

OCTOBER 2023

SEC Newsletter



WELCOME TO THE OCTOBER 2023 SEC NEWSLETTER!

Welcome to the October 2023 SEC Newsletter.

In this edition, we provide updates on the Great Britain Companion Specification (GBCS) Pilot outcome, progress on the Smart Metering Device Assurance (SMDA) review, the Programme Assurance report, Security Guidance changes and the elections for the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub Committee (TABASC), Operations Group (OPSG) and SMDA Sub-Committees.

We also invite responses to our TABASC Effectiveness survey, provide a recording of the annual SEC Party Engagement Day and raise awareness of an Ofgem workshop on the DCC review.

You can also read our usual updates on modifications, upcoming webinars, meeting dates and key Industry news, and hear our latest Modcast.

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.

SEC
Smart Energy Code

Governance

GBCS PILOT OUTCOME AND TAKEOVER FROM DESNZ

Great Britain Companion Specification (GBCS) is a document governed under the Smart Energy Code (SEC) and is updated once new Smart Metering functionality is introduced. GBCS v4.1 was published in November 2021, and among several changes, introduced the capability for Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification (SMETS)2 compliant In-Home Displays (IHDs) and Pre-Payment Interface Devices (PPMIDs) to have their firmware upgraded remotely via DCC User Interface Service (DUIS) commands.

These changes necessitated a change in the firmware used in the Toshiba and WNC Comms Hubs (CHs) used in the Central and South Communications Service Provider (CSP) regions, and the EDMl Comms Hubs used in the North CSP region. These changes have been managed by the DCC through the standard release process of Pre, User and Systems Integrations Testing (PIT, UIT and SIT), resulting in Live Service Criteria being reviewed by SEC Sub-Committees Test Assurance Group (TAG) and Operations Group (OPSG), with SSC and TABASC consulted as required. The GBCS 4.1 release was the first GBCS release to come under SEC governance, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) had managed previous releases.

The Toshiba CH was the first to exit testing and gained approval at the SEC Panel in June 2023 to enter the Pilot Phase in the production environment. This involved a managed rollout of firmware Over the Air (OTA) to Toshiba CHs installed in consumer premises. It also included an Initial Pallet Validation (IPV) phase which involved Energy Suppliers using refurbished CHs operating on the GBCS 4.1 firmware in new Smart Metering installations at consumer premises.

Following the OPSG’s assessment of DCC's readiness to exit the Pilot against the outstanding Live Services Criteria (LSC), the SEC Panel, at its October 2023 meeting, recommended proceeding to mass manufacture.

At the end of the pilot phase, DCC had successfully completed the rollout to circa 3 million CHs, with no negative impact on performance, and energy Suppliers had successfully performed smart installs. Following OPSG's recommendation to approve Pilot Exit, the SEC Panel endorsed the view on 24 October 2023. The WNC CH has also successfully completed PIT and SIT testing and the SEC Panel is considering whether to recommend entry to the Pilot with input from its Sub-Committees. The EDMl Comms Hub is currently in PIT testing and is planned to be available for User testing in February 2024. DESNZ has also confirmed that future releases of GBCS will continue to be managed under SEC governance.



SMDA REVIEW PROGRESS UPDATE

Tranche One of the SMDA Review, which the SEC Panel commissioned to identify the value of the Scheme and whether Parties believed that it should change, has been completed.

As directed by the SEC Panel, Tranche One focused on Parties that contribute most to the fixed overheads of the Scheme and therefore nine Suppliers were interviewed including two Small Suppliers.

Overall, the results showed that Suppliers saw value in the Scheme, though improvements can be made. Based on this feedback and input from Ofgem and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) in support of an assurance scheme, the SEC Panel has agreed to move to Tranche Two.

Tranche Two will seek input from all SEC Parties, to identify improvements to the Scheme. The SEC Panel Chair, Angela Love and SMDA Sub-Committee Chair (SMDASC), Carmen Strickland, supported the development of objectives for this next phase of work:

- Clarify the current regulatory obligations (Licence Conditions and SEC) on Parties in relation to providing evidence of interoperability and interchangeability of Smart Metering Devices against Government expectations.
- Identify and document the requirements for SMDA services that meet the current and future regulatory obligations, Government expectations and industry requirements.
- Create the documentation required to support the competitive re-procurement of SMDA testing services identifying and addressing any barriers preventing parties from bidding.

These objectives and supporting Project Brief were approved by the SEC Panel in October and work will be commencing immediately.



SECURITY GUIDANCE UPDATES

The Security Controls Framework (SCF) v2.12 is now available and can be found on the SEC Website [here](#) (please note that you are required to log in to download the document).

Updates have been made including:

- Changes to Appendix F for the addition of G3.1 and G3.2 within the scope of the Verification User Security Assessment.
- Changes to Appendix B to include information on the use of automated tools for risk assessments, in alignment with G5.14 and G5.15.

In addition, some housekeeping changes have been made to address some formatting issues in some of the tables in V2.11.

No changes have been made to Part 1 of the SCF apart from the uplift to the version number to align with the Part 2 numbering.

SECAS noted that there were no major changes to the Standards and Best Practices review, but the newest version (v7.2) is now available and has been updated on the website [here](#).



Governance

PROGRAMME ASSURANCE REPORT

The SEC Panel agreed and published a Programme Assurance Policy which sets out the framework and processes for SEC involvement and oversight in DCC initiated projects and programmes that have the potential to impact DCC Users. The Policy aims to ensure that the path through SEC governance for any User impacting project is clearly articulated, and User input is considered throughout the programme life cycle and at defined stages. This is to give the SEC Panel confidence that DCC Programmes, which deliver its services, are suitably executed in line with good practice and in the interest of SEC Parties.

Each month, a Programme Assurance Report is published to update the SEC Panel and SEC Parties on the status of the DCC Programmes. It outlines the work done since the last update, key milestones, and planned engagement over the next quarter. It also outlines any changes to the stages of the Programmes and any artefacts received since the last update.

Key highlights in October's report include:

- DSMS will be undertaken by the Future Service Management (FSM) Programme. The description of the programme and proposed scope and outcomes have been updated.
- GBCS 4.1 – CSP N CH1 post-SIT completion testing issue closures have been provided to TAG ahead of go-live readiness reviews for WNC CH in October.
- 4G CH&N – 'Interim' OMS vs. enduring OMS gap analysis and customer engagement plan was presented to OPSG. The DCC plans to return in December to share the customer journeys.
- DSP Data Systems – High-Level Requirements will be brought to the Sub-Committees across October.
- S1 Dual Control Organisation (DCO) will be providing high-level kick-off updates at TABASC, SSC, SMKI PMA and OPSG. The programme will return to review and discuss High Level Customer Needs in November.
- PKI Enduring Services – Options analysis has been brought to SSC and SMKI PMA and was presented to the SEC Panel in October.

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



SEC SUB-COMMITTEE ELECTION UPDATES

TABASC Election Update

We recently made a call for nominations for the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) seats:

- 3 Large Supplier Seats
- 2 Small Supplier Seats
- 1 Electricity Seat
- 1 Gas Networks Seat
- 2 Other SEC Parties Seats

We would like to thank those who have made nominations so far and invite others to nominate prospective candidates. If you would like to be involved in important industry developments, you are also able to nominate yourself.

The TABASC election nomination deadline is Friday 3 November. If you have any questions or feedback on the election process, please contact the [SECAS helpdesk](#).



Governance

SEC SUB-COMMITTEE ELECTION UPDATES

OPSG Election Update

The Operations Group (OPSG) elections were held in August 2023. Congratulations to the following candidates who have been selected by their Party Categories as OPSG Members:

Large Suppliers	Electricity Networks	Other SEC Parties
Emslie Law Rochelle Harrison Kevin Donnelly	Shuba Khatun	Alex Ford

Thank you to the outgoing OPSG members Elias Hanna and Nick Coombs for their commitment and contribution to the Operations Group.

The term began on 1 October 2023, therefore the first OPSG meeting with the newly appointed members was held on Tuesday 10 October 2023.

There are still vacant seats available for five Large Supplier Party representatives, two Small Supplier Party representatives, one Electricity Network Party and one Gas Network Party representative. If you would like to nominate yourself or an individual, please contact the [SECAS helpdesk](#).

Smart Meter Device Assurance Sub-Committee (SMDASC) Election

Are you interested in joining the SMDASC and representing your Party Category? The SMDASC call for nominations is now underway. SEC Parties are invited to submit nominations by the close of play on Wednesday 8 November 2023 to fill the following seats:

- One Network Party
- One Large Supplier
- One Other SEC Party GSME Manufacturer
- One Other SEC Party ESME Manufacturer
- One Other SEC Party Meter Asset Provider

SMDASC members are responsible for being a decision-making body for all technical aspects and testing process issues relating to the SMDA Scheme and meet every two months with the next meeting scheduled for 5 December 2023.

If you are interested in nominating yourself, or a prospective candidate, please log into the website and complete the form [here](#).

You do not need to be a SEC Party to be nominated, however, only SEC Parties may nominate. You can find out more information on the SMDASC [here](#).



SMDA COMMUNICATIONS HUB UPLIFT

The Communication Hubs used within SMDA testing have been uplifted following agreement from the SMDA Sub-Committee. The table below shows the updates:

Model	Current FW Version	New FW Version
EDMI SB	2.03.3	3.01.02
EDMI DB	2.13.3	3.11.2
Toshiba SB	12.36	13.6
WNC SB	4.1.0.3	4.0.0.7

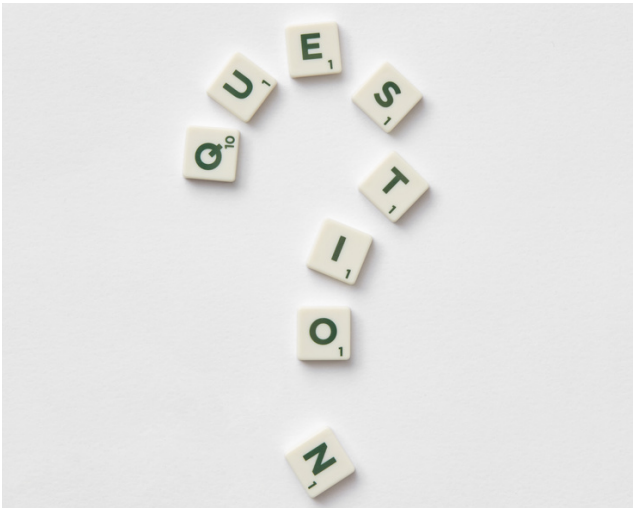
To submit a device for testing please contact SMDASO@gemserv.com.



CALL FOR RESPONSE TO TABASC EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

SEC Parties are invited to participate in the TABASC Effectiveness Review questionnaire. You will provide valuable insight into the specific aspects of live operations affecting your User experience with End-to-End processes, including those managed and provided by the DCC. Responses are limited to **one per SEC Party**.

You can access the Questionnaire and more information [here](#). The deadline for responses is 5 pm on 27 November 2023. If you have any questions, please contact [SECAS Helpdesk](#).



Governance

LATEST SEC MODCAST

In the [October SECAS Modcast](#) episode, after our usual roundup of the past month in SEC Change, we delve into the details of the [November 2023 SEC Release](#), including what is in the scope of the release, who these changes impact and how to get more information and support. This is followed by our guest speaker, Fiona Bond from the SECAS Security team, who took us through our [New Online Booking tool](#) for Security Assessments.

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



ANNUAL SEC PARTY ENGAGEMENT DAY RECORDING

The Annual SEC Party Engagement Day was held back in the summer. If you couldn't attend in person or watch via live streaming, don't worry as you can watch the recording of the presentations [here](#).



UPCOMING WEBINARS

CTG Webinar

SECAS and the Communications Transition Group (CTG) Chair, Jason Stevens, will be hosting a Transition to 4G webinar on **7 November 2023** to introduce the CTG and present an overview of the plan to transition to a 4G solution, what this means for SEC Parties and how to get involved. To sign up, please email SECAS@gemserv.com and we will send you the attendee link.

SEC Change Webinar MP253 'Traffic Management - User Actions Required'

SEC Change will be running a webinar on **15 November 2023** to present an overview of the newly raised Modification Proposal MP253 'Traffic Management - User Actions Required'. To sign up, please click the link [here](#) to register on Livestorm.

Security and Privacy Webinar

SECAS and the User CIO will be hosting a Security and Privacy webinar on **23 November 2023** to present an overview of the assessment process and share tips to help SEC Parties prepare for their assessment. To sign up, please email SSC@gemserv.com and we will send you the attendee link.



Industry News

INVITATION TO OFGEM’S STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP ON THE DCC REVIEW

Ofgem is carrying out a review of the regulatory arrangements to be put in place for the DCC following the expiry of its current Licence. The objective of this review is to:

- Put in place an effective regulatory framework to underpin the future role of the DCC following the expiry of the current Licence; and
- Appoint a Successor Licensee to hold that Licence.

As part of the DCC review's second phase (detail design), Ofgem invites SEC Parties to a stakeholder workshop to inform its framework design ahead of formal consultation. This will take place **virtually on 22 November 2023** and will consist of two sessions (morning and afternoon) focussing on:

- The future role of the DCC, governance, and the operational model
- Allowed revenue determination (future 'price control' and incentives)

If you are interested in attending the event, please email DCCregulation@ofgem.gov.uk with your contact information by 17 November 2023. Further details will be emailed to registered attendees a week before the workshop.

If you have any questions regarding this stakeholder event, please contact DCCregulation@ofgem.gov.uk.



Modifications

NEW DRAFT PROPOSALS

There have been five new Draft Proposals raised since the last newsletter. You are invited to provide feedback to the [Change Team](#) to help us understand whether these issues affect you.

[MP250 'Correction of an error in GBCS'](#)

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) has identified an error relating to the implementation of SECMP0056 'IHD / PPMID Zigbee Attributes Available on the HAN'. This error is within the GB Companion Specification (GBCS) Table 7.4. This error and its resolution have been tracked by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's (DESNZ's) Issue Log under TS1580.

[MP251 'Transfer of Secret Key Material'](#)

The Data Communications Company (DCC) needs to transfer the Transitional Change of Supplier (TCoS) Private Key from the Data Service Provider (DSP) to the new Enduring Change of Supplier (ECoS) Service Provider. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) made specific provisions in the SEC for this to happen in Section G2.22F – G22I. These clauses were written so that the same permissions from the SMKI PMA (after consulting with the Security Sub-Committee (SSC)) can be applied to other scenarios (e.g., DSP re-procurement).

The DCC has presented a proposed method of transfer to the SMKI PMA and SSC which the SMKI PMA approved on 2 October 2023. The DCC proposes to use a DCC Key Infrastructure (DCCKI) Certificate to secure the transfer of the TCoS Private Key from the DSP to the ECoS Service Provider. The SMKI PMA and the SSC recognise that this is a sensible and secure means of authenticating the transfer using a known Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) that is subject to SEC governance rather than using an alternative PKI that is not. However, SEC Appendix S 'DCCKI Certificate Policy' restricts the use of DCCKI to establishing Transport Layer Security (TLS) communications over the DCC Gateway and signing Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML) assertions for the Self-Service Interface (SSI).

[DP252 'Amending the process for Communications Hub returns'](#)

The DCC has noted they are aware of over 65,000 Communications Hubs (CHs) which are 'not on the wall' and are in the possession of non-Responsible Parties. Where the Party in possession is not the Responsible Supplier, they are unable to decommission the CH or identify the Responsible Supplier due to confidentiality clauses in SEC Section M 'General'. The CHs in the Proposer's (and other non-responsible Parties) possession are taking up space in their warehouses and incurring ever increasing storage costs. The Proposer noted that where they are unable to meet service level agreements (SLAs), there is a financial impact for the Party in possession of the CH, the Responsible Supplier and indirectly, consumers.

[MP253 'Traffic Management - User Actions Required'](#)

Most DCC Users in receipt of SEC Panel guidance will follow the requested actions, however, there is no obligation enforced by the SEC that ensures the measures required to ease the stress on the DCC System are followed. This essentially means the guidance could be ignored, which can lead to the DCC Systems being compromised.

[MP254 'Changes to GFI Arrangements'](#)

The DCC has been informed by its Service Provider that the manufacturer of the GFI Testing Tool can no longer produce the equipment included in the kit due to the lack of necessary hardware materials. Therefore, the DCC can no longer provide any new GFI Testing Tools if requested. Furthermore, the contract between DCC and its Service Provider to provide support for GFI is due to end in November 2023.



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 the consultation, download the consultation pack linked below and send your response to the [Change Team](#).

MP242 'Change to Operational Metrics to Measure on Success' Download here .	Closing Date: Wednesday 15 Nov 2023	Impacted Parties: All SEC Parties
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MODIFICATION REPORT CONSULTATIONS

There is currently one open Modification Report Consultations. You are invited to provide feedback to the [Change Team](#) to help us understand your views on whether the modification should be approved.

MP251 'Transfer of Secret Key Material' Download here .	Closing Date: Wednesday 8 Nov 2023	Impacted Parties: DCC
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MODIFICATIONS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Panel has approved a project to review the end-to-end Change Process as well as to implement several improvements that are already underway. We will be seeking input from industry Parties in the next couple of months. In the meantime, if you have any comments or feedback on the process, please email them to sec.change@gemserv.com.



MP219 SENT BACK BY THE AUTHORITY

On 6 October 2023 the Authority sent [MP219 'Accessing Consumption Data on behalf of SEC Parties'](#) back requesting further information be included in the Modification Report to support its decision. Whilst it acknowledged that much of the information was provided in the report, it requested further details around the business case. SECAS presented the revised timetable of work to the Change Sub-Committee on 17 October. We expect to re-submit the updated Modification Report to the Authority in December, with a decision from the Authority expected by around mid-February.



Publications

OPEN INDUSTRY CONSULTATIONS WEBPAGE

Please visit our [Open Industry Consultations webpage](#) for details of 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](#).

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

Key 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](#).

- 1 November 2023 - [SEC Monthly Working Group Meeting – November 2023](#)
- 2 November 2023 - [TABASC Meeting 95](#)
- 8 November 2023 - [SECPMA Meeting 111](#)
- 8 November 2023 - [SSC Meeting 181](#)
- 14 November 2023 - [Operations Group 106](#)
- 16 November 2023 - [Prepayment Metering Forum \(PPMF\) Meeting](#)
- 20 November 2023 - [Communications Transition Group 9](#)
- 21 November 2023 - [Change Sub-Committee Meeting 57](#)
- 22 November 2023 - [Change Board Meeting 84](#)
- 22 November 2023 - [SSC Meeting 182](#)
- 24 November 2023 - [Other SEC Party Quarterly Issues Call – November 2023](#)
- 27 November 2023 - [Operations Group 107](#)
- 28 November 2023 - [SEC Panel Meeting 122](#)
- 29 November 2023 - [TAG Meeting 108](#)

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