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Operations Group (OPSG) Meeting 98 on 11 July 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 number of connected smart meters reached close to 27.1 million, with an increase of 500,000 compared to the previous month. The installation rate of smart meters remained consistent at around 16,000 per business day.

The average Service Request Variants (SRVs) per meter has risen from 47.5 in July 2022 to 54 in June 2023. The OPSG noted that this trend would have implications for demand forecasting; the DCC and Users would need to collaborate in a structured demand forecasting process.

The ratio of the average number of SRV 4.8.1's per meter per month has increased from 15 to 19 over the last twelve months due to the Other User and Combined Supplier usage. Combined Suppliers have increased the proportion of meters that they read and Other Users have increased their customer base.

There was one Category 2 Incident in June 2023 related to SMETS1 in Full Operating Capability (FOC), caused by high volumes of traffic. The incident lasted for 3 hours 10 minutes and was restored within the agreed Service Level Agreement (SLA).

4. July Price Change Event Initial Update (DCC): The DCC reported that the July price change event targeted approximately 18 million devices for updates, representing a significant increase of around 30% compared to the previous event in April. SMETS2 Devices exhibited favourable performance, with satisfactory success rates for both future-dated and on-demand update requests. Approximately 11 million SMETS2 Devices were successfully updated, achieving a success rate of approximately 95%. However, problems were encountered with SMETS1 Devices during the event. On-demand update requests proceeded smoothly, but future-dated requests had a lower success rate. This was due to two separate incidents that affected the processing of future-dated requests, with the DCC noting that the root cause of these incidents and plans to address them are still being investigated. The OPSG expressed disappointment and frustration that despite the preparations made it had once again proved impossible to execute the price changes entirely smoothly. Further, the OPSG were critical of the time being taken to analyse to identify the root causes of the incidents, with concerns raised about the effectiveness of the monitoring systems and resources in place during the event. The DCC noted the problem management team is coordinating activities internally and externally with service providers to address the incidents and maintain transparency before providing an update to OPSG at the July reporting meeting.

5. DCC Service Management System (DSMS) Update (DCC): The DCC confirmed that they see Industry engagement and understanding of the needs and pain points of users as crucial: they would plan Workshops to gather input on current usage patterns, and future needs. The DCC noted that they understood the importance of proposing a full engagement plan and that they planned to do this as soon as possible.

6. Central Service Provider North (CSP N) Scaling & Optimisation (DCC): The OPSG noted an update on the proposal to trial extending the 6-hour Scheduled Read Window. The DCC reported on the results of the Request for Information, stating feedback and concerns had been addressed, and that overall, there was support for the initiative. The DCC presented details of the pilot, The OPSG endorsed the proposal, and DCC confirmed that the pilot is confirmed to start on 27 July 2023.

7. OPSG Risk Register (SECAS): The OPSG reviewed the highest severity risks and agreed that the four risks with severity ratings of 15 and above should be escalated to SEC Panel. The OPSG asked that SECAS review the risks in the Communications Hub (CH) supply chain, given that the current risk (015) in the area is now obsolete.

SECAS also confirmed that regarding that the 2G and 3G sunsetting risk was being managed by the CTG.

8. DSP Update (DCC) (RED): The DCC provided the OPSG with an update on the Data Service Provider (DSP) reprocurement.

9. Proposed Amendment to the DSP Alert Protection Mechanism Exclusion List (DCC): The OPSG requested a fuller explanation for the justification of this proposal and asked that the views of Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub Committee (TABASC) and Security Sub-Committee (SSC) be obtained.

10. Northbound Prioritisation (DCC): The OPSG discussed the proposed designation of extreme low voltage threshold Alerts as high priority, and their inclusion in the DCC proposed northbound prioritisation solution. The OPSG endorsed the proposal.

11. November 2023 SEC Release (DCC): The DCC reported progress towards readiness and confirmed that no issues or risks had been identified.

12. Toshiba GBCS 4.1 Update (DCC): The OPSG noted an update regarding the GBCS 4.1 programme and considered options to address recently discovered WNC CH defects. The OPSG accepted the DCC recommendation to proceed with the programme as planned, acknowledging that this meant that the defects would not be fixed until a later release.

13. DCC Engagement RY 22/23 (DCC): SECAS provided an update on the draft Panel input into the Ofgem assessment of DCC's engagement performance. Comments from Members were invited. The OPSG noted the update.

14. MP241 'Interoperability Checker Update' (SECAS and DCC): OPSG noted the danger that a discussion already held at the SEC Working Group would be repeated at the OPSG with limited added value. The OPSG noted that it may be able to provide more useful input at later stages in the modification process.

15. Customer Perspective: None proposed.

16. AOB

16.1. Enduring Change of Supply (ECoS) Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR) testing

The OPSG noted that this proposal had not followed the agreed process for consideration of changes to outages and the Annual Outage plan. The OPSG asked for the proposal to be tabled in line with that process.

Next Reporting Meeting: 24 July 2023; Main Meeting: 08 August 2023.