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CTG Meeting 16

10:30 – 13:30, 10 June 2024

CTG_16_1006 – Meeting Headlines

Decision, Discussion and Information Items

1. Previous Meeting's Minutes (For Decision) (**RED**)

The Communications Transition Group (CTG) reviewed the minutes from the CTG 15 meeting and **APPROVED** them as final.

2. Actions Log Update (For Decision) (**RED**)

The CTG **NOTED** the actions log update and **AGREED** to close all actions marked as Propose to Close.

3. 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 an overall RAG status of Green. DCC highlighted the Joint Industry Plan (JIP) milestone of 7 June 2024 for the Systems Integration Testing (SIT) Exit will not be met due to ongoing testing of the CH firmware release to resolve a defect, and the revised SIT Exit date is now 18 July 2024. DCC noted the delay in SIT Exit would not affect the upcoming JIP milestone for the commencement of User Integration Testing (UIT) and the Initial Pallet Validation (IPV) milestones later in the year.

CTG raised concerns on the provision of oversight on the critical path timelines during the gap between CTG monthly meetings, and DCC **AGREED** to provide fortnightly summary updates on programme progress in relation to SIT activities and any key issues by exception to the CTG Chair for onward sharing to CTG.

User Integration Testing (UIT) Update

DCC presented an update on UIT and advised the UIT-B start date is Monday 5 August 2024, ahead of the UIT JIP Milestone on 6 August 2024. DCC advised UIT-A access will be available from 11 November 2024, and defects can be raised from 25 November 2024. DCC highlighted test participants have been invited to the Testing Services Day, to be held on 9 July 2024 at DCC's Brabazon lab, for test participants to undertake biometrics and safety training ahead of UIT-A opening.

Initial Pallet Validation Approach Document (IPVAD) Update

DCC presented an update on the Initial Pallet Validation Approach Document (IPVAD) and advised DCC are reviewing comments received on the draft IPVAD, including those received from the CTG, ahead of issuing a finalised IPVAD for CTG consideration and approval at the extraordinary CTG meeting scheduled for 21 June 2024.

CTG sought clarification on the impact of potential firmware changes ahead of manufacturing IPV Devices and DCC **AGREED** to confirm with Toshiba what the final date or lead time is before 4G manufacturing commences should any firmware changes be needed.

Regulations Update – Phase 2 Consultation

DCC advised four responses were received on the [CH&N Consultation on Phase 2 regulatory changes](#), including a response from SECAS on behalf of the CTG and OPSG, and that DCC will publish the Conclusions Report in week commencing 10 June 2024.

DCC also highlighted the [CH&N Consultation on the Communications Hub Supporting Information \(CHSI\)](#) was published on 30 May 2024 and closes on 27 June 2024, and noted the supporting information has been updated to include 4G Comms Hubs. The CTG Chair advised SECAS is preparing a response on the CHSI Consultation on behalf of CTG and OPSG, which would be circulated to CTG and OPSG Members for comment.

[Post meeting note: a draft response has been issued by SECAS on behalf of CTG and OPSG (incorporating views from the relevant Chairs) on 11th June for review by the respective Sub-Committee members.]

Intimate Communications Hub Interface Specification (ICHIS) Progress Update

DCC presented an update on the Intimate Communications Hub Interface Specification (ICHIS) testing for the existing meter estate and noted 12 out of 13 models had been successfully tested and the testing phase concluded. DCC advised the majority of meters are compliant with the latest ICHIS specification, however a small percentage of meters have noise levels that exceed the 4G bands and further impact assessments for these meters are required. DCC noted initial analysis suggested that the affected noisy meters do not require replacing – this was welcomed by CTG.

The DCC agreed to meet with the Sub-Committee Chairs and agree a ICHIS engagement approach among the SEC Sub-Committees, including confirming the absolute number of impacted Devices once field analysis has been completed and the required broader engagement with Suppliers on impacted Devices and any recommended mitigations. The OPSG Chair and SECAS further agreed to consider how Device mitigations, such as firmware upgrades, will be shared with broader industry if driven by ICHIS or Trust Centre Swap Out recommendations.

4G Comms Hub Financing Update

DCC presented an update on 4G Transitional Financing Arrangements and advised a stakeholder engagement session on the 4G CH Financing Outline Business Case (OBC) was held on the 23 May 2024 with Suppliers and DNOs, and a Request-For-Information had been issued to attendees post meeting to capture feedback on the proposed options. DCC noted responses to the RFI are due on 14 June 2024 and will be considered in the finalisation of the OBC prior to the OBC being presented to the SEC Panel in July 2024. The CTG Chair reminded DCC on the importance of ensuring clarity on the next steps and associated timelines.

The CTG **NOTED** these updates.

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

DCC presented an update on SMETS1 End of Life (EoL) and noted DCC are currently analysing the anonymised responses provided by SECAS from the SMETS1 EOL RFI. DCC noted they are working closely with DESNZ to advance the strategic outline case and keep abreast of any policy changes, however noted work was not as advanced as DCC had anticipated and that a second SMETS1 EOL workshop would not occur in June 2024.

SECAS presented the anonymised findings to Questions 4 and 5 of the SMETS1 EoL RFI. The CTG **NOTED** the update and **AGREED** for these findings to be downgraded in classification from Red to Amber-Strict.

The CTG **NOTED** these updates.

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

The TAG, OPSG, TABASC and SSC/SMKI Chairs provided Sub-Committee updates relevant to the 4G programme, including:

- TAG will have oversight of any SIT defects prior to UIT opening and the TAG Chair agreed to work with SECAS to confirm how visibility of key testing issues can be shared with SEC Parties outside of the Testing Advisory Group.
- The Live Services Criteria 1 readiness reviews are due to commence at OPSG in June, and the TCSO sub-group has been confirmed and terms of reference are being drafted.
- TABASC have raised concerns with DCC regarding the lack of real-world testing to provide 4G coverage assurance. Following CTG discussion on the topic, the DCC agreed to provide a 4G coverage assurance summary paper to CTG (for sharing with OPSG and TABASC), articulating the additional activities DCC have undertaken and are currently undertaking to provide confidence on the Vodafone coverage assurance, high-level plans for network monitoring at go-live and in-life, and what strategies DCC will put in place should actual coverage not reflect theoretical indicators.
- SSC are reviewing the 4G CH security characteristics.

The CTG **NOTED** the update.

6. CTG Overall Transition Plan (OTP) Update (For Information) (GREEN)

The Chair **NOTED** a CTG Energy Supplier Readiness Session has been scheduled for 27 June 2024, and themes and outputs will be shared at the next CTG meeting in July; an update to the OTP if required will be progressed in due course. The CTG Chair advised that the July CTG agenda will also include a perspective from an Energy Supplier member.

7. 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 v15.0.

8. CTG Factsheets (For Decision) (AMBER)

The CTG **NOTED** the updates made to the Green and Amber Factsheets which reflects advice received from the REC Code Manager's Consolidated Metering Code of Practice (CoMCoP) Review Leads and **AGREED** to baseline the Green Factsheets as v2.2 the Amber Factsheets as v4.2.

9. AOB (RED)

DCC Update: VMO2 3G Sunsetting

Following OPSG Chair and CTG Chair engagement with DCC, DCC provided a latest update to CTG on VMO2's transition activities from 3G to 2G and advised VMO2 will be undertaking two trials to inform VMO2s 3G switch off in 2025. The DCC planned to provide an update at the OPSG on 11th June. The CTG **RAISED** concerns about the lack of information provided on the trial specifics, noting potential impacts on Supplier estates and customer services and **REQUESTED** DCC return to CTG as soon as possible and provide when and where the trials will take place, the volume of smart meters impacted, and the approach to be taken for new installs, to ensure energy suppliers are fully aware in order to manage consumers if any critical issues arise.

[Post meeting note: the CTG Chair and OPSG Chair met to ensure alignment ahead of OPSG on 11th June that followed CTG on 10th June. Following the OPSG meeting, DCC has provided the CTG Chair and SECAS with updated slides to reflect responses to some of the questions raised at CTG the day before, as these were further discussed at the OPSG on 11th June. The updated slides have been included in the CTG_16 post meeting documentation folder.]

Annual SEC Party Engagement Day

SECAS advised the Annual SEC Party Engagement Day is due to be held on 17 July 2024 and noted parties could express interest by emailing secas@gemserv.com by 25 June 2024 with subject line 'SEC Party Engagement Day.'

DCC Consultations

DCC provided an overview of upcoming consultations and noted updates on consultations would be provided to all Sub-Committees moving forward to enhance engagement.

Approach for CTG engagement

The Head of Industry Operations noted an approach made by an industry party to SECCo for engagement with CTG to share its thinking. CTG suggested that the OPSG and CTG Chairs review the proposal, and provide a view to CTG on whether it is appropriate to take forward.

The CTG **NOTED** the updates.

Next Meeting Date: 8 July 2024.