

## Minutes of GIRS Providers Forum



LRQA Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Venue: Microsoft Teams

### Attendees:

| Name                       | Name                     | Name                 |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Les Thomas (LT)            | Dave Wilkins (DW)        | Karl Miller (KM)     |
| Andy Bunten (AB)           | David Morgan (DM)        | Murray Richards (MR) |
| Andy Ginn (AG)             | Dean O'Dee (DO)          | Paul Mason (PM)      |
| Andy Holland (AH)          | Derek Muckle (DM)        | Peter Tootell (PT)   |
| Andy Jones (AJ)            | Eric Dodd (ED)           | Robert Beavis (R)    |
| Angela Fry (AF)            | Graham Cocksey (GC)      | Sarah Parker         |
| Carl Blezard (CB)          | Graham Hill (GH)         | Alan Shaw            |
| Charlotte Berryman (CBM)   | Heather Pippin (HP)      | Steve (Unverified)   |
| Christian Crackle (CC)     | Philip Henderson (PH)    | Steve Richards       |
| Claire Pape (CP)           | Hollie Richardson (HR)   |                      |
| Claire Wilcox (CW)         | Ian Wilson (IW)          |                      |
| Jerry Cowling (JC)         | Kevin Wilkinson (KW)     |                      |
| Daniel Briault (DB)        | Mark (Unverified) (Mark) |                      |
| Daniel Scott (DS)          | Mark Harrison (MH)       |                      |
| Danny (Unverified) (Danny) | Martin Peters (MP)       |                      |

### Apologies / attendees at recent meetings:

The meeting request was issued to over two hundred potential attendees. Numerous apologies were received but have not been listed due to the numbers involved.

### Minutes of Meeting

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

The chair extended a welcome to the new and regularly attending UIP representatives at the UIP Forum, he then proceeded to outline the agenda for the day, noting the presence of 39 attendees and thus deciding to forgo the customary individual introductions.

#### 2. Review and acceptance of Previous Minutes Dated 06<sup>th</sup> May 2025

LT Apologised to the forum, for the cancellation of the September UIP forum, and explained that this was a misunderstanding at LRQA

The minutes of the May meeting were accepted as a true record of events.

#### a) Matters Arising from previous meeting.

The main matters arising were discussed as follows:

##### 2.1. Cadent Weekly Whereabouts

The possible development of a central repository on a SharePoint site was tabled, and KM took an action to see if such a SharePoint with universal access to submit whereabouts but with access to those whereabouts, limited to the adopting network owner and the submitting UIP, was possible.

KM informed the meeting that LRQA had not progressed the SharePoint site to date, as the company is concentrating on updating the IT platform used to host the GIRS, WIRS and NERS registers that is becoming outdated.

LT reminded the forum of GC's concern that having a central repository would mean the site would need to be managed, which could be onerous.

## **2.2. Cadent Quotes for Mains Cut-Offs**

LT informed the meeting that there was no update from OfGEM, but that there was a Gas Disconnections Workshop on 25th November organised by OfGEM and a second workshop is to be held Monday 19th February at the Future Energy Networks (SGN) Office in London. The purpose of the workshop was to agree how the Gas Act needs to be updated in relation to service cut offs in order to ensure competition in the disconnection market, as the drive to net zero, could result in the need for the industry to disconnect circa 20 million services over time.

KM informed the panel that originally, the meeting was to be face-to face, but a second invite had been issued to establish those wishing to attend remotely via "Teams"

KM reiterated that Section 50 costs were likely to be prohibitive to UIP's ability to be competitive in a disconnection market.

AH reminded the panel that Section 50 licences for those other than statutory undertakers are for new connections only, In Nottingham and East midlands, The local authorities prohibit UIPs and Self Lay companies from carrying out service alterations and disconnections. Therefore, unless the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) is also amended, there will be no competition from the UIPs.

## **2.3. EUSR SHEA – CSCS relationships**

For Information LT informed the meeting in his role as a TA that he was recently asked to undergo a group induction for entry on to Barratt / Redrow sites to carry out an audit. The automated system uses skills registration numbers to gain access to the system.

It was clarified that when he tried to use the EUSR Reference (His current EUSR SHEA Gas Card has the CSCS Logo and hologram), the system did not recognise the number. When he used his recently obtained Professionally Qualified person CSCS card reference number, this was accepted and he was able to complete the induction.

The system did state that candidates could use a streetworks card reference number, but he did not try this.

It was reiterated that this is not an EUSR issue, but that the competency arrangements to access construction sites are being driven by the wider construction industry. NCO qualifications are not an issue as these are recognised Construction Skills Council, the issue arises for those roles that do not have a readily identifiable qualification. (E.g. Auditors, inspectors etc.)

There was a useful discussion and both HP and CB confirmed that EUSR are working quickly to address the issue and roles outside of the NCO regime are to be agreed shortly, hopefully in a meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

CB stated for example that for supervisory roles, SHEA Gas and the Managing gas safely qualification, will be sufficient to gain a valid CSCS number

**There were no further matters arising.**

### **3. REVIEW OF GIRSAP MINUTES SEPTEMBER 2025**

#### **3.1 Cadent Weekly Whereabouts**

Discussed in 2.1 Above

#### **3.2. EUSR SHEA – CSCS relationships**

LT gave an update to GIRSAP regarding EUSR and CPs losing their above 180mm and Distribution qualification as EUSR ratify the information provided.

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

“In January 2025 we introduced 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.”

This applies if a candidate has an early City & Guilds certificate, (6029 or earlier)

#### **3.3. Body Vent requirements**

During the May GIRSAP it was agreed that LT would arrange a meeting between Peter Tootell and Bharath Devaiah at Cadent to develop a standard design for tabling at GIRSAP.

Peter Tootell confirmed that as requested, he had sent an example design to Bharath but had not received a response. In advance of this meeting he had written once again but received a bounce back from the email.

GIRSAP are requested to confirm the new contact details for this issue.

#### **3.4. 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**

LT informed the forum that one of the areas discussed with Cadent was that in advance of a recertification assessment, that LRQA can request information relating to obtaining objective evidence relating to Completion file performance from GTs as part of the three yearly recertification process.

During discussion there was a consensus that those in attendance, would support such a process. It was explained that Cadent are seeking to quote connection charges relative to the UIP's performance, however, it was also stated that the elevation in connection charges includes companies who conscientiously try to deliver completion files on time and with adequate information, this contributes to the cost of the additional work required to pursue those companies deemed “repeat offenders”.

Adopting such a process would allow LRQA to pursue companies with a high level of completion file deficiencies but it would also provide an independent review of any rejections, as there is a perception that the issues do not always solely lie with the UIPs. The process would allow LRQA to provide feedback as and when required.

DO informed the meeting that he had recently received a substantial completion letter for a job completed in 2014. He also stated that the company that completed the work is no longer in existence.

CW reiterated her understanding that for minor queries, Cadent should call to resolve minor issues, whereas in fact rejections are always raised, even if one character is indiscernible.

### **3.5. SCO registrations**

LT informed that meeting that prior to the last GIRSAP, 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.

During discussion DO confirmed that 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. CB informed the forum that for most of the iGTS they work with, they have been able gain SCO registration without GDN registration, but that they ensure that the AE carries out the first job inspections

### **3.6 SCO10**

There was a discussion related to the revised SCO10 document that has been issued to all UIPs. Whilst it is understood that under the new process, there should 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.

There are a number of issues when using the form that have been experienced by the UIPs:-

- You cannot sign the form
- The length of time taken for the Network Owner to process the forms
- Freezing panes to see top of the form would be a big help.
- Expanding the cells so that you can see all the content that has been entered. Some cells work; others don't
- Facility to spell check the submission. Its currently blocked from working.

It was also clarified that there seems to be confusion as to when the form is used. Some GDNS appear to require that the annual declaration that the existing SCO data remains valid is going to suffice, with a review of the full NMM form when the existing certificate expires, whereas other GDNS seem to require the NMM form has to be updated annually.

GIRSAP is requested to confirm requirements.

Finally, the discussion centred on the impacts of the Future homes' standard and the potential downturn in activities in the new connections arena and the ability to maintain competence. There was a consensus that this is not an immediate risk, as there will still be the need for the installing UIP to carry out repairs for interference damage etc.

GIRSAP are to be asked for their thoughts on the issue.

### **3.7. Uploading of Emergency Cover Drawings to SGN**

The forum was reminded that Leigh Keegan informed GIRSAP that he had 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 SharePoint pages etc. However, as he had only just been made aware of the issue he doesn't know if an automated system can be supported at present.

The UIPs can confirm that as they do not provide this information SGN, this has not been identified as an issue.

### **3.8. SGN Connection Services restructure**

The forum was reminded that Leigh Keegan informed GIRSAP 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.

## **4. LRQA YTD Report 2025**

The surveillance visit detailed results for 2025 (see attached Report) were presented summarised as follows:

There are 161 Companies Listed on the Web site (-6)

### **Company Info**

**The following companies have been removed from the register**

- AS Utilities Scotland
- Blu-3
- Complete Utility Solutions
- Energy Asset Utilities Ltd (Merger with parent Company)
- Forefront
- Multi Utility UK Ltd
- Network Plus Multi Utility Ltd
- Pascon
- Radius Utilities Ltd (Not to be confused with Radius Subterra)
- Sapphire Utility Solutions
- Self-Lay Services
- South-East Eco
- UCP Choice
- WM Donald Ltd

### **5 New companies have been added to the Register**

- Amjutan Ltd.
- Energy Flow Utilities Ltd.
- KSC Construction Ltd
- MJ Utility Services Ltd
- OCU Services Ltd

#### **4 Company's accreditation remain Suspended**

Generally, these are companies that have let their Partial Accreditation Status Lapse:-

Gasco Ltd  
Mac Civils Ltd  
Nexus Utilities  
Skanska

#### **Throughout 2025 LRQA completed**

207 on site Surveillance Visits }  
20 Design Surveillance Visits } (225 total in 2024)

15 Recertification visits (16 total in 2024)  
15 Partial Assessments (15 total in 2024)  
7 Partial to full Assessments (12 total in 2024)

#### **On Site Deficiencies Identified**

8 Major Deficiencies (12 total in 2024)  
99 Minor Deficiencies (100 in 2024)  
147 visits with no deficiencies (112 During 2024)

#### **Design Deficiencies Identified**

3 Minor Deficiencies (Not reported in 2024)

The Major deficiencies identified during 2025's surveillance visits were identified as:

1. No deep excavation permit available on site or shuttering used
2. The team were observed carrying out the installation of the service that included pipelaying and electrofusion jointing. Work on site was halted however, as the LRQA Assessor became aware that the premises were to be a multi-occupancy building and the provider does not hold GIRS CMOB scope.
3. Several failures identified on site including, insufficient depth of cover on new 63mm main, deviation from the approved design, no completed test certificate, and No FM144 in place.
4. Insufficient plant available to carry out the works and 2 x fire extinguishers and a top loading clamp were out of calibration.
5. The number and nature of deficiencies observed during the surveillance visit, together with the available lead time indicates that a suitable supervisor has not been active in overseeing the works
6. No site-specific risk assessment was presented or briefed to the site operatives or assessor for sign-on
7. No torque wrench for the valve, BA out of date, and team was observed entering excavation while MP mains on test.
8. Proximity issues between utilities and the provider has failed to close out outstanding deficiencies from SV5.

## 5. Bulletins Issued / Info raised Since Last GIRSAP

- SCO 10 Forms and process

## 6. AOB

### a) Introduction of the Streetworks Material Classification and Sampling

PM asked the forum for their understanding of the new protocol and its implications to the UIP.

The Street Works UK Material Classification Protocol has three key stages.

1. Desktop Risk Assessment
  - a. This stage identifies any known or likely contamination risks before anyone breaks ground
2. Site Assessment

This is the primary classification method under the new protocol

- a. Inspecting each layer of excavated material separately
  - b. Using PAK spray and litmus paper (recommended but not mandatory)
  - c. Answering a structured set of risk questions
  - d. Classifying each material layer as Red (potentially contaminated) or Green (low risk)
3. Sampling (Verification Testing)
    - a. These samples do not change the classification on the day — they are used to audit and validate the process

CB referred to the following link which describes the process

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEIRWNtiRGg>

And CB provided the following document for reference



Street-Works-UK-Protocol-FAQ-updates

GIRSAP's expectations of the UIPs for dealing the paperwork are requested.

### b) EAU Opportunity

KM informed the forum that the Energy and Utilities Alliance (EUA) are seeking attendance at the next forum. As the EUA provides a leading industry voice helping shape the future policy direction within the sector and given the EUA/Utility Networks' focus on the gas sector, they would like the opportunity to connect with more UIPs. They were unable to attend today but are seeking to attend in May

## 7. Next Meeting Details

The agreed dates for 2026 meetings are:

GIRS Forum – 19th May 15th September

GIRSAP – 27th January, 26th May, 29th September

LT will be seeking to move these to the 2<sup>nd</sup> June and 6<sup>th</sup> October