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November 2024 SEC Release (7 November 2024)

SEC Release Implementation Document

Version 0.1

8 November 2023

Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer
communication

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About this document

This document is a Smart Energy Code (SEC) Release Implementation Document (RID). It summarises the scope of the SEC Release, the impacts it will have, the timeline and testing strategy, the central costs that will be incurred, and the acceptance criteria for this release.

This document will be updated periodically as the release develops.

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This document also has one annex:

- **Annex A** will contain the Data Communication Company's (DCC's) SEC Release Testing Approach Document (TAD) for this release. This document will be produced by the DCC at a later date.

1. Scope

Approved Modification Proposals

There are no Modification Proposals currently approved for inclusion in this release.

Targeted Modification Proposals

The following Modification Proposals will be included in this release if a decision to approve is received by the respective cut-off dates:

- [SECMP0028 'Prioritising System Messages'](#) proposes to introduce 'priority level' indicators to messages. During periods of high message volumes, were a queue to form, this would result in the Data Service Provider (DSP) System processing higher priority messages first. Among these high priority messages would be those relating to Prepayment top ups and ensuring supply is available for vulnerable consumers.

Cut-off date for inclusion: 20 December 2023

- [MP137 'Sharing Information on Defects and Issues'](#) proposes the DCC to build and maintain a searchable database which can store issues and defects reported to it. This database will be populated with the information in the DCC Service Management System (DSMS) provided by Suppliers.

Cut-off date for inclusion: 7 August 2024

- [MP176 'Customer Analytics Reporting'](#) proposes to mandate that the DCC delivers a standardised set of benchmarked reporting to all DCC Users which will enable them to identify their performance for key business processes in comparison to their peers and to enable them to diagnose reasons for poor performance so that they can take steps to address it.

Cut-off date for inclusion: 2 May 2024

- [MP223 'WAN Coverage Reporting'](#) proposes to create new reports to show the Wide Area Network (WAN) coverage level in each Communication Service Provider (CSP) region. There will also be reporting on changes to WAN coverage in the previous three months and WAN-related incidents which have been raised. A new template will be created to allow WAN-related incidents to be reported on, which will then also be collated into a new report.

Cut-off date for inclusion: 24 October 2024

No further modifications that impact on DCC Systems are expected to be added. Further modifications that do not impact on DCC Systems may be added to the scope of this release at a later date.

DCC Change Requests

There are no Change Requests currently targeted for this release.

2. Impacts

This section lists the impacts that the changes included in this release will have on participants and their systems, SEC documents and other industry Codes. This section assumes all targeted modifications will be approved for inclusion in this release.

SEC Party and DCC impacts

Participant impact matrix					
Modification	Suppliers	Electricity Networks	Gas Networks	Other SEC Parties	DCC
SECMP0028	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MP137	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MP176	✓	✓			✓
MP223	✓			✓	✓

The impacts on the different participants are summarised below. The business requirements for each Modification Proposal are annexed to the Modification Reports for each modification, which are available on the corresponding modifications' webpages.

SEC Party impacts	
Participant	Summary of impacts
All SEC Parties	(SECMP0028) (For SEC Parties that send and receive messages which are processed through the DSP System) In periods of high system traffic, the messages associated with time-sensitive processes will be prioritised, better enabling Service Users to efficiently execute those processes.
Supplier Parties	(MP137) Suppliers will be able to report issues, defects and fixes to the DCC. (MP176) (indirect impact) Suppliers will receive a more detailed level of reporting from the DCC and may wish to amend their internal processes accordingly. (MP223) Suppliers will be able to determine more easily whether there is WAN coverage at an address where they are planning an install.
Electricity Network Parties	(MP137) Electricity Network Operators will be able to report issues, defects and fixes to the DCC. (MP176) (indirect impact) Electricity Network Parties will receive a more detailed level of reporting from the DCC and may wish to amend their internal processes accordingly.
Gas Network Parties	(MP137) Gas Network Operators will be able to report issues, defects and fixes to the DCC
Other SEC Parties	(MP137) Meter Manufacturers and Meter Asset Providers will be able to report issues, defects and fixes to the DCC.

SEC Party impacts	
Participant	Summary of impacts
	(MP223) (indirect impact) Meter Installers will have a better idea of whether the WAN coverage has changed in the previous three months.

DCC impacts	
Area impacted	Summary of impacts
Report generation	(MP176) the DCC will require increased resource to support and deliver the enhanced reporting suite. (MP223) the DCC will need to produce two new reports to satisfy the MP223 business requirements.
Communication Service Providers (CSPs)	(MP223) DCC will also need to contact CSPs on an informal basis to discuss ongoing work which is ongoing to improve WAN and whether any planned WAN outages will take place.
DCC Systems	(SECMP0028) DCC System impacts are expected to be limited to changes to the application business logic, reuse of extant components (including the Service User Retry Buffer (SURB)) and changes to the format of Alerts. The technical solution for Northbound message processing will augment the prioritisation established in a previous change, CR1344 'DSP Buffering', such that Northbound messages are treated in one of the following ways: - Passed straight to Message Gateway North. - Stored in the Motorway cache-based Northbound Message Store (NMS) for priority-based retrieval. - Stored in the Oracle-based SURB. The solution will assign a priority to all Southbound messages to be used when selecting work from queues for onward transmission to the Smart Metering Wide Area Network (SM WAN) and to prioritise delivering responses to Service Users. (MP137) There are no changes to DCC Total Systems but the DCC will be required to develop and maintain a database.

SECAS impacts

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) will need to make the updates to the SEC to implement the modifications approved for this release.

SEC document impacts

The following SEC documents will be updated in this release:

- Section H 'DCC Services'
- Appendix AB 'Service Request Processing Document'

Each of these documents is affected by the following modifications:

SEC document impact matrix				
Document	SECMP0028	MP137	MP176	MP223
Section H		✓	✓	✓
Appendix AB	✓			

The document impacts for some modifications are provisional based on the current understanding of the solutions. Some solutions are still at early stages of assessment, and the impacts will be updated as these modifications evolve.

The approved changes to each document are annexed to the Modification Reports for each modification, which are available on the corresponding modifications' webpages.

Technical documentation versions and validity

Some Releases include proposals that require changes to either the Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification (SMETS) or the Great Britain Companion Specification (GBSC). However, the proposals within this document only require changes to the SEC, so no technical specifications will be affected.

Other code impacts

No other Codes are impacted as a result of this release.

3. Implementation timeline

This section lists the planned timeline for the implementation of this release.

This timeline includes dates for approval of the TAD, dates for when the System Integration Testing (SIT) and User Integration Testing (UIT) test phases are planned to commence and complete and key governance steps for the Change Sub-Committee (CSC) and other Sub-Committees to complete.

Please note that dates for the submission and approval of the SIT and UIT Completion Reports and the commencement and closure of the UIT window are provisional and may change nearer the time. These dates are based on the anticipated schedule for Operations Group (OPSG), Testing Advisory Group (TAG) and CSC meetings and will be confirmed as the DCC prepares the TAD.

Release implementation timetable		
Date	Event	Notes
21 Nov 23	CSC baselines RID for system-impacting modifications	The CSC will review the RID for DCC System-impacting modifications (including modifications targeted but not approved) and baseline the document.
21 Feb 24	DCC submits draft SEC Release TAD	

Release implementation timetable		
Date	Event	Notes
28 Feb 24	TAG reviews draft SEC Release TAD	
1 Mar 24 – 22 Mar 24	DCC consults on draft SEC Release TAD	The DCC will consult the industry on the draft TAD.
17 Apr 24	DCC submits updated SEC Release TAD	The TAD will be updated to account for comments provided by the TAG and from the consultation.
24 Apr 24	TAG reviews updated SEC Release TAD	The TAG will provide a view to the CSC on whether this document is suitable for use.
16 Apr 24	CSC reviews SEC Release TAD	The CSC will review the TAD and incorporate it into the RID.
May 24	SIT commences	
14 May 24	OPSG reviews the DCC's progress against the operational acceptance criteria	
21 May 24	CSC baselines RID for non-system-impacting modifications	The CSC will review the RID for non-DCC System-impacting modifications (including modifications targeted but not approved) and re-baseline the document to include these.
18 Jun 24	CSC reviews SEC Release TAD	The CSC will review the TAD and incorporate it into the RID.
Aug 24	Test Participants inform DCC of their regression testing plans	At least 10 Working Days before UIT begins
13 Aug 24	OPSG reviews the DCC's progress against the operational acceptance criteria	
Sep 24	UIT commences	
10 Sep 24	OPSG reviews the DCC's progress against the operational acceptance criteria	
18 Sep 24	DCC submits SIT Completion Report	
25 Sep 24	TAG reviews SIT Completion Report and status against the testing acceptance criteria	The TAG will provide a recommendation to the CSC on whether SIT has been completed successfully.
Sep 23	Test Participants to provide regression testing results to DCC	At least five Working Days before UIT completion
1 Oct 24	DCC submits evidence against the operational acceptance criteria	
Oct 24	UIT window closes	
8 Oct 24	OPSG reviews status against the operational acceptance criteria	The Operations Group will provide a recommendation on whether the release should be implemented as planned.

Release implementation timetable		
Date	Event	Notes
15 Oct 24	CSC go/no-go decision	The CSC will review the status of the release against the acceptance criteria and will determine if the release should be implemented as planned.
7 Nov 24	Release go-live	The changes are implemented.

4. Test strategy

This section covers the testing approach that will be taken by the DCC as part of the implementation of this release.

DCC's testing approach

The DCC's SEC Release Testing Approach Document will be provided as Annex A to this document in due course. This will cover the DCC's approach to SIT.

User testing approach

The DCC's SEC Release Testing Approach Document will be provided as Annex A to this document in due course. This will cover the DCC's approach to UIT.

5. Costs

This section summarises the costs that will be incurred by the DCC and the SECAS in implementing this release.

DCC costs

The total DCC implementation costs of this release have not yet been determined.

The DCC has provided the following cost breakdown for each DCC System impacting modification in this release via the individual DCC Assessments:

Breakdown of DCC implementation costs					
Modification	Design, Build & PIT	SIT	UIT	Implement to live	Application Support
SECMP0028	£305,381	£0	£0	£1,032	£3,466
MP137	£15,000 – £25,000				1 FTE*
MP176	£72,000				£67,320 ¹

¹ The quoted Application Support costs are for one year only. After that time, the costs will be considered as part of Business as Usual, and will be covered by annual DS&A costs.

Breakdown of DCC implementation costs					
Modification	Design, Build & PIT	SIT	UIT	Implement to live	Application Support
MP223	£45,000				N/A

**to be confirmed following the receipt of the DCC Full Impact Assessment.*

Costs in italics are estimated costs provided in the Preliminary Assessments. Firm costs will be provided in the Impact Assessments.

The DCC will provide standalone costs for SIT, UIT and Implement to Live for each modification for inclusion in their Modification Reports as part of the Impact Assessment. Once the scope of the release is confirmed and the Preliminary Assessments for all candidate modifications are complete, the DCC will produce a combined Preliminary Assessment. This will provide a combined estimated cost for each of these stages when the modifications are delivered as a single package. Where possible, these combined costs will also be provided in the respective Modification Reports.

SECAS costs

SECAS will incur two days effort, equating to around £1,200, to update and implement the changes to the SEC. SECAS estimate a maximum of eight days of effort, equating to around £4,800, will be needed for project management of the release. This cost has already been accounted for in the SECAS budget, and so Parties will not incur any additional costs.

6. Acceptance criteria

The following criteria will need to be met before the release can go live.

Prior to go-live, the Operations Group and the TAG will review the status of the release against these criteria. They will provide a recommendation to the CSC on whether to implement the release as planned. The CSC will review these recommendations and will determine then if the release should or shouldn't be implemented as planned.

Operational acceptance criteria

1. The DCC has brought to readiness all the new and changed components needed to provide the new services. This will include completing the service design and proving the service operations capability.
2. The DCC has demonstrated that all pre-existing services will be stable in the run-up to deployment of the release.
3. The DCC has proven that the new services can be operated alongside, and integrated with, the existing services.
4. The DCC has assessed the risk posed by existing problems and defects in the existing live service, and the implications these will have for the revised service.
5. The DCC has assessed and addressed the impact on Users arising from any issues, defects or workarounds within the new services.

6. The DCC has demonstrated that lessons learnt from previous SEC Releases and other DCC changes have been taken on board.
7. The DCC has demonstrated there will be no detrimental impact on consumers' experience.
8. The DCC has completed assurance of the Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery processes.
9. SECAS will be ready to implement the approved changes to the SEC on the agreed implementation date.
10. SECAS has brought to readiness all the new and changed components that it is responsible for that are needed to support the new services.

Testing acceptance criteria

1. The DCC has developed the coding for each approved change and confirmed it will be able to deploy this to the production environment on the agreed implementation date.
2. The DCC has completed and closed each test phase against the agreed exit criteria specified in the TAD.
3. The DCC has successfully completed regression testing.
4. The DCC has allowed adequate opportunity for Users to test the changes prior to deployment.
5. The DCC has confirmed that there are no Severity 1 or 2 defects outstanding that would be deployed to the live environment.
6. The DCC has produced a clear resolution plan for any outstanding Severity 3, 4 or 5 defects and that the number of remaining testing issues is within the agreed threshold figures specified in the TAD.
7. The DCC has demonstrated that the SIT and UIT test environments were aligned to the solution being deployed to the production environment; if there were any differences, these were identified and the risks these posed demonstrably managed.

Appendix 1: Version control

Document history		
Version	Date	Changes
0.1	8 Nov 2022	First draft published and presented to the CSC to be baselined for the scope on the DCC Systems.

Appendix 2: Glossary

This table lists all the acronyms used in this document and the full term they are an abbreviation for.

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
CSC	Change Sub-Committee
CSP	Communication Services Provider
DCC	Data Communication Company
DSMS	DCC Service Management System
DSP	Data Services Provider
DUIS	DCC User Interface Specification
GBCS	Great Britain Companion Specification
NMS	Northbound Message Store
OPSG	Operations Group
PIT	Pre-Integration Testing
RID	Release Implementation Document
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SECAS	Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
SMETS	Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification
SIT	System Integration Testing
SURB	Service User Retry Buffer
TABASC	Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee
TAD	Testing Approach Document
TAG	Testing Advisory Group
UIT	User Integration Testing
WAN	Wide Area Network