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MP241 ‘Interoperability Checker Update’

Annex A

Business requirements – version 0.1

About this document

This document contains the business requirements that support the solution(s) for this Modification Proposal. It sets out the requirements along with any assumptions and considerations. The Data Communications Company (DCC) will use this information to provide an assessment of the requirements that help shape the complete solution.

1. Business requirements

This section contains the functional business requirements. Based on these requirements a full solution will be developed.

Business Requirements		
Ref.	Requirement	Responsible for delivery
1	Provide consumers with specific data to indicate whether their smart meter is capable of operating in Smart Mode	DCC
2	Provide consumers with specific data to indicate whether their smart meter is currently operating in Smart Mode	DCC
3	Provide consumers with specific data as to whether, if they switched Supplier, their meter would continue to operate in Smart Mode	DCC
4	Provide consumers with information as to whether their property could have Smart Meter installed	DCC

2. Considerations and assumptions

This section contains the considerations and assumptions for each business requirement.

2.1 General

This solution will be applied to Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications (SMETS)1 and SMETS2 Devices.

Amendments are required to the Citizens Advice (CA) Interoperability Checker, to improve the consumers' user experience and provide additional information on Smart Meter availability.

The current generalised results based on Device Models and Supplier Interoperability Data contribute to cause confusion and inconsistency. If a consumer's SMETS1 meter is a Device Model that the Responsible Supplier has indicated it would generally operate in smart mode, the checker will indicate that it is operating in smart mode and, conversely, if there is no match in the Supplier Interoperability Data, the checker will indicate that the meter is not operating in smart mode. In either case, the result could be incorrect as:

- the Supplier may not be communicating with that specific SMETS1 meter, despite its policy being to operate meters of that Device Model in smart mode.
- the Supplier Interoperability Data may be incomplete, as maintenance of the data is a manual task for Suppliers.

This modification recommends assessing improvements that would provide more personalised results based on actual transaction data, thereby also removing the need for Suppliers to maintain the Supplier Interoperability Data and utilising the DCC's location-based data to provide additional information to consumers waiting for Smart Meter installations.

2.2 Requirement 1: Provide consumers with specific data to indicate whether their smart meter is capable of operating in Smart Mode

This requirement is to ensure transparency and avoid any confusion. This information would help customers understand the capabilities of their smart meter. Providing clear and concise information would also help customers make informed decisions on whether to upgrade their meter if necessary.

2.3 Requirement 2: Provide consumers with specific data to indicate whether their smart meter is currently operating in Smart Mode

This information would ensure that customers are aware of the current functionality of their meter.

2.4 Requirement 3: Provide consumers with specific data as to whether, if they switched Supplier, their meter would continue to operate in Smart Mode

This information would give customers the confidence to switch providers without worrying about their smart meter capabilities changing.

2.5 Requirement 4: Provide consumers with information as to whether their property could have a Smart Meter installed

This information would enable customers to make more informed choices about availability of having a Smart Meter

3. Glossary

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

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
DCC	Data Communications Company
CA	Citizens Advice
SMETS	Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification

SEC Modification Proposal, SECMP241

Interoperability Checker Update

Preliminary Impact Assessment (PIA)

Version:	1.0
Date:	13th October, 2023
Author:	DCC
Classification:	DCC Public

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1 Executive Summary

The Change Board are asked to approve the following:

- Total cost to complete the Full Impact Assessment (FIA) of £10,000; and
- The timescales to complete the Full Impact Assessment of 40 days.

The total ROM costs to deliver SECMP0241 are £100,000, which includes Design, Build and PIT, with a tolerance of $\pm 20\%$.

Problem Statement

Citizens Advice, as the statutory consumer champion, has a remit to provide independent information and advice to consumers. Citizens Advice offers information on smart meters, including a tool to check whether a SMETS1 Meter is operating in Smart Mode and DCC is mandated by the SEC to provide the data (the Interoperability Checker Service) that is displayed on the Citizens Advice website.

Currently, the Interoperability Checker's results may not reflect a consumer's actual experience with their Smart Meter. The indication of whether a consumer's SMETS1 Meter is operating in Smart Mode is generalised and can lead to confusion for the consumer, since it may be inconsistent with their experience.

The lack of a source of personalised information from an independent source for consumers waiting for a Smart Meter installation also leads to frustration. There is a need to improve this user experience by providing additional information on the likelihood of having a Smart Meter installed.

Benefit Summary

By enabling Citizens Advice to provide personalised results, derived from up-to-date data held by DCC, consumers will benefit from unambiguous and reliable information on whether their SMETS1 Meter is operating in Smart Mode.

By providing independent advice on the likelihood that a SMETS2 Meter can be installed, based on DCC data, Citizens Advice will enable consumers to make more informed choices about Smart Meters.

In both cases, Citizens Advice's own advisers will be better able to support consumers who contact them seeking help and advice with issues relating to energy and smart meters.

2 Document History

2.1 Revision History

Revision Date	Revision	Summary of Changes
13/10/2023	1.0	Issued

2.2 Associated Documents

This document is associated with the following documents:

Ref	Title and Originator's Reference	Source	Issue Date
1	Annex A - MP241 Business Requirements v0.1	SECAS	
2	DP241 Modification Report v0.2	SECAS	28/06/2023
3	MP241 - Preliminary Assessment Request	SECAS	14/09/2023

References are shown in this format, [1].

2.3 Document Information

The Proposer for this Modification is Robin Seaby from DCC.

The initial Preliminary Impact Assessment was requested of DCC on 14th September 2023.

3 Context and Requirements

In this section, the context of the Modification, assumptions, and the requirements are stated.

The requirements have been provided by SECAS, the Proposer, and the Working Group.

3.1 Problem Statement

Currently, the Interoperability Checker's results may not reflect a consumer's actual experience with their Smart Meter. This inconsistency has resulted in misunderstanding among some consumers.

The Interoperability Checker Service has issues with providing accurate information to consumers about their Smart Meter's capabilities and the likelihood of having one installed. The current generalised results are based on Device Model rather than personalised information. This has contributed to misperception and inconsistency in results which can be frustrating for consumers.

The lack of a source of personalised information for consumers waiting for a Smart Meter installation also leads to queries being raised to the DCC. There is a need to improve the Interoperability Checker's user experience and provide additional information on the likelihood of having a Smart Meter installed.

3.2 Business Context and Requirements

The Interoperability Checker Service is a tool available on the Citizens Advice website that advises consumers on whether their Smart Meter is operating in Smart Mode. The tool also informs consumers about which Suppliers they could switch to whilst retaining or regaining Smart functionality on their Smart Metering System (SMS). The data used to populate the Interoperability Checker is based on the Responsible Supplier's indication of which Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification (SMETS) Device Models it is capable of operating. The Interoperability Checker Service was designed to assist SMETS1 consumers to identify whether their meters would lose functionality if they moved Supplier, as well as helping them to see whether the smart functionality was currently being used.

The Smart Energy Code (SEC) Section H16 'Provision of Data by Suppliers to the DCC' requires the DCC to collaborate with Citizens Advice to provide the tool.

3.3 Business Requirements

Requirement 1: Provide consumers with specific data to indicate whether their smart meter is capable of operating in Smart Mode.

This requirement is to ensure transparency and avoid any confusion. This information would help customers understand the capabilities of their smart meter. Providing clear and concise information would also help customers make informed decisions on whether to upgrade their meter if necessary.

Requirement 2: Provide consumers with specific data to indicate whether their smart meter is currently operating in Smart Mode.

This information would ensure that customers are aware of the current functionality of their meter.

Requirement 3: Provide consumers with specific data as to whether, if they switched Supplier, their meter would continue to operate in Smart Mode.

This information would give customers the confidence to switch providers without worrying about their smart meter capabilities changing.

Requirement 4: Provide consumers with information as to whether their property could have a Smart Meter installed.

This information would enable customers to make more informed choices about availability of having a Smart Meter.

4 Description of Solution

Following analysis of the Requirements above, the DCC proposes the following Solution:

- Coverage data-marts with associated reporting
- Smart mode data-marts with associated reporting
- Supplier operable device model data-marts with associated reporting
- Smart meter take-up data-marts with associated reporting
- Additional DCC API endpoints for smart mode, smart meter take-up and WAN coverage
- Citizens Advice back-end system integration with new DCC API endpoints
- Citizens Advice website development

4.1 DCC Data Science and Analytics (DS&A) Solution

Utilising the coverage datasets provided by the CSPs and Smart Metering Inventory data provided by the DSP, the DS&A team will create and maintain bespoke, automated Extract, Transform and Load (ETL) processes to import the data from our Data Lake and from there create a new data model which can be used to satisfy Requirements 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The data from this data model will be used to create 3 separate reports in csv format that will be consumed by the Interoperability Checker Service ETL applications and loaded to the database.

Report 1 - Requirements 1 & 3

For Requirements 1 & 3, a new report will be created that will be produced each week. The new report will indicate, for each Domestic Energy Supplier, which SMETS1 Device Models it is operating in Smart Mode. To determine this information, DCC will apply the following criteria:

- The Supplier has sent at least one Service Request that targets a Device of that Device Model and that was successfully processed.

Report 2 - Requirement 2

For Requirement 2, a new report will be created that will be produced each day. The new report will indicate, for each Enrolled SMETS1 Smart Metering System, whether the Responsible Supplier is operating that Smart Metering System in Smart Mode. To determine this information, DCC will apply the following criteria:

- The Supplier has sent at least one Service Request within the preceding 30 days (or another period to be confirmed) from a list of SRVs (to be confirmed) that targets the Device and that was successfully processed.

Report 3 - Requirement 4

For Requirement 4, a new report will be created that will be produced each month. The new report will indicate, for each Domestic Premises in GB, whether that premises is covered by the DCC SMWAN and the percentage of the total number of Domestic Premises in the surrounding area (the minimum size of which is to be confirmed, subject to Data Privacy Impact Assessment) at which there is an Enrolled SMETS2 Smart Metering System.

4.2 Critical Software Solution

Utilising the new reports provided by DCC, Critical Software will develop additional Extract, Transform and Load (ETL) serverless applications to be deployed into the DCC Interoperability Checker Service cloud environments. The Interoperability Checker Service database will be modified to hold the data supplied in Reports 2 and 3 (Report 1 contains data of a type already held in the database and so can be processed without impacting the database table structure).

Supplier Interoperability Data (SDID) files containing Device Model interoperability data from Suppliers will no longer be processed and so Suppliers will no longer be required to submit these via the DCC external SharePoint site.

The Interoperability Checker Service API will be modified to include new endpoints for Citizens Advice to request information in relation to Requirements 2 and 4, consumers and additional serverless applications will be developed to fulfil valid requests received at the new API endpoints.

4.3 Citizens Advice Solution

Requirements 1 & 3

In response to a consumer query, the Citizens Advice smart meter checker website currently displays a list of Energy Suppliers who support SMETS1 Meters of the same Device Model as the consumer's Meter, provided by the DCC Interoperability Checker Service API.

DCC's solution to fulfil Requirements 1 & 3 changes how this data is populated in the DCC system, however there is no change to the interface with Citizens Advice.

Requirement 2

Currently, in response to a consumer query, the Citizens Advice smart meter checker website checks whether that consumer's SMETS1 Meter is of a Device Model that's listed as being supported by the Responsible Supplier, as provided by the DCC Interoperability Checker Service API.

To fulfil Requirement 2, the Citizens Advice smart meter checker website will call an additional endpoint to the DCC Interoperability Checker Service API to establish whether the consumer's Meter is operating in Smart Mode, as indicated by Report 2. The result will be presented to the consumer, which will replace the current output derived from the list of supported Device Models.

Requirement 4

Citizens Advice will develop a new user journey for consumers who visit its website seeking information about new Smart Meter installations, directing them to a new section of the website where they will be prompted to enter their postcode and premises identifier.

Using a new API endpoint provided by DCC, Citizens Advice will request SMWAN coverage and Smart Meter take-up information relevant to that address and present back to the consumer.

5 Impact on Systems, Processes and People

As defined the change included in this document is confined to data already within the DCC, with no expected changes impacting SMETS1 or SMETS2 Service Providers.

5.1 Infrastructure Impact

No impact to existing infrastructure.

It should be noted that the solution as proposed should not add noticeable traffic or processing to the Smart Metering System or network.

5.2 Security Impact

The provision of Smart Meter take-up data for the area surrounding a consumer's premises will be subject to a Data Privacy Impact Assessment by DCC, in order to ensure that the definition of that geographical area encompasses a sufficient number of domestic premises that there could be no risk of any breach of privacy for those individuals, while still providing a meaningful response to the consumer.

5.3 DCC Functions and Capabilities

The full range of activities required to implement the new reports including design, development, testing, and implementation would be performed by DCC DS&A utilising in-house contractors and permanent staff.

DCC Enterprise IT will support deployment of the updates to the DCC Interoperability Checker SIT and Prod environments.

DCC Enterprise Testing will execute tests in the DCC Interoperability Checker SIT environment to validate the deployment.

DCC Service Centre procedures and knowledge articles will be updated to reflect the extended scope of the service provided to Citizens Advice.

6 Implementation Timescales and Approach

A key factor in planning and delivering this Modification's implementation and release is that the changes are neither part of the Smart Metering System, nor do they impact any Technical Specifications, such that they can be implemented separate from the now-standard SEC Release dates.

This work should be completed within ten (10) months of approval. This delivery timeline can be considered as two separate parts:

Part 1: Delivery of Requirements 1, 2 and 3 within six (6) months; and

Part 2: Delivery of Requirement 4 within a further four (4) months.

Parts 1 and 2 may be released separately or combined into a single release into Production. Timescales will be further elaborated as part of the Full Impact Assessment.

6.1 Testing and Acceptance

The development and testing will not follow the PIT, SIT, and UIT pattern associated with a conventional SEC Release, and will not require the testing services of the System Integrator, DSP or CSPs.

DCC DS&A and Critical Software will develop and test the required changes in their respective test environments prior to deployment into the DCC Interoperability Checker SIT environment, where DCC will carry out further testing to validate the DCC solution end-to-end.

Citizens Advice will carry out User Acceptance Testing against the DCC Interoperability Checker SIT environment prior to deployment to the Production environment.

Consumer focus groups will be used during the development of website content to ensure clarity and ease of understanding of the information presented.

Further detail on the testing approach will be developed as part of the Full Impact Assessment.

7 Costs and Charges

The table below details the cost of delivering the changes and Services required to implement this Modification Proposal. The Rough Order of Magnitude cost (ROM) shown below describes indicative costs to implement the business requirements.

7.1 Design, Build, and Testing Cost Impact

The table below details the cost of delivering the changes and Services required to implement this Modification. The scope of supply under this PIA includes design, development (build), testing within the Critical Software PIT environment and validation by Citizens Advice against the DCC Interoperability Checker SIT environment.

£	Design, Build and Test
Implement Interoperability Checker Update	£100,000 with a tolerance of +/- 20%

Based on the existing requirements, the fixed price cost for a Full impact Assessment is £10,000 and would be expected to be completed in 40 days.

Appendix A: Glossary

The table below provides definitions of the terms used in this document.

Acronym	Definition
BAU, BaU	Business As Usual
CPL	Central Products List
CSP	Communication Service Provider
CSV	Comma Separated Variable
DCC	Data Communications Company
DNO	Distribution Network Operator
DSP	Data Service Provider
DUIS	DCC User Interface Specification
ESME	Electricity Smart Metering Equipment
FIA	Full Impact Assessment
FTE	Full Time Employees
GBCS	Great Britain Companion Specification
GSME	Gas Smart Metering Equipment
I&C	Installation and Configuration
IHD	In Home Display
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MVP	Minimum Viable Product
OMR	Operational Metrics Review
PIA	Preliminary Impact Assessment
PIT	Pre-Integration Testing
PMR	Performance Measurement Report
PPMID	Payment Meter Interface Device
ROM	Rough Order of Magnitude (cost)
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SECAS	Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
SIT	Systems Integration Testing
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMETS	Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification
SMS	Smart Metering System
SRV	Service Request Variant
SVP	Speed, Volume, Payload
S1SP	SMETS1 Service Provider
TOC	Technical Operations Centre
UIT	User Integration Testing

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MP241 'Interoperability Checker Update'

Modification Report

Version 0.3

28 June 2023

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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 solution.
- **Annex B** contains the full DCC Preliminary Assessment response.

Contact

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1. Summary

This proposal has been raised by Robin Seaby from the Data Communications Company (DCC).

Interoperability Checker Service is a tool on Citizens Advice website that enables consumers to check whether their Smart Meter should be operating in Smart Mode. It uses information provided by Supplier's to provide generalised results to the consumer.

The current generalised results in the Interoperability Checker are based on Device Models and Supplier Interoperability Data. This data can change and leads to inconsistency and can lead to consumer confusion. Citizens Advice has received consistent feedback from consumers based on these generalised results and would like to explore changes to improve the consumers' user experience and provide additional information on Smart Meter availability.

The modification aims to enhance personalisation by leveraging actual transaction data. Additionally, it aims to utilise DCC's location-based data to provide consumers with additional information while they wait for Smart Meter installations.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

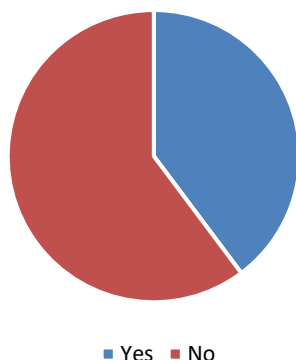
The Interoperability Checker Service is a tool available on the Citizens Advice website that advises consumers on whether their Smart Meter is operating in Smart Mode. The tool also informs consumers about which Suppliers they could switch to whilst retaining or regaining Smart functionality on their Smart Metering System (SMS). The data used to populate the Interoperability Checker is based on the Responsible Supplier's indication of which Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification (SMETS) Device Models it is capable of operating. The Interoperability Checker Service was designed to assist SMETS1 consumers to identify whether their meters would lose functionality if they moved Supplier, as well as helping them to see whether the smart functionality was currently being used.

The Smart Energy Code (SEC) Section H16 'Provision of Data by Suppliers to the DCC' requires the DCC to collaborate with Citizens Advice to provide the tool.

What is the issue?

Currently, the Interoperability Checker's results may not reflect a consumer's actual experience with their Smart Meter. This inconsistency has resulted in misunderstanding among some consumers. To gain further feedback on the issue, Citizens Advice ran a survey from 17 November 2022 until 10 March 2023, which received 88 responses. One question that was asked was "Was the tool helpful to you?" 35 respondents answered "Yes" and 53 answered "No".

Citizen Advice Bureau consumer feedback



The Interoperability Checker Service has issues with providing accurate information to consumers about their Smart Meter's capabilities and the likelihood of having one installed. The current generalised results are based on Device Model rather than personalised information. This has contributed to misperception and inconsistency in results which can be frustrating for consumers.

Comments from consumers who completed the survey included:

- *"The pages (for both meters) say my meter is working but my account says that no meter readings since 24/10/22."*
- *"It said it cannot get readings, but my supplier does get them. I know my meter is SMETS1 and want to see if it's been upgraded"*
- *"It says my meter SHOULD be working in Smart mode not IS WORKING so I suspect the tool just checked that a Smart meter was installed, not that it was actually signalling readings back to my supplier. Waste of time."*

When asked what could make the tool more useful, suggestions from consumers included:

- *"Absolute Confirmation that the meters are sending data."*
- *"Yes. How do I know it is functioning correctly. That would help."*
- *"An answer from the tool that discusses the possibilities why there is no reply from the meter."*

What is the impact this is having?

The lack of a source of personalised information for consumers waiting for a Smart Meter installation also leads to queries being raised to the DCC. There is a need to improve the Interoperability Checker's user experience and provide additional information on the likelihood of having a Smart Meter installed.

Impact on consumers

Consumers are impacted negatively due to the Interoperability Checker's results not reflecting a consumer's actual experience with their Smart Meter. The use of Device Models instead of personalised transaction data and reliance on outdated Supplier Interoperability Data can cause confusion and inconsistencies for consumers. This lack of accurate information can lead to frustration and potentially prevents consumers from making informed decisions about their energy usage. Furthermore, the absence of a reliable source of personalised information for consumers awaiting Smart Meter installations is resulting in a number of enquiries to the DCC, creating further inconvenience and delays. It is understood that this is likely generating call traffic to Suppliers as well.

3. Proposed solution

Proposed Solution

The proposed solution aims to shift the responsibility for the Interoperability Checker Service from energy suppliers to the DCC. With the proposed solution, the DCC will take charge of the entire Interoperability Checker, ensuring that consumers receive accurate and personalised information regarding their Smart Meter's Smart Mode compatibility and the potential for Smart Meter installations. This shift will improve the user experience, reduce consumer confusion and minimise queries to energy suppliers and the DCC.

4. Impacts

This section summarises the impacts that would arise from the implementation of this modification.

SEC Parties

SEC Party Categories impacted			
✓	Large Suppliers	✓	Small Suppliers
	Electricity Network Operators		Gas Network Operators
	Other SEC Parties	✓	DCC

Large and Small Suppliers are both effected due to the DCC taking charge of the Interoperability Checker.

DCC Systems

DCC System changes

The full impacts on DCC Systems and DCC's proposed testing approach can be found in the DCC Preliminary Assessment response in Annex B.

DCC System traffic

It has been advised that the proposed solution should not add noticeable traffic or processing to the Smart Metering System or network.

SEC and subsidiary documents

The following parts of the SEC will be impacted:

- Section H 'DCC Services

The changes to the SEC required to deliver the proposed solution can be found in Annex B.

Technical specification versions

This modification does not impact Technical Specifications.

Devices

No Devices are impacted from the implementation of this modification.

Consumers

This modification will lead to a more accurate Interoperability Checker Service, enhancing the user experience by providing consumers with the information they need to make informed decisions about their Smart Meters.

Other industry Codes

No impacts have been identified on other Codes if this modification were to be implemented.

Greenhouse gas emissions

No impacts have been identified on greenhouse gas emissions if this modification were to be implemented.

5. Costs

DCC costs

The estimated DCC implementation costs to implement this modification is £100,000. The breakdown of these costs are as follows:

Breakdown of DCC implementation costs	
Activity	Cost
Design, Build and Pre-Integration Testing (PIT)	£100,000
Systems Integration Testing (SIT)	TBC
User Integration Testing (UIT)	TBC
Implement to Live	TBC
Application Support	TBC

More information can be found in the DCC Preliminary Assessment response in Annex B.

SECAS costs

The estimated SECAS implementation cost to implement this as a stand-alone modification is one days of effort, amounting to approximately £600. This cost will be reassessed when combining this modification in a scheduled SEC Release. The activities needed to be undertaken for this are:

- Updating the SEC and releasing the new version to the industry.

SEC Party costs

A summary of costs will be included in this modification following the Refinement Consultation.

6. Implementation approach

Recommended implementation approach

SECAS is recommending an implementation date of:

- **27 June 2024** (June 2024 SEC Release) if a decision to approve is received on or before 7 June 2024; or
- **7 November 2024** (November 2024 SEC Release) if a decision to approve is received after 8 June 2024 but on or before 18 October 2023.

This modification aims to make the next SEC release because Citizens Advice and the DCC are working together to enhance consumer experience. Should there be any unforeseen circumstances and it misses the June 2024 SEC release. SECAS recommends this modification is implemented into the November 2024 SEC release.

7. Assessment of the proposal

Areas for assessment

Would updating Supplier Interoperability Data be better for user experience?

The Interoperability Checker tool needs to be improved to make it easier to use and be more reliable. This can be done by using information about how different Devices work together, as well as checking to see if a Smart Meter is working properly by looking at its transactions. The Proposer believes that this will allow users to get tailored results based on their specific information. The Proposer also notes this will save time and frustration and help users make informed decisions about their energy usage. These suggestions will be assessed along with any other options during the Refinement Process.

Would leveraging the DCC's location-based data to provide personalised information to consumers be better for user experience?

Some consumers provided feedback to Citizens Advice that it would be useful for people without a Smart Meter to receive information about whether it is possible to have a Smart Meter in their area. Consumers have noted that there can be anecdotal evidence of being unable to obtain a Smart Meter in their area and would like to be able to check this. The DCC could provide additional information to consumers by using their location-based data. In turn, this should reduce the number of queries from consumers to their Supplier or the DCC. This will reduce the burden on Parties' customer service teams and ensure that consumers are able to access the information they need quickly and easily. Overall, the aim is to improve the customer experience and provide added value to consumers.

Sub-Committee input

SECAS will engage with 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:

Sub-Committee input	
Sub-Committee	Input sought
OPSG	OPSG to advise on operational requirements needed to improve the Interoperability Checker's user experience
SMKI PMA	No input required

Sub-Committee input	
SSC	Seek input on whether any necessary adjustments or assessments should be taken into consideration before progressing
TABASC	To review if there are any potential risks or challenges that could arise during implementation

Observations on the issue

The OPSG Chair highlighted that this modification is a big change which could potentially put DCC closer to the end consumer over suppliers. There were concerns about the accuracy and responsibility of the data. The SSC Chair pointed out that the initial security architecture has been approved, but the title may not accurately reflect the broader intent. The TABASC Chair emphasised that suppliers would need to approve the data due to a disconnect between what they see and what the DCC sees. The three Sub-Committees discussed the base data and the need for further feedback from consumers to ensure they are receiving enough information. The OPSG Chair stressed the importance of clarifying the purpose and scope of the service and suggested obligating suppliers to provide accurate data. The SCC Chair noted that the information on the CAB website may be promising more than the service provides. The group agreed that it is the supplier's responsibility to provide the necessary information to meet the consumer's needs. The scope needs revising to ensure accuracy and currency of the data, and the DCC will need to determine how hard it will be to provide the information.

A Working Group raised concerns over a issue of duplication as there is a similar smart meter health checker being built by their organisation and is available. SECAS have investigated this with the DCC and it appears that there is no issue of duplication as the product is in beta testing whereas the enhancements being made to a product which is currently live would not be an issue.

8. Case for change

Business case

Approval of the modification

The decision to approve the modification should take into account its alignment with the general objectives of the SEC. These objectives primarily focus on enhancing consumer information and experience within the energy sector. The proposed modification holds the potential to enhance the effectiveness of the Interoperability Checker Service and reduce consumer confusion.

Improved Consumer experience

By leveraging DCC's location-based data, consumers will receive more accurate and personalised information regarding their Smart Meter's capabilities. This will empower consumers to make well-informed decisions about their energy usage and Smart Meter options.

Reduction in Consumer confusion

The modification will eliminate the inconsistencies and inaccuracies that consumers currently face when using the Interoperability Checker Service. By providing reliable and tailored information, it will enhance the overall user experience.

Efficiency gains

Centralising the responsibility with the DCC is expected to reduce the burden on energy suppliers and the DCC in terms of inquiries and support requests. This will lead to efficiency gains and cost savings, benefiting both stakeholders and consumers.

Against approval of the modification

While there are clear advantages to the proposed modification, it's important to consider potential challenges and drawbacks that may warrant caution. Factors against approval may include:

Implementation Challenges

The transition of responsibilities from energy suppliers to the DCC may pose implementation challenges, including technical integration and coordination among stakeholders. These challenges should be carefully assessed to ensure a smooth transition.

Increased costs

The Preliminary Assessment associated with this modification amount to £100,000.

Views against the General SEC Objectives

Proposer's views

The proposer of this modification believes that centralising the responsibility for the Interoperability Checker Service with the DCC is the most cost-effective solution to address the current issues. The proposer believes that this modification supports general SEC objective C¹

Enhanced accuracy

The proposer argues that the DCC's access to location-based data will result in more accurate and personalised information for consumers. By leveraging transaction data and location-based insights, consumers will receive real time and tailored information about their Smart Meter capabilities, ensuring a better user experience.

¹ (c) the third General SEC Objective is to facilitate Energy Consumers' management of their use of electricity and gas through the provision to them of appropriate information by means of Smart Metering Systems;

Reduction in queries

The modification is expected to significantly reduce the volume of queries directed at energy suppliers and the DCC. By providing a reliable source of information, the Interoperability Checker Service will decrease the burden on customer service teams, improving efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Consumer-centric approach

The proposer emphasises the importance of a consumer-centric approach. They argue that the modification aligns with the general objectives of the SEC, fostering a competitive and consumer friendly energy market.

Industry views

Industry views will be collected post Refinement Consultation.

Views against the consumer areas

Improved safety and reliability

This modification has a positive impact on reliability as it will reduce the inaccuracy of the Interoperability Checker Service.

Lower bills than would otherwise be the case

This modification has no impact on lowering bills.

Reduced environmental damage

This modification has no impact on reducing environmental damage.

Improved quality of service

This modification has a positive impact on improving the quality of service.

Benefits for society as a whole

This modification has no impact on benefitting society as a whole.

9. Appendix 1: Progression timetable

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
Draft Proposal raised	5 May 2023

Managed by

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
Presented to CSC for initial comment	16 May 2023
CSC converts Draft Proposal to Modification Proposal	16 May 2023
Business Requirements developed with Proposer	16 May 2023 – 4 July 2023
Modification discussed with Working Group	5 Jul 2023
Modification discussed with OPSG	6 Jul 2023
Preliminary Assessment requested	14 Sep 2023
Preliminary Assessment returned	16 Oct 2023
<i>Modification discussed with Working Group</i>	<i>1 Nov 2023</i>
<i>Refinement Consultation</i>	<i>6 Nov 2023 – 27 Nov 2023</i>
<i>Impact Assessment costs approved by Change Board</i>	<i>21 Dec 2023</i>
<i>Impact Assessment requested</i>	<i>27 Dec 2023</i>
<i>Impact Assessment returned</i>	<i>22 Feb 2024</i>
<i>Modification discussed with Working Group</i>	<i>6 Mar 2024</i>
<i>Modification Report approved by CSC</i>	<i>19 Mar 2024</i>
<i>Modification Report Consultation</i>	<i>25 Mar 2024 – 8 Apr 2024</i>
<i>Change Board Vote</i>	<i>24 Apr 2024</i>

Italics denote planned events that could be subject to change

10. 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
CSC	Change Sub-Committee
DCC	Data Communications Company
OPSG	Operations Group
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SECAS	The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
SMETS	Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification
SMKI PMA	Smart Metering Key Infrastructure Policy Management Authority
SMSS	Smart Metering System
SSC	Security Sub-Committee
TABASC	Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee