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DP100 ‘Service Response Traffic Management’

Problem statement – version 0.5

About this document

This document provides a summary of this Draft Proposal, including the issue or problem identified, the impacts this is having, and the context of this issue within the Smart Energy Code (SEC).

Proposer

This Draft Proposal has been raised by Terry Underwood from Utiligroup.

What is the issue or problem identified?

Service Responses in wider traffic management

Service Responses are received by Users after a Service Request is sent by that User. Currently, two Modification Proposals have been raised to assist with traffic management of the Data Communications Company (DCC) Systems: these are [SECMP0062 'Northbound Application Traffic Management - Alert Storm Protection'](#) and [SECMP0067 'Service Request Traffic Management'](#). The current proposals only cover Alerts and Service Requests, where both will be throttled if an abundance of either threatens to overload the DCC Systems. Both of these modifications look at traffic management preventing a DCC Systems outage.

How does this issue relate to the SEC?

There are currently no proposals offering management when the DCC Systems have suffered an outage or restriction and are then restored. In these scenarios Service Responses will be queued while the DCC Systems are restricted and then be sent to the Users when DCC Systems come back online. Users' adapter systems will receive all of these Service Response messages at once, irrespective of priority.

The SEC does not currently specify how Service Response should be released after an outage or restriction. This means User systems may receive all messages at once and the priority messages will have to wait to undergo processing rather than being treated as priority. Changing the SEC so that the DCC has a clear and transparent means of providing prioritisation and traffic management for Service Responses can help. Areas of the SEC that will likely be affected by any potential solution include:

- SEC Appendix AD 'DCC User Interface Specification' (DUIS);
- SEC Section H 'DCC Services'; and
- SEC Section A 'Definitions and Interpretations'.

This will be due to having to explicitly detail where the DCC is providing a means of Service Response prioritisation and/or throttling in the SEC, and any accompanying terminology that will be created for SEC Section A. Further analysis will be undertaken in the Development Stage and in the Refinement Process when business requirements are devised.

What is the impact this is having?

User issues with Service Responses

The Proposer has encountered issues with the current process and has presented these to the Operations Group, who have confirmed that other User Systems have experienced the same issues. In particular, Adapter systems in general being required to process an abnormal volume of queued traffic (e.g. Service Responses and Alerts) once released by the DCC. They have requested that there should be an element of control to the release of all outbound DCC traffic. In the absence of a planned coordination or outbound traffic management, responses are sent at once, irrespective of importance. This kind of activity means that important messages cannot be prioritised for processing, causing potential end-consumer impact by delays to time-critical processes.

The Proposer suggests that where there has been a necessity to look into inbound traffic management to protect the DCC Systems from an outage, investigations should take place into outbound traffic management when the DCC Systems are restored or have an abnormal volume of traffic. This way, it can provide an element of control over outbound traffic, ensuring that time-critical messages can be prioritised. Messages such as Install & Commission and Prepayment could therefore be prioritised over messages such as Alerts, the latter being throttled and placed at the back of a queue.

What are the views of the industry?

Views of the DCC

The views of the DCC will be gathered as part of the Development Stage.

Views of SEC Parties

The views of Parties will be gathered during the Development Stage.

Views of Panel Sub-Committees

The Operations Group have stated they hold a high interest in the Draft Proposal and its future developments.

Views of the Change Sub-Committee

The views of the Change Sub-Committee will be gathered during the Development Stage.