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'DCC virtual gateway for new and existing DCC Users'

November 2024 Working Group – meeting summary

Attendees

SEC Party Category	Working Group Members	Representing
Large Suppliers	Julie Brown (JB)	British Gas
	Emma Johnson (EJ)	British Gas
	Alex Hurcombe (AH)	EDF
	Francesca Scott (FS)	EDF
	Sharon Armitage (SA)	E.ON
	Ralph Baxter (RB)	Octopus Energy
	Joey Manners (JM)	Octopus Energy
	Emslie Law (EL)	OVO
	Mahfuzar Rahman (MR)	Scottish Power
	Kevin Clark (KC)	Utilita
Other SEC Parties	Patricia Massey (PM)	BEAMA
	Ian Lovatt (IL)	Chameleon
	Daniel Davies (DD)	ESG Global
	Martin Bell (MB)	EUA
	Michael Snowdon (MS)	Secure Meters
	Jeff Studholme (JS)	Smart Meter Assets
Network Parties	Jamie Lowe (JL)	Northern Power Grid
	Shuba Khatun (SK)	SSEN

Other Participants		
DCC		
Bradley Baker (BB)	Chris Barlow (CB)	Paul McShane (PM)
Rajorshi Nag (RN)	Robin Seaby (RS)	Sumit Singh Thakur (SST)
David Walsh (DW)		
SECAS		
Simon Grimwood (SG) *WG Chair*	Rachel Black (RBl) *Meeting Secretary*	Elizabeth Woods (EW) *Lead Analyst*
Mo Sumro (MS) *Lead Analyst*	Georgiana Severin (GSe) *Lead Analyst*	Alison Beard (AB) *Releases Manager*
Marc Rhodes (MR) *Lead Analyst*	Rainer Lischetzki (RL) *Technical Consultant*	

Overview

Issue

- Smart Energy Code (SEC) Parties wishing to become a Data Communications Company (DCC) User must have a physical DCC Gateway Connection.
- Existing DCC Users are migrating to cloud-based architecture and almost all new onboarding DCC Users have requested this as an option.
- The DCC has fielded 130 onboarding queries in the last 18 months, representing an increase of interest in DCC User roles. All 130 organisations have expressed concerns for a fixed line connection to be able to connect to the DCC network as it leads to additional lead times during the DCC onboarding process.

Impact

- Existing SEC Parties and new organisations wishing to become a DCC User are required to spend money on physical premises they otherwise would not need to if the option of a virtual connection existed.
- Currently 90-day lead time for physical installation of a line, this would be reduced to 30 days with cloud.
- Cloud-based connectivity can be a more cost-effective gateway connection vs physical connections, especially where redundancy of connection is required.

Proposed Solution

- Adding the option for cloud connectivity for DCC Users in the Data Service Provider (DSP) service catalogue

Working Group Discussion

Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) (MS) provided an overview of the issue, impact and Proposed Solution.

Testing of virtual gateway connectivity

A Working Group member (MB) questioned if virtual DCC Gateway Connections would be easier for manufacturers to connect to the DCC for live testing. MB questioned whether User Integrated Testing (UIT) aspects are being investigated as part of this issue. MB added that when a Supplier establishes a DCC Gateway Connection, a piece of equipment is installed at the Suppliers data center to allow DCC Users to conduct UIT testing. MB questioned if DCC User UIT testing has been considered.

The DCC (CB) stated that testing environments have not been considered for this modification due to the modification focusing on productions systems more than it is testing environments. The Working Group member (MB) acknowledged this.

Working Group members agreed that the Proposed Solution addresses the issue.

Next Steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS to present the modification to Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC); and
- SECAS to request the Preliminary Assessment; and
- SECAS to develop the modification report

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