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MP253 ‘Traffic Management for Price Cap Update Events – User Actions Required’

April 2024 Working Group – meeting summary

Attendees

SEC Party Category	Working Group Members	Representing
Large Suppliers	Julie Brown (JB)	British Gas
	Alastair Cobb (AC)	British Gas
	Emma Johnson (EJ)	British Gas
	Adrian Simons (AS)	British Gas
	Sharon Armitage (SA)	E.ON
	Amy Cox (ACo)	EDF
	Alex Hurcombe (AH)	EDF
	Joey Manners (JM)	Octopus Energy
	Ralph Baxter (RB)	Octopus Energy
	Mahfuzar Rahman (MR)	Scottish Power
	Kevin Clark (KC)	Utilita
Small Suppliers	Sam Ward (SW)	Good Energy
	Aiden Way (AW)	Rebel Energy
Other SEC Parties	Patricia Massey (PM)	BEAMA
	Emily Waters (EW)	BUUK
	Beth Tatton (BT)	Calisen Metering
	Carl Whitehouse (CW)	Calisen Metering
	Craig Biffen (CB)	EUA
	Michael Snowden (MS)	Secure Meters
	Jeff Studholme (JS)	Smart Meter Assets
	David Lane (DL)	Smart Metering Solutions
	Mitch Kerry (MK)	Trilliant
Network Parties	Catherine Duggan (CD)	Electricity Northwest Ltd
	Stuart Blair (SB)	Northern Powergrid
	Alan Creighton (AC)	Northern Powergrid
	Shuba Khatun (SK)	SSEN

Other Participants		
DCC		
Bradley Baker (BB)	David Rollason (DR)	Gary Stuart (GSt)
David Walsh (DW)		
SECAS		
Kev Duddy (KD) <i>WG Chair</i>	Rachel Black (RBI) <i>Meeting Secretary</i>	Elizabeth Woods (EW) <i>Lead Analyst</i>
Ali Beard (AB)	Georgie Severin (GSe)	Ben Giblin (BG)
Simon Grimwood (SG)		

April 2024 Price Cap Update Event

AH queried the success of the recent April 2024 Price Cap Update Event (PCUE). DW confirmed there were no major incidents, with only a few issues surrounding scheduled reads occurring. AH queried whether the mod is actually required. AB noted there is a lot of additional time and resource from the DCC utilised during a PCUE. AB clarified the DCC need to provide some indicative costs to support the business case. DW clarified that PCUE's were not in the specifications of the DCC Total System when it was built. DR pointed out bank holidays play a big role in the success of PCUE's, as install and commissions don't take place therefore system traffic is minimised.

Network Party Support

SK queried what support would be available for Network Parties during PCUE's so as they can still collect required data. DR advised that only traffic relating to tariff updates will be managed, so anything else would be business as usual. SK clarified their organisation was impacted by the April 2024 PCUE, so AB asked SK to send over impacts to DR for further investigation.

PCUE Improvements

JM noted that the most recent modification report did not include data from the January 2024 PCUE. JM felt that after each event since 2023 improvements are being made despite growing numbers of active meters. JM pointed out Ofgem expect the same performance on weekdays and bank holidays. AB clarified there would be less system traffic on a bank holiday which JM noted. JM felt there should be more supporting evidence, and the modification seems like overkill. JM feels the proposed Price Cap Instructions Document (PCID) is poor in comparison to other Code Required documents.

Guaranteed Standards of Practice (GSoP)

RB noted comments from the refinement consultation responses around the possibility of consumers not having their tariffs updated for a few days based on the PCID instructions. RB pointed out there has been a lot of negative media around 'broken' smart meters, and believes a lot of consumers would contact their suppliers thinking their meter is broken if their tariff is not updated swiftly. RB believes this modification may need to be Authority Determined to ascertain Ofgem perspective. RB also noted there is a conflict with GSoP, as Suppliers are expected to update tariffs within 24 hours of

the PCUE. RB asked if the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) have reviewed this modification. SG confirmed they have not, but the Operations Group (OPSG) have. RB advised they felt the discussion at OPSG did not pick up a lot of the issues raised within this meeting. RB advised the modification to return to OPSG again.

Historical PCUE Data

SB asked if there is anyway to review data from PCUE's 3+ years ago. SB noted that majority of tariff-based traffic is from Standard Variable tariff consumers, whereas the norm was to have a fixed tariff with a smaller number of consumers being on variable tariffs. SB advised they are supportive of the modifications intent, but feels the proposed solution doesn't address the issue.

Implementation Approach

JM felt it was hypocritical to expect users to make required changes to their internal infrastructure in time for the July PCUE based on a June 2024 SEC Release. AB clarified that isn't the expectation, it is just the current targeted implementation date. JM pointed out the proposed legal text requires Users who are unable to meet the obligation to contact the DCC to agree alternative solutions, however, the User would still be in breach of the obligation.