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SEC Change Sub-Committee Meeting 69_1911

19 November 2024, 10:00 – 11:30

Teleconference

SECCSC_69_1911 – Final Minutes

Attendees:

Representing	CSC Members	Organisation
Change Sub-Committee Chair	Ali Beard (AB)	Change Sub-Committee Chair
Large Suppliers	Emma Johnson (EJ)	British Gas
	Emslie Law (EL)	OVO
Small Suppliers	Daniel Davies (DD)	ESG Global
Other SEC Parties	Jeff Studholme (JS) *(Part Meeting)*	Smart Meter Assets
	Philip Doyle (PD)	Reverve Ltd

Other Participants		
DCC		
Bradley Baker (BB)	David Walsh (DW)	
Jack Hammond (JHa) *(Part Meeting – Agenda Item 5)*	Robbie McMillan (RMcM) *(Part Meeting – Agenda Item 2)*	
Ofgem		
Ian Chalfon (IC)	Cristina Ullastre (CU)	
Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS)		
Rachel Black (RB) *Meeting Secretary*	Khaleda Hussain (KH)	Simon Grimwood (SG)
Ben Giblin (BG)	Georgie Severin (GS)	

Apologies:

Representing	CSC Members	Organisation
Network Parties	Kelly Kinsman (KK)	National Grid Electricity Distribution

Consumers	Faye Brookes-Lewis (FBL)	Citizens Advice

1. Welcome and Introductions & Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Chair welcomed members to the CSC meeting.

SECAS advised that no comments had been raised on the last meeting minutes. The CSC **APPROVED** the minutes as final.

2. Actions Outstanding

Action Reference	Action
64/01	The DCC (PMcE) to investigate the downsizing of the Regression Testing scope which should reduce costs for the November 2024 SEC Release and report back to the CSC.
The DCC (RMcM) stated that they reduced the regression testing scope by 75%, which resulted in a reduction of £600,000 in costs. They added that the DCC has adopted this approach for the upcoming June 2025 SEC Release to ensure costs can also be reduced there. Status: Closed	
66/02	The DCC (PMcE) to advise the CSC of the specific business as usual costs included in SEC Releases.
The DCC (RMcM) advised that running costs that are incorporated for modifications on a case-by-case basis are put forward when Impact Assessments are agreed and voted on. They advised that the Release Implementation Document (RID) is updated with those where they apply. Status: Closed	

3. SEC Modification Progression

DP277 'Virtual Gateway Connection'

SECAS (SG) presented the CSC with a summary of DP277 'Virtual Gateway Connection', recommending it progress to the Refinement Process.

A member (EL) noted that there was an explicit reason for the use of physical cables as opposed to virtual connection and queried what the use of virtual connections means from a security perspective. SECAS (SG) advised that they are preparing documents to take to the Security Sub-Committee (SSC) next week in relation to this. As part of MP248 'Requirements for DCC Gateway Connection', the DCC (DW) noted that it was presented to the SSC on four occasions to explain the virtual framework. They advised that a risk assessment was carried out on it, and the architecture was reviewed and approved by the SSC. However, they agreed this would need to be presented to the SSC again.

A member (JS) asked if there has been any canvasing of existing Users in relation to the discussions at SSC. They noted this was originally seen as a barrier to entry for DCC Users, and asked how many people would likely move from the physical connection, as those savings would be realised by existing users. The DCC (DW) advised that there is one Distribution Network Operator (DNO), and three other existing Users who have shown interest in a virtual connection. They advised the DCC has checked the contracts associated with the physical connectivity and it is possible for a User to switch with no charges incurred from exiting the contract. They advised they will note this and the different charges in the Preliminary Assessment. They highlighted that it is not being proposed that only the virtual connection should be used, as different Users may find the physical connection is more suitable for them. The member noted there would be cost savings associated with this, and benefits realisation can be shown across the industry by how many of these virtual connections are live, thereby saving costs per connection. The member (EL) added that this needs to be presented to the SSC to ensure this can be done, as there are security reasons the physical connection is needed.

Another member (DD) queried if there are any tangible benefits to moving to a virtual connection. The DCC (DW) advised that the virtual connection has greater resilience, further functionality, and can support dual lines.

The CSC:

- **AGREED** the issue and impact has being clearly defined and understood
- **AGREED** that DP277 should be converted to a Modification Proposal
- **AGREED** that MP277 should be progressed to the Refinement Process
- **AGREED** the proposed timetable for MP277

4. SEC Modification Timetables

SECAS (BG) provided an update on the timetables for Modification Proposals, providing an updated Prioritisation Matrix and summaries of high and very high priority modifications.

The member (EJ) noted that DP266 'Alternative SMETS1 UTRN Generation' had been withdrawn and asked for a summary of the issue identified in the Draft Proposal. SECAS (BG) advised that when Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications 1 (SMETS1) Devices are enrolled all Unique Transaction Reference Numbers (UTRNs) have to be retrieved from the DCC Total System. SECAS (SG) added that DP266 sought an alternative avenue for gaining UTRNs when the DCC Total System is unavailable. A member (DD) noted that it was withdrawn as the Proposer has decided to pursue a solution through the DCC's Elective Communications Service (ECS) which sits outside of the SEC. The member (EJ) asked if the Terms of Reference associated with MP224 'SEC Performance Assurance Framework' remain the same as highlighted in the Modification Report. The Chair confirmed this, but advised they need to be presented to the SEC Panel before being approved as final. The member asked who will chair the committee. The Chair advised that this has not been decided yet, but could arrange an update for the CSC. However, they advised that work is currently being done on this. A member (EL) agreed that recruitment is taking place in relation to this.

In relation to MP169 'Managing SEC Obligations and the Consumer's Right to refuse a Smart Meter', a member (JS) queried if there is a way to make it clear in the Modification Report that there is another solution, which would be not allowing consumers the right to refuse a Smart Meter. The Chair highlighted that the Citizens Advice view is that consumers should have the right to refuse a Smart Meter. The member noted this but advised that it is important to have the alternative documented, despite its controversy. The member (EL) agreed and added that MP169 was only raised as a result of it being stated in Parliament by a minister that consumers could refuse a Smart Meter. The member (JS) suggested that with the change of ministers, the industry should take this as an opportunity to increase support for Smart Meters. The Chair acknowledged the points raised but advised that

Citizens Advice are concerned that enforcing the use of Smart Meters will result in people being opposed to them, and not increase support for them. However, the Chair advised that the comments raised can be included in the Modification Report to ensure Ofgem have all necessary information available to them when making their decision in the future.

The Chair advised they will speak with the DCC to confirm if [DP218 'Review of the SEC Charging Methodology'](#) is still expected to go out for consultation before the end of November 2024.

A member (EJ) noted that it had been said that an updated Modification Report for [MP275 'Section K changes to support 4G Communications Hubs rollout'](#) would be published last week, but it is not yet on the web page. The Chair acknowledged this and advised that SECAS are waiting for information to be provided by the DCC Finance Department before this can be updated. They noted that it was almost the end of the MP275 Refinement Consultation deadline but advised it would be updated as soon as possible. The Chair apologised for any inconvenience caused. The member noted that during the DCC teaching session on 5 November 2024, the DCC presented slides showing the impacts of what would happen if MP275 is approved versus what would happen if it was rejected. They asked if this should be included in the Modification Report. The Chair advised that the figures on the slides were illustrative, and not representative of the actual figures. They stated this would not be included in the Modification Report, as it would cause confusion. However, they noted that Ofgem representatives were at the session and are aware of the figures shown. Ofgem (CU) agreed with this. The Chair noted that there are other concerns, such as the Outline Business Case (OBC) not being approved by SEC Panel yet, but they advised they hope this will be approved on Tuesday 26 November 2024. Another member (JS) observed that there is a lot of focus on the modelling associated with this, but there is a bigger strategic consideration by funding Communications Hubs for over a year. They advised this will give an advantage to anyone who is not currently in the market and future entrants who will effectively inherit free Communications Hubs. However, they noted this is an argument that those who pay for DCC charges need to make. The Chair noted this, but advised that it will not operate this way, and will continue to operate as it does currently.

A member (EL) asked for clarification on the 'Updating Wide Area Network (WAN) Coverage Checker' issue. SECAS (BG) advised that the dates were being changed, and the WAN coverage work will be ongoing for the next few months. However, they advised they will provide the member with an update after the meeting.

The CSC:

- **NOTED** the updates on the SEC Modification Timetables

5. Post Decision Delivery and Ofgem expected decision dates

SECAS (KH) presented an update on the Post Decision Delivery and Ofgem expected decision dates.

The member (EJ) advised they thought the go-live date for [MP176 'Customer Analytics Reporting'](#) was meant to be before the end of Quarter 1 in 2025, but the wording now does not refer to this. The DCC (JH) clarified that they had previously said go-live would be in 2025, and it would need to be done before the go-live of [MP242 'Change to Operational Metrics to Measure on Success'](#). They advised they have not confirmed the go-live date of MP176 as the DCC are still in discussions with Suppliers who are carrying out the build. The Chair explained that the DCC had advised the CSC that they would confirm the go-live date in Quarter 1 of 2025. However, the Chair highlighted that the DCC will be non-compliant, as the agreed go-live date was 31 December 2024.

The member (EJ) asked if it has been confirmed when the SEC Performance Assurance Board (PAB) will commence, as their organisation will need to set up internal processes to ensure they are ready to respond. The Chair stated they will ask the SECAS Head of Continuous Improvement and Project Delivery, who is involved in the setting up of the SEC PAB. However, they advised that the first meeting is likely to take place in early 2025 and will be discussing performance assurance techniques. Another member (EL) advised they had the same query and will raise this at SEC Panel. The member (EJ) noted this and advised having a few months' notice would be very beneficial to Parties. The Chair agreed with this, and advised they will also ask the SECAS Head of Continuous Improvement and Project Delivery to attend the December 2024 CSC meeting to provide further clarity on this.

In relation to MP239 'Enduring Solution for Resolving SMETS2 Device Certificate Misalignment Issue', the Chair advised that the DCC has stated that no slippage will take place in Phase 2, and the go-live will still be in June 2025.

While discussing the MP242 end-to-end plan, a member (EJ) asked for an explanation of the DCC reviews. They asked if consumers would have seen output from late January through to February, and any issues will be fed back to the DCC at the meeting in March. The DCC (JH) disagreed with this. They explained that it will all go live in June 2025 at the same time. They advised that the DCC reviewed take place once it has been built, and they then run the data internally. They advised this goes through a DCC internal review check to ensure everything is running correctly. They advised these reviews have been shown today to highlight the additional level of validation the DCC carries out internally. The member noted that MP242 had basic numbers and interactive ways of displaying information. They asked if this would remain the same, or can the base numbers be provided earlier than June 2025. The DCC (JH) advised they are waiting until June 2025 as there is a business logic that sits under each of the processes. They advised they would be reluctant to provide numbers for Install and Commission sooner, as further refinement may need to take place.

The CSC:

- **NOTED** the updates on the Post Decision Delivery

ACTION 69/01: SECAS Head of Continuous Improvement and Project Delivery to attend the December 2024 CSC meeting to provide further information on the set up of the SEC PAB.

6. SEC Releases Update

SECAS (SG) presented an update on progress with the upcoming SEC Releases.

A member (EJ) queried if MP085B 'Synchronisation of Smart Meter voltage measurement periods (meters currently installed)' would be ready to be implemented as part of the February 2025 SEC Release. Another member (JS) also queried if the other Modifications included in the SEC Release would be ready for implementation. The Chair advised that if there is no slippage in their timelines, all the Modifications scheduled for the February 2025 SEC Release will be ready.

The member (EJ) noted that MP205 'Updating terminology to align with the NCSC' was meant to go out for consultation this week, and asked if this was still going to take place. The Chair advised that SECAS are waiting for the Proposer to decide the next steps for MP205 after the November Working

Group discussion. However, they advised it might be decided that MP205 does not need to go out for consultation yet.

The member (EJ) noted that there is no sight of upcoming SEC Releases on the SECAS website and asked if this is something that could be looked into. SECAS (SG) noted this and advised it might be possible to create a SEC Releases page on the website. However, they advised they would investigate this further before giving the CSC a definite answer.

The CSC:

- **NOTED** the updates on the SEC Releases provided in the paper
- **AGREED** the baseline of the February and November 2025 Release

ACTION 69/02: SECAS (SG) to investigate creating a SEC Releases page on the SECAS website.

7. CSC Terms of Reference changes

SECAS (AB) presented the CSC with the proposed changes to the CSC Terms of Reference.

The member (EJ) advised they are supportive of the removal of referral for Change Board decisions.

A member (JS) suggested changing the requirement to 'seek' Party Category views, to requirement to 'represent' Party Category views, as they suggested this is more comprehensive. The CSC and CSC Chair agreed with this. The member (EJ) asked if they will be allowed to seek Party Category views on **AMBER** classified papers. They gave an example of the SEC Releases costs issue sitting with the CSC for a long period of time, and members being unable to discuss this with their Party Category due to its confidentiality. However, they noted this was something they would have preferred to share. The Chair advised that **AMBER** classified papers are restricted to the view of Sub-Committee members at their respective meetings. They advised that one of the duties of the CSC is to review costs of SEC Releases, and this was within their remit. The member agreed with this but advised that if they had not been a member of the CSC, they would have been frustrated to not have any sight of the costs being discussed in that scenario. The Chair acknowledged this and suggested that if that situation occurs again the CSC could make a request to reduce it to a **GREEN** classification, meaning it could be shared with anyone who is a SEC Party.

The CSC:

- **AGREED** to the CSC Terms of Reference changes as discussed

ACTION 69/03: SECAS to add the requirement to seek Party Category views.

8. Any other business (AOB)

The Chair advised the CSC of the timetable for MP275, noting that an ad hoc Change Board meeting will take place on 10 January 2025 to give their final vote.

There was no further business, and the Chair closed the meeting.

Next Meeting: 17 December 2024