

## **Minutes of the 39<sup>th</sup> WIRS Provider Forum LRQA, Remote meeting via MS Teams on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 2022**

**Venue: Remote meeting via MS Teams.**

**Time: 10.00am**

**Attendees:**

Mark Whitehouse (MW) Chair LRQA  
Andrew Carter (AC) LRQA  
Carl Blezard (CB) – PN Daly  
Ben Brownbill (BB) – Infrastructure Gateway  
Andy Bunten (AB) – External Technical Advisor  
Lee Crabtree (LC) - HVSS  
Steve Crossland (SC) Balfour Beatty  
Malcolm Drake (MD) - HydroVein  
Paul Duke (PD) - Connect IT  
Jim Duddridge (JD) - Aquamain  
Jed Garside (JG) - External Technical Advisor  
Damian Ireland (DI) – J. Geraghty  
Bill Jones (BJ) \_ BGS Utilities  
Matt Larham (ML) – Carey Group  
Denise McGlynn (DM) – EU Skills  
Ian Mumford (IM) - UKPS  
Chad Paget (CP) - UKPS  
Jo Parker (JP) - External Technical Advisor  
Jamie Sankey (JS) – S&R Construction  
Craig J Smith (CS) – Energy Assests  
Peter Vaughan (PV) - External Technical Advisor  
Hamdan Wahaish(HW) – Aptus Utilities  
Kevin Wilkinson (KW) – PBU  
Katie Yates (YK) - Fulcrum

## Action list

| Action | Date     | Action   |
|--------|----------|--|
| 12     | 19/10/21 | DMex and their breakdown i.e., SLO's/Developer's/Customers. Assurance of the data by Water UK?<br>MW to speak with the successor to David Strang regarding the data and data assurance.  |
| 14     | 08/03/22 | MW to prepare performance info from the Developer dashboard metrics to review at the next WIRSAP meeting.<br>Not yet progressed. Subgroup volunteer list formed (see WIRSAP minutes). iAuditor used by LRQA. Keep action open to be progressed.                                      |
| 15     | 06/07/22 | Action 11 WIRSAP–Standards for pressure testing and chlorination DMcG to progress this action.   |
| 16     | 15/11/22 | <b>The requirements for pressure testing of DI/CI and Strap Ferrules should be tabled, discussed and agreed at the WIRSAP forum. Whilst this is happening, LRQA will require a pressure test to be completed prior to any UPT connection under the CRUPC scope for any material.</b> |
| 17     | 15/11/22 | <b>Action – Raise the issue of Reg 31/BSI ‘Materials in Contact’ at the WIRSAP meeting for their comment and action (BB). What levels of communication should be in place for this issue to be applied?</b>  |

## Minutes of the Meeting

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies including any matters to be raised by WIRS Providers.

Introductions not completed due to the size of the attendee group.

Further areas covered during AOB.

2. Review of minutes from the last WIRS Providers forum (6<sup>th</sup> July 2022).

- 2.1. Action review (by MW).

### **Action 12 – DMEX / Assurance of the data by Water UK?**

Table the question at the next WIRSAP meeting. MW to speak with the successor to David Strang regarding the data and data assurance.  
Operative Competency – Agenda item (completed.)

### **Action 14 – Developer dashboard metrics.**

Not yet progressed. Subgroup volunteer list formed (see WIRSAP minutes).  
IAuditor used by LRQA in the interim. AIMS system from LRQA but not yet progressed regarding metrics. Keep action open to be progressed.

### **Action 15 - Standards for pressure testing and chlorination**

Action 11 WIRSAP – Tim St. John to progress this from WIRSAP to NCC forum and feedback. Action outstanding.

### **Action 16 – GIRSAP GAS clearance issue.**

Cadent issue. GIRSAP to progress regarding progress. Action closed.

### **Action 17 – GM questionnaire.**

GM could not extend deadline. Good response from SLP's. Action closed.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> of July 2022 were accepted as true and accurate.

3. **Review of minutes from the last WIRSAP forum held on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2022.**

- 3.1. Action review (by MW).

### **Action 1 – Standardisation of Auditing – Outstanding Action by MW.**

*LR now using IAuditor combined with PowerBI. Dashboard planned based on water company's requirements of WIRS data. New WIRSAP chair now in place (Tim St. John of Bristol Water), WIRSAP needs to define what metrics are required to be reported.*

### **Action 5 – WIRS ToR – WIP - Outstanding Action by MW.**

*Now with LRQA to ensure consistency between schemes (GIRS/NERS). Draft still outstanding.*

#### **Action 6-11 – No response from the WIRSAP chair (TSJ)**

*Action 6 – Barrier pipe and DCS – Mike Sloan has tabled this at NCC who then stated that the issue was an adoption code meeting issue. MW to speak with NCC chair to progress the way forward.*

*Action 8 – Commissioning of Water mains/flushing schedules (Developer/SLP responsibilities) – With NCC forum. MW to progress and feedback.*

*Action 11 – Standards for pressure testing and chlorination (WIRS extra scope?) – With Adoption Codes panel for further comments/approval. No response received from two emails sent by MW to the chair of the adoption codes panel. Anglian Water also concerned that issues are not being responded to*

**Raised at Water UK, DMcG to follow up,** still an issue DMcG to progress this action.

*Action 12 - All WIRSAP members – What does the WIRSAP want in terms of reportable metrics? See action 1.*

*Action 15 – Contestable vs non-contestable work on the LRQA website. **No conclusion from LRQA management. Action outstanding.***

*MW stated that it was agreed as a way forward to just have one entry on the WIRS register and not discriminate between contestable and non-constable.*

*Action 16 – L5 DSM qualification.*

*DMcG/MW to progress this action at the next WIRSAP. **LD&A – Need to gain WIRSAP approval first re. benefits etc.***

## **4. Industry updates**

### **4.1. Accreditation Working Group - Operative Competency NCO(W).**

MW presented slides received from Graham Morley (UU) from the Water UK Accreditation working group – Summary & Options for NCC – September 2022.

MW stated that Graham Morley had received 26 responses from SLP's, and these had been presented to the NCC and then through to Ofwat.

JG pointed out that NCO (W) L3 existed for Supervisors. MW stated that this is mainly seen in the Scottish area requirements.

MW stated that only 11 water companies had responded (from 22) for the accreditation working group.

AC stated that he had completed the WIRS partial assessment for Network Plus Services (UU and YW regions).

#### **1. Variances**

It was noted by the forum that not all Water company's required SHEA Water as a water company requirement.

The bottom two lines from Water company's – Mains and services - Inhouse or 'nothing' re training/qualifications.

BJ stated that this is what has been suspected from the LSP community. BJ also stated that Repairs and leakage requirements need to be separated from the training requirements.

JP highlighted 'nothing' re training as an issue – Poaching seen for employees with NCO (W) qualifications.

DMcG raised an observation of WIRS accreditation vs competent people. MW stated that water company's need to step up as training is in inverted comma's.

2. Quick wins

MW talked through the Fairwater Connections feedback regarding this working group.

3. Experiential insight

Scope

DMcG stated that's for vacancy filling – who would know in relation to the water company/framework contractor relationship and that this group had limited questions.

JP agreed that water companies are one step removed from their contractors position.

DMcG stated that people were being lost from industry to HS2 and Cable laying and hopefully NCC/Ofwat recognise this issue.

MW stated that the overall survey was not mandated and only 11 (9) water companies had responded.

NCO in recruitment

DMcG/MW stated that the figures did not give enough detail. How many from SLP's to WC's?

NCO Units

BJ commented that the same observations had been seen in the gas industry.

Options

MW reviewed each option in detail.

DMcG/MW both stated that for Option 3, nothing changes for WC's, SLP's have time extended by and extra three months potentially.

MW stated that Option 4 is a half way house, nothing mentioned for WC's.

JP stated that it felt that the options were dumbing down and papering over the cracks and that it failed to illustrate robust networks being installed.

IM stated that he had witnessed problems with the NCO (G) conversion to (W) and retraining was a real pain with candidates expected to complete the full course. Assessor availability was an issue.

DMcG stated that is the quals were via City and Guilds and Cabwi, then they should recognise prior learning. **DMcG stated that she was working with a**

**group to align water and gas modules and asked for people to let her know re involvement.**

Option 5

BJ pointed out R&M duties vs. current SLP activities.

JP queried 'significant costs to water company's' - Are WC assessing the competencies of people, are they training the people now?

MW asked what the forum would want to see from this optioneering exercise? The total of responses stated Option 4 as a minimum going forwards to get to Option 5 ASAP.

JG stated that for Option 4 Operatives would still need an NCO "general" with gas/water addons.

JP added that NCO 'general' also meant duplication with SHEA Water. DMCg stated it was about risk and competencies making them relevant, robust and fair.

MW stated that a meeting had been held between Fairwater Connections and LRQA (30/09/22) and that the Ofwat meeting had also been held on the 10/10/22 and the formal response was still outstanding from this meeting.

#### **5. UKWIR Project – Leakage in MDPE pipes – JP**

JP gave an overview of the project which is being led by WRc. RPS Leakage is a group members along with AntHire.

Electrofusion jointing seen as most probable failure modes and water companies had been tasked with demanding water leakage targets from Ofwat to meet 2030 deadlines.

JP stated that there was an asset maintenance workstream which was looking at repairs, new assets and renovation of water mains. Service pipes were not covered as part of the scopes of previous projects but this one would be including under the scope.

JP stated that water company's were looking at Control Point effectiveness.

1st steering group meeting was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2022 with a workshop scheduled in December (if anyone was interested). Issues included data provision.

**JP asked for volunteers to attend the steering group and to let her know directly via email ([j.parker101@btinternet.com](mailto:j.parker101@btinternet.com))**

JP added that she will manage a sub group into the study for direct feedback direct help/info/date for the project.

SC asked whether the IGN would be reviewed for Pressure testing and whether the PIG panel could be used to help?

MW stated that the Scottish Water WQ group had completed a lot of work regarding pressure testing.

#### **6. LRQA WIRS Project Site Monitoring form**

MW went through the template which is sent out prior to any pre-planned surveillance visits in terms of the information and data requirements.

7. **LRQA Surveillance visit reminders.**

MW reminded the forum about the WIRS scheme requirements in terms of meeting the visit requirements and the potential for downgrade to Partial or Suspension should the SV schedule be missed (with info/updates copied to Water companies).

8. **Pressure test requirements – CRUPC scope.**

AC tabled an issue whereby water companies DCS documents did not specify implicitly the need for a pressure test for CI/DI UPT installation and that was no consistency. AC stated that HyRam user instructions recommended a pressure test prior to the drilling of a branch connection but did not specify any parameters. AC asked the forum for advice – Should the ‘best practice’ be a requirement and should this be detailed within the DCS document.

AS stated, that YW already had a UPT standard which specified the YW requirements or a pressure test.

BB stated that his company complete A 12Bar for 10 mins test (open and closed valve).

JG also asked that the pressure test issue should also encompass metal strap ferrules.

**Action – The forum agreed that the requirements for pressure testing of DI/CI and Strap Ferrules should be tabled, discussed and agreed at the WIRSAP forum.**

**Whilst this is happening, LRQA will require a pressure test to be completed prior to any UPT connection under the CRUPC scope for any material.**

9. **AOB and issues to be raised at the next WIRSAP meeting.**

- DMcG stated that Gas and Water NCO qualification were being looked at concurrently with appreciated help from BJ and a gas representative nominated by Les Thomas. Gas is to be completed by March 2023 with Water having no end date (as self-funded);
- BB raised an issue in AW whereby AW are now asking for all ‘Materials in Contact’ with water per project/job including a list of all Reg 31 WRAS No.s and BS No’s. DMcG thought that this maybe from a DWI instruction. BB stated that this requirement needs to be listed within the respective WC DCS as extra manpower requirements were being considered. MW stated that Water UK need to be more involved from a consistency perspective. JP stated that this issue showed a lack of understanding of the WIRS requirements. CP agree with BB and that it seemed like only one area of AW were asking for this information.

**Action – Raise the issue of Reg 31/BSI ‘Materials in Contact’ at the WIRSAP meeting for their comment and action (BB). What levels of communication should be in place for this issue to be applied?**

JP raised the solution of raising a DMEX/CEMEX complaint to the respective water company (cc Ofwat) to focus the Water Company attention on the matter.

10. **Date of Next Meetings 2023**

Next meetings to be sent out by MW for March 2023/July 2023 and November 2023 via Email/MS Teams. Dates to be advised.

Date of next WIRSAP is 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022.

Meeting closed at 1240hrs.

