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CTG Meeting 13

10:30 – 13:30, 11 March 2024

CTG_13_1103 – Meeting Headlines

Decision, Discussion and Information Items

1. Previous Meeting's Minutes (For Decision)

The Communications Transition Group (CTG) reviewed the minutes from the CTG 12 meeting and **APPROVED** them as final including minor changes.

2. DCC Update: 4G CH&N Programme (For Information) (**AMBER**)

Programme Update

DCC presented an overview of the overall plan for CH&N Transition to 4G Communication Hubs (CHs) and provided updates on its programme risks and issues noting that all areas have a RAG status of Green. DCC advised that Systems Integration Testing (SIT) was progressing well and there is no overall threat to final implementation of the 4G programme at this stage. DCC advised they were developing additional Joint Industry Plan (JIP) milestones on RF Noise Testing, which would be presented to Smart Metering Delivery Group (SMDG) in March 2024.

Live Service Criteria Process

DCC presented the timeline for the Live Service Criteria (LSC) readiness reviews. DCC noted that the LSC would be formalised between April and October, prior to seeking DESNZ approval on the LSC Submission in November. SECAS raised concerns the timeline presented did not allow the SEC Panel time to sufficiently consider and endorse the LSC submission, prior to the Panel Chair writing to DESNZ with a recommendation which the DCC agreed to review.

User Integration Testing Update

DCC presented an update on the timeframe for User Integration Testing (UIT), noting that ordering for Test Comms Hubs commences on 1 April 2024 with a manufacturing and delivery lead time of three months, prior to the UIT-B availability date of 5 August 2024. CTG members raised concerns that testing would occur in the UIT-B testing environment rather than UIT-A and noted DCC communications had not been clear, which may result in some suppliers being unable to participate in UIT as they only have access to the UIT-A environment. The Testing Advisory Group (TAG) Chair advised they had requested DCC to consider if the availability of the UIT-A testing environment could be brought forward to occur prior to go-live. CTG **REQUESTED** clarification on the specific UIT testing dates, noting only JIP milestones had been presented, and further asked DCC to consider what information on UIT-B access could be shared with the TAG.

Mesh and 4G WAN Coverage

DCC presented an update on the 4G Mesh replacement strategy, and estimated there are approximately 104,000 Mesh Gateways and Hops that cannot be replaced without losing Comms Hub

connectivity. DCC proposed a passive strategy whereby Mesh replacement is avoided during the 4G transition and active Mesh Gateways and Hops are protected until a later date. The CTG queried the support DCC would provide Suppliers in determining which Mesh comms hubs could be swapped out, and the CTG Chair clarified the expectation that DCC would provide a 4G coverage database however noted the expectation that Suppliers would consult their own 2/3G estate to make informed decisions.

DCC advised the NETMAD Consultation would be issued on 5 April 2024 and DCC would continue engagement on the best way to monitor Mesh replacement outcomes, and proposed CTG may be the appropriate forum to oversee reporting obligations.

4G Comms Hub Financing Update

DCC presented an update on 4G Comms Hub Financing and noted DCC would present short-listed financing options for both 4G Comms Hubs and Exchange Visits to CTG 14 in April, prior to issuing a formal consultation in late April/early May 2024. DCC highlighted they would consult with DESNZ and CTG in August 2024 with the aim of final decision-making.

Intimate Communications Hub Interface Specification (ICHIS) Progress Update

DCC presented an update on *Intimate Communications Hub Interface Specification (ICHIS)* testing for the existing meter estate, and noted testing was progressing well with 5/13 models successfully completed without WAN/HAN issues identified. DCC highlighted a new JIP Milestone to complete testing by June 2024, prior to issuing and then concluding any formal consultation by September 2024 should issues arise during testing. DCC committed to keeping CTG updated as testing progresses.

The CTG **NOTED** these updates.

3. DCC Update: 3G Sunsetting (For Information) (AMBER)

DCC presented an update on VMO2 3G Sunsetting and noted engagement with Suppliers and DNOs on the impact of proposed VMO2 changes was ongoing and expected to conclude by the end of March 2024. DCC noted they are in discussion with VMO2 to secure further information on Pilot plans and dates and expected to complete a review of VMO2's Traffic Management Gateway Delivery Plan in late April, prior to commencing Phase 2 of Industry Engagement in June 2024. The CTG **REQUESTED** that any VMO2 modelling and proposed pilots encompass peak demand periods for an accurate representation of impacts.

The CTG **NOTED** the update.

4. DCC Update: SMETS 1 End of Life (For Information) (AMBER)

DCC presented an update on SMETS1 End of Life (EoL) and confirmed the first workshop is scheduled for 20 March 2024, which will focus on business needs and critical success factors. The CTG Chair advised they had requested SECAS propose an approach for capturing cost data to support the SMETS1 EoL Strategic Outline Case (SOC) and SECAS presented a high-level approach which includes issuing a Request for Information (RFI) and example questions to be considered and agreed by CTG Members at the first workshop.

The CTG **NOTED** the update.

5. Actions Log Update (For Information) (GREEN)

The CTG **NOTED** the actions log update and **AGREED** to close all actions marked as Propose to Close, with the exception of CTG 12/02 and CTG 05/CONF03 with CTG Members highlighting issues with the DCC contacts log and seeking further information on cost processes respectively.

6. Sub-Committee Chair Updates (For Information) (GREEN)

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The CTG **NOTED** relevant updates to the 4G programme provided by the TAG, OPSG and SSC-SMKI Chairs.

7. 4G Programme Baseline Margin Project Performance Adjustment (For Information) (GREEN)

SECAS presented an update on the Baseline Margin Project Performance Adjustment (BMPPA) requirement for the SEC Panel to review and assess how the DCC has engaged its customers on the 4G Comms Hub programme between August 2023 and March 2024. SECAS will be seeking feedback from SEC Parties on DCC engagement via a Survey which will be open between April and May 2024 (w/c 08/04/24 and w/e 10/05/24).

The CTG **NOTED** the update.

8. Asset Life Brief Preliminary Findings Paper (AMBER-STRICT)

SECAS presented an overview of the Asset Life Brief Preliminary findings from three scenarios, with indications that the first in first out 'Last Minute' modelling scenario presents the more cost-effective solution based on the asset depreciation timeline.

The CTG **NOTED** the update and **REQUESTED** SECAS consider sharing the raw model with CTG members to allow Suppliers to run their own data inputs.

9. CTG Overall Transition Plan (OTP) Update (For Information) (AMBER)

Engage provided an overview of the outcomes from the phase two Energy Suppliers focussed 4G Transition Readiness Sessions held on 29 February 2024 and 8 March 2024, noting an updated OTP will be presented to CTG 14 in April for baselining. The amendments will reflect agreed changes from the session, as well as reflecting the latest updates to JIP milestones and any substantial updates to swimlanes.

The CTG **NOTED** the update.

10. CTG Risks and Issues Register – monthly update (For Decision) (RED)

The CTG **NOTED** changes made to the Risks and Issues Register and **AGREED** to the changes and baselining of the draft as v12.0.

11. CTG Factsheets (For Decision) (AMBER)

The CTG **NOTED** changes made to the Green and Amber Classified Factsheets and **AGREED** to the changes and baselining of the draft Factsheets as v2.0 and v4.0 respectively.

12. AOB (CLEAR)

SECAS noted the Strategic Working Group (SWG) has initiated a 'Horizon Scanning' activity, to envision how the Smart Metering Infrastructure and its associated arrangements might appear in 10 years, extending beyond the scope and timeline outlined in the SEC Strategic Plan. To facilitate information gathering, SECAS has issued a draft horizon scanning survey on behalf of the SWG and is seeking responses from [SEC](#) and [Non-SEC](#) parties via two tailored surveys.

Next Meeting Date: 8 April 2024