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Operations Group Meeting 101

29 August 2023, 12:30-16:10

Teleconference

OPSG_101_2908 – Final Minutes

Attendees:

Category	Operations Group Members
Operations Group (OPSG) Chair	Dave Warner
Large Suppliers	Emslie Law
	Rochelle Harrison
	Robert Williams
	George Macgregor
	Ralph Baxter
	Audrey Smith-Geary
	Lawrence Cross
	Kevin Donnelly
	Sam Draper
Network Parties	Shuba Khatun
Other SEC Parties	Michael Snowden
Data Communications Company (DCC)	Ian Drummond

Representing	Other Participants
Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS)	Charlotte Riddick (<i>Secretary</i>)
	Conroy Saunders
	Eugene Asante
	Tim Newton
	Louise Evans (Agenda item 10)
DCC	Timothy Dunning
	Danielle Jackson
	Val Cumberland

Representing	Other Participants
	Liam Bolton
	Claire Garland
	Gary Fairclough (Part) (Agenda Item 5)
	Andrew Rowley (Part) (Agenda Item 6)
	Adam Rawling (Part) (Agenda Item 6)
	Helen Metcalfe (Part) (Agenda Item 10)
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)	Rachel Allen

Apologies:

Representing	Name
Large Suppliers	Tim Larcher
Other SEC Parties	Elias Hanna
	Geoff Huckerby
Small Suppliers	Cassie Bowerman

1. Previous Meeting Minutes

The Chair invited members to comment on the draft minutes from the last OPSG reporting meeting.

The OPSG **APPROVED** the minutes from OPSG meeting 99 as final.

2. Actions Outstanding

SECAS presented the outstanding actions. Actions were noted as completed where appropriate.

Action Ref.	Action	Date Raised	Last Target Date	Revised Target Date	Owner
OPSG 72/02	The DCC to provide an update on the investigations into the contractual definition PM3 DSP Performance measures in the PMR.	24/05/2022	01/12/2022	N/A	DCC
The DCC explained that this action had been raised due to misunderstandings on the contractual definitions of PM3 DSP Performance Measures. The OPSG noted the DCC clarification of the definitions used with particular focus on the difference between a Change Release versus a Maintenance Release and whether these definitions have been used correctly against the PMR. The DCC shared its findings with the OPSG and requested examples of where the definitions are believed to have not been used correctly as this will assist the investigation. The OPSG also requested the DCC to clarify the justification for the proposed costs associated with the investment. The DCC agreed to investigate and come back to the OPSG with a further update.					

Action Ref.	Action	Date Raised	Last Target Date	Revised Target Date	Owner
OPSG agreed to keep this action open until these queries were answered. Status: Open					
OPSG 81/05	The DCC to provide a further view of the performance of Service Requests related to the Price Cap change and EBSS processes (including those completed successfully within SLA, failed SLA but completed successfully and failed/No Response) to represent the operational impact to Users and consumers.	11/10/2022	11/07/2023	N/A	DCC
The OPSG agreed they had covered this topic in previous discussions and had had a good session at the workshop. Status: Closed					
OPSG 83/12	SECAS to narrow the scope and consider the approach for addressing concerns with the duplication of Issues, Risks and topics within SEC Governance Forums.	08/11/2022	05/09/2023	N/A	SECAS
The OPSG were reminded that SECAS had undertaken work on this and had set out a number of options to deal with these questions on lack of clarity and duplication. At that time the OPSG had decided that work should be limited to issues being considered under SEC governance. Since then SECAS had begun developing a database of such issues for internal SECAS use. The OPSG agreed it would be beneficial to have visibility of the centrally managed issues database created by SECAS in order to avoid duplication. SECAS confirmed the current version of the central issues database is not planned to be shared externally; however, this will be a consideration in future. Status: Closed					

ACTION 100x/01: DCC to provide a procedure on proposed engagement with Users during the Price Change Event should issues/incidents occur ahead of the 1 October 2023 event.

ACTION 100x/02: DCC to provide a view on traffic duplication for review, ahead of the 1 October 2023 event.

ACTION 100x/03: DCC to take the Service User potential actions discussed during the Price Change Event workshop and feed into peak demand calculations in order to confirm potential outcomes at the 1 October event.

SECAS provided OPSG members with awareness of the three actions that were opened at the Price Change Events workshop (100x/01, 100x/02 and 100x/03). The OPSG agreed that the target completion of these actions prior to the 1 October price change event should be realistic but that they would review this once an update had been provided by the DCC under agenda item five.

The OPSG:

- **NOTED** the update.
- **AGREED** to close all actions marked as Propose to Close except for Action **OPSG 72/02** which will remain open.

ACTION 101/01: SECAS to review and provide visibility to Users of the centralised database under development listing the issues captured across the SEC Sub-Committees with a view to highlighting any potential duplication.

3. SEC Panel Reports – July 2023

SECAS provided a summary of the regular DCC reports to the Smart Energy Code (SEC) Panel that have been delegated to the OPSG to review.

3.1. Registration Data Provider (RDP) Incidents

SECAS presented the RDP Incidents report for July 2023; five new Registration Data Provider (RDP) Severity 5 Incidents were opened in July. All incidents from May and June have now been resolved following Registration Data corrections, with 4 Incidents being reported as resolved within the month.

3.2. SEC Panel Quarterly Problem Report Summary – Q2 2023

The OPSG considered the Quarterly Problem Report for Q2 2023. The report outlined that there were 47 Open problems at the end of Q2 2023. Three Problems have breached the target the DCC has set for Root Cause Analysis: two Problems were in the medium Category, with one in the low Category. There were also 44 open Problems which the DCC considers are 'Significant and/or Impactful'.

3.3. Service Request Variance Report – Q2 2023

The OPSG considered the Service Request Forecast Variance (SRV) Report for Q2 2023. The OPSG noted that the aim is for forecasts to be within +/-10% of actuals. In Q2 2023, forecasts were 94.71% of actual service request (SRV) volumes. The OPSG noted that they were well within the target threshold. The DCC noted that its quarterly updates follow the calendar year rather than the financial year. The OPSG queried why June's variance was double the variances of the previous months in that quarter and the DCC responded that the big impact on June SRV variance was SRV 4.6.1 Retrieve Import Daily Read Log (Future Dated) 34M below forecast, of the 36M below in the quarter and SRV 4.8.1 Read Active Import Profile Data (Future Dated) 38M below forecast of 85M below in the quarter.

3.4. DCC Responsible Communications Hubs Returns Quarterly Report

The OPSG considered the Responsible Communications Hubs (CH) Returns Quarterly Report for Q2 2023. The Q2 2023 report outlined that a total of 6,463 records were closed during this period. Of these, 6,129 were attributed to Service Users (No Fault Found) and 334 were attributed to the DCC (Fault Found). The Communications Hub Fault Rate regional split of returns was 65% in Central & South and 35% in the North.

The OPSG:

- **NOTED** the DCC SEC Panel Reports.
- **AGREED** the commentary in Annex 1, confirming that any further issues be provided to the SEC Panel.

4. Performance Measures Report – June 2023

SECAS presented its review of the Performance Measurement Report (PMR) for June 2023, focusing on the measures that were below target and noted the associated responses to queries provided by the DCC.

The OPSG noted one Category 2 incident was closed during this month and no incidents were excluded from the June 2023 PMR.

SECAS noted that despite CPM1 achieving overall target, S1SP DXC PM1.1 '*Percentage S1SP Countersigned Service Request Times within relevant Target Response Time*' has failed to achieve the minimum service level again (after previously achieving target service level for the first time in May 2023, since first being reported in August 2021).

SECAS also noted that S1SP DXC PM1.5 '*Percentage of S1SP SMETS1 Alert Response Times within relevant Target Response Time*' failed to achieve the minimum service level, with performance worse than for the previous month. SECAS confirmed that the DCC are due at the September OPSG main meeting to provide a comprehensive review of DXC and the ongoing issues in the FOC (Final Operating Capability) cohort.

SECAS reported that the PM2 measure failed to meet its target service level across all Communication Service Provider (CSP) regions, noting that DCC were due to provide an update on PM2 in CSPN as soon as reasonably possible.

SECAS highlighted that CMP3A '*For those Alerts which are subject to SEC Section H3.14(i), percentage of Alerts delivered within the applicable Target Response Time*' for CSPs C&S failed to achieve the minimum service level for the third month in a row. The DCC reported they are in the process of considering a number of factors contributing to the failing performance, and noted that a formal report will be presented to the OPSG in October 2023 to demonstrate the current baseline performance as per SEC [MP096 'DNO Power Outage Alerts'](#).

SECAS noted that the Performance Indicator (PI) 1 '*Performance against the times set out in the DCC's Power Outage & Restoration Alerts Delivery Management Document*' failed to reach target service level for all SMETS2 CSP regions for the third month in a row. The DCC state that its Service Ownership Team is still working with Arqiva and VMo2 respectively on several initiatives to deliver improvement for all CSP regions.

The DCC reported that for both CPM3A and Performance Indicator (P1) it is in direct contact with the network providers via the Distribution Generation forum and noted that it conducts a monthly review with Ofgem on both these measures.

The OPSG noted the importance of performance related to power outage alerts and that it will consider this further in the light of the report to presented in October.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

5. PM2 Performance Update

This item was **Deferred**.

6. Business Process Indicator Report Summary

The DCC provided a summary of business process performance, using the agreed business process indicators.

The DCC has seen Change of Supplier (CoS) performance drop due to the CSS MI. The DCC explained how a major incident in CSS could lead to a performance shortfall for smart metering, noting that the incident in question resulted in some registration data being out of sync for a period.

The performance of tariff updates has improved to expected levels, as it was in April 2023.

SMETS2 Post Install & Commission (I&C) performance has dropped across all CSP regions due a particular SRV being used by a single user as part of their orchestration.

The OPSG queried why Firmware Activation performance for CSPN in July was poor. The DCC noted that this was measuring against SRV 11.3 performance and agreed to take this away and review it. The performance in CSP C&S was also noted as poor due to service user systems including SRV 11.3 in the same Firmware update business process orchestration thereby creating a lot more traffic on the network.

Similar behaviour to previous months for Firmware Activation has been observed within SMETS1 MOC (Middle Operating Capability) and FOC (Final Operating Capability). The DCC confirmed it's working closely with the FOC S1SP (SMETS2 Service Provider) to ensure successful future rollouts.

CoS (Change of Supplier for MOC and IOC (Initial Operating Capability) has dipped due to the CSS Major Incident.

The OPSG discussed what would be the best way to measure genuine firmware activities due to the high number of retries of failed attempts which significantly degrade performance. The OPSG noted the attempts recorded on the actual measure were not at the Device level and that it does show the number of attempts on Devices which is a more useful representation than observing success rates at the Device level. The OPSG noted that these firmware issues have already been discussed.

The DCC noted that there had been no overall drop in performance within the 3G sunseting trial areas pre and post switch off (at around 94% success with 96-97% of Comms Hubs communicating). The OPSG noted that an action had been raised previously to consider the practicality of complementing the metrics used for this with more detailed measures.

The DCC presented the steps it would go through to complete the open action OPSG 66/08 (The DCC and SECAS to propose a plan for systematically diagnosing and remediating business process failures.) covering the steps the DCC go through to develop the standard reporting on the success of key business processes and associated remediations where required. The DCC noted that the waterfall charts for meter reads, firmware and post install & commission are to be included at a later date. The DCC noted it would bring a further update to the September OPSG meeting while making reference to SECMOD MP242 (Change to Operational Metrics to Measure on Success) which is expected to ensure improvements in the reporting.

The OPSG questioned how the DCC will prioritise the focus. The OPSG noted the need for OPSG to be able to provide input on priorities for both reporting to OPSG and also execution of agreed improvement plans. The DCC agreed to take this away to look into an effective approach and agreed to have a discussion with the OPSG Chair to look into an approach that would enable the DCC to provide an informed view of issues to the OPSG for review and decision on prioritisation going forward. The OPSG agreed that pre-payment should be top of the prioritisation list. It was noted that pre-payment goes across all technology and the OPSG agreed that this topic should be a continuing priority focus. The DCC agreed to provide more detail at the next OPSG Reporting meeting in September.

The DCC further noted that prepayment performance remained stable, the OPSG noted the inclusion of overall success percentage in the waterfall report. The DCC confirmed that all switches as part of

the remediations have been replayed in the system and that there was only one of c. 230,000 which has not been replayed due to a service user that DCC are attempting to communicate with.

The DCC noted that the pre-payment glidepath had fallen below the forecast this month and that there is an open action 98/03 (DCC to provide additional information on the best and worst performers by cohort to indicate the network performance, with adverse user behaviour excluded) to look at this. The DCC noted the addition of the PDP Issue referencing 0.42% improvement in prepayment vends due to the deployment of the WAN Self-Heal defect fix with up to 70% of the devices to have been upgraded OTA (Over The Air) by the end of September 2023.

The OPSG queried how major incidents impacted prepayment vends success rates:. The DCC clarified that it would depend on the actual major incident and any failed prepayment vends would be seen in a major incident bucket for the root cause, but they may not be seen if they could not be logged and processed.

The DCC noted that SMETS2 CoS performance has been variable while Install and Commission (I&C) volumes are slightly down on the previous month. For I&C reporting, the OPSG noted the metric 'Incorrect Device Status' now constitutes both 'devices not commissioned' and 'devices in an incorrect state'. The OPSG queried if the DCC had witnessed poorer performances in the north than central and south and the DCC agreed that they did and that there were sizable differences in performance.

The DCC noted that Tariff Update performance has seen an increase in failures across all cohorts since the last Price Change Event with failed validations of SRV 1.1.1 due to an invalid date and time being provided. The DCC also noted it is still to understand the cause of network timeout errors.

The OPSG noted further overviews of performance against key business process indicators in the Appendix slides provided by the DCC.

ACTION 101/02: The DCC and OPSG Chair to review potential approaches to prioritising the focus on specific Business Processes at future OPSG meetings. The DCC to then bring this back to OPSG for further discussion and agreement on next steps.

The OPSG noted the update.

7. OPSG Risks & Issues Update

SECAS presented the OPSG with updates to the Risks and Issues Register.

A summary of discussions was provided regarding the highest severity OPSG risks and new candidate OPSG Issue 111 'Arqiva whitelist CH Issue' for consideration. The new issue relates to a SMETS2 whitelist corruption issue dating back to March 2021 which causes connected HAN Devices to disappear from the CH Whitelist. The OPSG endorsed the addition of OPSG Issue 111 onto the OPSG Issues Log.

The OPSG queried where the Arqiva whitelist CH issue is being discussed owing to the fact that the issue is seen in live operation. SECAS confirmed that the DCC are discussing this issue at the DCC led twice weekly 'SMETS2 UIT and maintenance release' meetings and has been brought up at the DCC led TIF (Top Issues Forum) and will continue to monitor and validate all identified avenues. SECAS confirmed the mitigation will be updated and agreed that information on the consumer impact would be added.

The OPSG agreed to Risks 015 and 016 being transferred to and now being managed by the CTG Risk 026 and for SECAS to consider how regular updates from the CTG could be provided at the OPSG. The OPSG also agreed on the rewording of Risk 017.

SECAS noted that the DCC were hosting a workshop 27 September 2023 covering the interim OMS (Order Management System) for 4G CHs and agreed to check the distribution list to make sure OPSG members were invited.

The OPSG:

- **ENDORSED** the addition of candidate Issue 111 onto the OPSG Issue log.
- **AGREED** to the CTG taking Risk 015 forward and to close this Risk on the OPSG Risks and Issues Register and to close Action OPSG 98/05.
- **AGREED** Risk 17 should have the wording amendments discussed.

8. BCDR Action – 88/03

The DCC provided an update and conclusion for the 'DXC' SMETS1 Service Provider March 2023 Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR) test which relates to the open Action OPSG 88/03: this test experienced failures at both fallback and failover.

Both the failover and fallback did not complete as planned due to issues with the Adapter schedule micro-service not starting. A Category 1 Incident was raised and the DCC carried out a 'lessons learnt' exercise which resulted in the decision not to run fallback/failover in the same day for DXC or, generally, for other service providers (it may still be considered for specific instances where the architecture is explicitly able to support it).

The OPSG noted that testing schedules already consulted on with industry for 2023/24 and the DCC confirmed they are to replan the DXC dates currently scheduled in September 2023 to a later date.

The OPSG **AGREED** to close Action OPSG 88/03.

9. Price Change Events Workshop Update

The DCC provided an update on the Price Change Event Workshop on 16 August and expressed how well it went in terms of the participation and support.

Service Users identified their priorities for the 1 October Price Change Event which included updates on: prepayment, monthly bills and credit, and expressed the particular importance of protecting prepayment consumers. The OPSG Chair expressed concerns over potentially causing disruption to CoS (Change of Supplier). The DCC confirmed that CoS will not be impacted and nor will CoS traffic impact the Price Change Event in any way. DCC explained that the highest switching day had 65,000 CoS transactions since the faster switching market started which will have minimal impact on the c.70 million daily transactions going through the DSP (Data Service Provider).

The DCC presented an update on the proposal for implementing the prioritisation and went through the timeline anticipated for 1 October and 4 October. The OPSG noted the schedules only include Daily Half Hourly Reads (SRV 4.8.1) not Daily Profile Reads (SRV 4.6.1) and the success of managing these relies on service user support. The DCC noted that they would be bringing the updated anticipated utilisation numbers in its update in the OPSG Main meeting on 12 September. The OPSG discussed whether any further items had been missed in the last workshop and it was highlighted by an OPSG member that some service users for commercially sensitive reasons may be more likely to discuss items in an anonymous session with the DCC as this would encourage more open dialogue and clearer view of the challenge.

The OPSG also noted that a modification aimed at codifying certain aspects of traffic management and User submissions is in the pipeline and should be coming onto the website soon.

The OPSG Chair noted that the DCC had mentioned discretionary traffic at the workshop including SMETS1 migration and asked if things like firmware downloads could be rescheduled.

The DCC confirmed that in this regard the approach taken to protect the Price Change Event in October 2023 would be the same as for the previous Price Change Event which involved pausing firmware deployments for a period of two weeks across the day of the event itself.

The DCC noted that they had identified that some users were having to undertake firmware updates so as to be able to send a subsequent tariff update.

The DCC highlighted the need to involve other Industry service users who did not participate in the Price Change Event workshop and do not attend the OPSG. The DCC requested support from OPSG members to assist in driving the message to those less engaged service users and noted that the support of the large SEC Parties would help to influence other SEC Parties not currently engaged in the process.

The OPSG noted that these proposals were optional for service users, noting the need to ensure there were no issues as a result of SEC Parties that decided not to follow the guidance. The DCC confirmed that SEC Parties will be asked to let the DCC know in advance whether they can or cannot follow this guidance and that the DCC will update the OPSG on the responses received. The DCC noted the importance of using the scheduling services to avoid the risk of pre-payment customers being unable to vend. The DCC confirmed it is scheduled to meet with two service users of significant size later this week to provide support and awareness. The OPSG Chair asked if the DNOs were involved at this point and the DCC confirmed that the DNO User Group traffic would not clash with the Energy Supplier User Group network traffic, this is despite sharing the same network. The DCC further confirmed the User Groups have their own separate pathways into the DSP system. The DCC re-iterated to the OPSG members the need to contact the DCC to confirm whether they could or could not follow guidance so that it could plan for the 1 October 2023 Price Change Event effectively.

The DCC confirmed they are targeting a draft guidance document for all service users to be issued the week commencing 4 September 2023, with a final update to all service users on actual planned changes targeted by 15 September 2023.

The DCC also noted that the CSPs were on board and were working to be ready.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

10. Any Other Business

10.2. SECAS Update – Panel Information Policy v6

SECAS provided the Panel Information Policy V6.0 and confirmed this is now published on the SEC website. All live documents including policies and guidance will be updated, however historical documents such as meeting papers and minutes will remain unchanged. The OPSG members were encouraged to refer to the classification box at the top of each document to learn how the document should be treated and the audience it can be shared with. It was also further clarified by SECAS that the Red classification allows for the primary registered OPSG member to share with their formally registered alternate.

10.2. Northbound prioritisation (including N56) Update

The DCC provided an update on the Northbound prioritisation (including N56) work and noted that there were currently no emerging risks and that delivery is on track for go live on 5 October 2023. The DCC agreed to return to the September OPSG 103 Reporting meeting to provide an update ahead of go-live.

10.3 PKI-E consultation

SECAS reminded the OPSG of the PKI-E consultation which is due to close on 1 September and provided a link ([Quarterly Service Request Forecast Variance Report - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)) to the report in the DCC's SharePoint.

10.4. Call for nominations reminder

SECAS reminded the OPSG that the call for nominations for the OPSG election is open until 4 September and that one existing Other SEC Parties member will not be standing, meaning there would be a vacancy for that category.

10.5 Customer Satisfaction Survey

The OPSG Chair again invited members to contact himself with any comments regarding the Customer Satisfaction Survey. In addition, the Chair noted the intention to schedule a discussion of the survey outcomes at a future OPSG.

10.5 Next Meeting

It was noted that the meeting on 12 September would be a face-to-face meeting at ETC Venues at 8 Fenchurch Street. However, the address may change given there have been some issues at the venue.

There was no further business, and the Chair closed the meeting.

Next Main Meeting will be an in-person meeting: 12 September 2023 (ETC Venues, 8 Farringdon Street, London. If the location changes, the OPSG members will be updated by SECAS via the Teams channel)

Next Reporting Meeting: 25 September 2023