Minutes of the 63rd NERSAP Meeting

Remote Meeting via Microsoft Teams on 23rd November 2021

Attendees:

Mel Swift (Chair) (MS)	GTC	mel.swift@gtc-uk.co.uk
Les Thomas (Secretary)	Lloyds Register	les.thomas@lr.org
Simon Burnett (SB)	Morrison US	simon.burnett2@morrisones.com
Martyn Crocker (MC)	UKPN	martyn.crocker@ukpowernetworks.co.uk
Paul Wragg (PW)	Power On Connections	paulwragg@poweronconnections.co.uk
Paul Costelloe (PC)	Lloyd's Register	paul.costelloe@lr.org
Chris Roe (CR)	UCCG - Eon	chris.roe@eonenergy.com
Karl Miller (KM)	Lloyd's Register	karl.miller@lr.org
Andy Thomas (AT)	SSE	andy.thomas@sse.com
Brian Hoy (BH)	ENWL	brian.hoy@enwl.co.uk
Tracey Taylor (TT)	ENWL	tracey.taylor@enwl.co.uk
William Cass (WC)	Last Mile	William.Cass@lastmile-uk.com
Simon Gray (SG)	Energy Assets	simongray@EnergyAsses.co.uk

Apologies :
Apologies had been received from Gareth Pritchard of The HEA.

1. Introductions

Following brief introductions, the Chairman welcomed the attendees to the meeting. Tracie Taylor ENWL Connections Manager was introduced as the new ENWL representative as a replacement for Michael Doward. Brian Hoy was in attendance to give a formal handover.

During discussion it was explained that Graham Smith had left the HEA and was no longer the HEA representative. MS recorded a vote of thanks for Graham's continued efforts and support of NERSAP over the years and commented that no doubt there would be an opportunity to contact him in the future as he developed into his new consultancy role.

2. Nominations and appointment of Vice Chairperson

MS described the role of the vice chairperson and explained how the Chair / Vice Chair alternated over a three year term. Currently the vice chair is required from a DNO representative.

During discussion it was agreed that as there were only two DNOs represented and that as Tracie was new to NERSAP it would be unfair to select. The decision was made to defer the appointment.

During discussion MS reiterated the ambitious targets for 2022 and need to consider a re-shaping of the scheme to bring it up to date with industry requirements and that this involved the NOs agreeing what is required from the scheme.

During the discussion surrounding the current attendance, BH stated he would raise the issue the CIC Panel. The need for a Face to face meeting was also discussed as there was an obvious need to reinvigorate the meeting.

BH requested that meeting invites be sent out at the earliest opportunity to ensure dates were in the diary and having the dates in the minutes was probably insufficient. This was Agreed

Action: BH to raise NERSAP Attendance in the CIC meeting Thursday	
Action: LT to issue place holder meeting requests with these minutes.	

3. Review and acceptance of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the meeting dated 20th July 2021 had been issued prior to the meeting and were confirmed as a true record of events.

4. Matters arising:

4.1. Update on Competency Working Group

Action: LT & MS to discuss a new schedule and circulate proposed dates.	**Ongoing:** Further meetings of working group to be arranged following discussions with EUSR

MS informed the meeting that a further meeting had been held with EUSR on the 4th November 21 and that EUSR have confirmed that two people have been allocated to the working group. They have been tasked with identifying what EUSR need to do to take the PSS framework forward and also to consider the Governance for Design Competence framework and the updates required to the Craft and Design scope of requirements document. The competency working group to continue driving this initiative.

4.2. Update on NERS Strategy Working group

Action: 1st Meeting held and program of meetings to be developed to ensure scheme remains fit for purpose to respond to the requirements of external impacts in the industry	**Open:** To be discussed in item 4.7 below

4.3. Raising Standards with ICPs
As detailed above due to the need to meet the future challenges with the industry, there is tacit agreement of the requirement for the above Working Groups to continue their work, particularly with respect to raising competence levels. The question as to which body should be representing the NERS community was not discussed at this meeting.

Action: MS agreed to raise the action at the ENA and WC (Agreed in a later session) agreed to raise at the INA	Open: Ongoing

4.4. NERS Data March 2021 – June 2021

It was explained that Best Practice discussions are now included as a standard agenda item in the UIP forum, and based on the highest level of findings currently, best practice discussions to date have been on equipment calibration and the passport process.

| Action: LT to include Best Practice discussions in future NERS Providers Forums | Action Closed: Best practice is now a standing agenda on the NERS Providers forum.

Calibration issues and passport issues discussed initially. |
|---|---|

4.5. Network Authorisations
PW further reiterated the background to Power On's particular issue being a direct result in UKPN's internal permitry arrangements and earthing requirements for some Self Connection jobs.

The issue related to HV self-connect activity via a Transfer of Control Certificate, where UKPNs current process requests that the CMEs are restored before the CTC is cancelled.

MC and PW agreed to have a local discussion between PoC and UKPN, so UKPN can gain an understanding of what is seen as best practice and then ultimately review what changes UKPN can make to their current self-connect offerings.

4.6. Operational Requirements

Paul Costello gave a background to the Operational requirements proposal. He explained that currently, where a Network Operator enters into a Framework agreement with an ICP, the ICP would need to hold Project management to set a different jointing ICP to work. During discussion the issues surrounding authorisations were described and the UKPN and ENW processes explained.

It was also explained that NERS accreditations and authorisations are different and the responsibilities should not be blurred. The possibility of a builder/developer appointing different ICPs to complete the operational and installation activities was discussed and it was clarified that whilst there are issues over whose safety rules are applicable and a safe system of work has to be in place to manage this, if a street lighting ICP has the scopes to complete the cable ID and make the necessary connections then this was acceptable. It was clarified that the scheme needs to have the flexibility for each operator to work within their framework.

It was agreed that the current proposal for those ICPs holding Construction; Network Connections - Jointing scopes (where LRQA currently already assess procedures relating to their understanding of operational activity), being able to utilise the services of another

appropriately accredited ICP to undertake the operational activity relating to their new connection without the need for holding the Project Management scope. It was also agreed that the arrangements for safety rules would need to be robust and LRQA would need to re-iterate the requirements on each future visit/assessment to these ICPs. There is also a need to finalise the checklist for those ICPs holding Network Connection scopes to give stakeholders confidence that an ICP can sub-contract Operational activities to an appropriately accredited ICP without necessarily holding any Operational scopes themselves.

Action: LT to include PC's proposal letter with the minutes so that they can be considered in readiness for the nest NERSAP in July.	**Ongoing:** LRQA to revisit the appropriate sections in V9 of the NERS requirements document to provide clarity

4.7. Strategic Working Group

MS opened discussion and reiterated the point that currently despite the increasing numbers of iDNOs and established DNOs, there is little representation in the meeting today and in the recent Strategic working group meeting only MS and LRQA were in attendance.

MS referred to the meeting held in Manchester January 2018 and reiterated the need to review the requirements of the scheme in a changing industry and to improve the scheme to make it more representative for network owners, had not changed.

It was also agreed that a re-boot is required but in order to achieve the above objective and NERSAP need to establish what the Network owners want. This drives the need for a focus on the Strategic Working group and LRQA agreed to develop a straw man of what they can provide via the iAuditor tool, and improved reporting.

The need for considering a system of reducing surveillance visits for good performers and increasing surveillance visits on poor performers was discussed.

A need to review the MOU and the membership of the panel of NERSAP was discussed but it was agreed that the review of panel membership would need to be addressed outside of this forum.

During discussion WC aired his concern about how Completion file compliance is monitored by LRQA, and it was reiterated that what was required are simple outputs, from a regime that gives confidence in the quality of the ICPS activities.

Concerns were raised regarding the number of new ICPs coming on board, with numbers increasing rapidly, is there a need for a change and a root and branch review is required into the process. The fact that there has been no change in process for 12 years was discussed as was the challenges received from ICPs regarding the difference in standards witnessed.

LRQA reiterated the need of open and honest feed back but also reiterated the need for Network owners to be informed of issues so that a raised awareness of issues can inform the assessment process.

There was a general commitment for the SWG, and a meeting was agreed for the 13th January 2021

Action: LRQA to arrange meeting 13th January 2022 at Meetpoint Midlands	
Action: LR to produce a Straw Man of deliverables for discussion	
Action: Network Operators to identify deliverables from the scheme	

4.8. Competency Working Group
Discussed in 4.1 above

4.9. NERS requirements document V.9 "Design Lite" CIC
In the CIC COP Panel meeting LRQA had been asked to raise a modification proposal at the next NERS meeting, to see if there is scope to revise the existing design accreditations for design e.g. create a new design 'lite' option or include simple design in the existing construction standard. Due to the importance of understanding the scale of this i.e. how many connections etc, an initial clause was tabled for discussion as follows:

> *3.1.1   Standard Designs of single-phase connections (NERS Design scope accreditation not required).*
>
> *A Single phase 'non disturbing' load up to a maximum of 5 kVA connected to an existing 3 phase mains cable at a maximum length of 25 metres – 35mm² CSA cable is considered a standard design and the design scope is not required.*
>
> *Note: The above is dependent upon the NO's technical design criteria, which may vary regionally, and an agreement would be required between the NO and the Provider regarding actual design parameters*

During discussion it was agreed that the first paragraph was too prescriptive and that some DNOs have a self-service process up to 70kVA for a non-disturbing load. Limiting a load to 5kVA would mean a new house could not be connected and was too restrictive. It was also agreed that any such clause would need to be generic enough to recognise that most DNOS have a matrix and when a construction ICP is working within such a matrix they would have the appropriate technical knowledge to construct to that standard design but would not require full designer competence within the company.

The discussion centred on what was to the best forum for developing the wording of the new clause and it was agreed that a separate working group would be best placed to agree the proposal.

Action: LRQA to review previous minutes as this has been discussed before (M. Bracey, M Crocker & S Rogers) and a new group to be arranged do develop the proposed clause	

5. NERS DATA October 2020 - October 2021

The NERS Data was presented (see attached)

Currently the number of ICPs are as follows
Full accreditation All scopes - 60
Full/Partial - 202
Partial only – 76
Suspended – 5

Total 343

Number of new companies since last meeting – 7

The increasing number of NERS companies was discussed and the NERS Assessor resources explained. Currently, there are 5 full time employees supported by three contractors. It was explained that one of the current FTEs is stepping down to become contractor working 2/3 days a week, but that Nigel Evans is Joining LRQA early in December. LRQA are also seeking a development role for someone to develop into a MURS assessment role.

During discussions it was identified that there are 5 companies currently suspended. NERSAP requested that LRQA report on the reasons for any suspensions as part of the report.

During discussion it was also explained that the use of iAuditor and the new reporting formats was going to allow for more trend analysis to identify the best and worst performing ICPs and it was agreed that future reporting requirements will be discussed as part of the SWG.

Action: LRQA to report on Suspensions in future reports	

6. Review of NERS Forum Minutes 2nd November 2021

6.1. Section 50 Applications
In the Providers Forum Frank Welsh had raised the issue of Local Authorities NRSWA 1991 requirements making Section 50 applications overly onerous and forcing ICP's to seek Statutory Street Works Noticing via IDNO's.

MS described the issues and approaches available. The unilateral approach by some councils was also described. Network operators present confirmed a reluctance to allow ICPs to operate under their statutory undertaker's licence due to the risks to their

operation. It was agreed that this was an appropriate topic to be taken to the INA to promote the industry view to the Highways Authorities.

6.2. New Model Distribution Safety rules
During discussion it was confirmed that the changes to the DSRs would be published in the 2022 DSR update.

7. Working Group Updates
Discussed in section 4 above

Action:	

8. Communications (Access to Infrastructure) Regulations 2016
PC explained that LRQA had been approached by SSE regarding identifying a scheme requirements document for a possible new scheme for monitoring third parties' requiring access to existing apparatus. SSE had a policy document and PC asked the panel if they had such a document so that a scheme requirements document could be developed based on the statutory instrument and respective Network Operators' policies.

There was a general discussion over the issues of third parties gaining access to infrastructure. Some NOs explained there had been a reluctance to allow third parties access and previously there had been a drive to remove third party assets from poles.

The new SI may change this stance and it was explained that there have been INA SHE Forum and SHE Committee at the ENA

Action: Network owners are requested to forward any policies they do have on third party access to infrastructure to PC to inform any scheme requirements document developed.	

9. LRQA and Inspection Services Sale
KM gave an update on the progress of the sale. The brand has been launched and legal separation is complete and physical separation is ongoing. The sale to Goldman Sachs Asset Management is awaiting legal ratification in one more country.

The Utilities team was transferred in to LRQA Verification Ltd as part of Inspection Services on November 9th 2021.

There will be no requirement for ICPs to change van logos in the near future and as the management team has not changed, there is no difference in the management structure.

Change management arrangements are in place, however specific separation issues are addressed as and when they are identified.

BH questioned if LR had verified if the MOU could be transferred to Goldman Sachs as part of the due diligence process. This could not be confirmed. Contracts in place had been novated but it was identified that as the contractual relationships were with the ICPs it was possible that the MOU had not been fully considered.

The links to the web site were also queried as the network owners have the links embedded in their documents. A test proved the links were not working and LRQA are seeking to address this

During discussion it was confirmed that not all ICPs and Network operators had been contacted and informed of the move to LRQA and LRQA was reminded of the need to consider the requirements of NERSAP and the ICP Stakeholders and to understand the impact on the service they provide

Action: LRQA to address the web site link issues	Completed 24th November 2021
Action: LRQA to provide literature on the sale progress, including timescales to legal transfer etc.,	

10. AOB and Date of next meeting

10.1. AOB

- WC asked if LRQA could review our process of assessing completion file arrangements

- PC asked the panel for their interpretation of the need for (unmetered) in the Highway Electrical Equipment scopes. There was a consensus that it was not required. LT explained that there was a reason it had been left in but would check before removing it for Version 9

Action: LT to check why Unmetered remained in V9.	

10.2. Date of next Meeting

MS thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution and confirmed the dates for the next meeting were as follows:

Agreed Dates 2022

NERS Provider Forum   1st February, 7th June & 11th October - Teams Meeting

NERSAP   15th February, 21st June & 25th October - Face to face

NERS – Statistics

Full - 60

Full/Partial - 202

Partial – 76

Suspended – 5

Total 343

- Number of new companies since last meeting – 7

NERS DATA October 2020 – October 2021

Date	Outstanding from previous month	Planned SVs for Month	Total (Outstanding plus Planned - Column F)]	SVs completed in Month	Customer Change to planned month	Variance
Oct-20	1	29	20	36	10	16
Nov-20	5	34	28	26	11	-2
Dec-20	4	35	26	32	13	6
Jan-21	6	36	31	30	11	-1
Feb-21	1	26	18	26	9	8
Mar-21	5	36	33	38	8	5
Apr-21	0	41	37	40	4	3
May-21	1	40	35	44	6	9
Jun-21	0	34	32	37	2	5
Jul-21	2	40	30	16	12	-14
Aug-21	4	23	20	35	7	15
Sep-21	1	37	30	29	8	-1
Oct-21	0	32	29	30	3	1
Totals	23	311	260	309	168	

Note

- Red Cells denote where LR has not met the number of SVs required during that month.

- Green cells denote where LR has exceeded the number of SVs required during that month.

- Where a provider has requested that the date of a surveillance visit is postponed to meet their requirements this is not counted as a planned SV for that Month.

Surveillance Visit Performance Last 12 Months

This graph shows the variance described on the previous page in a graphical Form. IF LR completed all planned visits in the month planned it would be a straight line at zero.

Surveillance Visits BY DNO/IDNO

Surveillance Visits by DNO/IDNO

	ENC	ENW	Last Mile	ESP	NPG	SPN	SSE-N	SSE-S	UKPN	WPD	UKPD	Murphy	GTC	Fulcrum	Office	Energy Assets	Leep	Urenco	Wind Energy	Private	HEN	Design	Total
Oct-20	0	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	9	9	0		4	2	2	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	36
Nov-20	0	2	1	0	3	1	1	1	11	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	26
Dec-20	0	0	2	4	2	6	0	1	5	3	1	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	32
Jan-21	0	3	2	0	2	1	0	0	11	6	1	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	30
Feb-21	0	2	0	0	1	3	2	0	5	4	0	0	0	1	6	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	26
Mar-21	0	2	0	0	3	0	4	4	7	3	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	38
Apr-21	1	1	2	0	3	0	2	2	9	6	0	2	1	0	4	0	3	0	0	1	2	1	40
May-21	0	2	2	2	6	2	3	0	14	2	0	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	44
Jun-21	0	2	0	0	3	0	1	0	7	12	0	4	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	37
Jul-21	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	3	4	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Aug-21	0	2	1	1	4	3	1	0	4	3	0	1	2	2	5	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	35
Sep-21	0	1	3	0	4	3	0	2	8	3	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	29
Oct-21	0	1	2	1	5	3	1	1	3	8	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	30
	1	15	11	7	24	13	14	9	78	47	2	10	14	6	23	5	6	0	0	10	9	5	309
	0	5	4	2	8	4	5	3	25	15	1	3	5	2	7	2	2	0	0	3	3	2	100

This table represents the number of surveillance visits witnessed on the NO Networks

Three Yearly Renewals

3 Yearly Renewals

	Completed prior to expiry date	Completed after expiry date	Total
Oct-20	3	0	3
Nov-20	4	0	4
Dec-20	1	1	2
Jan-21	0	0	0
Feb-21	3	0	3
Mar-21	0	0	0
Apr-21	1	0	1
May-21	4	0	4
Jun-21	3	1	4
Jul-21	3	0	3
Aug-21	0	0	0
Sep-21	1	0	1
Oct-21	1	1	2
	24	**3**	**27**

Total for year

Late by how many days?	Count
<10	
10 to 20	
20 to 30	1
40 to 50	1
60 to 70	0
70 to 80	0
80 to 90	1
90 to 100	0
>100	0
Total	3

All delays can be attributed to COVID related issues, no provider went out of accreditation

The data presented here is a simple count of the number of re-certification assessments carried out.
Those carried out After the expiry date have to request an extension to their certificates

Annual Partials

	Completed prior to expiry date	Completed after expiry date	Total			Late by how many days?	Count
Oct-20	2	1	3			<10	
Nov-20	0	0	0			10 to 20	2
Dec-20	0	0	0			20 to 30	0
Jan-21	1	0	1			40 to 50	1
Feb-21	0	0	0			60 to 70	0
Mar-21	1	0	1			70 to 80	0
Apr-21	2	0	2			80 to 90	1
May-21	1	0	1			90 to 100	0
Jun-21	0	1	1			>100	
Jul-21	1	1	2				
Aug-21	0	1	1			Total	4
Sep-21	0	0	0				
Oct-21	1	1	2				
	9	5	14	Total For Year			

Where a company does not
Gain full accreditation they need to request an Annual Partial Assessment to ensure their processes and procedures remain current and that their Authorising Officer, Assessing officer or Technical Advisor remains in place

Partial to Full Assessments by DNO/IDNO Area

Partial to Full Assessments by DNO/IDNO Area

	ENC	ENW	Last Mile	ESP	NPG	SPN	SSE-N	SSE-S	UKPN	WPD	Fulcrum	Private	Design	Murphy	Eclipse	Other	Office	Total
Oct-20	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7
Nov-20	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Dec-20	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	7
Jan-21	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	9
Feb-21	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Mar-21	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Apr-21	0	1	2	1	3	1	0	0	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
May-21	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	4	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	12
Jun-21	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7
Jul-21	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Aug-21	0	2	1	0	6	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Sep-21	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Oct-21	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	9
	0	8	3	1	13	6	3	0	20	17	0	1	2	0	0	0	3	77
	0	10	4	1	17	8	4	0	26	22	0	1	3	0	0	0	4	100

This table represents the number of Partial to full assessment visits witnessed on the NO Networks – The first job for any scope held at partial has to be assessed.

Number of Minor Deficiencies recorded by DNO/IDNO each month

Number of Minor Deficiencies recorded by DNO/IDNO each month

	ENC	ENW	Last Mile	ESP	NPG	SPN	SSE-N	SSE-S	UKPN	WPD	Energy Assets	Leep	GTC	Fulcrum	Private	Office	Harlaxton	Murphy	Design	Total
Oct-20	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	9	16	0	4	5	0	0	2	0	0	0	40
Nov-20	0	0	3	0	6	0	0	5	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	28
Dec-20	0	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	18
Jan-21	0	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	12	4	1	0	0	2	5	0	0	0	0	31
Feb-21	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	6	0	0	0	12
Mar-21	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Apr-21	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	3	12	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	27
May-21	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	8	12	2	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	30
Jun-21	0	5	1	0	2	1	1	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Jun-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Jul-20	0	2	1	0	0	1	3	0	5	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	23
Aug-20	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	15	2	0	0	0	0	6	8	0	0	0	35
Sep-20	0	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	19
Totals	0	18	9	0	16	5	3	18	69	28	1	4	12	2	8	23	0	0	0	216
%age Total	0	8	4	0	7	2	1	8	32	13	0	2	6	1	4	11	0	0	0	100

This table represents a simple count of the number of findings identified on each network each month

Top 5 Reasons for Minor Deficiencies in Last Reporting Period

	Top 5 Reasons for Minor Deficiencies in Last Reporting Period	
	Reason	**Count**
1	13 Passport incorrect format/incorrect contents	23
2	7h Sufficient equipment is available for the work being done and that, as required, this equipment is maintained and kept in calibration.	16
3	8d Quality and safety arrangements meet scheme requirements.	7
4	7c Work instructions clearly describe the full extent of the work to be carried out including layout and, as necessary, specification.	4
5	6a For the scopes of work undertaken UCP has documented method statements detailing how the work is to be undertaken to the	4

New Data

New Reporting Options For Discussion

- Currently reporting is on LR performance

- Number of findings are a count of findings identified on a Nos network – doesn't tell them what or by who

- Sample report