

### An Irish energy utility leads the way in shaping gas standards for the future

**“When you’re involved in standards development, you’re at the cutting edge of what’s happening in your industry. You’re looking to the future, and your organisation is focused on the pathway ahead. For us, that pathway is to a net zero gas network.”**

LIAM NOLAN, HEAD OF TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL TRAINING  
AT GAS NETWORKS IRELAND



## Spearheading gas standardisation

*An interview with Liam Nolan of Gas Networks Ireland.*



From developing safety standards used by every registered gas installer in Ireland, to anticipating the needs of a future all-renewable gas network as part of the national effort

to achieve net zero targets, Liam Nolan has been at the forefront of gas standardisation for over 20 years.

His expertise is helping to shape the technical framework underpinning the gas industry, and he has been chair of NSAI's Gas Technical Standards Committees (GTSC) Central Committee since 2019.

### The power of collaboration

Gas Networks Ireland has played an important and influential role in NSAI's gas technical standards committees since their inception in 1981, providing technical expertise, field data, and operational insights to ensure that standards are both practical and future proof.

*“We help ensure standards are aligned with real-world network requirements, not just theory. That means they not only meet regulatory requirements but also support innovation and safety as the gas network and Ireland's energy mix evolves.”*

These days, Gas Networks Ireland's leadership in standards development is reflected in its strong representation on the NSAI gas committees – including committee chairs. *“We have seven different technical committees under the GTSC, plus our hydrogen coordination group,”* Liam explains.

### Working together toward net zero

As the semi-state organisation responsible for operating Ireland's €3 billion, 14,758km national gas network, Gas Networks Ireland ensures the safe and reliable delivery of gas to over 720,000 homes and businesses across the country.

Looking ahead, the organisation is preparing the gas network to significantly scale up renewable gases to support a net zero carbon network.

Delivering on this ambition will require two networks of renewable gases – one transporting biomethane and the other transporting hydrogen, supported by new and updated technical standards.

*“To achieve our vision of decarbonising the network, we need standards to allow for the introduction of biomethane at scale, and then in the medium-to-longer term, the introduction of hydrogen.”*

### Putting the right expertise in place

In 2019, the Gas Technical Standards Committees (GTSC) broadened their scope to include renewable gases such as hydrogen. At the time, however, NSAI had limited expertise in the area.

To bridge that gap, Liam proposed a secondment programme that placed a Hydrogen Standardisation Expert from Gas Networks Ireland into the NSAI system. This ensured technical committees had access to the latest knowledge as standards began to evolve.

The secondee has since helped build capacity and knowledge within the NSAI GTSC consultative system, supporting informed decision making around hydrogen standardisation nationally and internationally.

This secondment has led to NSAI representation on the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment’s Interdepartmental Hydrogen

Working Group, contributing to its National Hydrogen Strategy, and providing input to the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) Hydrogen Coordination Group.

### The daily benefits of standards

Gas Networks Ireland’s dedication to NSAI committee work is rooted in their daily experience of standards’ benefits. *“We operate one of the safest and most modern gas networks in Europe, and our commitment to robust standards is a key reason why.”*

*“In our day-to-day operations, we rely on technical standards to ensure safety on the gas network and deliver consistency in our operations and management.”*

*“As Ireland progresses toward a low-carbon future, the role of standards in supporting the safe and effective integration of renewable gases, including hydrogen, has never been more critical.”*

### Words of wisdom

For Liam, the choice is clear: *“If you’re not involved in standards, your organisation is missing out. When you’re involved in standards development, you’re at the cutting edge of what’s happening in your industry. You’re looking to the future, and your organisation is focused on the pathway ahead. For us, that pathway is to a net zero gas network.”*

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Gas Networks Ireland operates and maintains Ireland’s national gas network, considered one of the safest and most modern renewables-ready gas networks in Europe.

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[GasNetworks.ie](https://GasNetworks.ie)

**+ Have your say: Would you like to contribute to the development of standards? NSAI encourages Irish organisations, businesses and experts to get involved. Join a technical committee, as Liam did, or read and comment on draft standards through NSAI’s Your Standards, Your Say platform.**



**NSAI**