

MARCH 2024

# SEC Newsletter



## WELCOME TO THE MARCH 2024 SEC NEWSLETTER!

Welcome to the March 2024 SEC Newsletter!

In this edition, we are calling all readers to opt-in to the Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey and participate in the SEC Panel assessment of DCC customer engagement. We share the outcome of 4G Communications Hub (CH) Pre-Integration Testing (PIT) for the Great Britain Companion Specification (GBCS) 4.1, and the TABASC Technical Effectiveness survey, and provide advance notice of the new SEC website. We also reference changes made to the Programme Assurance Policy, and the Terms of Reference for several Sub-Committees. There are lots of industry consultations out for comment at the moment, to which SEC Panel will be responding.

You can also read our usual updates on modifications, and listen to our latest Modcast. And we end with a spotlight interview with our new Interim Chair of the Privacy Sub-Committee (PSC) – Camilla Winlo.

We hope you enjoy this edition; please contact us at the [SECAS Helpdesk](#) if there are any topics you would like to see covered in an upcoming newsletter.



# Governance

## ANNUAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY – CALL TO ACTION

SEC Parties are invited to participate in the annual SEC Customer Satisfaction Survey!

By providing your consent [here](#) before **5pm on April 17, 2024**, you will have the opportunity to share your thoughts and help us enhance the services we provide. The survey will be conducted by an independent marketing research agency (DJS Research) and will take only 15 minutes of your time via telephone. Your feedback is highly appreciated and will help us serve you better. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact [secas@gemserv.com](mailto:secas@gemserv.com).



## SEC PANEL ASSESSMENT OF DCC CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

As part of the DCC Price Control and incentive tools, the SEC Panel is obliged to assess the engagement that the DCC has undertaken with its customers during the Regulatory Year ending 31 Mar 2024 (RY23/24), as this feeds into the level of margin which the DCC may retain.

This year's assessment has 2 parts: the Ofgem Operational Performance Regime (OPR) and the DESNZ Baseline Margin Project Performance Adjustment (BMPPA) scheme for 4G Communication Hubs (CH). SECAS will be issuing a survey on behalf of SEC Panel to seek views from SEC Parties on DCC's engagement during the 2023/24 Regulatory Year and specifically in relation to 4G Communications Hub. This will run from **8 April to 10 May**. It is crucial for SEC Parties to share their views, as this will feed into the Panel's scoring provided to Ofgem and DESNZ.



## NEW SEC WEBSITE

We are thrilled to announce that our new SEC website will be launching in May 2024!

SECAS has been working hard to replace the existing SEC website as approved by SEC Panel. The new front-end will enhance the user experience by improving search functions, navigation, and personalisation. Additionally, the document and content management functions have been updated through an information architecture refresh, utilising the latest technology. This delivers a significant improvement to the current experience of end users.

We are confident that you will find it to be a valuable resource for all your needs. Please keep an eye out for more information about the launch and the exciting new features that will be available.



## PRE-INTEGRATION TESTING (PIT) FOR THE 4G COMMUNICATIONS HUBS AND NETWORKS (CH&N) PROGRAMME GBCS 4.1 UPDATE

The Great Britain Companion Specification (GBCS) sets out where GB smart metering varies from the international Zigbee and DLMS COSEM standards. The current version is GBCS 4.1 which introduces some new functionality, including the ability to provide Over-The-Air (OTA) upgrades to Pre-Payment Interface Devices (PPMIDs) and HAN Connected Additional Load Controllers (HCALCs).

The WNC Comms Hubs used in the Central and South CSP regions successfully exited testing and gained approval to enter into a pilot phase where OTA firmware upgrades were rolled out to Comms Hubs installed in consumer premises in a controlled manner, and where volunteer Energy Suppliers performed Initial Pallet Validation (IPV) using GBCS 4.1 WNC Comms Hubs in smart meter installs. Those phases have now successfully completed and gained SEC Panel approval on 26 March 2024. The firmware will be used in the manufacture of new WNC Comms Hubs. New WNC Comms Hubs manufactured with the GBCS 4.1 firmware are expected to be available in July 2024.

The EDM1 Comms Hubs used in the Northern CSP region successfully exited System Integration Testing (SIT) and User Integration testing (UIT) and gained approval at SEC Panel on 26 March 2024. In April these will enter the pilot phase of controlled OTA firmware roll out and IPV Energy Supplier smart meter install



## PROGRAMME ASSURANCE POLICY

The Programme Assurance Policy (PAP) was set out by the SEC Panel to provide a framework for SEC involvement and oversight of DCC-initiated projects and programmes which have the potential to impact DCC Users. The framework established a process for the progression of a project or programme from conception to release, including the creation of a number of gateway stages which must be progressed through before go-live.

Previously, a number of testing requirements were captured under Section T of the SEC (Testing During Transition), however this was removed as part of [MP167A \('Review of SEC Documents \(Testing Approach Document Criteria\)'\)](#), as the requirements are out of date and Section D was enhanced for SEC Releases.

The second part of this modification, [MP167B \('Review of SEC Documents \(DCC Internal Systems Change Governance\)'\)](#) defines the PAP in Section D of the SEC and obligates the DCC to adhere to the document when it is initiating a project or programme with potential DCC User impacts. MP167B was implemented in the February 2024 SEC Release.

The SEC Independent Chairs provided feedback to SECAS, as part of the development of these modification proposals, that the testing requirements set out in the PAP should be developed further to include the intent behind the original Section T drafting for DCC Internal Systems Changes.

SECAS has worked with the DCC to review draft changes to the PAP using SEC Section D as the basis, and to align the approach with current Testing Advisory Group (TAG) working practices. The TAG and SMKI PMA endorsed these changes and the Panel approved v1.1 of the Policy on 26 March. The new version of the PAP can be found [here](#).



## PROGRAMME ASSURANCE REPORT

The DCC has reviewed its Programme portfolio and made the following changes:

- Three programmes have moved from Stage 0 to Stage 1: Future Connectivity Strategy, Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications (SMETS)1 End of Life and 3G Sunsetting.
- SMETS1 Dual Control Organisation (DCO) has moved from stage 1 to stage 2 and Test Automation Framework has moved from stage 3 to stage 4.

Key Highlights for March include:

- Future Service Management (FSM) - The Programme received Strategic Outline Case (SOC) feedback from DESNZ with no material objections to progressing to Outline Business Case (OBC) stage.
- Comms Hubs & Networks (CH&N) - Successful Pre-Integration Testing (PIT) exit was endorsed by Testing Advisory Group (TAG) in February 2024 and the System Integration Testing (SIT) phase has commenced.
- PKI-E - DESNZ provided a non-objection letter on the OBC on 31 January 2024 and the RFP was issued in the first week of February. Live Service Criteria (LSC) readiness reviews are also in progress for the Manufacturing Pack (ECoS).
- Great Britain Companion Specification (GBCS) 4.1 release for EDM1 Comms Hubs. SMETS1 DCO - Business Needs for the DCO enduring programme have been shared with all relevant Sub-Committees and agreed by Operations Group (OPSG), Security Sub-Committee (SSC) and Smart Meter Key Infrastructure Policy Management Authority (SMKI PMA).

The Report can be found on the SEC website [here](#).



## TABASC TECHNICAL EFFECTIVENESS SURVEY OUTCOMES

On an annual basis, the TABASC is required to assess the effectiveness of the Technical and Business Architecture of Smart Metering by surveying SEC Parties. In this survey, respondents shared their views on a range of topics, including DCC Systems, services and processes, Home Area Network (HAN) and Device Performance, Firmware Upgrade performance, System performance, Business Processes, and Issues related to SMKI, DCCKI, and/or IKI.

In this year’s survey, results indicated that SEC Parties are somewhat dissatisfied with DCC System Performance, somewhat satisfied with Device and HAN performance, and somewhat satisfied with the performance of current business processes. TABASC has identified several actions to progress in response to the survey, including gathering insight into the variance of current performance between Communications Service Provider (CSP) regions, requesting that the DCC provide a holistic view of all traffic prioritisation and DCC system capacity optimisation activities (so that DCC Users can make sound business process decisions based on current and upcoming DCC initiatives), and asking DCC to highlight the way in which its performance planning considerations are assured technically.



## SUB-COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE UPDATES

In conjunction with the Sub-Committees, SECAS has carried out an annual review of the Sub-Committee Terms of Reference (ToR), for the TABASC, TAG, OPSG, Change Board and Change Sub-Committees to ensure that the remit and processes of the Sub-Committees remain up-to-date and reflect current ways of working. Each of these Sub-Committees has discussed and endorsed the ToRs, and the SEC Panel has agreed with the changes made in this round of updates.



# Industry News

## DEPARTMENT FOR ENERGY SECURITY & NET ZERO (DESNZ) – CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE SEC RELATING TO THE COMMERCIAL PRODUCT ASSURANCE (CPA) SCHEME

On 26 February 2024, DESNZ issued a consultation on proposed changes to individual SEC Sections and Appendices. The changes aim to establish:

- New arrangements for device security assurance (known as CPA) following the National Cyber Security Centre's (NCSC) decision to withdraw its CPA scheme for Smart Metering;
- Transitional measures to support a smooth transition to the new arrangements; and
- Measures to provide for device Manufacturers to become SEC Parties for the purpose of becoming subscribers of IKI certificates. The consultation letter and attachments that show the proposed changes in more detail can be downloaded [here](#).
- The SEC Panel, with input from the Security Sub-Committee, will be providing a response to this consultation. If you would like to respond directly, comments on these proposals should be submitted by **5pm on 8 April 2024** to: [smartmetering@energysecurity.gov.uk](mailto:smartmetering@energysecurity.gov.uk).



## OFGEM ENERGY CODE REFORM: IMPLEMENTATION CONSULTATION

Ofgem requires feedback on its proposed approach to implementing the energy industry code governance reforms set out in the Energy Act 2023.

The Act gives Ofgem new functions to set the direction for the electricity and gas industry codes and will license code managers, who will be responsible for the governance of the codes. Under this new code governance framework, code managers will be responsible for making sure that the codes develop in line with Ofgem's strategic priorities. You can find the consultation [here](#).

The SEC Panel will be responding to the consultation.

A response form is provided with the consultation. If you would like to respond directly, please send the form by email to [industrycodes@ofgem.gov.uk](mailto:industrycodes@ofgem.gov.uk) by **23 April 2024**.



# Industry News

## SMART METERING IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME: 4G COMMUNICATIONS HUB ONLY EXCHANGE SITE VISITS ARRANGEMENTS, AND FURTHER PROPOSAL ON THE DCC CHARGING MECHANISM AND LEGAL CHANGES

Following the industry engagement process which took place in summer 2023, on 29 February 2024 the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) issued a response confirming the industry funding arrangements by which energy suppliers undertake 4G Communications Hub only exchange site visits (i.e. where no smart meter(s) are replaced) in the Central and South regions of Great Britain. The conclusions set out in the response reflect the feedback received from industry, as well as the Government's support to the smart meter 4G transition. These decisions aim to minimise the risk of smart meter functionality interruption, owing to the sunset of the 2G/3G networks.

DESNZ is now further engaging industry with proposed changes to the DCC Licence and the main body of the Smart Energy Code to support the implementation of 4G Communications Hub only exchange site visit arrangements. The Department's response, and further proposal on the DCC charging mechanism and legal changes (set out in Annex A) can be accessed [here](#).

Feedback on these proposals should be submitted by **5pm on 12 April 2024** to [smip.sdc@energysecurity.gov.uk](mailto:smip.sdc@energysecurity.gov.uk). Any questions you may have on any of these documents should also be sent to the same mailbox.



## ENERGY CODE REFORM: CODE MANAGER LICENSING AND SECONDARY LEGISLATION

DESNZ and Ofgem have jointly released a consultation, which sets out their initial proposals for code manager standard licence conditions and selection processes. They are now developing the secondary legislation and regulatory framework for code managers, which will allow Ofgem to implement the reformed framework and drive strategic changes across the codes in the interest of consumers and competition.

The consultation covers the proposed high-level contents of the code manager licence and sets out proposals for the secondary legislation that will underpin Ofgem's code manager selection process. This includes who is eligible for selection, how Ofgem will determine whether to pursue competitive versus non-competitive selection for each code, and how any non-competitive selection process would work.

An online response form is provided which can be accessed [here](#). The SEC Panel will be responding to this consultation, but if you would like to respond directly, please send your response by email to both [industrycodes@ofgem.gov.uk](mailto:industrycodes@ofgem.gov.uk) and [codereform@energysecurity.gov.uk](mailto:codereform@energysecurity.gov.uk) by **5 May 2024**.



# Industry News

## JOIN THE INTRODUCTION TO THE REC WEBINAR ON 25 APRIL

The REC Code Manager is hosting an Introduction to the REC Webinar on 25 April 2024, from 10:00 to 12:30. This event is primarily for new REC Parties or those who are new to the industry.

During this session, you will receive a high-level summary of the following topic areas:

- The Role of the Code Manager
- REC Portal
- REC Services: Electricity Enquiry Service (EES), Gas Enquiry Service (GES), and Central Switching Service (CSS)
- Stakeholder Engagement
- REC Change Process
- Energy Market Architecture Repository (EMAR)
- Keeping up to date with the Code Manager

Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about the REC and its services. To sign up to the webinar click [here](#). Please visit our [Open Industry Consultations webpage](#) for details of more consultations that may be of interest to SEC Parties. If you are aware of a consultation that should be added, please contact the [SECAS Helpdesk](#).



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# Modifications

## REFINEMENT CONSULTATIONS

As a SEC Party, you can help influence the Proposed Solution, help determine the business case for the change, and comment on how the proposal will affect your organisation. For more information and to respond to the consultation, download the consultation pack linked below and send your response to the [Change Team](#).

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">MP253 'Traffic Management for Price Cap Update Events - User Actions Required'</a><br><br>Download <a href="#">here</a> . | <b>Closing Date:</b><br><br>Tuesday 2 Apr 2024 | <b>Impacted Parties:</b><br>DCC, Suppliers,<br>Network Operators,<br>Other Users. |
| <a href="#">MP230 'Review the SLA for delivery and completion for SMETS1 firmware'</a><br><br>Download <a href="#">here</a> .         | <b>Closing Date:</b><br><br>Friday 19 Apr 2024 | <b>Impacted Parties:</b><br>Suppliers, DCC                                        |



## CHANGE SUB-COMMITTEE (CSC) ELECTION RESULTS

31 March 2024 signalled the end of the term for several CSC members. We therefore issued a call for nominations, and the results are listed below:

- Emslie Law (OVO) was re-elected to the Large Supplier Party seat
- Kelly Kinsman (National Grid Electricity Distribution) was re-elected to the Electricity Network Party seat
- No nominations were received for the vacant Small Supplier Party seat
- No nominations were received for the vacant Gas Network Party seat

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the returning CSC members. If anyone would like to make a nomination for the above vacant seats now or in the future, please contact us at [sec.change@gemserv.com](mailto:sec.change@gemserv.com).



## LATEST SEC MODCAST

In this episode of our modcast, we bring you a roundup of the past month in SEC Change. We also delve into more detail about our new SEC Issues Group. We discuss what it is, when it will be held, what this means for you, and how to submit an issue. You can access the modcast [here](#).

If you want to know more about any of the above, please email [SEC.Change@gemserv.com](mailto:SEC.Change@gemserv.com) or call us on 020 7090 7755.



# Publications

## SECAS HELPDESK

Please contact the [SECAS Helpdesk](#) with any questions and a member of the team will be happy to help. Helpdesk hours are **Monday-Friday 9-5pm (excluding bank holidays)**.



## Key Upcoming Governance Meeting Dates

### INDUSTRY EVENTS CALENDAR

SECAS now hosts a collated calendar of industry events, consultations, and publications on the SEC website. This is in response to industry feedback that a joint calendar would add value to SEC Parties.

This includes events from SECAS, DCC, DESNZ and Ofgem looking one month ahead. It will be a snapshot at the time of publication and will be updated monthly. The Industry Events Calendar is available [here](#).

### KEY SEC MEETING DATES

- 3 April 2024 - [SEC Monthly Working Group Meeting - April 2024](#)
- 8 April 2024 - [Communications Transition Group 14](#)
- 9 April 2024 - [Operations Group Meeting 115](#)
- 9 April 2024 - [SMDA Sub-Committee Meeting 11](#)
- 10 April 2024 - [SECPMA Meeting 116](#)
- 10 April 2024 - [SSC Meeting 190](#)
- 15 April 2024 - [Strategic Working Group Meeting 17](#)
- 16 April 2024 - [Change Sub-Committee Meeting 62](#)
- 18 April 2024 - [TABASC Meeting 100](#)
- 18 April 2024 - [PSC\\_02\\_1804](#)
- 19 April 2024 - [Other SEC Party Monthly Engagement Call – April 2024](#)
- 22 April 2024 - [Operations Group Meeting 116](#)
- 22 April 2024 - [Large Supplier Engagement Call – April 2024](#)
- 23 April 2024 - [SEC Panel meeting 127](#)
- 23 April 2024 - [SECCo Board meeting 127](#)
- 24 April 2024 - [Change Board Meeting 89](#)
- 24 April 2024 - [TAG 113](#)
- 24 April 2024 - [SSC Meeting 191](#)
- 25 April 2024 - [Small Supplier Engagement Call – April 2024](#)

You can view all upcoming and previous event / meeting dates in the [online calendar](#).

# Spotlight Interview with Camilla Winlo, PSC Interim Chair

## **WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE ON THE ROLE OF INTERIM CHAIR FOR THE NEW PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE? IS THE NEW PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION IN PLACE AND WHEN IS THE FIRST MEETING?**

Smart meter data is increasingly important to inform the UK's response to the Net Zero carbon reduction challenge. It's being used in increasingly innovative ways to encourage people to think about how they can use less energy and manage their consumption to smooth energy demand. I worked in marketing for 15 years before moving into data protection, and I know how important it is for people to have trust and confidence in how their data will be collected and used. If they don't trust smart meters, they simply won't allow them to be installed and that means they will miss out on the benefits – and so will society. I see the Privacy Sub-Committee as an essential forum for ensuring that the Smart Energy Code provides that trust and confidence. The first meeting happened on 21 March and the Terms of Reference was approved at the previous SEC Panel meeting.



## **WHAT ARE YOUR TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE DURING YOUR TENURE AS INTERIM CHAIR?**

At the moment, my top priority is making sure that the Privacy Sub-Committee is set up for success. That means make sure all the members have a common understanding of what the Privacy Sub-Committee is for and how members contribute, and that we give them the right information to help them do their jobs well. I think it's really important that the Privacy Sub-Committee supports the SEC Statement of Objectives and promotes safe innovation. That includes maintaining SEC Section I and the Privacy Controls Framework

## **WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE, AND HOW DO YOU PLAN TO ADDRESS THEM?**

The point of any sub-committee is to ensure that diverse voices and experiences can inform thinking and decision-making. I think the biggest challenge on any new committee is to recruit the right level of diversity and make sure that all those voices feel heard. Following on from that, the next important challenge is to ensure that those diverse voices can come to a consensus that takes into account, not just each member's own priorities, but also what they have heard from their fellow members. I'm really encouraged by what I've seen so far.

## **HOW DO YOU ENVISION THE PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE EVOLVING UNDER YOUR LEADERSHIP?**

If you think about the four stages of team formation, the Privacy Sub-Committee is definitely at the Forming stage. We've only had one meeting so people are only just starting to learn about each other and what is involved in membership. I'd like to see it evolve through the next stages – Storming, where we explore different ways of working together, and Norming, where a culture starts to form – and move quickly to the Performing stage, where we are working effectively together and really adding value.

# Spotlight Interview with Camilla Winlo, PSC Chair

## **CAN YOU SHARE ANY INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS THAT YOU ARE PARTICULARLY EXCITED TO WORK ON AS INTERIM CHAIR OF THE PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE?**

We have a few interesting projects coming up. There's the regular work of overseeing the assessments and ensuring that Other Users are meeting their obligations and maintaining the effectiveness of Section 1 and the Privacy Controls Framework, but also some interesting projects including one to look at Consent Strategy which I know is really important to a lot of organisations. Consent is really all about engagement so if we can get that right, it will really encourage people to get more from their smart meters.

## **WHAT MESSAGE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE PRIVACY SUB-COMMITTEE AND WIDER SEC PARTIES?**

There's no point to smart meters without innovation – and no point to innovation without trust and confidence. What the Privacy Sub-Committee does is really crucial to the continued successful roll-out of smart meters, and because of that, how the UK responds to the climate emergency and our Net Zero targets.

## **WHAT'S SOMETHING ABOUT YOU (A FUN FACT) THAT NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW?**

I've been fortunate enough to do some fairly cool things in my time, but the one that usually surprises people most is that I've driven a sports car round a circuit on a frozen lake up near the Arctic Circle. It's the most amazing fun – you're driving on ice, so it's incredibly easy to drift and the only thing you can hit is powder snow which definitely helped make me feel brave enough to put my foot down. It's also really magically beautiful.