitation, only attendees are identified in the minutes.

PC advised that as it was Armistice Day the meeting would observe at 2-minute silence at 11am.

2. Acceptance of previous minutes

The minutes were accepted as a true record of that meeting and a brief overview of the various topics documented in the minutes is provided in Section 4 of these minutes.

3. 'Right Card' Scheme (EUSR/CSCS)

PC gave an update on the proposal to hold a separate EUSR presentation and would be sending out invites as EUSR were not able to make this meeting and Graham Commons (GC) and Mick Beeby (MB) welcomed the opportunity to attend an update by EUSR. KM commented that EUSR would be communicating the changes across the industry and he welcomed this.

Divyesh Jansari (DJ) asked if the CSCS card was in addition to NERS competency certificates and PC replied that discussions with EUSR were aimed at the NERS competency certificates being acceptable evidence to qualify an operative to hold the relevant CSCS card.

GC commented that a lot of effort was already being put into assessing competency in the industry, which should negate the need for EUSR to assess the fitness of an individual to hold a CSCS card.

Bob Fearnley commented that he was aware of a training organisation that can provide the CSCS card and PC responded that EUSR were going to be allowing trainers to collate evidence and to apply for a CSCS card on the individual's behalf but thought it unlikely that they would be doing this free of charge.

Carl Blezard (CB) commented that it was up to each individual site to stipulate whether or not a CSCS card was required so possession of a CSCS card would not be mandatory. MB responded that such variations would lead to confusion and a precedent be set so that CSCS cards would be required in all cases.

Steve Davies (SD) commented that a CSCS card would demonstrate competence to a developer for example. MB agreed but questioned why the determination of competence and hence fitness to hold the relevant CSCS card would be done by EUSR when it was likely to already have been done by an operative's employer.

KM advised that he was aware of circumstances where operative's qualification certificates were not available and was therefore preventing difficulty in gaining a relevant card. GC commented that this may lead to a shortage of much-needed skills in the industry.

Rachel Thomas (RT) and Fergus Kaye (FK) of EUSR joined the meeting to give a presentation on the upcoming 'Right-Card' scheme. Questions arising were:

Q. Is there still an intention to roll out a briefing for Site Managers etc on what to accept before allowing operatives on to their sites ?

A. There may not be a need to roll out additional briefing if sites use the 'Smart Check' app. As they are being encouraged to do.

Q. Will cards bearing the CSCS hologram (e.g. SHEA Power, Gas, Water) issued before June 2026 still be acceptable as a CSCS card on their own ?

A. Cards will continue to be valid until renewal but clarification would be sought from CSCS by EUSR.

Q. What about for example, Managers. Auditors etc who are not carrying out craft activities ?

A. These may be on the 'exempt' list PC commented that although LRQA auditors have applied via professional membership to CSCS for a Professionally Qualified person, not everyone is a member of a professional organisation.

Q. Will operatives carrying out utility civils works on site who are not employees of a NERS accredited organisation (e.g. developer ground workers) require the appropriate CSCS card.

A. Ground workers will require a CSCS card but it may be that this is not applied for via EUSR as ground workers carry out 'non-utilities' work on site also.

Q. Can a NERS passport not be used in lieu of a CSCS card ?

A. A site manager might not be familiar with a NERS passport as evidence but a CSCS card is more universally accepted. However agreement has been reached with EUSR to accept 'alternatives' such a Certificates of Competence issued by NERS accredited organisations.

Q. Where multi-skilled teams are employed, will a card just be required for their primary activity ?

A. PC commented that he would expect the various eligibilities to be summarised on one card, the same as SHEA Power, Gas and Water if an operative hold more than 1 qualification.

Q. Can we have a copy of the slides presented to attach to the minutes of this meeting ?

A. Yes – PC will circulate once received from EUSR.

Q. Will there be a card for able layers since this did not appear on the slide showing the types of card available ?

A. Yes this will be looked at to align more closely with the NERS scopes.

Q. Will the SHEA course suffice as regards training for manual handling, HAVs, CoSHH etc and if not could it be expanded to avoid additional course(s).

A. SHEA is only an appreciation course and not intended to substitute for specific course such as Manual Handling, WAH etc.

Q. Will the EUSR presentation be given to the Advisory Panel meetings as well as the Forums

A. EUSR are happy to present to all.

4. Matters discussed at previous Forum Meeting on 11th November 2025

4.1 Number of attendees

PC advised that there had been 146 attendees at the previous Forum meeting on 11th November 2025

4.2 SPEN Safety Bulletin

PC advised that a Safety Bulletin had been issued by Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) concerning the back feed of a transformer by a generator which was discussed.

4.3 NERS Requirements Document v10 and proposed v11

PC advised that v10 had been issued in March 2025 and invited comments from ICPs on suggested changes/additions/ deletions and clarifications that anyone would like to see in v11.

4.4 'Right Card' scheme (EUSR/CSCS)

Covered above.

4.5 NERS Staffing by LRQA

PC advised that an additional assessor had been recruited who was now utilised fully, and that a further Assessor had joined LRQA on 5th January 2026 but that Dave Ellis would be leaving LRQA on 17th March 2026. PC advised that LRQA are still looking for additional assessor.

4.6 Internal meter positions

This had been raised by an ICP representative at the previous meeting as there was still concern about ICPs, (most often in Scotland) being asked to connect properties at unsuitable meter positions (e.g. on internal walls and beneath stairs). PC re-iterated the general consensus of ICPs and those network operators who were present at the last meeting, that ICPs should not be connecting services to unsatisfactory meter positions against ENA standards, and by continuing to do so were undermining their own case for complaint. MB confirmed this and stressed that developers need to be steered away from this practice where possible.

4.7 Work commencing before design approval is obtained

PC confirmed that the NERS Requirements document would be amended per NGED's request to emphasis that construction should not commence before design approval is obtained. MB confirmed that developers were under time pressures and therefore this was passed onto ICPs leading to construction commencing before design approval is obtained. EC confirmed that such a stipulation would protect the ICPs. Alex Parmley (AP) confirmed this. EC confirmed that NGED accept design submissions from 'design-only' ICPs but they still need to be involved in the design approval, inspection and handover process since the inspection process becomes more difficult if NGED don't know exactly what they're inspecting without an approved design. Bob Fearnley (BF) asked for a copy of NGED's policy on this. MB commented that the contract between ICP and network Operator would not allow construction work to commence without design approval in place. PC agreed to seek approval from UKPN to circulate their document '10 Steps to Compliance' to assist network operators in having a policy on this.

4.8 Substation Civil Works Accreditation

PC confirmed that LRQA had been requested in previous forum meetings and NERSAP to consider bringing the civil works associated with sub-station construction under NERS.

4.9 INA Substation Earthing

PC advised that LRQA had agreed to meet with INA to discuss this but that the INA had cancelled the meeting the day before it was due to take place. MB advised that INA would refer back to LRQA with a view to rescheduling this meeting.

5 Matters Discussed at Previous NERSAP Meeting on 25th November 2025

Time constraints meant that with the focus on agenda item 3 above and the detailed discussions on this meant that discussion on this agenda item was curtailed.

5.1 NERS Requirements document v11

PC invited suggested changes, additions amendments for consideration in v11 of the NERS Requirements document.

5.2 NERS Passport Issues

GC confirmed that the suggested 'Confirmation of Competency' document produced by LRQA had gone some way to addressing issues with NERS passports.

5.3 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

PC confirmed that this had been discussed at the last NERSAP meeting and that LRQA were very close to receiving signed copies from all NERSAP members with just two outstanding.

5.4 Near misses- shallow cables

James Barker (JB) confirmed that an initiative by the Highway Electrical Association to raise awareness of these near misses had commenced. JB agreed to update the meeting with findings and initiatives resulting from data collection in this area. PW advised that there was a lot of evidence to suggest that digging straight down on cables without understanding the depth was being done.

5.5 Acceptance by DNOs of designs from Design ICPs

PC advised that he had made a proposal to the Competition in Connections Code of Practice panel to clarify that 'design-only' ICPs have no less ability to submit designs for approval than construction ICPs but the panel had asked for specific details (i.e. projects) where this had been an issue so that these instances could be investigated. Some information had been received from an ICP which enabled NPg to modify an internal process, but the complainant who referred to other DNOs had failed to substantiate their claim of unfair practice and PC advised that he would not be pursuing this any further with the CiC CoP panel.

6 Governance of Design Competency Review

PC advised that a meeting planned with EUSR for Friday 13th to discuss feedback received from the consultation exercise looked likely to be cancelled by EUSR.

7 NERS Requirements Document

PC advised that v10 was published March 1st, 2025, and invited any suggestions for amendments, additions etc for V11. KM commented that NERS is administered by LRQA on behalf of NERSAP which consists of a number of stakeholders. Any changes are with the approval of NERSAP not solely LRQA.

GC commented that the dramatically increased attendance at this meeting demonstrates that the ICP community is aware that they have an opportunity to instigate change. GC thanked LRQA for their work to date in involving the ICP community.

8 LRQA Report

PC advised that the LRQA report would be submitted with the minutes of this meeting as usual but due to time constraints this would not be presented at this meeting.

9 Any Other Business

PC reiterated that due to time constraints the LRQA report will be circulated with the minutes of this meeting.

MB commented on a UKPN Safety Bulletin concerning Genie Evo switchgear and PC agreed to circulate it with the minutes of this meeting.

GC thanked Dave Ellis for the hard work he had contributed to these meetings and this was echoed by the meeting. Paul Wragg (PW) advised that he was retiring and the meeting thanked him for his Chairmanship of the NERS Advisory Panel and his many years of work prior.

10 Dates of Next Meetings (subject to NERSAP confirmation)

- NERS Provider Forum 14th July 2026, 10th November 2026
- NERSAP 24th March 2026, 28th July 2026, 24th November 2026