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MP285 'Radio Teleswitch Service switch off'

Modification Report

Version 1.1

14 April 2025



About this document

This document is a Modification Report. It sets out the background, issue, solution, impacts, costs, implementation approach and progression timetable for this modification, along with any relevant discussions, views and conclusions.

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This document also has two annexes:

- **Annex A** contains the redlined changes to the Smart Energy Code (SEC) required to deliver the Proposed Solution.
- **Annex B** contains the full responses received to the first Modification Report Consultation.

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1. Summary

This proposal has been raised by Richard Vernon from the Data Communications Company (DCC).

As Radio Teleswitch (RTS) Service signal is due to be switched off from June 2025, with any RTS meters needing to be replaced with Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications (SMETS) 2 Devices.

Consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business could experience a disruption unless Energy Suppliers arrange suitable meters ahead of the switch off.

The Proposed Solution is to allow installing Parties to install 4G Communications Hubs, where Long Range Radio (LRR) installations are not possible in the North Geographical Region, e.g., where a full Install and Commission (I&C) cannot be completed or cannot be connected, and where RTS meters are being replaced.

This modification will impact the DCC, Suppliers and Other SEC Parties (Meter installers, Meter Asset Providers (MAPs) and Meter Asset Managers (MAMs)). There are no DCC System costs, so implementation costs will be limited to the Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) time and effort. There may be additional costs for SEC Parties opting to received 4G Communications Hubs before they are generally available in the North. This is a Self-Governance Modification and, if approved, will be implemented through an ad hoc SEC Release one Working Day after decision. The proposed changes are required as soon as possible as the RTS Service switch off is scheduled for June 2025.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

RTS is a technology that uses radio signals to instruct specific RTS electricity meters to switch between peak and off-peak rates. These electricity meters were designed to support consumers who may use electric storage systems, as well as those with panel or immersion heaters in water tanks which typically charge and heat up at night. These meters are often supplied in areas without mains gas, or to support storage heating systems and among other reasons.

The end of RTS Service has been known for some time, with the expectation that Energy Suppliers would upgrade RTS meters before the RTS Service switch off from 30 June 2025.

What is the issue?

Any RTS meters will need to be replaced with SMETS2 Devices before the June 2025 deadline.

In Ofgem's recent consultation to introduce new RTS Licence Condition under the Electricity Supply Licence, it was noted there are still approximately 600,000 RTS meters left in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) as of January 2025.

There is concern that some properties within the Communication Service Provider North (CSP.N) area will not be able to connect to the LRR Wide Area Network (WAN) to benefit from Smart services or have the ability to continue using time of use tariffs. The DCC have noted that the number of RTS

meters in the CSP.N are estimated to be around 200,000 and there are further estimates that around 5,000-40,000 of those are in areas where the Communications Hub Enrolment is not possible using LRR.

As currently stated in the SEC Appendix I 'CH Installation and Maintenance Support' E2.3 table 2, Energy Suppliers are currently only able to install non-cellular WAN variant Communications Hubs in the North, however there is an expectation that it will be possible to install 4G Communications Hubs in the latter part of 2025.

What is the impact this is having?

Consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business could experience a disruption unless Energy Suppliers arrange suitable meters ahead of the switch off. Some consumers will cease to benefit from access to Time of Use tariffs. Where LRR is not available consumers will not be able to benefit from any Time of Use Tariffs or the provision of smart metering services. This may be particularly impactful for those consumers with storage heating which currently uses off peak supply.

Where electricity meters are not exchanged and a RTS meter remains in place, the following impacts have been identified by EnergyUK in an article titled ['The Radio Teleswitch Service switch-off: What you need to know'](#):

'....the heating and/or hot water provisions in your home or business could be affected. You may find that your heating and/or hot water is continually left on or off, or the charging-up happens at the wrong time of day. Your electricity supplier won't be able to confirm how much electricity you have used during peak or off-peak times, which means your electricity costs could be much higher than before'.

Impact on consumers

Consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business could experience a disruption unless electricity Suppliers arrange suitable meters ahead of the RTS Service switch off.

3. Solution

Proposed Solution

The Proposed Solution is to allow installing Parties to install 4G Communications Hubs, where LRR installations are not possible in the North Geographical Region, e.g., where a full I&C cannot be completed or cannot be connected, and where RTS meters are being replaced.

The Proposer (the DCC) has raised this modification to specifically support Energy Suppliers with RTS meter replacement by proposing an additional option for Enrolment of the Communications Hub.

The Proposer has noted that this modification is not intended to make any changes to the WAN coverage checker, but an allowance to provide additional optionality for a Communications Hub installation. The WAN coverage checker will continue to advise installation of CSP N Communications Hub, however cellular coverage data for the North will not be provided as part of this modification proposal.

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

Breakdown of Other SEC Party types impacted			
	Shared Resource Providers	✓	Meter Installers
	Device Manufacturers		Flexibility Providers
	DCC Other Users	✓	MAPs/ MAMs

Suppliers and their Meter Installers will be directly impacted as this would open more options for replacing Communication Hubs and Devices which are compatible at the consumers premises.

MAPs and MAMs are likely to be impacted as owners of any Meters replaced.

The DCC are directly impacted as this would allow 4G Communications Hubs to be installed in the North Geographical Region which the DCC would need to support.

DCC Systems

DCC System changes

This modification will not impact the DCC System.

DCC System traffic

This modification will not impact DCC System traffic.

SEC and subsidiary documents

The following parts of the SEC will be impacted:

- Section A 'Definitions and Interpretation'
- Section F 'Smart Metering System Requirements'
- Appendix I 'CH Installation and Maintenance Support'

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

Devices

Devices impacted			
	Electricity Smart Metering Equipment		Gas Smart Metering Equipment
✓	Communications Hubs		Gas Proxy Functions
	In-Home Displays		Prepayment Meter Interface Devices
	Standalone Auxiliary Proportional Controllers		Home Area Network Connected Auxiliary Load Control Switches
	Consumer Access Devices		Alternative Home Area Network Devices

This will affect Communications Hubs with RTS installations.

Consumers

Consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business could experience a disruption unless Energy Suppliers arrange suitable replacement meters ahead of the RTS Service shutdown.

Other industry Codes

No other industry Codes are impacted by this proposal.

Greenhouse gas emissions

This modification does not impact greenhouse gas emissions.

5. Costs

DCC costs

There are no DCC System costs to implement this modification.

Since 4G Communications Hubs are not readily available yet, the DCC have indicated that Suppliers can order them, but it will cost an extra £3.40 per Communications Hub (for air freight costs) if Parties want them delivered before the general 4G roll out (currently estimated to be July 2025). The DCC has engaged with Suppliers bilaterally and through the Supply Chain Working Group (SCWG) to provide the options and inform on deadlines for non-standard air freight delivery. To be clear this is not a cost to the DCC but a cost that the DCC will charge Suppliers or ordering Parties that wish to take up the offer.

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 if this modification is combined 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

For Suppliers who want to obtain 4G Communication Hubs sooner than the current estimated delivery date of July 2025, there is an option to request orders be shipped via air freight, this will have an additional cost to the Supplier of £3.40 per 4G Communication Hub.

6. Implementation approach

Approved implementation approach

The Change Sub-Committee (CSC) approved an implementation date of:

- **Ad-Hoc SEC Release** (one Working Day after decision)

The proposed changes are required as soon as possible, as the RTS Service switch off is scheduled for June 2025, which gives Suppliers an extremely short time to exchange consumer RTS Devices for an alternative. This modification needs to be implemented before the next scheduled SEC Release in June 2025.

7. Assessment of the proposal

Solution development

Discussions at the SEC Issues Group

The Issues Group was supportive of the modification, however it was clear in its feedback that the term 'RTS' should not be added into the SEC, as it does not exist in the SEC at this time and will cease to be imminently. The Issues Group was also supportive for any changes to be futureproofed, and if possible, to use a more generic term rather than calling out 2G, 3G or 4G Communication Hubs to be used when installers are checking for WAN signal at a consumer's property. The Issues Group was also favourable for any legal text changes to incorporate 'all reasonable steps', as this would cover all concerns raised, and it would also provide Suppliers with a wider range of options in order to complete a Smart Meter install on the day.

Discussions at the Change Board (26 March 2025)

This modification was presented at the March 2025 Change Board to determine if it should go to vote. This only included the option to install 2/3G Communications Hubs in the North as an alternative to LRR but did not include 4G.

A Change Board member (Large Supplier) queried if the coverage checker would change to include the North. The DCC advised that this Modification does not include changes to the coverage checker. The DCC subsequently clarified that there will be no Coverage Checker provided for 2/3G in the North

but there will be a Coverage Checker for 4G in the North once 4G in the North is more generally rolled out.

Another Change Board member (Large Supplier) queried the definition of the RTS that has been provided as it only seems to include some RTS meters. The DCC confirmed they were willing to amend the definition to include the definition in the RTS agreement.

The Change Board Chair queried what would be covered by the cost provided by the DCC. The DCC advised that the cost is what the Service Provider has offered, however, there has been no agreement yet. They added that this will allow Users to legitimately install cellular in the North. A Change Board member (Large Supplier) queried if this is based on a volume and a certain number of 2/3G meters being installed in the North. The DCC confirmed it is a volume to cover the estimations of how many RTS meters are likely to be replaced. A Change Board member (Large Supplier) queried if the actual number goes over the estimate, would the Service Provider require more money and how would this be managed. A Change Board member (Large Supplier) queried if this cost is to maintain the Devices. The DCC confirmed it is the cost to add 2/3G meters installed in the North to cover RTS replacement to the Service Provider contract, which effectively makes the installation legitimate.

Ofgem advised that the Modification Report will need to clearly outline which Parties will pay the costs and what are the steps if the service isn't needed. The Change Board Chair advised the Modification Report is currently written on the understanding that this is a text only change. A Change Board member (Large Supplier) queried the time scale for this Modification. The DCC advised once the Change Board voting takes place, the new legal text will be implemented the next Working Day.

The Change Board Chair informed the Change Board Members that SECAS are not asking to proceed to vote, due to the DCC requesting for a delay to conclude the commercial discussions.

Discussions at the Change Board (9 April 2025)

This modification was presented at an ad hoc April 2025 Change Board to provide an update and determine if it should go to vote.

The DCC advised that they intend to remove the 2/3G Communication Hub elements from the modification and proceed with a 4G Communication Hubs in the North solution instead. They noted that when the modification was initially raised in March 2025, their expectations was to use 2/3G Communication Hubs, however they have since agreed that they can provide 4G Communication Hubs in the North. They added that in order to support 2/3G Communication Hubs in the North, it would have to support them until 2033, which would cost a large amount of money over the 8 years, which is too high a cost for a small number of Communication Hubs, therefore the DCC cannot support the 2/3G Communication Hubs solution as it stands. The DCC noted that 4G is already available in the North and 4G Communication Hubs order options are currently possible including opting to air freight orders of 4G Communication Hubs. They added that this can start immediately, and orders received by 11 April 2025 can be delivered in mid-May 2025, with an additional cost to Suppliers of £3.40 per Communication Hub. The DCC noted that to pull forward all the current orders for 4G Communication Hubs stock would cost an extra £100,000. They added that future 4G Communication Hubs orders after May 2025 would follow existing Communication Hub ordering and have no added costs associated. They advised that compared to the £24m for the 2/3G Communication Hubs options, having the 4G Communication Hubs option available immediately is the more cost-effective option.

A Change Board member requested that the DCC perform a coverage comparison to identify where there is 4G but no LRR coverage. The DCC highlighted this would be difficult, but they would attempt to provide some further information.

The DCC were asked to confirm the correct ordering procedure and communicate this out to industry to allow easy ordering going forward.

The DCC noted the amended legal text changes to allow for the 4G Communication Hubs to be used to replace RTS meters in the North. The Change Board Chair noted the updated legal text had not been consulted with industry yet.

The OPSG Chair noted that if Suppliers had any 4G Communication Hubs Initial Pallet Validation (IPV) stock in hand, they could currently install them in the North. The DCC confirmed this is the case.

A Change Board member (Large Supplier) queried if industry will be provided with the offline 4G coverage checker earlier. The OPSG Chair advised that they had conversations with the DCC, who are going to push to have the offline 4G coverage checker provided to industry earlier, however the date is yet to be confirmed. A Change Board member (Large Supplier) noted their concerns for when their installers go to site, where there is no 4G coverage, there would be no solution available. The OPSG Chair noted the alternative is for Suppliers to install pre-configured meters at premises, however this would not provide a Smart experience.

The DCC concluded that they will progress the modification with the 4G Communication Hubs solution and have the offline 4G coverage checker available as soon as possible. They added that they will continue to look at the 2/3G Communication Hubs solution, and if any possibilities arise from it, they will proceed via a new modification.

The DCC noted that this does not have any impact on the South or Central Regions, it is purely for the RTS meters in the North to provide an option for Suppliers to use 4G Communication Hubs as 4G is already available in the South and Central Regions.

The Change Board agreed to send this modification back to the CSC in April 2025 to go to Modification Report Consultation then be presented for vote at the 23 April 2025 Change Board meeting.

8. Case for change

Business case

Given that the RTS Service switch off is only a few months away, Suppliers only have a limited window to replace the approximately 600,000 RTS meters still at consumer premises with SMETS2 Devices. This modification will provide more options for Suppliers to ensure consumers do not face disruption to supply ahead of the RTS Service switch off.

This modification will allow earlier deployment of 4G Communication Hubs in the North, so if any Supplier currently hold 4G Communication Hubs from the 4G Initial Pallet Validation (IPV) stocks, they are able to use them for RTS meter replacements straight away.

Views against the General SEC Objectives

Proposer's views

The Proposer believes this modification better facilitates SEC Objective (a)¹ as it will ensure consumers who have an RTS meter in their home or business do not experience a disruption as their Supplier would be able to arrange suitable replacement meters ahead of the RTS Service shutdown.

Views against the consumer areas

Improved safety and reliability

This modification will have a positive impact against this consumer benefit area, as it will ensure Suppliers are able to swap out Communications Hubs for consumers, therefore avoiding any supply disruption and able to remain on their time of use tariffs.

Lower bills than would otherwise be the case

There will be no impact from this modification in this consumer area.

Reduced environmental damage

This modification may have an indirect positive impact against this consumer benefit area, as it will result in fewer wasted consumer site visits and therefore a lower carbon impact.

Improved quality of service

This modification may have an indirect positive impact against this consumer benefit area, as it will result in fewer consumer site visits and therefore an improved quality of service.

Benefits for society as a whole

There will be no impact from this modification in this consumer area.

Final conclusions

This modification is to provide more options for Suppliers to ensure consumers do not face disruption to supply ahead of the RTS Service switch off.

The Proposed Solution would have a beneficial impact on consumers, as it will ensure Suppliers are able to swap out Communications Hubs for consumers and therefore avoiding any supply disruption and able to remain on their time of use tariffs.

The modification has no known industry costs associated with its implementation, but should Parties wish to order 4G Communications Hubs for early installation they would only pay an extra £3.40 per

¹ Facilitate the efficient provision, installation, and operation, as well as interoperability, of Smart Metering Systems at Energy Consumers' premises within Great Britain

Communications Hub until 4G Communications Hub become readily available from July 2025. This is a much more cost-effective option than the contract variations to install 2/3G Communications Hubs.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
Draft Proposal raised	10 Mar 2025
Sent to CSC for comment and for ex-committee decision	10 Mar 2025
CSC converts Draft Proposal to Modification Proposal	12 Mar 2025
Modification Report approved by CSC	12 Mar 2025
Modification Report Consultation	12 Mar 2025 – 19 Mar 2025
Change Board deferred vote	26 Mar 2025
Change Board update	9 Apr 2025
<i>Modification Report approved by CSC</i>	<i>15 Apr 2025</i>
<i>Modification Report Consultation</i>	<i>15 Mar 2025 – 22 Apr 2025</i>
<i>Change Board vote</i>	<i>23 Apr 2025</i>

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
CSC	Change Sub-Committee
CSP	Communication Service Provider
CSP.N	Communication Service Provider North
DCC	Data Communications Company
I&C	Install and Commission
IPV	Initial Pallet Validation
LRR	Long Range Radio
MAM	Meter Asset Managers
MOP	Meter Asset Providers
PSC	Privacy Sub-Committee
RTS	Radio Teleswitch
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SECAS	Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat

Managed by

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
SMETS	Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications
WAN	Wide Area Network