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Operations Group (OPSG) Meeting 88 on 14 February 2023 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 that in January 2023 there were close to 1.3bn Service Requests, an increase of 50 million from December 2022. The DCC has predicted that SRV volumes will continue to increase following SMETS1 migrations. The DCC noted that it is projected to receive 60% more meter installs onto its network than in 2022. The DCC reported that there had been an increase in Alerts particularly, the 8F3E Alerts that DCC suggested were caused by User activity during device installations.

The OPSG reiterated that the SRV per Device ratio is an important indicator that should be presented and analysed each month.

The DCC reported that there has been one Category 1 Major Incident in January 2023. The DCC noted that this was caused by BCDR activity that overran. The DCC noted that the number of open incidents continue to decrease. An OPSG member questioned the current end to end incident process and how DNOs interface with it.

The DCC reported that there has been an improvement in FOC prepayment success, which had now achieved 85% success rate for January 2023, however volumes remain low.

<u>3.1 SMETS1 (DCC):</u> The DCC reported that a total of 10.3 million meters have been migrated and 9.7 million have become operational. The DCC reported that there are now 537k meters left to become operated by Users.

4. FOC BCDR Testing (DCC): The DCC proposed that it will perform the Trilliant/DXC BCDR failover and failback tests in one date on 5 March 2023. The DCC noted that it will review the outcomes of this test, with a view to adopting the approach in other BCDR tests.

. The OPSG endorsed DCC’s BCDR proposal.

5. Annual Outage & BCDR Plan 2023/2024 (DCC): The DCC noted that this plan includes a reduction in additional outage hours from 66.56 hours in the current year to12 hours. The DCC noted that it will return to the OPSG for further review and endorsement of the schedule at the March meeting (OPSG 90).

6. Protecting the DCC Service Policy (DCC): The DCC noted that it introduced a policy to protect the DCC service where high User activity impacts the service e.g. high volume traffic. The OPSG requested that the DCC provide specifications (including principles and scenarios) showing the operational implementation of this policy. The OPSG agreed that, as the ‘system operator’, the DCC has the right and obligation to protect the integrity of the service.

7. WNC CH Issues - PDP Drop and Whitelisting (DCC):

<u>PDP Drop</u>: Regarding the WNC PDP Drop Incident (INC000000848418), the DCC outline that 126K Devices are currently impacted. Although there is no root cause yet identified; however the DCC

noted a firmware upgrade will mitigate this issue. The DCC noted that following 4.1.0.4 firmware release any new instances of No PDP will self-recover within 5 days (credit mode), and 1 day (prepayment mode). Impacted Devices which have not been updated to the new firmware versions will continue to recover at approximately 20% or more per month.

Whitelisting: Regarding the HAN Whitelist Incident (INC000000832699), the DCC noted that 4.0.0.7 firmware release mitigated further instances, however 19.9K Devices are still impacted and may need to be replaced.

7a. All CH Type Faults (SECAS): SECAS reported that DCC's Communication Hub (CH) Fault rate is 0.03% for Central and South, and North regions. The OPSG noted this is below 0.5% of the total number of CH installed in these regions. Therefore in accordance with SEC provisions SEC F9.17 Section F9.18 compensation will not be triggered. The OPSG noted that these provisions rely on the physical return of faulty Devices. The OPSG were disappointed as customers are at a disadvantage as there will be no compensation for consumer impacting Devices. The OPSG noted that the 4G CH contract negotiation team should be informed on the issue raised, the OPSG suggest that this could be raised with the Communications Transition Group (CTG). The OPSG have previously raised the issue of assurance of Devices with DCC.

8. Temporary Communications Hub Ordering and Delivery Rules (TCHODR) (DCC): The DCC presented the outcome of the consultation to extend the TCHODR. OPSG were informed that all consultation responses DCC received were in favour of the implementation of TCHODR to cover delivery months from April 2024 - September 2024. The OPSG supported DCC's proposals on this topic. The DCC noted that it will present the TCHODR to the SEC Panel on 28 February 2023 for final endorsement.

9. MP208 'Northbound Prioritisation of N56 Alerts' (SECAS): The OPSG noted their proposed role in approving adjustments to priority levels. The OPSG noted that such proposals would need to be supported by full impact assessments, including operational impacts. The Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) Chair noted that the technical aspect of the end-to-end process of changing the priority levels will need to be considered in detail as this may have a major impact to the infrastructure.

10. CSP N Scaling and Optimisation (DCC): The DCC reported that as part of the Phase 2 plan, the DCC will progress with the technical Options 1 (Increase in Radio Frequency (RF) Channels) and Option 4 (Request an Impact Assessment to support the Modulation Rate Increase to 4FSK. The OPSG requested that the DCC confirm the cost of increasing RF channels.

The OPSG asked that DCC brief them on the operational impacts of the proposed enhancements, including impact on capacity in comparison to forecast demand.

11. ECoS Go Live Readiness Review (DCC): The DCC presented the 6 months check point review for ECoS Go Live. The OPSG noted that DCC will need to provide more information on the progress towards readiness of the components comprising the new capability. The OPSG noted the clear and comprehensive presentation.

12. GBCS 4.1 Update (DCC): The OPSG noted and supported the proposed reordering of the readiness of firmware for different manufacturer's Devices.

The DCC outlined the impact of including First Pallet delivery and processes. The DCC noted that they intended to consult on the plan including such options. The OPSG supported the proposal to consult. The OPSG queried why a manufacturer had been excluded. The OPSG requested that the DCC provide a breakdown of the cost of first pallet as part of the consultation, e.g., implementing single pallet for only Single Band or Dual Band or both types of CHs.

13. T3 Trials (SECAS): SECAS relayed the outcome of the T3 Aerial trials sponsored by BEIS. The OPSG members commented on the challenges of the process, including the difficulties faced coordinating site visits with other parties. BEIS noted that it intended to further engage with Suppliers in March 2023.

14. DSP Options – Next Steps (DCC): The OPSG noted that there will be an extraordinary meeting on 20 February 2023 to reach an OPSG view on the DSP Options.

15. FOC Trilliant Performance (DCC/SECAS): The OPSG discussed the current issue affecting some migrated FOC SMETS1 Devices where blank gas meter reads are returned. DCC stated that they do not believe that maintaining migrated SMETS1 Devices is their responsibility. Trilliant are understood to be working on a firmware fix that will be made available to Users who have a suitable commercial arrangement with them. The broader issue of the responsibility for maintaining SMETS1 CHs was discussed. The issue is due to be discussed at the Technical and Business Design Group (TBDG) on 15 February 2023 with output to be fed back to OPSG.

16. Work Package: Q3 2022 (Oct - Dec) actuals (SECAS): The OPSG noted the Lookback Report against the Work Package for Q3 2022/23, and had no further comments.

17. Customer Perspective: None were proposed.

18. AOB: None were proposed.

Next Reporting Meeting: 27 February 2023; Main Meeting: 14 March 2023.