



Minutes of the NERS Provider Forum

Microsoft Teams Meeting on 15th July 2025 10:00am

Attendees:

Paul Costelloe (PC)	Chay Rees	Steve Harvey
Karl Miller (KM)	Umer Amin	Tom Radford
Nigel Evans	Julia Cotogno	Steve Owen
Mel Swift (MS)	Jetmir Leka	Sinead Nelligan
Mark Bryant (MBr)	Ed Griffin	Tyron Morrissey
Ritchie Graham	Farshad Forouzandehfard	Dave Jones
Emily Conner	Adrian Foster	Michael Dougan
Bob Fearnley (BF)	Russell Davis	Mick Beeby (MB)
Brian Cutler	Ephie Chalakateva	Richard Yates (RY)
J. Johnson	David Butler	Matthew Crittenden (MC)
Jamie Berry	Jessica Rothwell	Garry Mehmet
Benjamin Lois	Mark McGovern	Scott Cozens
Stuart Hunter	Kevin Wilkinson	Steve Mander
Alan Marshall	Gareth Wilson	James Burnett
James McGirl	Jordan Crowther	Andrew Barnes
Frank Williamson	Ernie Walker	Luay Elia
Peter Salmon	Bill Robertson (BR)	Rebecca Pollock
Michael Waller	Steven Johnson	Darren Williams
James Barker (JB)	John Lloyd	Keith Montague (KMo)
Adam Ledger	Chris Clark	Rob Bailey
Daniel Bridges	Rob Peters	Julie Tyrell
Viki Woolcock	Robert Vernon	Rupinder Sandhu
Gavin McKechnie (GMck)	Adam Cook	Alan Beynon
David Mimms	Daniel Miller	Lewis Hopkins
Elena Gorman	Tracey Taylor	Jamie Hosier
Socky Maila	Alex Searle	Phil Briggs
Sarah Standish	Stephen Hindle	Jason Watkins
Sarah Cameron	Philip Henderson	Bill Jones
John Carden	Ryan Salmon	Davie Callaghan
Julian Harris	Stephanie De Beer	Stuart Curwen (SC)
Andrea Moir	Dickson Madudu	Paul Ingram
Zach Bullock (ZB)	David Daniels	Andy Billings

1. Introductions

Paul Costelloe (PC) of LRQA introduced himself and 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, over 450 invitations had been sent and there had been 69 acceptances and 27 declined. With 96 attending on the day, due to the nature of the open invitation, only attendees are identified in the minutes.

PC advised that a slight amendment to the published agenda had been made to include the Scottish Power Express Safety Bulletin.

A discussion took place regarding the potential for using various AI applications for

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 was provided in Section 4 of these minutes.

3. SPEN Express Safety Bulletin

PC asked MS to give an introduction to the incident which prompted the issue of this Safety Bulletin. MS had agreed with the ENA to publicise this incident with this forum and gave a description of the incident. The bulletin is attached to these minutes for circulation. RY asked who the controlling authority in this instance and MS replied that it was the IDNO concerned. MB commented that pre-adoption the IDNO would only be aware of generator connections if the person connecting a generator had advised the IDNO. KM commented that a number of situations need to align for an accident to happen and stressed that alignment of unrelated events DOES happen.

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

.3.1 Content of v10 NERS Requirements

Paul Costelloe advised that v10 was released on March 1st 2025 with the main changes being to describe the requirement to hold Project Management scopes where work (other than 'labour-only' arrangements) is sub-contracted. and invited any comments regarding this. PC invited any comments on the changes and none were forthcoming.

3.2 Combined CoC/NERS Passport

A question was raised about whether the CoC issued by LRQA was mandatory and PC advised that it was not mandatory but that there needs to be identification of NERS accredited competencies and Non-NERS competencies.

3.3 HSE Position on Live Working

MS commented that he had heard a question asking whether single person live working was permissible and advised that it was NOT permissible under any circumstances when manipulating conductors. PC invited comments on the ENA SHE01 document. KMo

asked for everyone's understanding that live working should be undertaken with another person in close enough proximity to render assistance if necessary and the meeting agreed with this viewpoint. MS recalled a fatal incident some years ago where assistance was not close by. MBr confirmed that this had been a factor in at least one other incident he was aware of and sought clarity on what 'close proximity' means exactly. JB commented that there was potentially an error in SHE01 which stated that it might be unreasonable to work live bearing in mind the language used before-hand whether this should be 'reasonable' on page 19. **MS took an action to question this with ENA.**
***Post meeting note ENA are going to amend as necessary and re-issue.**

3.4 'Right Card' Scheme Being Introduced by EUSR

PC advised that LRQA were due to meet EUSR where LRQA would ask again if the competency management systems already in place with ICPs and Network Operators could count towards their assessment of individual's fitness to hold the relevant CSCS card. KM undertook to work with EUSR to see if some rationale could be reached rather than mapping the requirements out afresh. MB asked if anyone had any views on what DNO positions on this, since they are not happy with what is being proposed. MS advised that his understanding is that the ENA and HSE are challenging CSCS on this. MB stated that a NERS accredited organisation who had carried out a competency assessment of an individual should be enough.

3.5 Level 2 Apprenticeships

MS advised that the proposed Level 2 Apprenticeship standard was due to be advanced commencing with a meeting on 25th July so that someone holding such a qualification would not be denied a CSCS card.

3.6 Fire Suppression in Cupboards

BF agreed to provide an update on the ENA standpoint after this meeting and that a risk-based approach should prevail between preventing injury from electricity against preventing injury from fire/smoke. There was concern about inadvertent operation of fire fighting measures. Discussion is ongoing.

3.7 Review of Governance of Network Design Competency Document

PC advised that he was yet to set up a Working Group to review this document and thanked those that had volunteered to take part in this review. PC is also to obtain a 'Word' version that could be edited.

3.8 NERS Staffing by LRQA

PC advised that an additional assessor had been recruited who was now utilised fully, and that LRQA are still looking for additional assessor(s)

5. Matters Discussed at Previous NERSAP Meeting on 25th March 2025

Paul Costelloe advised that was some overlap of issues discussed at the previous ICP Forum and the NERSAP meeting following shortly after that.

5.1 ENA Live Working Guidance SHE01

Discussed above.

5.2 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

Paul Costelloe advised this was currently being revised following some suggested changes by one of the DNOs who, to date, have not signed it. PC advised that he had still not received the draft Schedule 1 from all of the parties it was requested from, giving details of NERSAP members (and their deputies) contact information.

5.3 LRQA Surveillance Visit Data

PC asked the meeting if they could help him explain why most surveillance visits are on DNO network when anecdotal data suggests that most connections are carried out on IDNO networks. A discussion took place regarding visits on street lighting. BR asked if a call-off by an ICP was triggering a surveillance visit and PC responded that this was not the case on NERS. GMcK confirmed that there are tens of thousands of street lighting assets where the ICP is in contract with local councils for replacement programmes and where the asset owner is a DNO. ZB reiterated that on PFI's for highway lighting there is a high volume (e.g. 100,000 per year) of transfers which could be put forward by an ICP for a surveillance visit by LRQA.

5.4 EUSR 'Right Card' Scheme

This was discussed while covering the points discussed at the previous ICP Forum and is minuted above.

5.5 NERS Staffing by LRQA

This had previously been raised and Paul Costelloe advised that a new NERS Assessor had been employed since the last meeting and LRQA were seeking one in Scotland.

6 Update on NERSAP Strategic Working Group

PC advised that the meeting scheduled for 26th June had been cancelled due to the small number of members able to attend.

7 NERS Requirements Document

PC invited comments on the NERS Requirements document in terms of queries, proposed amendments, feedback etc and proposals for change in v11.

8 LRQA Report

PC presented the data which is attached to these minutes. MB asked how many NERS Assessors are employed and PC responded that there are 8 but not only doing surveillance visits but initial partial assessments, scope extensions and renewals. A copy of the data presented will be sent with the minutes of this meeting. There are currently 485 NERS ICPs which are accredited and approximately 10 more currently undergoing assessment. There the number of NERS ICPs will exceed 500 by the Autumn

9 Any Other Business

JB raised a growing concern regarding the number of near misses being reported due to shallow depths of buried services. Examples point to historic practices of shallow cables.

PC invited GMcK to comment on shallow services and he replied that it is an issue that concerns everyone. Similarly with fibre cable with the practice of slot-cutting.

KM shared a picture of a scene where working at height was taking place in an unsafe manner.

SC raised the issue of internal meter positions mainly in Scotland. His opinion was that the architects need to understand that internal meter positions are contrary to the INA guidance. BR confirmed that this was in his experience a cause for concern. SC advised that this was mainly an issue with IDNO adoptable assets. MB commented that planning restrictions were sometimes a factor, but it should be the ICP who should be advising developers where unsuitable meter positions are proposed. BF supported that viewpoint stating that it should maybe be the INA or ENA that raise this issue with Building Standards agencies in the form of an information campaign. MC confirmed that ICPs should not be connecting services to unsatisfactory meter positions and in continuing to do so, the ICPs are undermining their own case.

10 Dates of Next Meetings

Dates for 2025 Meetings

- NERS Provider Forum 11th November
- NERSAP 29th July, 25th November