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MP253 'Traffic Management for Price Control Events - User Actions Required'

December 2023 Working Group – Meeting Summary

Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Anik Abdullah (AA)	SECAS
Ben Giblin (BG)	SECAS
Georgiana Severin (GS)	SECAS
James Hosen (JH)	SECAS
Kev Duddy (KD)	SECAS
Rachel Black (RB)	SECAS
Simon Grimwood (SG)	SECAS
Abhijit Pal (AP)	DCC
Christopher Thompson (CT)	DCC
David Rollason (DR)	DCC
David Walsh (DW)	DCC
Gary Stuart (GSt)	DCC
Emma Johnson (EJ)	British Gas
Julie Brown (JB)	British Gas
Beth Tatton (BT)	Calvin Capital
Alex Hurcombe (AH)	EDF Energy
Amy Cox (AC)	EDF Energy
Sharon Armitage (SA)	EON
Martin Bell (MB)	EUA
Matthew Roderick (MRo)	N3rgy
Stuart Blair (SB)	Northern Powergrid Metering
Ralph Baxter (RBa)	Octopus Energy
Emslie Law (EL)	OVO
Mahfuzar Rahman (MR)	Scottish Power
Shuba Khatun (SK)	SSE Networks
Nik Wills (NW)	Stark
Kevin Clark (KC)	Utilita

Overview

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) provided an overview of the issue, impact and solution.

Issue

- Energy Price Cap revised on a quarterly basis. These quarterly price events focus predominantly on tariff updates on a single day for a six-hour period.
- This traffic has caused both major incidents and significant increases in retry volumes and failure rates, which have ultimately resulted in the application of some price changes being delayed for both prepay and credit consumers.
- During 2023, the DCC worked with Users to agree an approach to limit the impact of Price Control events and issued User guidance.
- Though there was general agreement on the requirement and the approach, most Users did not follow the agreed process.

Solution

- Introduce an obligation requiring DCC Users to follow instructions issued by the DCC during a Price Control event.
- DCC to consult and amend requirements prior to an event. Once complete, the DCC would look toward SEC Sub-Committees for feedback before requesting the SEC Panel to approve.
- Examples of these instructions may include:
 - Restrict sending of specific SRs during a particular time
 - Users to future date SRs that are not specific to Price Control.
- There is currently no intention by the DCC to implement DCC System changes as part of this solution.

Working Group Discussion

SECAS (SG) clarified that the intent of the modification is to place an obligation in the SEC to require DCC Users to follow instructions issued by the DCC in relation to Price Control Events.

A Working Group member (RBa) noted the proposal is sensible but queried whether Ofgem were aware of the proposal, highlighting that the DCC are obligated to manage DCC Total System traffic at all times. SECAS (SG) confirmed that Ofgem are aware of the modification but have not provided feedback. The DCC (DR) confirmed the intent is to manage high peaks of traffic coming into the system without need for purchasing more infrastructure to manage that infrequent peak, noting that during a previous Price Control Event, 1.6m SRV's failed, leading to more traffic. They advised the

intention is to place the instructions within a code required document, and update this progressively with SEC Party, Sub-Committee and SEC Panel input and approval.

Another Working Group member (EJ) asked how much notice would be given to affected DCC Users prior to a Price Control Event, and whether any penalties would be applied for non-compliance to the obligation. Another Working Group member (JB) questioned whether there would be exemptions due to system constraints. SECAS (SG) confirmed consequences are not yet detailed and is an area of the modification that requires exploration. The DCC (DW) advised the DCC have been issuing guidance two months prior to previous events and expects the formal instructions would follow a similar timeline.

The DCC (DR) suggested there could be a standardised format for instructions, to cover events that fall on working days or those that do not.

Another Working Group member (SK) queried whether Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) would be impacted. The DCC (DR) advised that impacted Users would be notified when instructions are issued.

Next Steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS (SG) to issue the Refinement Consultation for MP253.