

Minutes of GIRS Advisory Panel Meeting

Microsoft Teams Meeting



2nd June 2026 10:00 am

Attendees

Les Thomas (LT)	leslie.thomas@lrqa.com (Secretary)
Leigh Keegan (LK)	leigh.keegan@sgn.co.uk (Chairperson)
Gareth Arnold (GA)	gareth.arnold@indigonetworks.co.uk
Richard Welsby (RWe)	Richard.welsby@lastmile-uk.com
Paul Leighton (PL)	Paul.Leighton@fulcrum.co.uk
Geoffrey Harle (GH)	GHarle@northerngas.co.uk
Jemima Mitchell (JM)	Jemima.mitchell@cadentgas.co.uk
Paul Chan (PC)	paulchan@energyassets.co.uk
Alex Green (AG)	Alex.Green@espug.com
Dave Morgan (DM)	dave.morgan@fincherutilitiesltd.co.uk
Karl Miller (KM)	Karl.Miller@lrqa.com
Andrew Fitzgerald (AF)	Andrew.Fitzgerald@wwutilities.co.uk
Peter O'Neill (PO)	peter.oneil@cadentgas.com
Evan Stanton (ES)	Evan.Stanton@wwutilities.co.uk
Dean O'Dee	dean.odee@me.com
Keith Johnston	Keith.Johnston@gtc-uk.co.uk

1. Welcome introductions and apologies for absence.

LK welcomed everyone to the 2nd GIRSAP meeting of 2026 and thanked everyone for the good turnout.

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Rachel Whitelock, Jemima Mitchell and Alex Green had apologised as they would be late attendees

2. Acceptance of previous minutes & matters arising

The previous minutes dated 27th January 2026 were accepted as a true record of events.

2.1. The outstanding Actions from Previous Meeting were discussed as follows.

2.1.1. Cadent Weekly Whereabouts

There was an open action for LRQA to consider the development of a central repository on an LRQA SharePoint site for whereabouts to be submitted.

At the May UIP forum it was agreed to close the action, as there is no short-term prospect of implementation and it is not currently a priority.

ACTION BY

2.1.2. EUSR SHEA – CSCS Qualifications

An update was provided on EUSRs new process where CPs were losing above 180mm and Distribution qualifications during EUSR ratification. This impacts candidates holding an early City & Guilds certificate (6029 or earlier).

LT advised the panel that older qualifications may initially be rejected, but cases can be escalated for individual review.

To start a review, application details should be sent to enquiries@eusr.co.uk for the attention of Fergus Kaye. At the UIP forum, attendees were reminded to include full supporting evidence for EUSR panel escalation.

For Information Andy Kear has received his full Cards following this process

2.1.3 EUSR SHEA – CSCS relationships

In the UIP forum, the discussion centred on the inconsistent recognition of EUSR and CSCS numbers within site induction systems, including issues on a recent Persimmon site where a general induction is required using the Persimmon Way App.

LT confirmed that as part of a recent ISO55001:2014 assessment, LT and some iGT management were recently asked to undergo the group induction using the APP, the team's EUSR References did not allow access. LT used his Professionally Qualified Person CSCS card and following instruction by the Site Manager, the iGT staff gained access by stating they were delivery drivers.

LT reiterated that at the UIP Forum, Phillip Henderson indicated that he had used the APP and his EUSR reference number was acceptable. EUSR agreed to investigate specific cases and to provide further clarification on role exemptions and card recognition.

2.1.4 Body Vent Requirements

At the last GIRSAP, it was agreed that LT would send Peter Tootell the email addresses of the GIRSAP members so that Peter could send a draft design for their approval.

LT apologised to the UIP forum as he had only sent Peter Tootell the addresses on May 18th. On Friday, LT asked Peter if he had sent the draft design as suggested. It was confirmed that this has not yet been done.

2.1.5 UIP performance

LT confirmed that, ahead of three-year recertification, LRQA will be requesting completion file performance evidence from GTs and as instructed in the January GIRSAP, LT has prepared an amendment to A1.6 of GIG 2.

Durning discussions PO reiterated that for LRQA to assess a UIP ability to issue a completion file successfully, there needs to be a review of work flow management arrangements, as too often, when a company is project managing a subcontractor, the Project Management

company complains that the performance of the sub-contractor is not their issue. PO reminds the UIP that the contractual obligations lie with the company that holds the Final Connections Agreement so it is the responsibility of that company, and not the sub contract company to ensure that all GT requirements are met. The proposed wording drew no objections from the UIP forum and was agreed at GIRSAP. The proposed wording agreed is as follows: <i>UIPs are reminded that the three yearly reaccreditation process requires LRQA to request UIP performance information from all Network Owners prior to recertification. The responses are used to inform the assessment in relation to conformance with Network owner requirements.</i> The New version of the GIRS Requirements document will be published with the minutes of this meeting for implementation on the 1st September 2026. 2.1.6 SCO10 Arrangements At the UIP Forum the UIPs raised concerns that SCO10 is being applied inconsistently across networks, with some networks requesting full applications, multiple work examples, network-specific evidence, and a lengthy submission processes even for what should be an annual review. GIRSAP were requested to reiterate requirements. During discussion it was clarified that the SCO10 matrix is for new entrants, extension of current registrations and also, W&WU clarified that for renewals, when a principal qualification relative to the registration (NCO(G) Etc.) expires, the SCO10 process should be used to send in the new information. It was reiterated that annual reviews for unchanged registrations should be completed using the annual review completion letter (page 38 of SCO10). It was also noted that SGN and Cadent issue Standard Notification (4), Review of Registration Details – Annual Review, in line with section 7 of SCO10. Each year, not all network owners follow this process, and UIPs were reminded of the reviewing manager’s responsibilities to ensure the necessary information is sent to the network owners. During discussion it was also reiterated that whilst there is an acceptance that the SCO 10 process is new, and the network owners are collectively trying to get people through the process, there was a consensus that often, the wrong information is being sent and the GTs are involved in a lot of chasing for the right information. Email issues The UIP forum highlighted problems experienced when applying for registration activities, as the submissions require large email attachments (3 examples of each RO or NRO type etc.). Clearly there are mailbox restrictions, which prevent emailing a single file and this is resulting in an administrative burden as the UIP has to send evidence across multiple emails. Alternative file-sharing methods such as google drive, or “We Transfer” were discussed with the GDNs stating that cyber security requirements prevented them from using such file	LT/KM LT
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sharing options. It was reiterated that even ZIP files can provide issues. Consequently, there was nothing that could be done to ease the burden when issuing such SCO10 data. Data Sharing The UIP forum highlighted that as many of the GDNs are using the Mineral Blue system could the system be used to transfer data. GH agreed to raise this with QEM and in a subsequent email he stated. <i>Addendum to meeting</i> <i>They (QEM) have confirmed this is something that can be done are in the process of building a system to allow this to happen, however this will require the buy in from all the GT's / Mineral Blue users.</i> <i>Speaking to them they are planning to try and arrange a workshop to allow each GT to be represented so they can flesh out what works best for the collective.</i> LK informed the meeting that SGN are experimenting with SharePoint that will allow external organisations access to secure file structure such that they can upload files. As part of the trials he would look at the how the system could work for other scenarios such as the SCO data and would report back AG reminded the meeting that whilst the GDNs may be adopting Mineral Blue, this was not necessarily the case for iGTs, and the existing arrangements would need to continue. SCO10 Service Level Agreements The UIP forum has requested that if the Network Owners are requesting large amounts of documentation and the UIPs diligently supply it, that there should be a service level agreement for a response, as it seems not all network owners are looking at their mailbox. During discussion it was confirmed that the network control teams are “Light” across the board and gaining access to the responsible engineer remains an issue. Consequently, a fixed SLA is not practical at the moment, and even if it were, it would only be on receipt of a Valid submission pack. Cadent’s requirements for 3x mentored evidence on a Cadent network At the UIP forum an email from Karl Brayson dated 1.05.2026 was tabled that stated : <i>We reviewed your query on Tuesday, and the preference is 3x mentored evidence on a Cadent network as our internal policy and procedures slightly differ to the other gas distribution networks.</i> <i>However, mentored evidence from other networks will be accepted due to the reduction in IGT works, and that the assessment will be conducted on an individual basis to ensure mentored evidence reflects the required standards for the Cadent network.</i> Cadent are asked to confirm if this stance applies to the wider UIP community.	GH LK
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GH stated that due to the reduction in the new connections workload, NGN allow evidence of mentored connections on other networks and PO agreed that he would take up the issue and clarify Cadent's position. 2.1.7 F.H.S. and the impact on the GIRS Scheme LT gave an update on The Building Regulations etc. (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2026 (SI 2026/335), which were published on 24 March 2026 and come into force on 24 March 2027. They state: 24 March 2027 — all new homes must comply with the FHS unless covered by transitional arrangements. The transition period is 12 months from 24 March 2027 so ends 24 March 2028 Any plot not registered by March 2027 or commenced by March 2028 must comply with the FHS. (Meaningful commencement means foundations and installation of drainage. This does not affect I&C connections which will continue. Gas is not banned by name, but no gas-fired system can meet the carbon-performance requirements, meaning developers cannot legally install gas boilers in compliant new homes. As requested LRQA have drafted an initial Risk Register to start the discussion which was tabled for consideration and comment in readiness for approval in September. During discussion, a key risk to UIPs being unable to maintain the surveillance schedule for all scopes was discussed in detail and a proposal to amend A.1.6. of GIG 2 to change the requirement at recertification to reduce to partial all scopes not witnessed in the last 12 months, to all scopes not witnessed in the current accreditation period. This was agreed. A discussion relating to the scoring and objectivity ensued, but it was reiterated that the purpose of the risk register is to start the discussion and for the advisory panel to develop this collectively. It was reiterated that due to the timescale, there may need to be a bespoke meeting in advance of the September GIRSAP. GIRS risk 9 was also discussed in some detail that relates to UIPs ceasing to operate and or going in to liquidation before sending in completion files. Cadent and SGN operate such a process for G17 projects and those including the installation of district governors. The discussion centred on the possible need to implement the TD101 certification file process in advance of issuing a clearance to proceed for higher risk projects.	PO
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3. LRQA Report

3.1.1. Surveillance visits Annual Report for Year-to-Date 2026

The surveillance visit detailed results were included as an attachment to the meeting invite and are summarised as follows:

There are 156 active companies listed on the web site, six of which are currently suspended having let their Partial Accreditation Status Lapse. 37 remain at partial accreditation.

3.1.2. Discussion of Findings raised – 2026

- 17 on site Surveillance Visits
 - 13 Design Surveillance Visits
- } (226 total in 2025)
- 9 Recertification visits (15 total in 2025)
 - 7 Partial Assessments (15 total in 2024)
 - 1 Partial to full Assessments (7 total in 2025)

During the surveillance visits the following deficiencies have been identified:

- 0 Major Deficiency (8 total in 2025)
- 27 Minor Deficiencies (99 in 2025)
- 43 visits with no deficiencies (147 During 2025)

A breakdown of the sections with the highest findings was provided that demonstrated most findings are raised under section 7. This included the requirements to have two sets of Breathing apparatus available and in calibration.

4. Review of UIP Forum Minutes dated 19th May 2026

4.1. Cadent Weekly Whereabouts

Discussed in 2a.1 above.

4.2 Cadent Quotes for Mains Cut-Offs

An update was provided on the ongoing Ofgem workshops concerning gas disconnections, costs, section 50 constraints, and safe methods of service cut-off. KM commented on the lack of understanding of operational activities demonstrated within OfGEM. This was subsequently provided by the LRQA and iGT representatives.

AG reiterated the concerns as there seemed to be little understanding of the difference between the statutory disconnection process and the requested disconnection processes.

This is likely to roll on for some time, hence the UIP forum and GIRSAP agreed to close this action and to await Ofgem's follow-up document before bringing the matter back for further consideration.

4.3. EUSR SHEA – CSCS relationships

Discussed in 2.1.3 above

4.4 Body Vent Requirements

Discussed in 2.1.4 above

4.5 The right of a GT to complain to LRQA where a UIP is not meeting their obligations in GIG2 and how that complaint should be received/actioned.

Discussed in 2.1.5 UIP Performance above.

4.6 SCO10

Discussed in 2a.5 above

4.7 Future Homes Standard Discussion

Discussed in 2.17 above.

4.8 Energy Utilities Alliance Presentation

A presentation was provided to the UIPs by Debbie Mitchell of the EUA. A summary of the presentation is included as 3.6 in the UIP forum minutes, and the presentation is included with the minutes of this meeting.

4.9 Standardisation of FM144 forms

The UIP forum has asked if the Network Owners would consider standardising FM144 communication forms across the companies to increase efficiency. If the owners cannot agree on a standard form, as Aptus rationalises their structure and systemises the issue of various forms, would the Network Owners accept a UIP generated form that would have all the information they require, but in a UIP_ based format?

There was a useful discussion where the differing requirements of the GDNs and iGTS were explained. SGN use a two-part form that is issued with the design submission acceptance and is used to prevent unauthorised connections as clearance to proceed is deemed when part A of the form is issued. The proposal was rejected.

4.9 AE Access to company mapping systems

The UIPs request easier access to mapping systems and highlighted difficulties with current login processes and lack of centralized information. The UIP forum asks could access to maps be linked not only to companies with the final connections agreement, but also for individuals, could access be linked to SCO registration as an AE?

The Issues with MAC users was explained as this is understood to be due the DNVGL mapping download arrangements and not to the ability to access Cadent Maps. The log on process for UIPs was explained, and it was explained that the restrictions of who can access Cadent maps are a result of the Webmaps & Ordnance survey copyright licence arrangements that limit the organisations that can access their systems.

LK informed the meeting that all AEs and CPs can approach LK for access to SGN's web based mapping system.

4.10 Design Houses communication processes

DACI highlighted that Cadent requires design organisations to hold PM accreditation to submit designs. DACI said it is accredited for design, not site management, and believes design houses are better placed to manage design than construction-focused UIPs.

This approach pushes construction-accredited UIPs into managing design work outside their experience and accreditation. DACI said this prevents accredited design houses from submitting designs directly while requiring UIPs to oversee work beyond their expertise.

PO reiterated the previous responses related to the final connection's agreements and issues experienced when a design houses acts as an agent of the construction UIP. Cadent have had experience of a construction UIP refusing to construct as per the approved design, and the current stance has been implemented to prevent a recurrence.

The DACI request was not supported.

5. LRQA Annual Rate review

In accordance with clause 7.2.9 of the GIRS MOU it is incumbent on LRQA to seek the GIRSMG acceptance of proposed increases in assessment costs.

The agreed formula that has been in use since 2013 is
$$NR = \text{current fee} \times (0.1 + 0.9 \times (\text{February Current year indices} / \text{February previous year indices}))$$

In February, the RPI was 3.24% and the CPI was 3.2%.

LRQA has once again chosen the lower of the two figures and due to rounding down to the nearest pound, this year's rate increase is 3.16% as the rate is increased from £1204 to £1242, an increase of £38.

The increase was agreed.

6. AOB

LK explained the impact of the new Economic Test used by all GT's and the fact that the Appraisal period and Asset life was altered from 45 years to 23 years to meet Ofgem's decarbonisation target of 2050. This will mean as time progresses, there will be less contribution from the GT and more from the customer until such time the reinforcement is fully funded by the client.

Dave Morgan announced that he would be standing down as the UIP representative from the next UIP Forum and as such would not be representing the UIP community at the next GIRSAP. Those present thanked Dave for all his support and input over the years.

LT & KM confirmed that LRQA would continue to support the GIRS process until such time that the industry could no longer support the processes offered.

7. Next meeting dates

LK thanked everyone attending and for participating in what was again a useful discussion.

The following meeting dates were agreed.

GIRS UIP	15th September
GIRSAP	29 th September