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MP285 'Radio Teleswitch Service switch off'

Modification Report

Version 1.0

12 March 2025



About this document

This document is a Modification Report. It sets out the background, issue, solution, impacts, costs, implementation approach and progression timetable for this modification, along with any relevant discussions, views and conclusions.

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This document also has one annex:

- **Annex A** contains the redlined changes to the Smart Energy Code (SEC) required to deliver the Proposed Solution.

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1. Summary

This proposal has been raised by Richard Vernon from the Data Communications Company (DCC).

As Radio Teleswitch (RTS) Service signal is due to be switched off from June 2025, with any RTS meters needing to be replaced with Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications (SMETS) 2 Devices.

Consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business could experience a disruption unless Energy Suppliers arrange suitable meters ahead of the switch off.

The Proposed Solution is to allow installing Parties to install cellular technology Communications Hubs, where Long Range Radio (LRR) installations are not possible in the North Geographical Region, e.g., where a full Install and Commission (I&C) cannot be completed or cannot be connected, and where RTS meters are being replaced.

This modification will impact the DCC, Suppliers and Other SEC Parties (Meter installers, Meter Asset Providers (MAPs) and Meter Asset Managers (MAMs)). There are no DCC System costs, so implementation costs will be limited to the Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) time and effort. This is a Self-Governance Modification and, if approved, will be implemented through an ad hoc SEC Release one Working Day after decision. The proposed changes are required as soon as possible as the RTS Service switch off is scheduled for June 2025.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

RTS is a technology that uses radio signals to instruct specific RTS electricity meters to switch between peak and off-peak rates. These electricity meters were designed to support consumers who may use electric storage systems, as well as those with panel or immersion heaters in water tanks which typically charge and heat up at night. These meters are often supplied in areas without mains gas, or to support storage heating systems and among other reasons.

The end of RTS Service has been known for some time, with the expectation that Energy Suppliers would upgrade RTS meters before the RTS Service switch off from 30 June 2025.

What is the issue?

Any RTS meters will need to be replaced with SMETS2 Devices before the June 2025 deadline.

In Ofgem's recent consultation to introduce new RTS Licence Condition under the Electricity Supply Licence, it was noted there are still approximately 600,000 RTS meters left in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) as of January 2025.

There is concern that some properties within the Communication Service Provider North (CSP.N) area will not be able to connect to the LRR Wide Area Network (WAN) to benefit from Smart services or have the ability to continue using time of use tariffs. The DCC have noted that the number of RTS meters in the CSP.N area is unknown to them, particularly those where the Communications Hub Enrolment is not possible using LRR.

As currently stated in the SEC Appendix I 'CH Installation and Maintenance Support' E2.3 table 2, Energy Suppliers are only able to install non-cellular WAN variant Communications Hubs in the North.

What is the impact this is having?

Consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business could experience a disruption unless Energy Suppliers arrange suitable meters ahead of the switch off. Some consumers will cease to benefit from access to Time of Use tariffs. Where LRR is not available consumers will not be able to benefit from any Time of Use Tariffs or the provision of smart metering services. This may be particularly impactful for those consumers with storage heating which currently uses off peak supply.

Where electricity meters are not exchanged and a RTS meter remains in place, the following impacts have been identified by EnergyUK in an article titled ['The Radio Teleswitch Service switch-off: What you need to know'](#):

'....the heating and/or hot water provisions in your home or business could be affected. You may find that your heating and/or hot water is continually left on or off, or the charging-up happens at the wrong time of day. Your electricity supplier won't be able to confirm how much electricity you have used during peak or off-peak times, which means your electricity costs could be much higher than before'.

Impact on consumers

Consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business could experience a disruption unless electricity Suppliers arrange suitable meters ahead of the RTS Service switch off.

3. Solution

Proposed Solution

The Proposed Solution is to allow installing Parties to install cellular technology Communications Hubs, where LRR installations are not possible in the North Geographical Region, e.g., where a full I&C cannot be completed or cannot be connected, and where RTS meters are being replaced.

The Proposer (the DCC) has raised this modification to specifically support Energy Suppliers with RTS meter replacement by proposing an additional option for Enrolment of the Communications Hub.

The Proposer has noted that this modification is not intended to make any changes to the WAN coverage checker, but an allowance to provide additional optionality for a Communications Hub installation. The WAN coverage checker will continue to advise installation of CSP N Communications Hub, however cellular coverage data for the North will not be provided as part of this modification proposal.

4. Impacts

This section summarises the impacts that would arise from the implementation of this modification.

SEC Parties

SEC Party Categories impacted			
✓	Large Suppliers	✓	Small Suppliers
	Electricity Network Operators		Gas Network Operators
✓	Other SEC Parties	✓	DCC

Breakdown of Other SEC Party types impacted			
	Shared Resource Providers	✓	Meter Installers
	Device Manufacturers		Flexibility Providers
	DCC Other Users	✓	MAPs/ MAMs

Suppliers and their Meter Installers will be directly impacted as this would open more options for replacing Communication Hubs and Devices which are compatible at the consumers premises.

MAPs and MAMs are likely to be impacted as owners of any Meters replaced.

The DCC are directly impacted as this would allow cellular technology Communications Hubs to be installed in the North Geographical Region which the DCC would need to support.

DCC Systems

DCC System changes

This modification will not impact the DCC System.

DCC System traffic

This modification will not impact DCC System traffic.

SEC and subsidiary documents

The following parts of the SEC will be impacted:

- Section A 'Definitions and Interpretation'
- Section F 'Smart Metering System Requirements'
- Appendix I 'CH Installation and Maintenance Support'

The changes to the SEC required to deliver the proposed solution can be found in Annex A.

Devices

Devices impacted			
	Electricity Smart Metering Equipment		Gas Smart Metering Equipment
✓	Communications Hubs		Gas Proxy Functions
	In-Home Displays		Prepayment Meter Interface Devices
	Standalone Auxiliary Proportional Controllers		Home Area Network Connected Auxiliary Load Control Switches
	Consumer Access Devices		Alternative Home Area Network Devices

This will affect Communications Hubs with RTS installations.

Consumers

Consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business could experience a disruption unless Energy Suppliers arrange suitable replacement meters ahead of the RTS Service shutdown.

Other industry Codes

No other industry Codes are impacted by this proposal.

Greenhouse gas emissions

This modification does not impact greenhouse gas emissions.

5. Costs

DCC costs

There are no DCC system costs to implement this modification, however the DCC estimates that costs to support cellular Communication Hubs in the North Geographical Region for RTS replacement only, will cost an estimated £2m-3m per year. These costs are subject to further negotiation.

SECAS costs

The estimated SECAS implementation cost to implement this as a stand-alone modification is one days of effort, amounting to approximately £600. This cost will be reassessed if this modification is combined in a scheduled SEC Release. The activities needed to be undertaken for this are:

- Updating the SEC and releasing the new version to the industry.

SEC Party costs

There are no known SEC Party costs associated with this modification. No concerns were raised at the SEC Issues Group.

6. Implementation approach

Approved implementation approach

The Change Sub-Committee (CSC) approved an implementation date of:

- **Ad-Hoc SEC Release** (one Working Day after decision)

The proposed changes are required as soon as possible, as the RTS Service switch off is scheduled for June 2025, which gives Suppliers an extremely short time to exchange consumer RTS Devices for an alternative. This modification needs to be implemented before the next scheduled SEC Release in June 2025.

7. Assessment of the proposal

Solution development

Discussions at the SEC Issues Group

The Issues Group were supportive of the modification, however the Issues Group were clear in their feedback the term 'RTS' should not be added into the SEC, as it does not exist in the SEC at this time and will cease to be imminently. The Issues Group were also supportive for any changes to be futureproofed, and if possible, to use a more generic term rather than calling out 2G, 3G or 4G Communication Hubs to be used when installers are checking for WAN signal at a consumer's property. The Issues Group were also favourable for any legal text changes to incorporate 'all reasonable steps', as this would cover all concerns raised, and it would also provide Suppliers with a wider range of options in order to complete a Smart Meter install on the day.

8. Case for change

Business case

Given that the RTS Service switch off is only a few months away, Suppliers only have a limited window to replace the approximately 600,000 RTS meters still at consumer premises with SMETS2 Devices. This modification will provide more options for Suppliers to ensure consumers do not face disruption to supply ahead of the RTS Service switch off.

The Proposer estimates that costs to support cellular Communication Hubs in the North Geographical Region for RTS replacement only, will cost an estimated £2m-3m per year. These costs are subject to further negotiation.

Views against the General SEC Objectives

Proposer's views

The Proposer believes this modification better facilitates SEC Objective (a)¹ as it will ensure consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business do not experience a disruption as their Supplier would be able to arrange suitable replacement meters ahead of the RTS Service shutdown.

Views against the consumer areas

Improved safety and reliability

This modification will have a positive impact against this consumer benefit area, as it will ensure Suppliers are able to swap out Communications Hubs for consumers, therefore avoiding any supply disruption and able to remain on their time of use tariffs.

Lower bills than would otherwise be the case

There will be no impact from this modification in this consumer area.

Reduced environmental damage

This modification may have an indirect positive impact against this consumer benefit area, as it will result in fewer wasted consumer site visits and therefore a lower carbon impact.

Improved quality of service

This modification may have an indirect positive impact against this consumer benefit area, as it will result in fewer consumer site visits and therefore an improved quality of service.

Benefits for society as a whole

There will be no impact from this modification in this consumer area.

Final conclusions

This modification is to provide more options for Suppliers to ensure consumers do not face disruption to supply ahead of the RTS Service switch off.

¹ Facilitate the efficient provision, installation, and operation, as well as interoperability, of Smart Metering Systems at Energy Consumers' premises within Great Britain

The Proposed Solution would have a beneficial impact on consumers, as it will ensure Suppliers are able to swap out Communications Hubs for consumers and therefore avoiding any supply disruption and able to remain on their time of use tariffs.

The modification has no known industry costs associated with its implementation.

An ex-committee CSC agreed for this modification to progress to the Report Phase. CSC members noted concerns about introducing 'RTS' as a term into the SEC. Whilst SECAS appreciates there are situations where there is no WAN in the North Geographical Region, this modification is limited to only RTS meters.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
Draft Proposal raised	10 Mar 2025
Sent to CSC for comment and for ex-committee decision	10 Mar 2025
CSC converts Draft Proposal to Modification Proposal	12 Mar 2025
Modification Report approved by CSC	12 Mar 2025
Modification Report Consultation	12 Mar 2025 – 19 Mar 2025
Change Board Vote	26 Mar 2025

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
CSP	Communication Service Provider
CSP.N	Communication Service Provider North
DCC	Data Communications Company
I&C	Install and Commission
LRR	Long Range Radio
MAM	Meter Asset Managers
MOP	Meter Asset Providers
PSC	Privacy Sub-Committee
RTS	Radio Teleswitch
SEC	Smart Energy Code

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
SECAS	Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
SMETS	Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications
WAN	Wide Area Network