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Operations Group Meeting 69

12 April 2022, 09:20 – 16:30

Teleconference

OPSG_69_1204 - Draft Minutes

Attendees:

Category	Operations Group Members
Operations Group Chair	Dave Warner
DCC	Lisa Moran
	Ian Drummond
Network Parties	Gemma Slaney
	Matthew Alexander
Large Suppliers	Emma Johnson (<i>Alternate for Rochelle Harrison</i>)
	Martin Christie
	Nick Coombs
	George Macgregor (<i>Alternate for Eleanor Judson</i>)
	Emslie Law
	Laurence Cross
	Ralph Baxter
Other SEC Parties	Michael Snowden

Representing	Other Participants
DCC	Easton Brown
	Wendy Liddell
	Marlene Gibson-Skinner
	Leigh Hill (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)
	Darren Robbins (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)
	Claire Aspin (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)
	Lynette Heywood (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)
	Andy Norman (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)
	Graeme Liggett (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)

Managed by

	Paul Weatherly (Part) (Agenda Item 17)
	Gary Glennard (Part) (Agenda Item 17)
	Viviane Da Silva (Part) (Agenda Item 7)
	Keith Foster (Part) (Agenda Item 6)
	Jason Hynes (Part) (Agenda Item 6)
	Ian Marshall (Part) (Agenda Item 6)
	Umang Shah (Part) (Agenda Item 8)
	Moses Ndukwe (Part) (Agenda Item 8)
	Luis Ogando (Part) (Agenda Item 14)
CGI	Graham Spenceley (Part) (Agenda Item 8)
SECAS	Veronica Asantewaa (Meeting Secretary)
	Eugene Asante
	Robin Healey
TABASC	Julian Hughes
BEIS	Natasha Free

Apologies:

Representing	Name
Large Suppliers	Kevin Donnelly
Small Suppliers	Kate Barnes
Other SEC Parties	Elias Hanna
	Geoff Huckerby

1. Previous Meeting Minutes

The Chair invited Operations Group (OPSG) members to comment on the Draft Minutes from OPSG 67.

The DCC noted that, regarding the User requirements for [MP104 'Security Improvements'](#), there are currently seven Users who have signed XML Certificates. The DCC noted that approximately 64 of 98 Users are ready for the June 2022 Release.

The OPSG **AGREED** the redlined comments and **APPROVED** the minutes from OPSG 67 as final.

2. Actions Outstanding

SECAS presented the OPSG Actions Outstanding. Actions were noted as completed where appropriate.

Action Ref.	Action	Date Raised	Last Target Date	Revised Target Date	Owner
OPSG 38/02	SECAS to investigate if the issue of 'Other User Data Retrieval' is a separate issue or another manifestation of an existing issue.	03/11/2020	12/04/2022	TBC	SECAS
SECAS noted that the Issues 73 'Other User Data Retrieval' and 75 'SR4.10 DNO Issue' are of similar nature however they may have different root causes and associated actions. The OPSG noted that the Issues may need to be combined into a single issue. SECAS noted that it will continue to investigate the root causes with the DCC and will make a recommendation to the OPSG after this work is complete. Status: Open.					
OPSG 62/13	The DCC to consider the planned DSP BCDR activity along with the DSP Technical Refresh when scheduling the BCDR calendar, both with regard to the optimum time to test the refreshed DSP, and the interaction with other planned maintenance windows.	07/12/2021	12/04/2022	N/A	DCC
The DCC noted that the revised Maintenance windows were discussed at the Annual Outages & Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR) 2022 workshop on 23 February 2022 and agreed by the SEC Panel. The DCC confirmed it will include planned BCDR activities in the DCC Operational Update in the future, along with an overview of what activities took place compared to the plan. Status: Closed.					
OPSG 63/10	The DCC to investigate issues with Incident communications for Incident INC000000796770, as OPSG members noted they could not see evidence that these had been received.	04/01/2022	04/08/2022	N/A	DCC
The DCC noted that as Incident INC000000796770 was internal to DCC, SEC Parties would not have seen communications regarding this Incident. The OPSG noted that as this was a Category 1 Incident SEC Parties should have received some form of communication. The OPSG noted the DCC should clarify what is a service impacting Incident and whether SEC Parties should receive communications for internal and external Incidents. The OPSG noted that this action should remain open for further investigation. Status: Open.					

Action Ref.	Action	Date Raised	Last Target Date	Revised Target Date	Owner
OPSG 67/09	The DCC to provide a forecast of the CH supply risk profile for 2022.	08/03/2022	04/08/2022	N/A	DCC
The DCC provided slides for this action. The OPSG noted that there will need to be more insight provided on the status of the CH supply chain after June 2022. The OPSG noted that this action will remain open until the risk profile for 2022 is available at the end of April 2022.					

The following actions were closed with no further comments: OPSG 62/11, OPSG 63/09, OPSG 67/02, OPSG 67/03, OPSG 67/04 and OPSG 67/16.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

3. DCC Operational Update

The DCC presented its regular update on its service operations.

The DCC reported that the ratio of SRV's per Device had increased due to the 1 April 2022 price cap change, particularly for SRV1.6, SRV1.2.1 and SRV1.1 relating to meter reads.

The DCC reported that it has achieved 16.3k daily installations in March 2022, noting that there is a steady growth of installations across the network. The DCC noted that Communication Service Provider North (CSP N) had a higher installation rate than CSP Central and South (C&S) for the twelfth consecutive month in a row.

The DCC noted that it has seen a small, but noticeable, improvement in success rates of SMETS2 prepayment top ups during March 2022. The OPSG suggested that the success rate scale of the prepayment graphs should be amended to focus on the relevant range. The OPSG also noted that it would be useful to see the number of prepayment top-ups per day per Device, which the DCC agreed to include. The OPSG reiterated that the reported improvements in the success rates are only while the DCC systems are operational, and that poor Service availability could undermine performance, but this would not be reflected in the DCC's reporting. The OPSG again requested that DCC reflect the level of availability in the performance graphs.

SMETS1 Final Operating Capability (FOC) continues to have a much lower overall success rate than other cohorts, achieving 32% success in March 2022. One specific defect has been identified with one energy supplier and when the affected installations are excluded the FOC success rate was 89%. The DCC noted that a fix for this particular problem will be confirmed by 14 April 2022. The DCC confirmed that the Technical and Business Design Group (TBDG) is aware of the low operational success rates, and can take these into account when overseeing proposed migrations.

The OPSG noted that there has been a reoccurring issue with Registration Data Provider (RDP) data which results in some Users receiving an E4 response (Failed Authorisation – Invalid User / User Role for Device) which is affecting some SMETS1 prepayment Devices, along with some Install and Commissioning activities. This has affected several Users and has caused a loss of supply to their customers. The DCC noted that it is currently investigating the root cause.

The DCC reported that the total number of Incidents has reduced by 1800 in March 2022 compared to the previous month.

The DCC provided an update on the WNC firmware Incident which impacted approximately 8.4k ESME CHs in CSP C&S. The OPSG raised concerns regarding the Incident management, noting that these issues should have been identified during the testing phase and rectified prior to deployment into production. The DCC noted that the root cause and the Incident management are currently under investigation via the Post Incident Review (PIR). The OPSG noted that this Incident has caused operational costs to Suppliers. The OPSG Chair noted that the issues of consequential costs will be raised with the SEC Panel.

The DCC reported that it is currently tracking 70 open Problems, 59 of these have a confirmed root cause and remediation plans established.

The DCC reported that there were 315 changes in the month, with a success rate of 99.05%. There was 1 adverse impact due to a failure during the DSP Data Centre move. The DCC noted that there was one Unplanned Maintenance event on 11 April 2022, executed to protect the Services.

3.1. SMETS1

The DCC reported that it has now migrated 8.4 million meters, with 7.7 million meters being operated by Suppliers. The DCC noted that SRV7.4 'Read Supply Status' has the highest failure rate with Suppliers and SRV 6.22 'Configure Event Behaviour' has the highest failure rate for Distribution Network Operators (DNOs).

ACTION OPSG 69/01: The DCC to amend the prepayments graphs to focus on the appropriate range of the success rate, and to show the number of top ups per day per Device.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

4. FOC Heightened Service Management Plan

The DCC provided an update on the progress on the Final Operating Capability (FOC) stability plan. The DCC reported that as of 30 March 2022 there had been 64 days of stable service without any Category 1 or 2 Incidents. The DCC noted that a root cause has been identified for PM1.5 and a fix will be implemented in May 2022, earlier than scheduled. The root cause for PM1.1 had also been identified and will be implemented in June 2022. The OPSG acknowledged progress of the plan, however commented that there are still some material issues with DXC and Trilliant, particularly the issues of production performance and BCDR (see agenda item 8).

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

5. Tariff Update - 1 April 2022 Price Change Communication

The DCC provided an update on how DCC Services had coped with the 1 April 2022 price cap change.

The DCC confirmed that the additional traffic arising from the price cap change on 1 April 2022 was handled successfully with no adverse impact on the Services. The DCC reported that there was a 60% increase in the number of meters that were updated, noting that there were 7.66 million SRV1.2.1 sent on 1 April 2022. The DCC noted that it achieved a 95% success rate, due to two additional traffic lanes being implemented by the Data Service Provider (DSP). The DCC noted that it will conduct a full lessons learned review and the results of this will be used to inform proposals for an enduring process for price cap changes in the future. The OPSG thanked Users and the DCC for their collaborative work on precautions to achieve successful execution on the day.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

6. Faster Switching - Transition Stage 2 Go Live

The DCC provided an assessment of readiness against the Live Service Criteria (LSC) for Transition Stage 2 of the Faster Switching Programme.

The DCC provided an assessment of readiness against the Live Service Criteria (LSC) for Transition Stage 2 of the Faster Switching Programme. The OPSG noted that its assessment of readiness is based on operational aspects of what is within the scope of the SEC, which is in effect the new and changed capabilities at the DSP within the scope of the SEC.

6.1. Component Readiness

The OPSG noted that the “Harvey Balls” summary presented by DCC indicated that the various components were expected to be completed on schedule, with no problems or issues (complete in this context means developed, tested, deployed and ready for use). The DCC also noted that there will be no changes to the Self Service Interface (SSI).

6.2. Residual Risks

The OPSG made the following comments on residual risks:

1. **Resubmission of bulk extract files during transition:** The DCC noted that there are no issues with bulk data load to date however should any defects arise, an approach to orchestration across multiple DCC Service Providers has been agreed and is in place. The OPSG highlighted the RDP E4 issues experienced by Users, noting that the data provided by the DSP may not be accurate. The DCC highlighted that the design of the new DSP/CSS interface is fundamentally different to those currently used across DCC Systems, including User Interfaces and the DSP/RDP interfaces, and confirmed that the issues experienced with User Interfaces and the RDP interfaces could not either affect the new interface, or arise for the new interface.
2. **SoLR process in Transition:** The DCC noted that Supplier of Last Resort (SoLR) process will not change. The DCC highlighted that an ad hoc data removal solution is being developed should a SoLR event occur. The OPSG noted that the impact of this was reclassified as Low risk following the mitigations in place.
3. **Risk of cyber-related attack:** The DCC noted that both invasive and non-invasive penetration tests will be carried out on CSS on the weekend before the start of Transition. The OPSG noted that this risk applies across the whole Faster Switching programme, and it will be discussed further at the Security Sub-Committee (SSC).

The OPSG **AGREED** that the residual risks were acceptable for Transition Stage 2.

6.3. Live Services Criteria (LSC)

The OPSG made the following comments against the LSC, the OPSG highlighted that some technical aspects may be outside of members expertise. SECAS confirmed that the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) had considered the architecture and solution design earlier in the development lifecycle; the Testing Advisory Group (TAG) had assessed whether the systems had been tested successfully and, as usual, the OPSG assessment should focus on the operational aspects only.

LSC 1: Switching services and associated operations and commercials are ready, including all support requirements from relevant PUIs and SPs

No further comments were made by OPSG members.

The OPSG **AGREED** to accept the readiness statement provided by the DCC. The OPSG agreed that the status for this LSC was **GREEN**.

LSC 2: The data quality target for go live has been achieved, the data migration solution has been fully tested and processes are in place to monitor and maintain data quality post-go live

The OPSG noted that Transition Stage 2 only implements the provision of data from the DSP to the CSS, and does not include the import of data from CSS to the DSP; the data being provided by the DSP is operationally live data. The group agreed that since production data is being provided, no further review of DSP data quality is required for Transition Stage 2. However, fuller consideration of data quality will be required during the assessment of readiness to proceed to Transition Stage 3. This will include the data being provided by the CSS to the DSP

LSC 4: Relevant DCC services are stable in the run-up to deployment of Switching into live operations

The group highlighted the RDP E4 issue currently being investigated by the DCC and questioned whether there were any other DSP issues that would impact Go-Live. The DCC confirmed that the issues experienced with the RDP interfaces could not affect the DSP/CSS interface. The OPSG again noted the major disruption caused by the failure of the DSP to properly handle User Interfaces (Incident Number.....

The OPSG **AGREED** to accept the readiness statement provided by the DCC, for relevant DSP Services. The OPSG agreed that the status for this LSC was **GREEN**.

LSC 5: DCC has demonstrated that lessons learnt from the Smart Metering Programme and other DCC changes have been taken on board and that industry best practice has been applied where relevant

No further comments were made by OPSG members.

The OPSG **AGREED** to accept the readiness statement provided by the DCC. The OPSG agreed that the status for this LSC was **GREEN**.

LSC 6: There is no detrimental impact to DCC Service Users' and Energy consumers experience

No further comments were made by OPSG members.

The OPSG **AGREED** to accept the readiness statement provided by the DCC. The OPSG agreed that the status for this LSC was **GREEN**.

LSC 7: Assurance of the Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery processes has been completed

The DCC noted that the CSS and the smart metering service can be upgraded independently of each other and confirmed that the changes to the DSP have been fully incorporated into the DSP DR capability.

The OPSG noted that whilst the DSP DR capability has been updated, DCC has yet to exercise the amended DR procedure. The DCC confirmed that it is working on plans to undertake a DR exercise and will inform the OPSG when this is complete.

The OPSG asked the DCC to confirm that the DSP DR environment is fully aligned with the production environment. Because the DCC was unable to provide confirmation during the meeting the OPSG acceptance of the DCC's statement of readiness was conditional on this confirmation being received prior to Transition Stage 2.

The OPSG conditionally **AGREED** to accept the readiness statement provided by the DCC with the condition that DCC must confirm that the DSP DR environment is fully aligned with the production environment. The OPSG agreed that the status for this LSC was **AMBER**, but would change to **GREEN** upon confirmation that the DR environment configuration matches the production environment.

6.4. LSC Conclusion

The OPSG **AGREED** to recommend to the SEC Panel that Transition Stage 2 could proceed (subject to confirmation of satisfactory BCDR arrangements being in place). *[Post Meeting Note: The DCC confirmed on 13 April 2022 that the configuration of the DSP production environment is the same as the DR environment. The CSS gateway is fully deployed and connected to the Gamma network, the DSP codebase has been deployed in both datacentres and the network configuration is in place to support either a DSP or CSS failover should a DR event occur during Transition Stage 2.]*

7. SI & DSMS Programme - Introduction and Engagement Plan

The DCC provided an overview of the System Integrator (SI) and DCC Service Management System (DSMS) Programmes. This included the scope, objectives, and business needs.

The OPSG noted that the SI Programme was more likely to be of interest to TABASC and the TAG.

Regarding the DSMS Programme, the OPSG noted that the DCC will need to clarify if there will be any changes to the SSI and other related programmes. The OPSG requested that the DCC provide a plan with clear milestones in the requirements process. The OPSG noted the need for further engagement on business needs, and noted that a list of business needs had been identified earlier in the overall NEP process.

ACTION OPSG 69/02: The DCC to clarify if there will be any changes to the SSI and other related programmes in the DSMS Programme.

ACTION OPSG 69/03: The DCC to provide clear milestones on the requirements process.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

8. Annual Outage & BCDR 2022 – Proposed BCDR Issues & Changes

The DCC provided details relating to the proposed deferral of the DXC Trilliant BCDR test that was scheduled for 24 April 2022. This was due to ongoing stability issues with the service.

The DCC noted that the SEC requirement (H10) could not be met as to attempt the test might put the operational Services at risk. The DCC noted that the DXC and Trilliant will need to demonstrate a period of stability to ensure that it is ready to carry out the annual 2022-2023 BCDR test, which DCC proposed would be on 9 October 2022. The OPSG was disappointed that these issues were not identified earlier, and the Chair highlighted that whilst carrying out a BCDR proving exercise on an unstable Service presents a risk, so does having an unproven Disaster Recovery process for a live Service. The OPSG asked whether the TBDG were aware of the operational difficulties being encountered, so that they could take this into account in monitoring migrations. DCC confirmed that TBDG were fully aware of the situation.. The OPSG endorsed the proposed deferral of the BCDR test for DXC Trilliant, noting that this appeared to represent the best balance of operational risks. The OPSG asked the DCC to reschedule the test for as soon as is prudent.

The DCC proposed rescheduling the DSP BCDR 2022-2023 test due to a clash with the upcoming Technical Refresh activities, and noting that the DSP would not be fully ready to undertake this test.. The DCC noted that technical changes to components cannot be made in DR as this will place the

service at risk of extended and unanticipated outage. The OPSG acknowledged the DCC's view that the current schedule was not achievable. The OPSG was disappointed that this change had come immediately after the approval of the annual outage plan. The OPSG endorsed the proposed deferral but did not endorse the proposed revised dates.

The OPSG requested that the DCC provide a revised Annual outage plan including the proposed rescheduled dates for both the DSP and DXC Trilliant tests.

ACTION OPSG 69/04: The DCC to provide a revised Annual Outage plan including proposed rescheduled dates for both the DXC Trilliant and the DSP BCDR tests, presenting any alternative options for dates.

The OPSG:

- **ENDORSED** the proposed deferral of BCDR tests for DXC Trilliant; and
- **ENDORSED** the proposed deferral of BCDR test for DSP.

9. Action 50/11

This item was deferred due to time constraints.

10. TSP Operational Readiness

This item was deferred due to time constraints.

11. OPSG Issues Log - Progress Report

SECAS and the DCC provided a brief update on Voltage Alerts (Issue 82) generated from a particular meter type. A DNO member highlighted that this is due to a firmware upgrade from a Device manufacturer; DNO Members also noted the significant impact that large volumes of voltage alerts are having on their business processes. The DCC noted that it is working on a fix with affected DNOs. The DCC noted that it will return with an update on the progress of the fix.

SECAS requested that the OPSG members review the Candidate Issues ex-committee for endorsement at the May meeting (OPSG 71).

ACTION OPSG 69/05: The OPSG to review the Candidate Issues ex-committee for endorsement at the May meeting (OPSG 71).

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

12. DCC Non-Compliances

The DCC provided an update on a list of DCC non-compliances taking account of the OPSG Risk Register and Issue Log. The OPSG noted the next steps and made no further comments.

13. ECoS: TMAD

This item was deferred due to time constraints.

14. Major Incident Review

SECAS presented a review of Incident INC000000823926, which occurred on Friday 18 February 2022, and was classified as a Category 1 Incident.

The DCC noted that CSP C&S had sufficient alerting in place on the network. The DCC had discussed the timeliness of the alerting with CSP C&S as part of the PIR.

The DCC confirmed that the root cause of the Incident was a network card failure on a specific application in CSP C&S. The DCC noted that there is a risk that a similar Incident could occur in the future, but confirmed that the implementation of Unidirectional Link Detection (UDLD) will help to mitigate any further instances.

The OPSG highlighted that the customer communications relating to the Incident were not clear and the DCC confirmed that the initial communications were incorrect due to human error. Consequently, the DCC agreed to change the relevant RAG status from Green to Amber and reissue the Review Report. The OPSG also queried the Green status of 'Resolution/Closure' however the DCC noted that this was within the SLA definition of closure, which did require that the root cause had been established.

The OPSG:

- **NOTED** the presentation; and
- **AGREED** that Major Incident Review Report for Incident INC000000823926 be published to all SEC Parties, subject to the revisions being made to the report.

15. OPSG Project: Performance Assurance Framework

SECAS requested that the OPSG members review the Performance Assurance Framework (PAF) Project Initiation Document (PID) and provide any further comments to SECAS by 19 April 2022.

ACTION OPSG 69/06: The OPSG to review the PAF PID and provide any further comments to SECAS by 19 April 2022.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

16. Customer Perspective

There were no customer perspective items proposed.

17. Any Other Business (AOB)

17.1. ECoS Summit April 2022

The DCC invited OPSG members to an event to discuss the ECoS program at 10am on 26 April 2022. The DCC noted that this will be an in-person event in London and asked members who wish to attend to complete this survey: [ECoS Attendance Survey](#).

17.2. Supporting Fuel Poor Households Project

The OPSG noted a DCC project related to fuel poverty, which was described at the DCC Business and Development Plan Workshop. The OPSG noted that there were concerns raised by SEC Parties about this project and that this will be raised at the SEC Panel meeting on 14 April 2022.

17.3. Scaling and Optimisation project for CSP N

The OPSG noted that the DCC and BEIS have been progressing Stage 1 of this project with the CSP N, including the modelling of performance. The DCC requested input from OPSG members on the

future usage profile for the CSP N. The DCC noted that it will provide a full briefing on the project at Smart Metering Design Group (SMDG) on 14 April 2022.

17.4. Management of Operational Issues

The OPSG noted that operational issues are considered at a number of industry forums. Parties may have difficulty in identifying the lead forum for any particular issue. The OPSG requested that SECAS set out options for making this process easier for SEC Parties.

17.5. Incident INC000000806199

The OPSG noted that, regarding Incident INC000000806199 that occurred on 21 December 2021, the root cause related to the DSP's management of the interface to User systems: there is no SEC requirement for User system response times. The DCC agreed and confirmed that all communications should reflect this.

17.6. Incorrect or No DNO Certificates

A DNO member noted that this has been under investigation for some time. The OPSG asked SECAS to report the latest status, along with setting out any potential process for escalation if satisfactory progress has not been made, during the first meeting in May 2022 (OPSG_71).

17.7. Scalar Issue

The DCC reported that a fix has been confirmed for a Scalar issue in one meter type. The DCC noted that the fix will require a firmware upgrade and there would be no change to the DCC systems. The OPSG asked DCC to report on the practicalities of the upgrade, recognising the firmware image size for the Device in question.

17.8. Status of a certain Service Provider

The DCC provided an update on the status of a Service Provider. The DCC noted concerns raised by OPSG members.

ACTION OPSG 69/07: The DCC to confirm details of the firmware upgrade fix for the Scalar issue, including the firmware image size for particular Devices.

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

Next Reporting Meeting: 25 April 2022; Next Main Meeting: 10 May 2022