

This document is classified as **White** in accordance with the Panel Information Policy. Information can be shared with the public, and any members may publish the information, subject to copyright.



DP240 'Service Request Management'

Modification Report

Version 0.1

4 January 2023

Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer
communication

592



Managed by



About this document

This document is a draft Modification Report. It currently sets out the background, issue, and progression timetable for this modification, along with any relevant discussions, views and conclusions. This document will be updated as this modification progresses.

Contents

1. Summary.....	3
2. Issue.....	3
3. Assessment of the proposal	4
Appendix 1: Progression timetable	5
Appendix 2: Glossary	5

Contact

If you have any questions on this modification, please contact:

Mike Fenn

020 3314 1142

mike.fenn@gemserv.com

1. Summary

This proposal has been raised by Graeme Liggett from the Data Communications Company (DCC).

The Smart Energy Code (SEC) doesn't set out detailed requirements for how the DCC should manage its service during periods where inbound Service Request volumes exceed service capacity. Exceptional or unexpected high volumes of Service Requests being sent could lead to congestion or, in exceptional events, DCC System failure.

To support the digitalisation of future energy systems through the capture, control, management and sharing of significantly increasing data volumes, the Proposer suggests introducing elements of Service Request management to the SEC.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

Under Condition 16 of the [Smart Meter Communication Licence](#), the DCC is required to procure the Relevant Service Capacity to “fully exercise the functions it has under or by virtue of the Principal Energy Legislation, this Licence, the Retail Energy Code and the Smart Energy Code”. However, service capacity will always be finite and may still be vulnerable to accidental or unexpected high volumes of traffic sent from DCC User systems.

Currently the SEC doesn't set out detailed requirements for how the DCC should manage the service during periods where inbound Service Request volumes exceed service capacity. SEC Section H 'DCC Services' sets out the time periods within which the DCC must undertake specific activities relating to the receipt of Service Requests, however there is no concept within the SEC of mitigating actions to protect the DCC Total System, and by extension the activities which utilise it, during periods of exceptional or unexpected high volume.

What is the issue?

The DCC expects the volume of messages sent over the DCC Total System to grow exponentially within the next ten years as more Devices are enrolled on the DCC service, with a target of 55 million meters in 33 million premises. In response to the UK Government's Net Zero targets, industry parties are expected to attempt to capture significantly more data. Message payload sizes are also expected to increase as the digitalisation of Smart Energy Systems continues.

Alongside capacity expansion, which does not require a SEC modification, the Proposer believes that management of Service Requests sent by Service Users to the Data Service Provider (DSP) is a key response to the growing demand on the DCC Total System.

What is the impact this is having?

Where Service Request volumes exceed service capacity, and in turn generate an excessive volume of Service Responses and Alerts, periodic or temporary congestion events are likely to occur. This

can lead to a deterioration in service performance and in extreme cases overload and failure of the DCC Total System.

There are known examples of high volumes of Service Requests sent due to DCC User system errors or industry events which have resulted in this issue occurring, causing business processes for all DCC Users to become compromised through a loss of or reduction in service.

Impact on consumers

Any deterioration in service performance or failure of the DCC Total System affects all processes which utilise that system, including those related to the continuity of a consumer's energy supply and in response to consumer-driven requests. Without mitigating action, as the number of consumer premises registered on the DCC Total System increases, so does the likelihood of disruption to consumers.

3. Assessment of the proposal

Areas for assessment

Historically, challenges have been raised against modifications which looked to apply management mechanisms to DCC Total System traffic due to a lack of business case. This is because the solutions were seen as speculative, as the issue of the DCC Total System nearing or reaching capacity had not been encountered. However, instances of this issue occurring and resulting in deterioration of the service have now been recorded. The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) will work with the Proposer to provide quantitative data on the scale of the impact should these instances continue or increase in frequency.

The Proposer believes that Service Request management will help to resolve this issue. They also believe it is important that Service Users are able to decide how they would expect the DCC and wider industry to manage inbound Service Requests during periods of high demand for DCC Systems. In assessing how the DCC should manage inbound Service Requests, Service Users should consider the impact of these inbound Service Requests on the profile of outbound Service Responses and on the DCC Total System and Service User systems. SECAS will issue a Request for Information (RFI) to better understand what SEC Parties believe should be included in the Proposed Solution.

Sub-Committee input

SECAS will engage with the Chairs from the Operations Group (OPSG), the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC), the Security Sub-Committee (SSC) and the Smart Metering Key Infrastructure Policy Management Authority (SMKI PMA) to confirm what input is required from these forums. SECAS believes the following Sub-Committees will need to provide the following input to this modification:

Sub-Committee input	
Sub-Committee	Input sought
OPSG	Guidance on the relative usage levels of different Party types. Guidance on any associated reporting which will be required and insights from current DCC reporting.
SMKI PMA	N/A
SSC	Guidance on the potential security impacts of applying management mechanisms to Service Requests.
TABASC	Guidance on ensuring continuity of DCC Users' business processes.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

SECAS will present this Draft Proposal to the Change Sub-Committee (CSC) on 18 April 2023. Following this, SECAS will work with the Proposer to better understand the impact this issue is having before returning to the CSC for progression to the Refinement Process.

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
Draft Proposal raised	11 Apr 2023
Presented to CSC for initial comment	18 Apr 2023
<i>Draft Proposal discussed with Sub-Committee Chairs</i>	<i>19 Apr 2023</i>
<i>Draft Proposal developed with the Proposer</i>	<i>Apr – May 2023</i>
<i>CSC converts Draft Proposal to Modification Proposal</i>	<i>16 May 2023</i>

Italics denote planned events that could be subject to change

Appendix 2: Glossary

This table lists all the acronyms used in this document and the full term they are an abbreviation for.

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
CSC	Change Sub-Committee
DCC	Data Communications Company
DSP	Data Service Provider
OPSG	Operations Group
RFI	Request for Information
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SECAS	The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
SMKI PMA	Smart Metering Key Infrastructure Policy Management Authority

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
SSC	Security Sub-Committee
TABASC	Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee