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MP244 ‘Device Alerts for Smart Meter Credit Replenishment’ July 2024 Working Group – Meeting Summary

Attendees

SEC Party Category	Working Group Members	Representing
Large Suppliers	Emma Johnson (EJ)	British Gas
	Sharon Armitage (SA)	E.ON
	Alex Hurcombe (AH)	EDF
	Amy Cox (AC)	EDF
	Ralph Baxter (RB)	Octopus Energy
	Emslie Law (EL)	OVO
	Kevin Clark (KC)	Utilita
Small Suppliers	Daniel Davies (DD)	ESG Global
	Steve Blackler (SB)	E Gas & Electricity
Other SEC Parties	Beth Tatton (BT)	Calisen Metering
	Martin Bell (MB)	EUA
	Jeff Studholme (JS)	Smart Meter Assets
Network Parties	Shuba Khatun (SK)	SSEN
Citizens Advice	Colin Griffiths	Citizens Advice

Other Participants		
DCC		
Bradley Baker (BB)	Jonathon Helyer (JH)	Robin Seaby (RS)
David Walsh (DW)		
SECAS		
Kev Duddy (KD) <i>WG Chair</i>	Rachel Black (RBI) <i>Meeting Secretary</i>	Simon Grimwood (SG)
Mo Sumro (MS)	Ali Beard (AB)	

Overview

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) provided an overview of the issue identified as well as the proposed business requirements.

Issue

- Multiple scenarios where a Supply could have exhausted its credit value potentially resulting in loss if of power.
- There are currently no Device Alerts to notify a Supplier of issue resolution e.g., credit being topped up.
- This impacts Suppliers' ability to proactively provide support to vulnerable consumers who might be rationing or Self-Disconnecting.
- It also adds potentially avoidable traffic to the Data Communications Company (DCC), as Suppliers resort to sending SRV7.4 'Read Supply Status' multiple times to receive an update.

Business Requirements

Business Requirements		
Ref.	Requirement	Responsible for delivery
1	A SMETS2 Device Alert notifying a Supplier of the re-enablement of a Supply following the receipt of various Device Alerts relating to scenarios where credit limits have been exceeded or exhausted.	DCC Meter Manufacturers

MP244 Working Group Summary

SECAS (SG) provided an overview of the issue and Proposed Solution to the Working Group, as well as breaking down key comments received as part of the Refinement Consultation. Estimated costs from the Data Communications Company (DCC) and Gas Meter Manufacturers were also provided.

DCC System Traffic

SECAS (SG) advised that a workaround is already currently active within industry. Service Request (SR) 7.4 'Read Supply Status' can be sent to a Device , allowing for a Supplier to take remedial action if required. The DCC (DW) noted that there has recently been an increase in SR 7.4 being sent by Suppliers and Network Operators, potentially impacting the DCC Total System.

BT asked to confirm there is no risk or gap to mitigate as a result of this modification. SG confirmed the Proposer intends to utilise this Alert as an automated alternative to sending SR 7.4 requests manually for this particular issue. SG confirmed SR 7.4 has other uses so traffic will not be completely eliminated from the DCC Total System.

Alert Configuration

An Other SEC Party member (BT) queried as to what a Non-Great Britain Companion Specification (GBCS) / Non-Mandated and (NGNM) Alert is, and whether this option was on the table. SECAS (SG) clarified that an NGNM Alert would not have to be adopted by all Manufacturers and Users, but would

instead be an optional choice in which a DCC User could contract with a desired Manufacturer to provide.

The Manufacturer rep (MB) clarified that originally the scope of this modification covered both Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications (SMETS)1 and 2 Devices, but has since been reduced to just SMETS2.

The Proposer (KC) advised they have requested a mandated GBCS Alert for consistency across industry. They would like to avoid having different processes across different manufacturers. They also confirmed they are investigating the NGNM Alert alternative outside the scope of the modification process.

The Manufacturer rep (MB) asked the DCC to clarify the impacts on their system from NGNM Alerts, noting the Preliminary Assessment (PA) suggested they would still be impacted. The DCC (DW) confirmed they would review the PA to confirm.

TABASC Feedback

A Large Supplier member (RB) queried why a mandated Alert had been chosen despite the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) recommending pursuing a NGNM Alert. They shared concerns that TABASC discussion had not been circulated and there may be conflicting opinions and thought processes arising as a result.

Another Large Supplier (and TABASC) member (EL) advised the TABASC shared concerns in relation to the Technical Specification Applicability Tables (TSAT) potential impacts. Requiring all Suppliers to upgrade and adopt this Alert would require firmware upgrades to all Devices. SECAS (SG) SG confirmed that SMETS, GBCS, Message Mapping Catalogue (MMC) and DCC User Interface Specification (DUIS) would all need updating as part of this modification.

Business case

A Large Supplier Member (RB) highlighted that although costs from the DCC and Gas Manufacturers had been provided, there may be an underlying cost across industry as older or outdated Devices may be retired prematurely as a result of the changes proposed. They noted that statistics should be available in relation to the number of firmware upgrades that fail to be delivered, and that utilising these stats may allow for more structured analysis of this issue.

An Other SEC Party member (BT) asked if numbers can be ascertained as to how many Devices are likely to be impacted by this Issue. The Proposer noted that figures have been gathered in relation to the expected number of SR 7.4 to be sent, but not the number of Devices impacted.

The Proposer (KC) agreed the industry cost to implement this change is concerning, however the solution is not as simple as maintaining the current workaround. KC asked how industry would like the benefits quantified to a level that industry would accept, however there was no specific answer provided to this question.

Next Steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- The DCC to review the impacts of a NGNM Alert of their system;

- SECAS to develop the costs further
- SECAS and the Proposer to develop the benefits further
- SECAS to have the legal text reviewed by Technical Specification Issue Resolution Sub-Committee (TSIRS)