

Inspection plans for the Gas Distribution and Transmission Networks for 2005 – 2010 under the Gas Safety (Management) Regulations 1996 (GSMR)

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Introduction

1 In June 2005 Transco plc sold four of its distribution networks (DNs) followed by a change of name to National Grid Gas plc. For the sale to proceed, HSE assessed revisions to Transco's existing GSMR safety case as well as safety cases from the new owners. The cases were assessed using HSE's GSMR Safety Case Assessment Manual (SCAM – LINK).

2 The networks are now operated by:

National Grid Gas plc	North West East of England West Midlands North London National Transmission System (NTS)
Northern Gas Networks Ltd	North of England
Scotland Gas Networks Ltd	Scotland
Southern Gas Networks Ltd	South of England
Wales & West Utilities Ltd	Wales & West

3 Following assessment and subsequent acceptance, HSE drew up 5-year inspection plans for the period 2005 – 2010 to verify that the arrangements in the safety cases were adequate and being followed. A summary of the inspection topics, in no specific order, is given below. The timing of the inspections over the five-year period has been prioritised taking account of the conclusions from the assessment and other key priorities for HSE. Regulatory, pipeline, human factors and other specialist inspectors will carry out the inspections.

4 HSE's inspection activities are not limited to the issues shown below and will be reviewed annually and revised where required. These plans are in addition to inspections carried out to check compliance with other legislation, for example the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 1999 (COMAH) and the Pipelines Safety Regulations 1996 (PSR).

Safety arrangements

5 The safety management system and in particular the role of senior management, effectiveness of the management arrangements, supervision, internal communications and workforce compliance with procedures.

Resources, training and competence

6 Arrangements for ensuring sufficient numbers of competent personnel at director, management and frontline levels. This will look at the system for identifying resource needs and training and recruitment arrangements.

Procedures

7 Arrangements for developing operating procedures and an assessment of usability, consistency, fitness for purpose and governance arrangements.

Selection and control of contractors

8 Arrangements for selecting, controlling and monitoring contractor safety performance. This includes alliance (e.g. mains replacement), term, special projects (e.g. new pipeline construction), and connections contractors.

Live gas working

9 Arrangements for managing live gas operations including compliance with safe control of operations procedures, isolation standards, decommissioning and purging. This will include training, supervision and monitoring arrangements.

Auditing arrangements

10 Arrangements for auditing, how they are managed and co-ordinated and how the audit findings feed into corporate learning.

Emergency response

11 Emergency response arrangements including resources, first call response, compliance with GSMR 7(4) and call centre change management.

Corrosion control

12 Systems for managing pipeline corrosion and specifically cathodic protection arrangements.

New NTS arrangements

13 Arrangements for operating and maintaining the NTS including management structure and control of third party infringements.

Inspection of central control rooms

14 Under the current arrangements National Grid Gas Limited run the Gas National Control Centre (GNCC) and Distribution National Control Centres on behalf of the industry. The inspection will look at alarm handling, resources, ergonomics, and human factor issues.

Supply emergencies

15 Arrangements for protecting the 1 in 50 storage safety monitors, co-operation arrangements between the NTS and the DNs, communication systems, effectiveness of the interruption regime and co-operation arrangements under the offtake business rules in relation to supply emergencies.

Offtake business rules

16 The offtake business rules formalise the co-operation arrangements between the NTS and DNs. The inspection will look at the effectiveness of these arrangements.

Gas operations and key performance indicators

17 A review of the network operator's key performance indicators (KPIs), including gas operations and supply emergency KPIs.

Gas quality (NTS only)

18 Arrangements for ensuring gas conveyed in the NTS meets GSMR requirements.

Arrangements for co-operation

19 Verification of how the DN meets the requirements of GSMR regulation 6, including arrangements for exchanging information between DNs and NTS and independent gas transporters (IGTs), maintenance and retention of records, compliance with GSMR regulation 6(8), and issues concerning meter unbundling.

Co-ordination of emergency exercises

20 Arrangements for co-operation between DNs and between DNs and NTS.

Mains replacement (DNs only)

21 Two DNs/annum will be audited to ensure compliance with their approved mains replacement programmes.

Maintenance Systems (NTS only)

22 Inspection to verify the monitoring and maintenance arrangements of UK compressor stations.

Data accuracy and error handling on the gas network's asset register database

23 Arrangements for ensuring data accuracy in the asset register database. This will include DN distribution mains records and NTS records (high-pressure pipeline, above ground installations, and compressor records).

**HSE Gas & Pipelines Unit
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