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MP223 'WAN Coverage Reporting'

Modification Report

Version 0.3

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Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer
communication

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About this document

This document is a draft Modification Report. It currently sets out the background, issue, and progression timetable for this modification, along with any relevant discussions, views and conclusions. This document will be updated as this modification progresses.

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This document also has one annex:

- **Annex A** contains the business requirements for the Proposed Solution.

Contact

If you have any questions on this modification, please contact:

Ben Giblin

020 3934 8646

ben.giblin@gemserv.com

1. Summary

This proposal has been raised by Emslie Law of OVO Energy.

There is no obligation in the Smart Energy Code (SEC) for the Data Communications Company (DCC) to report on Wide Area Network (WAN) coverage.

The DCC currently provides reporting on 'SMWAN (Smart Meter Wide Area Network) connectivity level' via the Performance Measurement Report (PMR). SEC Parties also have access to the WAN Coverage Checker which informs them whether there is WAN at an address.

Some Suppliers have reported experiencing issues with lack of WAN when attending a site where the WAN Coverage Checker is reporting WAN coverage.

Suppliers may be wasting resources in organising installation appointments in areas where there is intermittent or no WAN. Suppliers are limited in being able to establish whether any issues are with intermittent WAN or the Smart Metering System (SMS). To establish where the problem lies, the Proposer believes that further reporting from the DCC will help with root cause analysis.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

WAN Coverage Checker

SEC Parties can view the WAN status at properties across Great Britain with reporting provided for each CSP region (South, Central and North). In CSP regions South and Central, Parties can view whether individual addresses have WAN coverage or not, and whether the coverage is considered low, medium or high. In CSP North, Parties can only view at WAN coverage at postcode level.

Performance Measurement Report

The DCC is currently reporting 'SMWAN connectivity level' via the Performance Measurement Report (PMR) as Service Provider Metrics which are not required by the SEC.

This is calculated *"on the last day of each Performance Measurement Period by comparing the number of commissioned Communications Hubs with the number of Communications Hubs where SM WAN connectivity has been reported as lost during the Performance Measurement Period."*

The Performance Measurement Methodology (PMM) defines 'Lost Connectivity' as when:

"(a) the Communications Hub had been through a successful installation (as defined in the Communications Hub Installation and Maintenance Support Materials (CHIMSM) within the Coverage Area; and

(b) there existed during the Performance Measurement Period a connectivity related Incident associated with the Communications Hub which had remained unresolved for greater than ten (10) days."

This measurement is reliant on Users completing an installation as per CHIMSM and then having raised a connectivity Incident which has remained unresolved for more than ten days.

What is the issue?

There is currently no obligations or requirement in the SEC on the DCC to report current WAN coverage percentages or any work which is ongoing to improve them.

The Bmax¹ targets required of the DCC are:

- 99.25% coverage in the CSP Central region.
- 99.25% coverage in the CSP South region.
- 99.50% coverage in the CSP North region.

Although the WAN Coverage Checker is provided to SEC Parties, the Proposer believes reporting could be improved by highlighting addresses where there is no WAN or the WAN status has changed.

What is the impact this is having?

Currently there is no measure or way to understand the current WAN coverage that is critical to Users wanting to enrol Devices in the DCC Service. Without reporting on WAN Coverage, SEC Parties may waste resources by organising smart metering installs in areas reported on the WAN Coverage Checker as having WAN but when attending site there is no WAN.

Impact on consumers

Consumers are impacted as their Supplier may not be able to identify whether the issue is with intermittent WAN coverage in their area or with the SMS. As a result, the Consumer loses out on the benefits of the smart meter rollout. Additionally, if Consumers have smart meter installation appointments which are unsuccessful due to lack of WAN when the Supplier reaches the site, this can negatively impact the Consumers view of the wider Smart Metering Implementation Programme (SMIP).

3. Assessment of the proposal

Areas for assessment

Sub-Committee input

SECAS has engaged the Chairs from the Operations Group (OPSG), the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC), the Security Sub-Committee (SSC) and the Smart Metering Key Infrastructure Policy Management Authority (SMKI PMA) to confirm what input is required from these forums. SECAS believes the following Sub-Committees will need to provide the following input to this modification:

¹ Bmax is the target coverage for WAN set in the DCC Licence

Sub-Committee input	
Sub-Committee	Input sought
OPSG	Do you agree this with the business requirements for this modification?
SMKI PMA	None – no impacts
SSC	None – no impacts
TABASC	Should any additional items be included in the business requirements for this modification?

Observations on the issue

This Draft Proposal was presented to the Change Sub-Committee on 15 November 2022. There were no comments from members, but the Proposer highlighted the importance of ensuring WAN coverage is visible to all SEC Parties. The Proposer also noted the modification will seek to enhance the WAN reporting measures which already exist to improve transparency and encourage further discussion on this topic.

SECAS discussed this modification with the Sub-Committee Chairs. The TABASC Chair noted that reporting could be split between SMETS1 and SMETS2 Devices. SECAS has worked with the DCC and Proposer to develop the business requirements and believes that the reporting should be included but not split between SMETS1 and SMETS2 Devices.

Statement of Service Exemptions

SECAS has clarified that under Condition 17 of the Smart Meter Communication Licence the DCC must review the Statement of Service Exemptions annually and propose revisions to Ofgem if there are any to make. The DCC is under no obligation in its Licence to report on WAN Coverage annually.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

SECAS will present this modification to the Working Group, TABASC and Operations Group in May 2023 for feedback relating to the business requirements. SECAS will then request a Preliminary Assessment from the DCC to gain information about the costs associated with this modification. The Preliminary Assessment will then be presented to the Working Group for comment. SECAS will then issue a Refinement Consultation to gain feedback from Parties.

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
Draft Proposal raised	1 Nov 2022
Presented to CSC for initial comment	15 Nov 2022
CSC converts Draft Proposal to Modification Proposal	17 Jan 2023
Business requirements developed with Proposer and DCC	6 Feb 2023 – 20 Mar 23
Modification discussed with Working Group	5 Apr 2023

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
<i>Business requirements discussed at TABASC</i>	1 May 2023
<i>Business requirements discussed at OPSG</i>	21 May 2023
<i>Preliminary Assessment requested</i>	29 May 2023
<i>Preliminary Assessment returned</i>	3 Jul 2023
<i>Modification discussed with Working Group</i>	2 Aug 2023
<i>Refinement Consultation</i>	9 Aug 2023 – 30 Aug 2023
<i>Modification discussed with Working Group</i>	6 Sep 2023
<i>Impact Assessment costs approved by Change Board</i>	20 Sep 2023
<i>Impact Assessment requested</i>	21 Sep 2023
<i>Impact Assessment returned</i>	15 Nov 2023
<i>Modification discussed with Working Group</i>	6 Dec 2023
<i>Modification Report approved by CSC</i>	19 Dec 2023
<i>Modification Report Consultation</i>	27 Dec 2023 – 19 Jan 2023
<i>Change Board Vote</i>	31 Jan 2023

Italics denote planned events that could be subject to change

Appendix 2: Glossary

This table lists all the acronyms used in this document and the full term they are an abbreviation for.

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
Bmax	Required WAN coverage set out in the DCC Licence
CHIMSM	Communications Hub Installation and Maintenance Support Materials
DCC	Data Communications Company
OPSG	Operations Group
PMM	Performance Measurement Methodology
PMR	Performance Measurement Report
SECAS	The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SMCL	Smart Meter Communication Licence
SMKI PMA	Smart Metering Key Infrastructure Policy Management Authority
SMIP	Smart Metering Implementation Programme
SMS	Smart Metering System
SMWAN	Smart Meter Wide Area Network
SoSE	Statement of Service Exemptions
SSC	Security Sub-Committee
TABASC	Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee