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Operations Group Meeting 106_1411

14 November 2023, 09:20 – 16:30

Meeting Headlines

At every meeting, the OPSG will focus on cross-industry matters that affect, or have the potential to affect, multiple Smart Energy Code (SEC) Parties. This month, the OPSG meeting included the following discussions (referenced by agenda item number):

3. DCC Operational Update (DCC): The DCC highlighted two Category 2 Major Incidents that occurred on 18 and 29 October respectively, the second one of which was closed then subsequently reopened as a Category 3. The root causes are being investigated.

The OPSG noted that the average number of Cat 1 and Cat 2 Incidents remains at the same level of 2 or 3 per month and expressed a concern around the lack of progress in terms of building resilience on the network to prevent incidents.

The DCC provided a summary of success rates for SMETS1 & 2 Prepayment Vends: these largely remained stable across the CSP regions for SMETS2. However, for SMETS1, IOC and FOC were impacted by the Major Incidents recorded in October 2023, which resulted in a decrease in average success rates in those Cohorts across all suppliers.

4. DSMS = Future Service Management (FSM) (DCC): The DCC provided an update on their approach to procuring an FSM. The DCC agreed to publish the proposed business needs within 10 working days to allow OPSG members to respond.

5. DCC Service Non-Compliance (DCC): The DCC noted the list of nine SEC Non-Compliances, noting four new Non-Compliances and one of which had been closed since April 2023. The OPSG advised that the recent issue of DCC enacting a suspension of services without notifying the SEC Panel should be recorded as a non-compliance.

6. Draft Annual Outage Plan 2024/25 (DCC): The DCC provided the OPSG with an initial draft of the 2024-25 Annual Outage Plan. The OPSG noted with concern that this draft envisaged significant outages for BCDR, including, for example, a particular concentration in April. The OPSG asked the DCC to further consider how to review this, and to return to the OPSG in December with the next iteration.

7. Demand Forecasting (DCC): The DCC presented an overview of a 5-stage process of deriving and issuing the demand forecast, and how users and the OPSG would be given the opportunity to be involved. The OPSG requested that the DCC identify the specific benefits for SEC Parties which this process will deliver.

8. 1 Jan Price Change Event (DCC): The DCC presented a summary of its planning and preparation activities. No major differences from the approach followed for October are envisaged. Once again, user cooperation will be requested; the OPSG again emphasised the need for the DCC to ensure the readiness of Service Providers (Also see AOB item below on Incorrect DSP responses)

9. GBCS 4.1 Update (DCC): The DCC provided a progress update on Toshiba, WNC and EDM I GBCS 4.1 releases noting that all were currently green, with no risks or issues to note. The OPSG noted that the next update from the DCC will be February 2024.

10. Scaling and Optimisation (DCC): The DCC reported a successful completion of Phase 1 and current status of Phase 2 trial of the retiming of the scheduled read window. The OPSG supported the approach for the next stage, requesting that it be clearly communicated in advance to all Users through the Service Desk channels.

11. SECMP0028 – Prioritising System Messages (SECAS): SECAS provided an update on the proposal to prioritise time-sensitive system messages based on urgency. The OPSG made several comments, including on prioritisation and the need for operational reporting, for forwarding to the Change Working Group.

12. DCO Update (DCC): The DCC introduced their proposed approach to this new programme. The DCC tabled the proposed statement of User Needs, seeking OPSG member comments before the publication of the next version.

13. November 2023 SEC Release (DCC): The DCC presented the final readiness review for the 8 Live Service Criteria for the November 2023 SEC Release. The DCC confirmed that there were no problems, Issues or Risks to bring to the OPSG's attention. The OPSG voted Green on the following Live Service Criteria (LSC): LSC 1, LSC 2, LSC 3, LSC 4, LSC 5, LSC 6, LSC 7, and LSC 8. The OPSG endorsed the state of readiness.

14. February 2024 SEC Release (DCC): The DCC presented an update on the progress of the February 2024 SEC Release and summary of impacts and SEC Modification Proposals. The DCC confirmed that there were no problems, Issues or Risks for the OPSG's consideration at this stage.

16. AOB:

User Forum update: SECAS provided the OPSG with an update on the request for a user forum where operational issues may be discussed in real time, advising that DCC are best placed to provision this service. However, the DCC advised they would not be able to do anything in the short term. The OPSG therefore again asked SECAS to consider whether they could provide a solution in the short term, and, as necessary to identify any budget implications.

DCC Enacting a Suspension of Service: The OPSG expressed concern that DCC had suspended service without following the SEC requirements.

The DCC acknowledged it had not followed the correct procedure as per the SEC and agreed to provide a formal response to the OPSG ex-committee on not meeting compliance including remediations taken. The OPSG Chair noted that although this is not a continuing non-compliance this should be added to the list of non-compliances with confirmation of remediation.

Service Capacity/User Demand: The OPSG discussed how the DCC currently manage and handle scheduling issues among Users. The OPSG confirmed this is largely carried out by the DCC via bilateral engagements. The OPSG highlighted that a collective approach would be required to reach optimum solutions and to provide Users with full visibility of issues which are being worked on with the other Users. The OPSG then again noted the importance of sharing this information/updates when there is congestion at the DSP (Data Service Provider) during peak demand.

DCC Incident Categorisation: The OPSG and the DCC discussed continuing challenges associated with the current Incident categorisation process and noted the need for another workshop before Christmas.

WAN Issues CPS North: SECAS provided an update to the OPSG noting instances in the CSP North region that render the CSP and DSP out of synch at the point a Comms Hub is physically powered on at site. This behaviour then causes Install & Commissioning processes to fail. SECAS confirmed investigations have begun and will follow up with the OPSG members that have confirmed they are experiencing this and agree follow on actions.

Incorrect Responses from DSP: The OPSG noted that the DSP is sending incorrect responses and have been incorrectly converting HTTP503 errors to HTTP500 errors when there have been overload protection events. The OPSG noted that the DSP had rectified the issue on 30 October 2023 price Change Event, with the consequent User impact at those times. The OPSG requested that the DCC confirm that all such known issues had been reviewed as part of the preparations for the next Price Change Event, and to include this confirmation in their next briefing to the OPSG.

Next Reporting Meeting: 27 November 2023; Next Main Meeting: 12 December 2023