

Minutes of GIRS Advisory Panel Meeting

Microsoft Teams Meeting



23rd September 2025 10:00 am

Attendees

Les Thomas (LT)	leslie.thomas@lrqa.com (Secretary)
Leigh Keegan (LK)	leigh.keegan@sgn.co.uk (Chairperson)
Paul Leighton (PL)	Paul.Leighton@fulcrum.co.uk
Dean O'Dee (DO)	dean.odee@me.com
Geoffrey Harle (GH)	GHarle@northerngas.co.uk
Dave Morgan (DM)	dave.morgan@fincherutilitiesltd.co.uk
Bharath Devaiah (BD)	Bharath.Devaiah@cadentgas.com
Rachel Whitelock (RWh)	rachel.whitelock@wwutilities.co.uk
Peter O'Neill (PO)	peter.oneil@cadentgas.com
Richard Welsby (RWe)	Richard.welsby@lastmile-uk.com
Paul Chan (PC)	paulchan@energyassets.co.uk
Jemima Mitchell (JM)	Jemima.mitchell@cadentgas.co.uk

1. Welcome introductions and apologies for absence.

LK welcomed everyone to the 3rd GIRSAP meeting of 2025 and thanked everyone for the good turnout.

There were some new faces, so a quick introduction took place.

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Gareth Arnold, Maria Kirkness, Karl Miller, Alex Green, and Keith Johnston

2. Acceptance of previous minutes & matters arising

The previous minutes dated 20th May 2025 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

KM was not in attendance so there is currently no update.

2.1.2. EUSR SHEA – CSCS Qualifications

Update regarding EUSR and CPs losing their above 180mm and Distribution qualification as EUSR ratify the information provided.

Still no formal solution regarding this. However, if a candidate has an early City & Guilds certificate, (6029 or earlier) when challenged, EUSR are issuing an experienced worker card whilst they ratify the qualifications.

ACTION BY

KM

LK informed the panel that he and Karl Miller attended a meeting and explained the construction industry challenge being faced, where, following Grenfell, the construction industry are trying to allocate job roles to skills, this is proving difficult but is required by April 2026. EUSR arranged a follow up meeting, but this was cancelled at the last minute.

DO stated that he has recently chase EUSR for a response regarding an operative that he is trying to get registered.

Addendum to meeting.

LT received an Email from Daniel McNulty of EUSR dated 23.09.2025 which stated

In January 2025 we introduce changes to our NCO Gas and Water registration schemes to meet with our CSCS license agreement.

Subsequently, we have identified that there are a number of people, working in the industry that achieved their qualifications over 15 years ago. Our challenge has been how to meet our CSCS licence requirements and at the same time not to stop people working and holding the registration categories they have held for many years. As a result we have implemented a new process to review cases on an individual-by-individual basis every week so ensure that any issues are resolved.

2.1.3 Who do EUSR report to?

Previous discussion prompted the question, who does EUSR report to, as there was a consensus that as network owners have responsible engineers who determine the competence of their operatives, and any changes to qualifications should be ratified by them or at least a body that they have influence over.

EUSR report to the Construction Leadership Council, and the CITB. EUSR are the CSCS Alliance Partner for the Utilities sector.

There are 38 CSCS Alliance Partners, including CSCS themselves, who each offer card schemes that display the CSCS logo and meet the Construction Leadership Council recommendations.

2.1.4 EUSR SHEA – CSCS relationships

For Information LT informed the panel that he was recently asked to undergo a group induction for entry on to Barratt Redrow sites. The automated system uses skills registration numbers to gain access to the system.

He tried to use the EUSR Reference it did not accept this – He used his Professionally qualified person CSCS card, reference and this was acceptable.

It is believed you could use a streetworks card reference number, but he did not try this

2.1.5 Body Vent Requirements At the UIP forum, Peter Tootell of Rush Construction asked the forum if anyone had, or knew of, a procedure or specification for installing valve body vents on 7 Bar strategic valves. No attendees had anything, and this led to a discussion on the matter. Discussion at the May GIRSAP the network owners agreed to consider their requirements to establish if a model design could be prepared that their UIPs could use as a basis for their design submission. During discussion it was agreed that LT would arrange a meeting between Peter Tootell and Bharath Devaiah to develop a standard design for tabling at GIRSAP. 3. LRQA Report 3.1.1. Surveillance visits Report Year to Date 2025 The surveillance visit detailed results were included as an attachment to the meeting invite and are summarised as follows: There are 167 active companies listed on the web site 6 of which are currently suspended having let their Partial Accreditation Status Lapse. 41 remain at partial accreditation. 3.1.2. Discussion of Findings raised – 2025 • 158 on site Surveillance Visits • 25 Design Surveillance Visits (22 total in 2024) • 10 Recertification visits (16 total in 2024) • 11 Partial Assessments (15 total in 2024) • 6 Partial to full Assessments (12 total in 2024) During the surveillance visits the following deficiencies have been identified: • 2 Major Deficiency (12 total in 2024) • 64 Minor Deficiencies (100 in 2024) • 76 visits with no deficiencies (112 During 2024) • 6 Comments Made The Major deficiencies identified on site during 2024 were described and a breakdown of the sections with the highest findings was provided that demonstrated most findings are raised under section 7 being, Are two sets of Breathing apparatus available and in calibration. 4. Review of UIP Forum Minutes 9th September 2025 LT explained that due to a miscommunication within LRQA, no one was able to run the UIP Forum which was consequently cancelled.	LT/BD
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5. AOB

5.1. PO - 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

PO questioned LRQA's response following an issue raised where a UIP repeatedly failed to provide completion files. LT reiterated the process in section A 1.4.1 of GIG 2 which describe the arrangements for investigations and even the removal of accreditation. He accepted that in the first instance as the UIP in question did not dispute the matter, the accreditation body could not carry out an investigation. However, as the UIP did not deliver the remediation plan in a subsequent meeting between the UIP, Cadent and LRQA, PO was informed that all LRQA could do was confirm if the UIP had processes and procedures in place.

LT asked if this could be taken offline, as he was not aware of the issue, and he believed, LRQA had a duty to review the operability of the procedures and not just that they existed. It was also agreed to review the wording in A1.4 to clarify any ambiguity and or add the requirement to review the successful implementation of any corrective action plans.

Addendum to meeting

LT to discuss with LRQA some ideas that arose in the offline meeting relating to obtaining objective evidence relating to Completion file performance from GTs as part of the three yearly recertification process.

5.2. SCO registrations

Shiela Lauchlan wrote to LRQA asking to raise an issue relating to SCO registration with iGTs at GIRSAP. When applying for SCO registration with iGTs, Shiela includes any SCO registration certificate with the other evidence to support the application. However, as she understands it, the GT should carry out their own assessment to their procedures. Shiela has had instances in the past where she has had to wait for the GT certificate before iGTs will process the application.

An example quoted was that a GT and iGT have both assessed an individual for works up to 2 bar and have issued registration certificates for their own SCO database. Her client is now trying to get clearance to proceed on an NRO, but this has not been granted by the iGT as the GT certificate has a typo and under 75mbar – 2bar states Routine Operations instead of Non-Routine Operations.

As part of the original application to the iGT Sheila submitted qualification, crossmatch and examples of NRO's where the individual was either mentored (if that was a new scope for them) or examples where they were the CP and had taken the permit.

Sheila suggests for iGTs that although a certificate issued by a GDN gives a level of assurance, that there is a risk within their own business processes where they are relying on another company's procedures and execution of those correctly.

During discussion DM confirmed that generally most iGTs will not issue its own certificate without a GDN certificate being in place. DO stated that occasionally, he has been able to obtain an iGT certificate when a GDN certificate is not in place by demonstrating a robust

coaching and mentoring process on the iGTs network and limiting the registration to PE, site-based connections only. Finally, there was a consensus that yes, the iGTs may be at risk, but that due to the lack of resources and the fact that iGTs have a national footprint, it is difficult to arrange for the first job inspections which is why there is a reliance on the GDN's certificates.

5.3. SCO10

GH informed the panel that the revised SCO10 document has been approved and the date for transitioning to the new paperwork is imminent. This means that under the new process, there would be a simplification of the forms used to streamline the process, the method of retention of registration information by the network owners should be streamlined.

5.4. Uploading of Emergency Cover Drawings to SGN

LK informed the panel that has just been informed that as part of the separation of IT systems following the sale of SGN by SSE, the system of uploading iGT emergency cover drawings has been switched off.

SGN are considering the options for the uploading of these plans including the use of a SharePoint pages etc. However, as he has only just been made aware of the issue he doesn't know if an automated system can be supported at present.

5.5. SLO1

LK wishes to inform the UIP community that SGN have formally adopted SLO1 which is the Specification for Audit Framework for Above 7 Barg Self-Lay Projects

5.6. SGN Connection Services restructure

LK informed the group that SGN's Connection Services department was preparing for a reduction in staffing numbers in readiness for GD3, the GDN Price Review in April 2026.

5.7. Publication of IGEM/TD/101

LK confirmed that IGEM expect TD/101 to be published in November 2025. Most of the changes made were to strengthen the wording and interpretation of the procedures.

6. Next meeting dates

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

The following dates for the 2026 Meetings were agreed

GIRS UIP	13th January 12th May 15th September
GIRSAP	27th January 26th May 29th September

LK