**Minutes of GIRS Advisory Panel Meeting**

**Microsoft Teams Meeting**

**27th September 2022 10:00 am**

**In attendance:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Les Thomas (LT) | LRQA Verification Limited | (Secretary) |
| Leigh Keegan (LK) | leigh.keegan@sgn.co.uk | (Chairperson) |
| Gareth Arnold (GA) | gareth.arnold@indigopipelines.co.uk | |
| Dave Morgan (DM) | dave.morgan@morland-utilities.co.uk | |
| Geoffrey Harle (GH) | GHarle@northerngas.co.uk | |
| John Fellows (JF) | john.fellows22@cadentgas.com | |
| Dean O'Dee (DO) | dean.odee@me.com | |
| Keith Johnston (KJ) | Keith.Johnston@gtc-uk.co.uk | |
| Paul Leighton (PL) | Paul.Leighton@fulcrum.co.uk | |
| Alec Bromiley (AB) | Alec.Bromiley@lrqa.com | |
| Peter O'Neil (PO) | Peter.ONeill@cadentgas.com | |
| Karl Miller (KM) | karl.miller@lrqa.com | |
| Alex Green (AG) | alex.green@espug.com | |
| Jemima Mitchell (JM) | Jemima.Mitchell@cadentgas.com | |
| Steven McGill (SM) | stevenmcgill@energyassets.co.uk | |

**1. Welcome introductions and apologies for absence**

As there were several new attendees the meeting commenced with formal introductions, after which, LK welcomed everyone to the 3rd GIRSAP meeting of 2022.

**Apologies:** Addendum to meeting: Apologies had been received from Carl Day of W&W Utilities, but this was stated in the meeting.

**2. Acceptance of previous minutes**

The previous minutes dated 24th May 2022 were accepted as a true record of events.

**3. Matters Arising**

**3.1 MM1 & MM2 forms**

The action relates to the completion of MM1 and MM2 forms and the need for the operative's date of birth and National Insurance number, and whether this gives UIPs an issue with GDPR.

LK confirmed that whilst no formal meeting had occurred, several informal communications had been made regarding the subject area and that progress has been made.

A letter has been received from the INA (see attached) confirming that the iGTs agree to the proposal to use the EUSR number in communications rather than National Insurance numbers and Dates of Birth, and PO also confirmed that the Cadent SCO Desk had agreed that they can cease the requirement for the National Insurance number as they can use the EUSR number.

**ACTION B**

The need for the DOB was discussed and that it can be useful to determine the EUSR number if the number is not known. If the EUSR number and surname is known, EUSR registrations can be searched which obviates the need for the DOB.

PO asked what the UIP expectations were regarding the legacy data held and there was a consensus that all new submissions would follow the requirement for EUSR number, but that legacy information would be purged as and when there was an update on an individual's STCs.

The meeting was reminded that the SCO MM1 & MM2 Spreadsheet includes a NI cell that requires a number in the AB 12 34 56 C format and that the locked cell will need to be amended to allow the input of the EUSR number

All Netwo Operator

**3.2 LRQA Reporting Developments**

As discussed previously, the proposal is to amend GIG 2 to inform all UIPS that Major and minor deficiencies are to be reported at GIRSAP on a provider-by-provider basis.

1.1 Definition of the reporting period added.
Reporting Period – The period following the last UIP Forum meeting

1.4 Wording added to reflect new reporting regime

**Reporting**

All Major and Minor Deficiencies identified during the reporting period are reported to GIRSAP on a provider-by-provider basis at the appropriate advisory panel meeting.

There being no objections, the wording was agreed.

LT

**3.3 Revised Kite Mark Letter and Cadent acceptance of GF branch saddle connections**

JF Confirmed that Cadent were party to the ENA letter relating to Materials and therefore GF Fittings are allowable. He also reminded the UIP Community that there are several useful documents available on the external website.

https://cadentgas.com/services/3rd-party/igt-uip/igt-uip-document-library

**3.4 Specialist Connections - Iris stop**

The proposed amendment in GIG 2 was agreed as

1.1 Definition of Flowstopping added
Flowstopping – All Metallic & PE bag stop applications

3.6 Specialist Connections - Iris Stop replaced with Flow Stopping
3.6 Specialist Connections - Flow Stopping

In addition, LRQA propose to amend clause 4.2.4 to clarify that for CNRB scopes, relevant operatives shall hold the **appropriate category** of EUSR registration and shall provide evidence that they have a record of working on pipelines with a Maximum Operating Pressure of 7 bar and/or carrying out connections in this scope. And that throughout the document, commas

have been added and spaces removed. With no objections raised, the wording was agreed. | LT

**3.5 Design Changes Due to Inaccurate Records**

The UIP forum has identified that the cross checking in Cadent between Network Control and New Connections is causing site delays.

PO stated that a change to the process was not possible as clearly there is a need to confirm that any connection did not adversely affect the network before a connection could be agreed. If the network records are found to be inaccurate on site there is an obvious need to check the impact of the change on the network analysis results, as well as the possible need to approve the connection type.

During discussion, Cadent were asked to consider if the principles of the Major / Minor Design Variation process as applied internally by Cadent under their Engineering Bulletin EB 347 Deviations from Routine or Non-Routine Operation Procedures for Gas Distribution Low and Medium Pressure Networks could be applied to the UIPS so that if site conditions were found that improved the network (larger diameters etc.) connections could continue provided the new connection type was in compliance with the standard tables. | PO/JF

The discussion continued and there was a consensus that historically delays had not been an issue, but with the increased number of restricted roads and road opening charges of £5000 per day delays can be very penalizing.

Cadent reminds the UIPs that a telephone call to the New Connections Team can be used to expedite any issues and it was confirmed that Cadent had been found to be supportive. However, communication is essential and the UIPs need to be proactive. Cadent also asked for examples of the type of delays that have occurred, and the delays experienced. | DO/DM

**3.6 Design of Multi Occupancy Buildings**

During discussion, it was confirmed that the INA had considered the issue of design organisations needing DMOBS for the design of single supplies to multi occupancy dwellings and, provided the meter boxes were external, they did not believe DMOBS was a requirement.

KJ informed the meeting that a letter had been prepared confirming the stance. This had not been received by LRQA or LK. **Addendum to meeting** A letter from the INA was provided later and is included as an attachment to these minutes.

KJ explained the reasoning in that with new connections to MOBS, the developer is the Client under CDM and will appoint a Principal Designer. The INA state as single services to meter boxes have no design impact to the internal aspects of the building, the requirement of the network Gas Designer to undertake such liaison is not required. The discussion continued and LK stated that SGN are tracking numerous issues that are yet to be concluded so are undecided.

There being no further objections, the current stance remains that single services to MOBS terminating at a meter box external to the building do not require DMOBs scope.

**Cadent Design Submission Approval for MOBS**

PO reminds the UIPs that currently there is no skill set within Cadent New Connections to

approve design submissions for MOBs. All Design Submissions that include MOBs are being passed to a Network that does hold the skills. Therefore, on receipt of a request, the UIPS are being asked to hold the design until such time as Cadent can pass the designs to the network for checking.

The New Connections Team are fully aware that the UIP can refuse to hold the design and under such circumstances, Cadent will approve the design with the caveat that it is subject to review by the G5 team and that final clearance to proceed is only allowed following approval of the detailed design submission.

**3.7 Requirement for Insulation Joints when using cellar entries to manifolds etc**

During discussion both KJ and LK explained the issue that any insulation joint fitted internally needs to meet GIS/E17 that requires heat resistance to 630$^{O}$C. Investigation reveals these can be obtained but are cost prohibitive.

It was explained that cellar entries are a steel to PE transition fitting with a rubber grommet between the carrier pipe and the sleeve. SSE have experienced issues where water has tracked up the pipe causing electrical continuity. Currently there is no obvious design solution.

KJ informed the meeting of the research conducted by BUUK. They too confirm such insulation joints are available but are cost prohibitive. He indicated however, that if the below ground entry is in a sump with an open grill, this facilitates inspection for water ingress as is the case for normally occupied basements.

He continued by explaining cellar entries mean there is PE up to the building and the steel PE sleeve is a suage fit so, subject to a risk assessment that considers the proximity to other assets, then a cellar entry could be acceptable.

Finally, it was stated that BUUK are researching the use of capillary foams that are waterproof to determine if electrical continuity is prevented and would update GIRSAP should there be any progress.

**4. LRQA Report**

**4.1 Surveillance visits results - 2022**

The surveillance visit detailed results are included as an attachment to these minutes.
There are 179 active companies listed on the web site, one of which, Mercian Utilities Ltd has been suspended following a complaint by a Domestic customer and the inability for LRQA to contact the company for some months.

A detailed report of those companies holding the various scopes was described and it was explained that now that CMOBS and DMOBS are enduring scopes the intention is not to report on these going forward.

**4.1.1 Discussion of Findings raised - 2022**

- 147 on site Surveillance visits completed
- 15 Recertification visits
- 18 Partial Assessments and
- 11 Partial to full Assessments have been completed

During the surveillance visits the following deficiencies have been identified:

- 4 Major Deficiencies (4 in 2021)
- 103 Minor Deficiencies (160 in 2021)
- 44 visits with no deficiencies (106 During 2021)

The latest Major deficiency identified on site was described where the two operatives conducting the drilling on a hot tap connection were not NCO(G) registered in accordance with scheme requirements.

A breakdown of the sections with the highest findings was provided that demonstrated most findings are raised under section 7 of GIG 2 *Work Issue and Control* and Section 6 *Methods of Working*. The inspection questions with the most failures and the surveillance visits with highest percentage of deficiencies per items checked since the last GIRSAP were also reported.

**5. Review of UIP Forum Minutes 13th September 2022**

The minutes had been circulated with the agenda for this meeting. LT informed the meeting that the UIP forum had 49 attendees.

The key areas of discussion were highlighted as follows:

**5.1 IGEM TD4 Update**

TD4 panel has completed the review and it has been approved for publication.

Originally, the panel wanted to issue the document for comment but due to the need to issue hydrogen supplements, it needed to be published. If there are any omissions / errors, these will be managed via an addendum.

**5.2 LRQA Portal for the management of corrective actions**

Due to the ongoing LRQA separation project, there has been no further work completed on this. With the final stages of separation underway and final completion last week 21st September, hopefully work on the new portal will commence shortly.

**5.3 Donkin Fig 555 Serial Numbers – *(For Information)***

AVK have changed the way they label their valves with the serial no. It is the 9-digit number below the bottom barcode at the right. The UIPS have been reminded that the label is not robust, and it is prudent to record the serial no. before installation to avoid losing the information during handling. The serial no. is no longer on the flange

**5.4 Radius Branch Saddles under development. *(For Information)***

Radius Subterra have a Minimuss branch saddle that is suitable for use on 213mm swaged pipe inserted in 8” and 9” metallic mains.

They are seeking to provide a short presentation in the January Forum on some of the new branch saddles they have developed and are in the process of being approved or are already approved for use on the UK gas networks

**5.5 Lloyds Register Assessor Changes *(For Information)***

LT informed the meeting that he was leaving full time employment at LRQA but would still be operating as a Subcontracted Assessor. He would remain as the Chair of the GIRS Forum and as the Secretary of GIRSAP so there will be little, or no, obvious change.

Pete Humphries (PH) Is also joining us as an additional Contracted Assessor resource and is about to start in the role.

**5.6 Connection types being produced by the design houses *(For Information)***

Designs have been proposed for a two-part top tee for medium pressure connections on steel mains and Designers have selected the nearest main without consideration to the connection type, i.e., 213mm swage-lined main and stating a branch saddle.

Good discussion was held at the forum and the design houses have been advised of the issues. The GTs are asked not to approve such design submissions.

**5.7 Manifold Designs – Use of Equivalent Lengths**

An iGT has rejected designs of manifolds stating that manifolds are designed as mains and therefore do not require additional lengths to be added.

Section 7.3.4.1 of IGEM/G/5 states that:
"For valves, elbows, etc. an additional length shall be added to the estimated pipe length to compensate for the effects on pressure drop and for accuracy."

Designers have been designing manifolds without additional lengths for some time and none had been rejected. Others have had completion files rejected because the lengths installed do not match the design length. 97% efficiency factor in design calcs. is used for dealing with fittings in Mains Design GL1

During discussion there was a consensus that the IGT community need to be consistent in the approval of design submissions, and that with the benefits of applying equivalent lengths there is an additional benefit of future proofing the network, as the calorific value of the gas supplied is likely to reduce as we move to a carbon neutral economy. The G/5 Requirement is that equivalent lengths shall be applied so this requirement needs to be demonstrated.

The use of models with equivalent lengths and the 97% efficiency factor for below ground steel was discussed and it was clarified that for systems that include steel pipes below ground and in manifolds, the use of different tags to include or exclude efficiency factors may be required However, the computer modelling software allows this, so it is not an issue.

Finally, the UIP Designers are reminded that where a design has been calculated using equivalent lengths, the actual lengths of the asset being installed need to be provided to the constructor and adopter to ensure that the as laid information is reflective of the asset installed.

**5.8 Mains Disconnections for new developments**

The UIP Forum has questioned the fact that Section 3.3 of GIG 2 states CCCR covers mains

& Service disconnections but that when a UIP had requested to SGN to disconnect a main, this had been refused.

During discussion it was clarified that mains disconnections are not "contestable" and most of the GDNs do not allow these disconnections unless the asset owner is unable to meet developer targets and the main is a single fed supply to what was formerly a brownfield site under development.

There was agreement that GIG 2 needs to be updated to reflect this, with a note that disconnections may be agreed with the network owners and approval needs to be sought prior to quoting for the work. Actual wording to be agreed by LRQA and the Panel Chair for issue in the new November Edition of GIG 2.

**5.9 The Recent Cadent Pressure Testing Briefing Note**

The UIP Forum raised the recent workshop and briefing note issued by Cadent on mains testing and test certificates.

There is now inconsistency across the networks as to what test equipment was to be used and there was a misunderstanding of when temperature was required. It was alleged that Cadent had rejected pressure test certificates for not including temperature when their own procedures did not require such information to be recorded.

JF reiterated the Cadent position, stating that a review of the pressure test records received previously revealed many were inaccurate, incomplete, and often the information held revealed they had in fact failed due to elongated conditioning times that reduced the allowable pressure drop due to creep, and this had then been exceeded. It was conceded that initially some pressure test certificates may have been returned incorrectly, but he believed the numbers were low and sought examples should this not be the case.

There was a useful discussion on stabilisation and Creep allowances that are both time dependant. It was also suggested that a photograph of the gauge and reading at the various stages of the pressure test is useful to give the network owner confidence that the test was valid. Whilst not essential, it is good practice.

**5.10 Proprietary Factory Entry (*For Information)***

A video relating to a manufacturing fault identified on a 125mm Wask Service entry (see attached) was provided where the valve, whilst maintaining a gas tight seal, was able to be rotated on the entry pipe when fitted in accordance with manufacturer's instructions

During discussion it was confirmed that the manufacturer had confirmed that the issue related to machining of the face and the split collar. This has since been resolved and should the issue be identified on any entry fittings procured but not yet installed, the manufacturer needs to be contacted to obtain the replacement collar.

**6. AOB**

**6.1 Crane Warning Notice**

LT explained that he had been made aware of a letter from Crane BS&U (see attached) where they are informing the industry to be aware of products purporting to be manufactured by WASK® including full kits, main structural castings, and safety critical spares, which are being offered for sale in the UK. The non-OEM products are not aligned with Crane's quality standards and have never been tested or approved by Crane for use on live gas operations.

A useful discussion ensued where other examples of malleable iron fittings and other items had got into the supply chain. It is a good reminder of the need to be vigilant in our procurement processes.

**6.2** GH informed the meeting that NGN had experienced issues with Frialen electrofusion couplers where the large diameter fittings were failing. The fittings have been kite marked to the appropriate standard but have been found to be out of tolerance. NGN are pursuing the issue with BSI to identify how they could have couplers kite marked when out of tolerance.

There was a useful discussion where GTC have identified similar issues and the fact the BS EN 1555 is a “common” gas and water jointing specification, but the water industry seeks a friction fit coupler whereas the gas industry seeks to rotate the fitting when clamped.

KJ informed the meeting that the fittings are no longer used in GTC. GH will keep the panel up to date on the conclusion of the investigation. GH

**7. Date of Next Meeting**

LK thanked everyone attending and for participating an a very useful discussion.

**The proposed dates of meeting for 2023 were tabled as follows. There were no objections**

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| **GIRS UIP Forum** | **10th January, 9th May, & 12th Sept 2023** |
| **GIRSAP** | **24th January, 23rd May, and 26th September 2023** |