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Operations Group Meeting 75

12 July 2022, 10:00 – 16:30

Teleconference

OPSG_75_1207 - 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	Rochelle Harrison
	Emslie Law
	Tim Larcher (<i>Alternate for Martin Christie</i>)
	Nick Coombs
	George Macgregor (<i>Alternate for Eleanor Judson</i>)
	Kevin Donnelly
Small Suppliers	Ralph Baxter
	Cassie Bowerman (<i>Alternate for Kate Barnes</i>)
Other SEC Parties	Michael Snowden

Representing	Other Participants
DCC	Easton Brown
	Marlene Gibson-Skinner
	Graeme Liggett (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)
	Richard Jones (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)
	Claire Aspin (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)
	Nicholas Ives (Part) (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)
	Darren Robbins (Part) (<i>Agendas Items 3, 4 & 5</i>)
	Steve Hyde (Part) (<i>Agenda item 4</i>)

Managed by

	Paul Weatherly (Part) (Agenda item 4)
	Stacy Kirton (Part) (Agenda item 5)
	Gav Parrott (Part) (Agenda item 5)
	Nital Hooper (Part) (Agenda item 8)
	Kevin Gale (Part) (Agenda item 8)
	Andrew Rabey (Part) (Agenda item 12)
	Will Bingham (Part) (Agenda item 15)
SECAS	Veronica Asantewaa (Meeting Secretary)
	Joey Manners
	Eugene Asante
	Adele Thain (Part) (Agenda Item 6)
	Mike Fenn (Part) (Agenda Item 17)
TAG	Robin Healey
TABASC	Julian Hughes
BEIS	Danny Holt
	Richard Haigh
	Eleanor Taylor

Apologies:

Representing	Name
Large Suppliers	Laurence Cross
Other SEC Parties	Geoff Huckerby
	Elias Hanna

1. Previous Meeting Minutes

The Chair invited Operations Group (OPSG) members to comment on the Draft Minutes from OPSG 73.

The OPSG **AGREED** the redlined comments and **APPROVED** the minutes from OPSG 73 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 63/14	The DCC to work with SECAS to identify and ensure that aspects of the SEC obligation (SEC Section K clause 4) and any consequent impacts are explicitly identified and included in the Live Services Criteria for the Switching Go Live Governance.	04/01/2022	04/08/2022	N/A	DCC/ SECAS
The OPSG were concerned that the stopping of Change of Supplier (CoS) services in preparation for Faster Switching Go Live would have an impact to Users and end consumers and queried how this would be managed. The DCC noted that it will be considered as part of the Faster Switching Programme and expects no impacts to general SEC services. Status: Closed (this action will be superseded by action 75/01).					
OPSG 67/15	The DCC to investigate the adverse impact on Users of the unplanned maintenance change to fix a DB Lock issue on 17 February 2022.	08/03/2022	04/08/2022	TBC	DCC
The OPSG noted that this action will remain open due to further investigation by the DCC. Status: Open.					

The OPSG agreed to close actions OPSG 62/04, 63/17, 73/05, 73/06, 73/07, 73/08.

The OPSG noted that the actions paper was difficult to read and suggested amending the format. SECAS noted that it will make the amendments.

ACTION OPSG 75/01: The DCC to confirm that services will not be impacted by the halting of CoS during Faster Switching Go Live.

ACTION OPSG 75/02: SECAS to review actions outstanding paper format and present a proposed version (noting the request to make it easier for OPSG to read).

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

3. DCC Operational Update

The DCC presented its regular update on its service operations.

The DCC reported that there had been approximately 300k meters installed in June, a slight decrease from the previous month; the DCC noted that a similar pattern had been seen at this time in previous years. The DCC reported that there has been a steady increase in SRV volumes, peaking at approximately 34 million per day in June.

The OPSG requested the DCC review the four graphs on the DCC Operational Activity View (Monthly Cumulative Meter Count, Daily Meter Installation Count, Monthly SRV Volumes and Daily SRV Volumes) to ensure that there is one consistent and clear key across all the graphs.

Generally, The OPSG suggested having one graph per page with observations instead of multiple graphics.

The DCC reported that there had been a decrease in the prepayment top-up success rates in SMETS1 and SMETS2.

In SMETS2, the DCC outlined that the prepayment top-up success was 94% in Communication Service Provider Central and South (CSP C&S) and 97% in CSP North (N). The DCC reported that CSP C&S top-up success rates were impacted by the WNC Incidents (INC000000832699 and INC000000848418) and a Category 2 Incident (INC000000864228).

The DCC reported that the overall SMETS1 prepayment success rate was 92%. The DCC reported that the Initial Operating Capability (IOC) cohort achieved 87% success and highlighted that this was a 1% decrease in performance from last month due to a Category 2 Incident (INC000000856834). The OPSG requested more information on the IOC cohort decrease in prepayment success rates (excluding the impact of Incident INC000000856834).

The DCC noted that the Final Operating Capability (FOC) cohort achieved a success rate of 35%. The OPSG highlighted that at the OPSG 73 meeting members were informed that FOC was forecast to achieve a 92% success rate at the end of June. The OPSG noted that anticipated improvements had not yet been observed. The DCC noted that there had been lower improvement than expected but a number of fixes had been implemented and they have seen a steady increase in success rates, emphasising that FOC achieved approximately 50% success rate in the first week of July 2022. The OPSG noted that the DCC should provide an overview of the FOC (including Prepayment, Incidents and Problems) in the DCC Operational Update in the August meeting (OPSG 77), along with an update on the current FOC Remediation plans. The OPSG noted that the scheduled completion of the remediation plan for FOC was imminent.

The DCC reported that there had been three Category 2 Incidents in June 2022. The DCC noted that there had been a continued downward trend in the total number of open Incidents in all categories.

The DCC noted that it is currently tracking 54 Problems, 36 of these have a root cause identified. The DCC noted that the average age of open Problem Records has been significantly reduced, thanks to a number of long-standing problems being dealt with.

The DCC reported that there were 234 maintenance changes in June 2022, achieving a 97.64% success rate. Two maintenance changes caused adverse impacts (Category 2 Incidents: INC000000859664 and INC000000864228). The DCC confirmed that there will be an unplanned maintenance change on 19 July 2022 between 07:00 – 09:00, (related to Gas Day handling within the Faster Switching Programme). The DCC noted that this will only impact FOC and Middle Operating Capability (MOC) services. The OPSG commented on the lack of communication and planning in preparation for this outage, and the expected impact to services.

3.1. SMETS1

The DCC reported that it has now migrated 9.1 million meters, with 8.5 million meters being operated by Suppliers. The DCC noted that there were approximately 576k migrated meters not yet being operated by Suppliers and outlined a plan as to when these meters are due to become operational.

ACTION OPSG 75/03: The DCC to amend the key for the four graphs on the DCC Operational Activity View to ensure that there is one consistent and clear key across all the graphs.

ACTION OPSG 75/04: The DCC to provide an overview of the FOC performance (including Prepayment, Incidents and Problems) at the August meeting (OPSG 77), with the expected update regarding the completion of the current FOC Remediation plan, and conclusions regarding the application of service credits.

ACTION OPSG 75/05: The DCC to provide details/analysis on the IOC cohort decrease in prepayment success rates in June 2022 (excluding the impact of Incident INC000000856834).

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

4. Service Outage Strategy

The DCC outlined the approach for developing the Service Outage Strategy, which has the goal of reducing the level of outages of the DCC service.

Initial work includes a DCC Commercial Technical Officer (CTO) study to review the key drivers for service outages and to outline a Programme of improvement works.

The DCC noted the Adverse Weather Trial is still in progress.

The majority of OPSG members were pleased with the proposed approach, although one Large Supplier (LS) member noted that although the plan's objectives were admirable, it was lacking detail on how the objectives would be achieved and therefore may not be feasible. A LS member noted that the plan should be reviewed by TABASC to understand the architectural considerations. The OPSG also noted that following the CTO study, the DCC should present its findings to the OPSG, Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) and Testing Advisory Group (TAG) for endorsement.

The OPSG Chair requested that members provide any further comments on the Service Outage Strategy by 26 July 2022.

ACTION OPSG 75/06: The DCC to present Service Outage Strategy to TABASC for comments and input.

ACTION OPSG 75/07: The DCC to present findings from the CTO study as part of the Service Outage Strategy, and seek endorsement on recommendations from TABASC, OPSG and TAG.

ACTION OPSG 75/08: The OPSG to provide any further comments on the Service Outage Strategy by 26 July 2022.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

5. Stability Plan

The DCC described a systematic and proactive approach to improving the service stability. The OPSG noted that an output from this should feed into the Service Outage Strategy.

The DCC noted that it will conduct a review of three areas: a Major Incident review of the last 12 months, a Forward View (Operational Change) and a review of Risks & Issues. Following the outcome of this review the DCC will provide a tactical plan with actions identified and agreed with Suppliers. The OPSG highlighted the need to reduce the number of Major Incidents per month as part of the plan. The DCC noted that it will provide quarterly updates to the OPSG.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

6. WNC CH Incidents

The DCC provided an update on its remediation plans for two Major Incidents that relate to WNC Communications Hub (CH) issues: INC000000832699 and INC000000848418.

6.1. INC000000832699

The DCC reported that there were approximately 18k impacted devices as of 3 July 2022. The DCC noted that Users can send a Service Request 8.9 'Read Device Log' to ascertain if their devices are affected. The DCC noted that there has been no root cause identified. The DCC noted that CH replacements will be required for impacted Devices. The DCC noted that a new firmware release (4.0.0.7) is targeted to be implemented at the end of July 2022 to stop this incident from occurring in the future.

The OPSG queried the approach for returning impacted CHs and ensuring they will be recorded as 'faulty'. The DCC recommended that Users follow the current CH returns process. The DCC noted that it will confirm the approach with CSP C&S and confirm that CHs replaced and returned due to this issue will be recorded as 'faulty'.

6.2. INC000000848418

The DCC reported that there were 247k Devices with the unrecovered Packet Data Protocol (PDP) Drop issue as of 6 July 2022. The DCC noted that no root cause has been identified.

The DCC suspended sending Round-Trip Times (RTT) test messages at the end of the June cycle to mitigate an increase in PDP drops. The DCC noted that the implementation of firmware version 4.0.0.7 is also expected to reduce service request timeout. The OPSG raised concerns regarding consequential costs and noted the discussions raised at the SEC Panel 104 and 105 meetings. The OPSG requested that an agenda item should be scheduled to provide an overview of the SEC Panel discussions and applicability to WNC Incidents.

The DCC provided a proposal to extend the suspension of RTT test HAN messages to the WNC CH estate from the July 2022 until the November 2022 measurement period, as it seems test HAN messages cause an increase in the prevalence of the PDP Drop issue. The OPSG reluctantly endorsed the proposal and noted it was the 'lesser of the two evils' and that OPSG would like this to be resolved as soon as possible, with the suspension for as shorter period as possible.

The DCC also provided an update on action 73/04¹, noting the development lifecycle performed by CSP C&S for WNC CHs. The OPSG reiterated that the DCC should confirm, as part of the action, the Quality Assurance processes that WNC Devices and Firmware undergo, ahead of being implemented.

ACTION OPSG 75/09: The DCC to confirm with CSP C&S on the approach for returned CHs impacted by WNC Incident INC000000832699, and whether these CHs will be recorded as 'faulty'.

ACTION OPSG 75/10: SECAS to schedule an agenda item to provide an overview of the SEC Panel discussions on consequential costs and applicability to WNC Incidents.

¹ OPSG 73/04: The DCC to confirm whether the level of assurance through the development lifecycle performed by CSP C&S for WNC CHs was adequate and provide a view on why these issues were not identified earlier, or, at the latest, in testing (which may have prevented Incidents INC000000832699 and INC000000848418 from occurring).

The OPSG:

- **NOTED** the update; and
- **AGREED** that action 74/05² can be closed, although status updates including root cause analysis should continue.

7. User Online Forum

SECAS provided an update on the User Online Forum as part of action 63/19³.

SECAS noted that it is currently trialling the application Microsoft OneNote, as an optional method to enable SEC Parties to share information. SECAS requested volunteers to participate in the trial. Five OPSG members expressed their interest in volunteering. The OPSG Chair noted that the link should be sent to volunteers to share with their wider Operational colleagues within their businesses for a proposed testing period of 10 working days. The OPSG Chair noted that a classification should be identified for the trial. SECAS noted that it will produce a User guidance document.

ACTION OPSG 75/11: SECAS to draft a simple User guidance document to go alongside the User Online Forum trial.

ACTION OPSG 75/12: SECAS to share the link with the OPSG members so that it can be shared with wider Operational colleagues within their businesses for a proposed test period of 10 working days.

The OPSG:

- **NOTED** the update; and
- **AGREED** that action 63/19 can be closed.

8. GBCS 4.1 Programme - Governance & Readiness Review

The DCC and SECAS presented an overview of the approach and timeline for reviewing the readiness and monitoring the deployment of the Great Britain Companion Specification (GBCS) v4.1 Communication Hub (CH) Firmware that was endorsed by the SEC Panel on 17 June 2022 (Panel_105).

The OPSG noted that the DCC should consider an initial Pallet pilot as part of the GBCS 4.1 Programme. The DCC and SECAS noted that this will be considered with the CSPs.

The OPSG noted that one of the planned Over The Air (OTA) firmware upgrade activities takes place in October during a Price Change event and questioned whether this had been taken into consideration when planning the pilots. The DCC and SECAS noted that it will investigate.

SECAS and the DCC noted that they will return to the OPSG in Q4 2022 to outline the proposals for the pilot and deployment. The OPSG endorsed the proposed dates and agreed they could be published on the SEC Releases webpage.

ACTION OPSG 75/13: The DCC and SECAS to consider and provide an update on possible plans for initial Pallet pilots after the GBCS 4.1 go live date.

² OPSG 74/05: The DCC to provide a detailed overview of the remediations plans for the WNC Incidents (INC000000832699 and INC000000848418).

³ OPSG 63/19: SECAS to investigate ways for an online forum to be created for SEC Parties to share information.

ACTION OPSG 75/14: The DCC and SECAS to confirm the impact regarding Pilot and Mass OTA activity (considering the approx. volumes of Devices planned for deployment or that have been upgraded) coinciding with key events i.e. the October Price Change event and rising Prepayment top up volumes.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation and **AGREED** to move forward with the proposed plan.

9. DSMS Procurement

The DCC provided outputs from the customer engagement survey and the scope for DCC Service Management System (DSMS) via ServiceNow.

The OPSG noted that the DSMS should be compliant with the SEC, (SEC Appendix AH and AI), including adhering to the SEC SSI Change Governance Process.

The OPSG emphasised that DCC must identify any ways in which a service based on ServiceNow would differ from the current service, and/or not meet SEC requirements. The DCC should also seek to identify opportunities that ServiceNow might provide. The DCC should propose a process to ensure that User requirements have been adequately investigated.

A Distribution Network Operator (DNO) member outlined that they had made it clear in their survey response that they strongly felt that the DCC should not use the results of this survey as approval for procuring ServiceNow, as it wasn't an appropriate governance mechanism and that not all SEC Parties may support the move to ServiceNow.

The OPSG requested that the DCC and SECAS discuss dates and return to the OPSG prior to the August 2022 SEC Panel to consider any SEC misalignment for ServiceNow.

ACTION OPSG 75/15: The DCC to return with an overview of the ability to meet current SEC requirements using ServiceNow as part of the DSMS, including any areas of misalignment and a process to ensure that User requirements have been adequately investigated.

ACTION OPSG 75/16: The DCC and SECAS to discuss dates and return to the OPSG prior to the August 2022 SEC Panel meeting to consider any SEC misalignment for ServiceNow as part of the DSMS.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

10. Customer Perspective – CH Delivery PMR Interpretation

The OPSG continued discussions of the provisions for reporting CH Delivery performance.

The DCC noted that it would report deliveries in the PMR format using the interpretation requested by Users going forward and retrospectively from February 2022. The DCC maintain that their current approach reflects SEC obligations, and it is making this adjustment to support User needs. An OPSG member disagreed that the current reporting was consistent with the SEC and that the DCC approach may cause an inaccurate perception of CH deliveries e.g., to for example BEIS and Ofgem. BEIS noted that it is aware of the issues being faced by Suppliers.

The OPSG **NOTED** discussion.

11. DSP Programme - Introduction to Options

The DCC listed five technical options for consideration in the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the DSP Programme.

The OPSG agreed to discuss the options in an upcoming workshop. The DCC noted that it will send a doodle poll to OPSG members with options of dates for a workshop (to be held via teleconference) to discuss DSP programme options in more detail. The DCC will then return to the OPSG in October 2022 or November 2022 to discuss the outputs of the workshop.

ACTION OPSG 75/17: The DCC to send a doodle poll to OPSG members with options of dates for a workshop (to be held via teleconference) to discuss DSP Programme options in more detail.

ACTION OPSG 75/18: The DCC to return to the OPSG in October/November 2022 with outputs from the workshop.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

12. CH&N Roadmap

This item is classified as **RED** and is therefore recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

13. OPSG Issues Log

13.1. Incorrect or No DNO Certificates

SECAS presented the latest position of the Incorrect or No DNO Certificates. The OPSG noted that the issue will also be discussed at the SEC Panel meeting on 15 July 2022

The OPSG noted areas of progress, and where further improvement is needed. The OPSG noted that the next steps should include the DNOs producing a prioritisation plan, as some Suppliers have limited resources across a number of operational issues that require resolving for the DNO's. The OPSG noted that this will be discussed further at the DIG forum.

13.2. Candidate Issues for Closure

SECAS asked the OPSG to review the candidate issues for closure and provide any further comments by 26 July 2022.

ACTION OPSG 75/19: The OPSG to review the candidate issues for closure on the OPSG Issues Log and provide any further comments by 26 July 2022.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

14. Major Incident Review

SECAS presented the Major Incident review of two Incidents for consideration: INC000000847147 and INC000000849294.

14.1. INC000000847147

The OPSG questioned why there was a delay of one hour between the DSP identifying the Incident via its automated alerting system and the classification of the Incident as a Category 2. The DCC noted the DSP were receiving automated alerts of service degradation and at 12:30 the Incident was also raised by a User, before a Category 2 Incident was raised. The DCC noted that this timescale was as expected during the Incident management process.

14.2. INC000000849294

The OPSG noted that the root cause of the Incident was due to human error, and questioned whether the runbooks are periodically reviewed and if engineers receive additional training. The DCC noted that the runbooks are reviewed to update any outdated processes, and this is tracked under the Post Incident Review (PIR). The DCC highlighted that as part of the lessons learnt review, all engineers received refresher training, the DCC also noted that any new engineers hired to support FOC will also receive adequate training.

The OPSG noted that the RAG status for customer communications should be Red because of communications to Service Users being delayed due to DCC Service Centre Analyst error. The DCC noted that this will be amended, and the report reissued. *[Post Meeting Note: The DCC reissued the Review Report for Incident INC000000849294 on 13 July 2022.]*

The OPSG:

- **CONSIDERED** the Major Incident Review reports; and
- **AGREED** the Review Reports for Incident INC000000847147 and INC000000849294 be published to all SEC Parties, after the requested amendments have been made.

15. ETMAD

The DCC presented an update on the approach and plan, responses to the Enduring Transition Migration Approach Document (ETMAD) consultation, and features of information provision and governance.

BEIS noted that the TCoS/ECoS migrations would be a simplified process in comparison to SMETS1 Enrolment & Adoption migrations. The DCC provided an overview of historical TCoS certificate rotation success and failures which the DCC believe should be reflective of the TCoS to ECoS performance. The DCC noted that there are some devices with, so far, no identified examples of TCoS rotations. However, noted that so far, no failures of the process had been identified.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update provided on the ETMAD development.

16. MP155 'Communications Hub Re-Flash'

Due to time constraints, the OPSG Chair noted that the OPSG should provide any further comments on this modification to sec.change@gemserv.com.

17. MP208 'Northbound Prioritisation of N56 Alerts'

SECAS presented an overview of modification [MP208 'Northbound Prioritisation of N56 Alerts'](#).

The OPSG noted and recognised the end energy consumer impact of the issue. Further evidence and understanding of the root causes of these failures was requested before the OPSG were able to comment on the solution itself. The OPSG members noted that the failure to achieve the expected time taken to deliver the alert occurred during the early hours of the morning (6am-8am), when the DCC were actioning large volumes of scheduled reads. However, there was no evidence of congestion on the DCC Service at that time.

The OPSG members supported further investigation into the issue, including asking DCC to review loading on the network at the times failures were observed.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

18. DP207 'Allowing Registered Supplier Agents to Maintain Meter Firmware'

Due to time constraints, the OPSG Chair noted that the OPSG should provide any further comments on this modification to sec.change@gemserv.com.

19. Any Other Business (AOB)

19.1. Annual Outage Plan

The OPSG noted that the DCC will provide an update on the annual outage plan at the end of July 2022. The DCC confirmed that it had cancelled the DSP BCDR window planned for 31 July 2022 and subsequent DSP BCDR activities in August 2022.

19.2. FOC

An OPSG member noted that most recently (in the last month) the performance of SMETS1 FOC they have observed has dropped significantly. The OPSG member noted that recently they have only received 1/3 of the attempted read requests on FOC without error or missing data. The DCC noted that it has reached out to Suppliers to discuss the issue further.

Next Reporting Meeting: 25 July 2022; Next Main Meeting: 9 August 2022