

# GNSP GIRS Notes

Implementation of the Gas Network Safety Passport under GIRS

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## 1. Introduction

The Gas Network Safety Passport (GNSP) is a scheme administered by Energy & Utility Skills (EUS), the Sector Skills Council for the Utility and Energy industries in the United Kingdom. It has been developed specifically for the gas distribution industry, following guidelines laid down by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), with the aim of providing a consistent level of basic safety awareness for all persons carrying out work on, or in support of, gas distribution operations at Gas Distribution Sites (GDS).

The GNSP provides a benchmark for basic safety training which:

- Will have a significant impact in reducing accidents and ill health caused by work.
- Will help reduce pollution incidents, minimising waste and contributing to a cleaner environment for everyone.
- Will provide recognition that workers have been trained to a common, recognised, and validated standard.
- Will save time and money by reducing the instance of induction training in industries with a high staff turnover.

A similar passport scheme has been in operation in the Gas Transmission industry for more than 3 years, delivering significant safety benefits to that area of the business.

In view of the benefits to be derived from the introduction and application of the GNSP, it is proposed that the GNSP should be extended to Utility Infrastructure Providers (UIPs) registered under the Gas Industry Registration Scheme (GIRS).

## 2. Timescales

Implementation timescales are as follows:

- With immediate effect new starters carrying out work at a GDS will be required to have successfully completed the EUS GNSP training. The definition of a GDS is given later in this document.
- From 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2005 all GIRS registered UIP employees carrying out work at a GDS will be required to have successfully completed the EUS GNSP training.
- The GNSP validity period will be limited to 3 years from the date that training is successfully completed and will be subject to a re-assessment process prior to a replacement GNSP card being issued by EUS. The re-assessment process is currently under development by EUS and will be issued at a later date.

**NOTE:** The GNSP does not provide confirmation of occupational competence.

### 3. Definitions

The following definitions apply with regard to this document.

***New Starter*** - an individual who is new to the employ, whether directly or indirectly, of a GIRS registered UIP. This includes operatives who transfer employment from one company to another. It does not refer to existing employees of an individual company starting work on a new job, (i.e. Mainlaying / Service Laying in a new location).

***Working below ground level*** - includes not only those operatives working directly on below-ground distribution plant, but also any individual who, whether directly or remotely ,(i.e. via HDD, Mechanical Excavation Plant, Barholing, laying backfill, etc.), has cause to carry out work below the normal surrounding level of the ground.

***Gas Distribution Site (GDS)*** - any temporary site/excavation on any part of an existing or proposed GT Distribution Network, (including access and egress) which is used by any person at work for the purposes of work, e.g. construction, alteration, repair, commissioning, decommissioning, maintenance, etc., or for the purposes of any activity arising out of or in connection with such work, e.g. inspection, delivery, storage and removal of tools, materials, equipment, plant, pipe, fittings, etc., including the space needed to move around to do the work. Unless already covered by the Gas Transmission Pipelines Passport Scheme, this includes, although is not limited to, the following:

- pressures not exceeding 7 bar outlet.
- LNG/LPG installations
- Governor stations
- The final connection activity necessary to connect a Gas Transporter's distribution network to another GT Network. This includes excavation works on the upstream GT parent main.

The definition of a GDS does not apply to support activities carried out so long as those activities are not undertaken within the limits of the GDS (i.e. within the area designated for work to be carried out), for example maintenance work on team vehicles, etc.

Any requests for additions or amendments to these definitions should be submitted in writing to the GIRS Management Group (GIRSMG). Until such time as a new definition has been formally confirmed, it should be assumed that the GNSP is a mandatory requirement.

## 4. GNSP Registration Process

The registration process for the Gas Network Safety Passport is as follows:

1. Competent trainers, wishing to deliver GNSP training, must undergo detailed training and assessment delivered by EUS. Only those Trainers who successfully complete this training and assessment, and are registered for this purpose with EUS, may deliver GNSP training.
2. Individuals required to be GNSP registered for operational purposes must successfully undergo training and assessment prior to the award of a GNSP.
3. Following the successful completion of GNSP training and assessment, individuals will be issued with a Temporary Certificate which will allow them access to a GDS for a limited period while their GNSP card is produced by EUS.
4. The Temporary Certificate validity period is limited to 1 month from the time of issue, after which time the Temporary Certificate shall no longer be accepted.
5. The GNSP card will contain details of the individual's GNSP training date and location, the start and end dates of the card's validity, the GNSP Registration Scheme Number, and will also display the holder's name and photograph.
6. GNSP cards are not transferable. Any attempt to use a GNSP card belonging to another individual must be reported to the GIRS Operator.
7. Prior to the expiration of the GNSP card's validity period, each individual must successfully undergo re-assessment. Failure to successfully complete this re-assessment by the end of the GNSP card's validity period will result in the individual's access to GDS being revoked.
8. Any individual who has failed to successfully complete re-assessment prior to the expiration of their GNSP card's validity must undergo full GNSP training and re-assessment before a new GNSP card will be issued.
9. The GNSP card is the property of the individual to whom it has been issued, and as such is transferable from one company to another.
10. When carrying out work at a GT GDS, individuals must carry their GNSP card on their person at all times. GTs will carry out audits to ensure compliance with this. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in access to the GDS being revoked.
11. GTs retains the right to refuse access to any of their GDS for any individual they feel may not comply with their safe practices of work, regardless of whether or not the individual is currently in possession of a valid GNSP card.

## 5. Exceptions and Exclusions

The introduction of the GNSP is aimed at improving the safety of Gas Distribution work, and as such it will be most effective when applied to all operational Gas Distribution activities. It is, however, acknowledged that there are some exceptions to this where practical or legal considerations outweigh the benefit of having a blanket requirement for every single person to hold a valid GNSP. Those excluded from the requirement to produce a GNSP card are:

- The Emergency Services, (Fire, Ambulance, Police), where the execution of their duties requires that they be granted access to an NGT GDS.
- The Health & Safety Executive in the course of their normal duties.
- Visitors. From time to time, certain individuals may, with the GT's consent, wish to visit a GT GDS (e.g. Local Authority Representatives, Senior Executives from within the utilities, etc.), or need to travel via a GT GDS to another GT site (i.e. Terminals / Gas Holder Stations attached to NGT offices). In these instances, the relevant GT procedures for visitor safety will apply.
- Other Utilities. In the event of there being a requirement for another utility to attend a GDS, (i.e. to isolate electrical cables / repair interference damage), the individual from the other utility may proceed under close supervision by the competent person on site.
- Holders of the Gas Transmission Pipeline Passport will not require a GNSP in cases where a connection is being made to the Transmission System only. This exclusion does not apply for any other Distribution work.
- CORGI registered ESEs working downstream of the emergency control valve or on first call emergency work.
- Drivers delivering aggregate/reinstatement materials direct from the quarry/process plant.

**Any requests for additions or amendments to these exceptions should be submitted in writing to the GIRSMG.**

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