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MP167B

‘Review of SEC documents (DCC systems change governance)’

Modification Report

Version 2.0

13 September 2023

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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 three 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 Refinement Consultation.
- **Annex C** is the Programme Assurance Policy (PAP).

Contact

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1. Summary

The Proposer for this modification is Tom Rothery from the Data Communications Company (DCC).

The initial intent of MP167 was to review the SEC to ensure that any necessary Code rationalisation takes place. At the time the proposal was raised, the DCC had identified two SEC Sections (T 'Testing During Transition' and X 'Transition') and one SEC Appendix (AN 'SEC Variation Testing Approach Document for BEIS Changes included in the November 2020 SEC Release') that would benefit from a review.

It was agreed by the Proposer and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) (now the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)) that these SEC documents and other identified clauses were no longer applicable to the SEC and have been removed under [MP167A 'Review of SEC documents \(Testing Approach Document criteria\)'](#).

During the Refinement Process, the Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) has engaged extensively with the SEC Sub-Committee Chairs to ensure that sufficient DCC testing obligations are in place for any User-impacting system releases. As a result, MP167A introduced enhanced Testing Approach Document (TAD) criteria, and MP167B intends to ensure that sufficient assurance is provided for DCC projects and programmes that potentially impact DCC Users.

This modification will impact the DCC only. There are no costs to implement this change which is targeted for the February 2024 Release. This is a Self-Governance Modification.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

The Proposer reviewed several documents of the SEC which identified areas that are no longer applicable. An in-depth review by the Proposer and SEC Sub-Committee Chairs resulted in these documents and clauses being removed from the SEC. MP167A bolstered TAD criteria, however the Sub-Committee Chairs requested that projects and programmes outside of scheduled SEC Releases are also subject to sufficient testing. This relates specifically to projects and programmes that may impact DCC Users.

The Programme Assurance Policy

The PAP 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 purpose of this policy is to provide the Panel with the necessary framework and processes to allow it to discharge its role in providing assurance of DCC Programmes; helping to support successful programme delivery to the maximum benefit of SEC Parties. This document went live on 2 January 2023, and can be found [here](#).

What is the issue?

The PAP, although a live document, is not currently referenced in the SEC. Without the PAP being referenced, the DCC is not obligated to adhere to the document, and therefore DCC Users may be adversely impacted by the go-live of projects and programmes.

What is the impact this is having?

There is currently a potential risk to the operational and security processes without having sufficient prescribed testing and assurance in place for DCC projects.

Impact on consumers

If an inadequate level of testing results in DCC Users being adversely affected, they may not be able to provide a sufficient service to end consumers.

3. Solution

Proposed Solution

The Proposed Solution is to define the PAP, and reference the document in the SEC. This will obligate the DCC to adhere to the document when it is initiating a project or programme with potential DCC User impacts.

Scope

Any programme or project initiated by the DCC that has the potential to impact DCC Users should progress in accordance with the PAP. This includes projects and programmes that relate to activities DCC must undertake in accordance with its licence, For example, re-procurement of a Service Provider. It is understood that a project is a standalone endeavour, whilst a programme may consist of several projects.

The framework within the policy is designed to be flexible and proportionate. Therefore, the exact level of information required, and path through the framework, will be confirmed on a case-by-case basis. For example, it is not expected that every project within a programme will be required to produce the same information required of the overall programme.

Version 1.0 of the PAP (published on 2 January 2023) describes the details of the framework and processes for the following stages of a project/programme:

- Identifying any DCC led project/programme that may impact Users, providing transparency over its inception, and seeking support to investigate further.
- Investigating the scope, approach and potential impact of the project/programme so an informed view of whether or not to proceed can be made, based on User impact.
- Defining the project/programme and set out how to deliver the “what” as described in the Project Brief. This will determine if it is feasible to continue the project/programme.

- Refining the project/programme to ensure the high-level User input received is refined into detailed User Requirements, a final detailed solution, a full Business Case and detailed plans for Develop and Transition stages.
- Developing the project/programmes to agree detailed testing plans and keep the Panel up to date as the project/programme progresses through Design, Build and Test.
- Transition, where the purpose of this stage is to ensure the Panel is clear on the progression of a project/programme against activities on the transition plan and to seek endorsement for a “go-live” decision. This will consist of evidence against a set of defined Live Service Criteria (LSC), Component Readiness and Residual risks/issues.
- Deploy/Go-Live, where the purpose of this stage is to ensure the Panel is aware of any issues with go-live and to receive confirmation that the project/programme is complete.
- Realise, where this stage puts in place any appropriate monitoring to discover if benefits have been realised and to capture any lessons learnt for future projects.

The PAP will be subject to amendments at the discretion of the Panel, and if the DCC disagrees with any proposed amendments, the matter can be raised with the Authority.

It is expected that a further iteration of the PAP will be published prior to the implementation of this modification in order to include the detailed testing requirements and list of expected artefacts that were captured in SEC Section T.

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

The DCC will be impacted by this modification as if it initiates a potentially DCC User impacting project or programme, it will need to adhere by the PAP. The PAP may be updated following consultation with the DCC and approval by the Panel, and the DCC will be able to appeal any change to the Authority.

A Refinement Consultation respondent stated that although MP167B directly impacts the DCC, it indirectly impacts all Users as without it, the DCC can introduce new projects and policies which may impact Users, but which are not subject to adequate controls and visibility.

DCC System

This modification does not impact DCC Systems, however they may be subject to new/additional testing if the change meets the agreed scope of the PAP.

SEC and subsidiary documents

The following parts of the SEC will be impacted:

- Section A 'Definitions and Interpretation'
- Section D 'Modification Process'

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

Consumers

More robust testing should mitigate against potential issues within DCC systems and Smart Metering Systems when new projects and programmes and their additional functionality goes live. As a result, a more reliable service will be provided to the consumer.

Other industry Codes

This modification will have no impact on other industry Codes.

Greenhouse gas emissions

This modification will have no impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

5. Costs

SECAS costs

The estimated SECAS implementation costs to implement this modification is one day of effort, amounting to approximately £600. The activities needed to be undertaken for this are:

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

SEC Party costs

Refinement Consultation respondents stated that they do not anticipate incurring any costs as a result of this modification.

6. Implementation approach

Agreed implementation approach

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

- **29 February 2024** (February 2024 SEC Release) if a decision to approve is received on or before 15 February 2024; or
- **27 June 2024** (June 2024 SEC Release) if a decision to approve is received after 15 February 2024 but on or before 13 June 2024.

As this is a text-only change, the modification can be implemented ten Working Days following decision.

7. Assessment of the proposal

Views of the Sub-Committee Chairs

During the Development Stage, SECAS held a meeting with the Sub-Committee Chairs to discuss initial observations regarding the original Draft Proposal (DP167). The Chairs commented that any proposed change must be carefully thought through and verified with the SEC Lawyer. Furthermore, they added that SECAS must ensure that any enduring arrangements that need to be kept are allocated to the relevant SEC Section.

Solution development

The DCC and SECAS have developed a solution with extensive collaboration with the SEC Sub-Committee Chairs.

Splitting MP167 into two separate modifications

The rationale for separating MP167 into two separate modifications was to address the issue identified in the two separate areas (TAD criteria (MP167A) and overarching governance around DCC system changes (MP167B)).

Views of the Working Group

SECAS presented the modification and the Proposed Solution to the Working Group. The Working Group approved of the Proposed Solution and provided no further comments.

8. Case for change

Business case

Ensuring that there is sufficient testing in place for User impacting DCC systems changes in light of the removal of Section T should mitigate the risk of Users experiencing issues due to new functionality being delivered. Obligating the DCC to adhere to the PAP will allow the Panel and SEC Parties better monitor how the DCC prepares for the go-live of its User impacting changes.

Support for the Proposed Solution

SECAS received three responses to the Refinement Consultation. All respondents felt that the modification should be approved. One respondent stated that any DCC projects or programmes that impact Users should be subject to visibility and scrutiny. They welcomed the Sub-Committee Chairs' request and the PAP framework. They agreed that the Policy should be referenced within the SEC to ensure the DCC have adequate obligations regarding its compliance and to enable the SEC Panel to have sufficient oversight.

Views against the General SEC Objectives

Proposer's views

The Proposer believes that this modification better facilitates SEC Objectives (a)¹, (e)² and (g)³. This is due to the Proposed Solution providing further transparency of DCC testing activities for projects and programmes (now that Section T no longer applies) that will result in greater efficiency of smart metering, while also facilitating innovation and design through implementing the changes.

Industry views

Refinement Consultation respondents agreed with the Proposer's views in regards to the SEC Objectives, with the addition of SEC Objective (b)⁴. The respondent identifying SEC Objective (b) stated that the solution will allow SEC Parties to have a better view and input into DCC projects that would affect them. They also added that it will also make these projects more efficient and accepted across Industry, leading to a more efficient and innovative market.

Views against the consumer areas

Improved safety and reliability

This modification will have a positive impact on safety and reliability as it will ensure that sufficient testing takes place for DCC system changes that impact DCC Users.

¹ Facilitate the efficient provision, installation, operation and interoperability of smart metering systems at energy consumers' premises within Great Britain.

² Facilitate innovation in the design and operation of energy networks to contribute to the delivery of a secure and sustainable supply of energy.

³ Facilitate the efficient and transparent administration and implementation of the SEC.

⁴ Enable the DCC to comply at all times with the objectives of the DCC licence and to discharge the other obligations imposed upon it by the DCC licence.

Lower bills than would otherwise be the case

This modification will have a neutral impact on the cost of energy bills.

Reduced environmental damage

This modification will have a neutral impact on environmental damage.

Improved quality of service

This modification will result in an improved quality of service as the additional testing should mitigate the risks of issues when DCC systems changes go live.

Benefits for society as a whole

This modification will benefit society as carrying out sufficient testing ahead of DCC systems changes going live will mean that smart metering services should face minimal interruption, while providing benefits of the implemented change.

Final conclusions

SECAS has collaborated with the Proposer and Sub-Committee Chairs to build a robust solution. SECAS has presented this modification and proposed change to the Working Group, which approved of the solution and provided no further comments. The modification was also unanimously supported by Refinement Consultation respondents. MP167B will reference the PAP within the SEC, ensuring the DCC follows an agreed policy when initiating a project or programme with potential DCC User impacts.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
MP167 formally split into MP167A and MP167B	8 Sep 2022
Solution development	Sep 2022 – Apr 2023
Legal text developed with the Proposer	May 2023
Modification discussed at Working Group	7 Jun 2023
Refinement Consultation	28 Jun – 19 Jul 2023
Modification Report approved by CSC	15 Aug 2023
Modification Report Consultation	16 Aug – 7 Sep 2023
Change Board Vote	20 Sep 2023

Italics denote planned events that could be subject to change

Appendix 2: Glossary

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

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
CSC	Change Sub-Committee
DCC	Data Communications Company
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
LSC	Live Service Criteria
PAP	Programme Assurance Policy
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SECAS	Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
TAD	Testing Approach Document

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MP167B ‘Review of SEC documents (DCC Internal Systems change governance)’

Annex A

Legal text – version 1.0

About this document

This document contains the redlined changes to the SEC that would be required to deliver this Modification Proposal.

Section A ‘Definitions and Interpretation’

These changes have been redlined against Section A version 31.0.

Add the following definition as follows:

Production Proving Registration Data	has the meaning given to that expression in Section P1.11 (Production Proving Registration Data).
Production Proving Systems	means the Systems used by the DCC in its capacity as the Production Proving Function.
<u>Programme Assurance Policy</u>	<u>has the meaning given to that expression in Section C2.3 (Panel Duties).</u>
Proposed Solution	means the variation under a Modification Proposal that is proposed and can be subsequently changed by the Proposer in accordance with Section D6.15 (Alternative Solutions).
Proposer	has the meaning given to that expression in Section D1.3 (Persons Entitled to Submit Draft Proposals).

Section D ‘Modification Process’

These changes have been redlined against Section D version 9.0.

Add Sections D10.22-27 as follows:

SEC Release Testing Approach Document

D10.18 The DCC, on request of the Panel, shall produce a document setting out how the requirements of Sections D10.13(d) and (e) will be satisfied (the “**SEC Release Testing Approach Document**”). A SEC Release Testing Approach Document shall be considered as part of the SEC Release Implementation Document for the relevant SEC Release.

D10.19 The DCC shall ensure that each SEC Release Testing Approach Document sets out the following, as a minimum, in respect of the SEC Release in question:

- (a) the proposed amendments to this Code that are the subject of the testing, an explanation of the associated changes to the DCC Total System, and the testing objective;
- (b) the testing environments and test phases to be used and how these will be sequenced;
- (c) the Devices to be used in testing (including the use of emulators);
- (d) the requirements (if any) for security testing;
- (e) the requirements (if any) for system capacity testing;
- (f) details of the testing that shall be undertaken, including the scope of testing and the extent of testing (including negative tests) and the approach to regression testing and End Of Cycle testing;
- (g) the applicable Testing Issue thresholds and the process by which DCC may propose to exclude Testing Issues from being counted against the Testing Issue thresholds;
- (h) the process and expected timescales for managing the resolution of extant Testing Issues following completion of a test phase;
- (i) the entry criteria that must be met in order for a test phase to commence and who approves entry;
- (j) the exit criteria that must be met in order for a test phase to complete and who approves exit;
- (k) any key risks (and risk mitigation) identified in respect of the proposed approach to testing;
- (l) the approach to providing assurance of the testing undertaken;
- (m) matters to be included in DCC’s test completion reports presented to the Panel; and
- (n) the requirements (if any) for User testing and for determining any associated test completion.

D10.20 The DCC shall prepare and consult upon each SEC Release Testing Approach Document and any subsequent amendments. The DCC shall report to the Panel on the outcome of each such consultation. The Panel shall review and determine whether to approve each SEC Release Testing Approach Document and any subsequent amendments.

D10.21 The DCC and each person other than the DCC that participates in (or is required to participate in) testing under a SEC Release Testing Approach Document shall comply with the document approved by the Panel (including such amendments as are approved by the Panel from time to time).

Programme Assurance Policy

D10.22 The Panel shall establish and maintain a policy (the "**Programme Assurance Policy**") to govern DCC-initiated projects and programmes that have the potential to impact Users but which do not require a Modification.

D10.23 In the case where the DCC implements a project or programme that has the potential to impact Users (but which does not require a Modification), the DCC shall adhere to the Programme Assurance Policy. For clarity, this may include DCC Internal System Changes.

D10.24 The DCC shall plan and implement DCC projects and programmes in accordance with the Programme Assurance Policy, and shall co-operate with the Panel and provide any and all information reasonably requested by the Panel for this purpose.

D10.25 In developing the Programme Assurance Policy, and prior to making any subsequent change to it, the Panel shall consult with the DCC and have regard to the views of all Parties.

D10.26 The Panel shall ensure that an up-to-date copy of the Programme Assurance Policy is made available to all Parties and is published on the Website.

D10.27 In developing or making changes to the Programme Assurance Policy, the Panel shall ensure that it gives due consideration to the need for the DCC to: (a) comply at all times with the 'General Objectives of the Licensee' (as defined in the DCC Licence); and (b) efficiently discharge the other obligations imposed upon the DCC by the DCC Licence.

D10.28 Should the DCC disagree with the Panel on any changes made to the Programme Assurance Policy (in accordance with the provisions of this Section D10), the DCC may refer the matter to the Authority for determination, whose decision shall be final and binding for the purposes of this Code.

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MP167B ‘Review of SEC documents (DCC Internal Systems change governance)’

Annex B

Refinement Consultation responses

About this document

This document contains the full collated responses received to the MP167B Refinement Consultation.

Question 1: Do you agree that the solution put forward will effectively resolve the identified issue?

Question 1			
Respondent	Category	Response	Rationale
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	Yes	We feel that this modification proposal will better facilitate SEC Objectives and will codify DCC obligations throughout testing.
Utilita	Large Supplier	Yes	We believe that having the Project Assurance Policy defined within the SEC would be highly beneficial to future DCC projects.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	Yes	Any DCC projects or programme that impact Users should be subject to visibility and scrutiny. We welcome the Sub Committee Chairs request and the Programme Assurance Policy framework. We agree the Policy should be embedded with the SEC to ensure the DCC have adequate obligations regarding its compliance and to enable the SEC Panel to have sufficient oversight powers.

Question 2: Do you agree that the legal text will deliver MP167B?

Question 2			
Respondent	Category	Response	Rationale
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	Yes	We appreciate the inclusion of publication of the PAP to the Website.
Utilita	Large Supplier	Yes	No comments.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	Yes	As above.

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed implementation approach?

Question 3			
Respondent	Category	Response	Rationale
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	Yes	We agree with the inclusion within the Feb 2024 release.
Utilita	Large Supplier	Yes	We agree with the approach outlined.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	Yes	-

Question 4: Will there be any impact on your organisation to implement MP167B?

Question 4			
Respondent	Category	Response	Rationale
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	No	As per the proposal this will be implanting assurance for DCC to adhere to, we as a DNO will not need to implement a process.
Utilita	Large Supplier	No	No direct impacts, however there may be indirect benefits due to the new assurance policy improving the transparency into DCC projects.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	No	N/A

Question 5: Will your organisation incur any costs in implementing MP167B?

Question 5			
Respondent	Category	Response	Rationale
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	No costs	We as a DNO will only incur costs from projects or testing as passed through by the DCC. We do not foresee costs from MP167B.
Utilita	Large Supplier	No costs	No costs to us to implement.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	No costs	N/A

Question 6: How long from the point of approval would your organisation need to implement MP167B?

Question 6			
Respondent	Category	Response	Rationale
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	N/A	N/A
Utilita	Large Supplier	None	We would not need to implement any changes for this modification.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	N/A	N/A

Question 7: Do you believe that MP167B would better facilitate the General SEC Objectives?

Question 7			
Respondent	Category	Response	Rationale
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	Yes	We feel that this modification proposal will better facilitate SEC Objectives a,e & g and will codify DCC obligations throughout testing.
Utilita	Large Supplier	Yes	We believe this will have positive impacts on SEC objectives (a), (b) and (e). Allowing SEC Parties to have a better view and input into DCC projects that would affect them will make these projects more efficient and accepted across Industry, leading to a more efficient and innovative market.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	Yes	We agree the solution will better facilitates the SEC Objectives due to it providing further transparency of DCC testing activities for projects and programmes (now that Section T no longer applies) that will result in greater efficiency of smart metering.

Question 8: Do you believe there will be any impacts on or benefits to consumers if MP167B is implemented?

Question 8			
Respondent	Category	Response	Rationale
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	No	N/A
Utilita	Large Supplier	Yes	Please see answer to question 7.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	Yes	Whilst this change only directly impacts the DCC it indirectly impacts all Users as with its absence the DCC are able to introduce new projects and policies which may impact us as a User, but which are not subject to adequate controls and visibility. Any impact to us as User may also impact our customers.

Question 9: Noting the costs and benefits of this modification, do you believe MP167B should be approved?

Question 9			
Respondent	Category	Response	Rationale
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	Yes	We feel that this modification proposal will better facilitate SEC Objectives a,e & g and will codify DCC obligations throughout testing.
Utilita	Large Supplier	Yes	Please see answer to question 7.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	Yes	See response to Q1.

Question 10: Please provide any further comments you may have.

Question 10		
Respondent	Category	Comments
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Network Party	N/A
Utilita	Large Supplier	No further comments.
Electricity North West Limited	Network Party	N/A

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Programme Assurance Policy

Version 1.0

2 January 2023

Change History

VERSION	STATUS	ISSUE DATE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
0.1	Draft	06/10/2022	Adam Lattimore	V0.1 for SECAS review
0.2	Draft	10/10/2022	Adam Lattimore	V0.2 for Independent Chair review
1.0	Final	17/10/2022	Adam Lattimore	V1.0 For Panel approval

Document Controls

REVIEWER	ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE
Louise Evans	Client Delivery Manager	Project Manager	6 October 2022
Abigail Hermon	Head of SECAS	Head of SECAS	7 October 2022
SEC Panel	Document Approver	Project Sponsor	25 October 2022

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1. Purpose

1.1 This Document

This document is the Panel Programme Assurance Policy. It 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 purpose of this policy is to provide the Panel with the necessary framework and processes to allow it to discharge its role in providing assurance of DCC Programmes; helping to support successful programme delivery to the maximum benefit of SEC Parties.

1.2 Scope

Any programme or project initiated by the DCC that has the potential to impact SEC DCC Users should progress in accordance with this policy. This includes those projects and programmes that relate to activities DCC must undertake in accordance with its licence, which in turn may or may not require BEIS Treasury Greenbook Business Cases. For example, re-procurement of a Service Provider.

It is understood that a project is a standalone endeavour, whilst a programme may consist of several projects. For the sake of brevity, this document refers to “projects” only. It is intended that this term captures both projects and programmes for the purposes of setting out the framework and process captured below.

The framework within this policy is designed to be flexible and proportionate. Therefore, the exact level of information required, and path through the framework, will be confirmed on a case-by-case basis. For example, it is not expected that every project within a programme will be required to produce the same information required of the overall programme.

SEC Modifications and non-SEC impacting projects are not included in scope of this policy.

1.3 Background

In November 2021, the SEC Panel discussed and agreed the role it should undertake, and the responsibilities it has, regarding DCC projects that have the potential to impact Users. The Panel's role can broadly be split into four main functions:

1) Advice to BEIS

As part of the DCC Licence Condition 16.6A obligation, it is expected that BEIS will seek the Panel's advice to demonstrate that proposed developments are supported by a clear SEC Party business need and facilitate the SEC applicable objectives.

Where BEIS is responsible for the implementation decision, the SEC Panel will advise BEIS on readiness for Go-Live through engagement, testing acceptance and security assurance undertaken by the Testing Advisory Group (TAG), Technical and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC), Security Sub-Committee (SSC), and Operations Group (OPSG).

2) Programme Assurance on behalf of SEC Parties

Independent of any required support for BEIS processes, the Panel has a general responsibility to assure the services provided under the SEC. Consequently, the Panel needs confidence that DCC Programmes which deliver these services are suitably executed in line with good practice.

3) User input on behalf of SEC Parties

DCC projects and programmes should take appropriate account of SEC Party views. This should be achieved through engagement in Programme Governance. The Panel has a general responsibility for ensuring that, throughout the programme lifecycle, the interests of SEC Parties and the User are reflected in key programme decisions and delivery stages.

This role also supports the DCC by indicating to them the extent to which Programme plans are supported by SEC Parties.

4) Programme Portfolio Governance role on behalf of SEC Parties

The planned concurrent implementation of numerous Programmes will produce significant risks and impacts for SEC Parties. The SEC Panel has a role in ensuring that the planning of the Portfolio of Programmes properly takes account of these impacts and seeks to mitigate risks to Users (and, ultimately, end consumers).

2. Overview

2.1 Project Framework

The Panel project framework aims to provide a transparent process for the development of project documentation and the delivery of that documentation to the Panel at key engagement points. This will ensure a consistent approach to the information shared during the progression of DCC projects and provides certainty to Users over how and when to expect engagement. It should ensure DCC's project methodology (the Change Delivery Methodology) aligns with the principles and processes set out in this policy.

All new undertakings that have a potential impact on Users should go through this framework. This is an important step to mitigate against the risk of key information being missed and/or the creation of a secondary process for sharing information on certain types of projects which will lead to confusion.

The framework also encompasses projects where BEIS require the production of a Business Case under DCC Licence conditions (LC13 and LC16). Whilst the decision related to Business Cases sits with BEIS, it does not mean the production of other key project documentation should not be produced in line with this Panel process. For example, where BEIS require a Business Case, it should not preclude a Business Case forming part of the Framework documentation (e.g. provided alongside the Project Brief and summarised within it).

It is expected that any information required as part of this framework will be delivered to the Panel and its Sub-Committees via committee papers and not via slides. This provides clarity on requested input and an auditable trail of information. Existing SEC governance meeting cycles should be considered and appropriately planned for.

Throughout a project's lifecycle, SECAS will provide regular updates and information to Users so they can see where in the framework a project is, what the next steps are, and any interactions with other ongoing projects.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The following sets out the roles and responsibilities undertaken by the SEC Panel, its Sub-Committees, SECAS and the DCC:

- SEC Panel** – Overall responsibility of ensuring framework is delivered in line with this policy and therefore assurance provided to Users. The SEC Panel will be responsible for reviewing governance project documentation (e.g. Project Brief, Project Definition Document, Project Initiation Document) and making a recommendation on project progression based upon views of Sub-Committees and wider Users. They ensure that Users views have been taken into account, that assumptions have been ratified and there is a clear plan for User engagement. The Panel is also responsible for escalating any concerns Users may have regarding the project to the Authority and/or DCC and making a recommendation on costs as part of its Business Case reviews. This gives assurance to Users that their views have been heard and taken into account, that the correct programme methodology has been followed, there is a

clear plan for User engagement communicated, User assumptions have been ratified and any impact on costs have been suitably captured.

- **SEC Panel Sub-Committees** – Responsible for reviewing specification documentation for projects and providing feedback to DCC and recommendations to the Panel on those documents. Also responsible for providing input into relevant areas of governance documents, for example project plans. Sub-Committees may provide any additional comments on project areas for the Panel to consider, allowing wider project questions and concerns to be raised and discharged through the Panel.
- **SECAS** – Responsible for liaising with DCC and Independent Chairs to ensure clarity over when project information is required and co-ordination of programme updates under SEC governance. Oversight of the creation of quality project documentation in a timely manner. Critical review of artefacts shared with the Panel and components at Sub-Committees. Proportionate attendance at Panel and Sub-Committee meetings where programme updates and input are shared/ requested. Compilation of central tracking and reporting on all open projects and programmes to be shared with the Panel and SEC Parties.
- **DCC** – Responsible for managing and executing the projects and producing the required information and documentation in line with this policy.

Panel Project Framework

Stage	Stage 0 – Identify	Stage 1 - Investigate	Stage 2 – Define	Stage 3 - Refine	Stage 4 - Develop	Stage 5 - Transition	Stage 6 – Go Live	Stage 7 - Realise
Purpose	To identify any DCC led project that may impact Users, provide transparency over its inception and seek support to investigate further.	To investigate the scope, approach and potential impact of project so an informed view of whether or not to proceed can be made based upon User impact.	To further define the project and set out how to deliver the “what” as described in the Project Brief. This will determine if it is feasible to continue the project.	To refine high level information into detailed User Requirements, a final detailed solution, a full Business Case and detailed plans for develop and transition stages.	Agree detailed testing plans and keep the Panel up to date as the project progresses through Design, Build and Test.	The provide transparency over progression of transition activities and to seek endorsement for a “go-live” decision.	To conclude the project through deployment of updated service or completion of activity.	To ensure aims of the project are successfully delivered and any problems encountered as part of the process are captured.
Activities	Update Panel on existing pipeline items Provide visibility to Panel on new items to be added to pipeline Produce clear Purpose Statement articulating the need for the activity and next steps in its progression Risk and Issues log updated accordingly	DCC’s “front door” assessment View on path through framework Project document matrix Discussion with appropriate sub-committees on a draft Project Brief Panel endorsement of Project Brief	Create high level Business Requirements based on User Needs Develop solution options High level impact assessment on solution options Draft Outline Business Case Draft designs and view of services Create Project Definition Document (PDD)	Final Business requirements reviewed by Sub-Committees Views on solution sought Transition approach and plan agreed with Sub-Committees Complete impact assessment and full business case Draft PID for Panel endorsement	Completion of detailed design and confirmation of final costs Creation of Testing plans and documentation Building the solution Confirming any impact on transition plan Testing undertaken	Updates on progress via readiness reports	Deployment of service or activity completion Embed change as business as usual	Discuss any relevant monitoring or reporting Annual review of lessons learned and any mitigation
Example of Key Documents	Quarterly Panel update which will set out rationale for each new item Updated pipeline reflecting new items	Project Brief Strategic Outline Business Case Key Document Matrix including engagement plan	PDD High-level Business Requirements Outline Business Case High Level Designs Service Definition Document	PID v1.0 Final Business Requirements Full Business Case Transition Plans	End of Phase Reports Testing Documentation Readiness criteria	Readiness Reports Go-Live Readiness Report	Project Closure Report	Lessons Learned Log

3. Stage 0 - Identify

The purpose of this stage is to identify any DCC led project that may impact Users, provide transparency over its inception, and seek support to investigate further.

3.1 Identifying new projects

DCC and SECAS will meet on a regular basis to discuss any potential new projects. They will review and identify those projects that have an impact, or a potential impact, on Users.

Following this initial triage, a regular meeting will be established with the Chairs of the Panel's Sub-Committees to discuss those projects that have been identified as User impacting. This meeting will establish those projects that will require support from Sub-Committees in developing the purpose statements.

Annually, the SEC Panel will review and comment upon the DCC Business Plan. This again provides an opportunity to understand the priorities and examine potential spend. It is expected the activities identified in the annual Business Plan review will lead to the individual projects noted above being raised.

3.2 Purpose Statements

Once a project has been identified that has the potential to impact Users, a Purpose Statement will be drafted. The Purpose Statement needs to:

- clearly set out the issue the project is trying to resolve;
- provide a high-level view of any potential impacts on the SEC/Users; and
- set out the plan/process of progressing through Stage 1 (the next step in the process).

Based upon the outcome of the Chair meeting, and agreed approach, the DCC would engage with the relevant Sub-Committees to develop and or/share the Purpose Statement before it is finalised. This provides an opportunity to seek support for the issue to be resolved, and provides an initial indication as to how much involvement each Sub-Committee may wish to have during the project.

3.3 Quarterly Panel brief

New Purpose Statements will be presented to the Panel on a quarterly basis. This quarterly brief will set out the new Purpose Statements (including the information set out in 3.2 above) and request that the Panel make a recommendation to the DCC as to whether or not work should proceed on the project. Such a Panel recommendation would be formed on the basis of User need, priority and potential cost. It may include any additional relevant comments the Panel which to raise to the DCC.

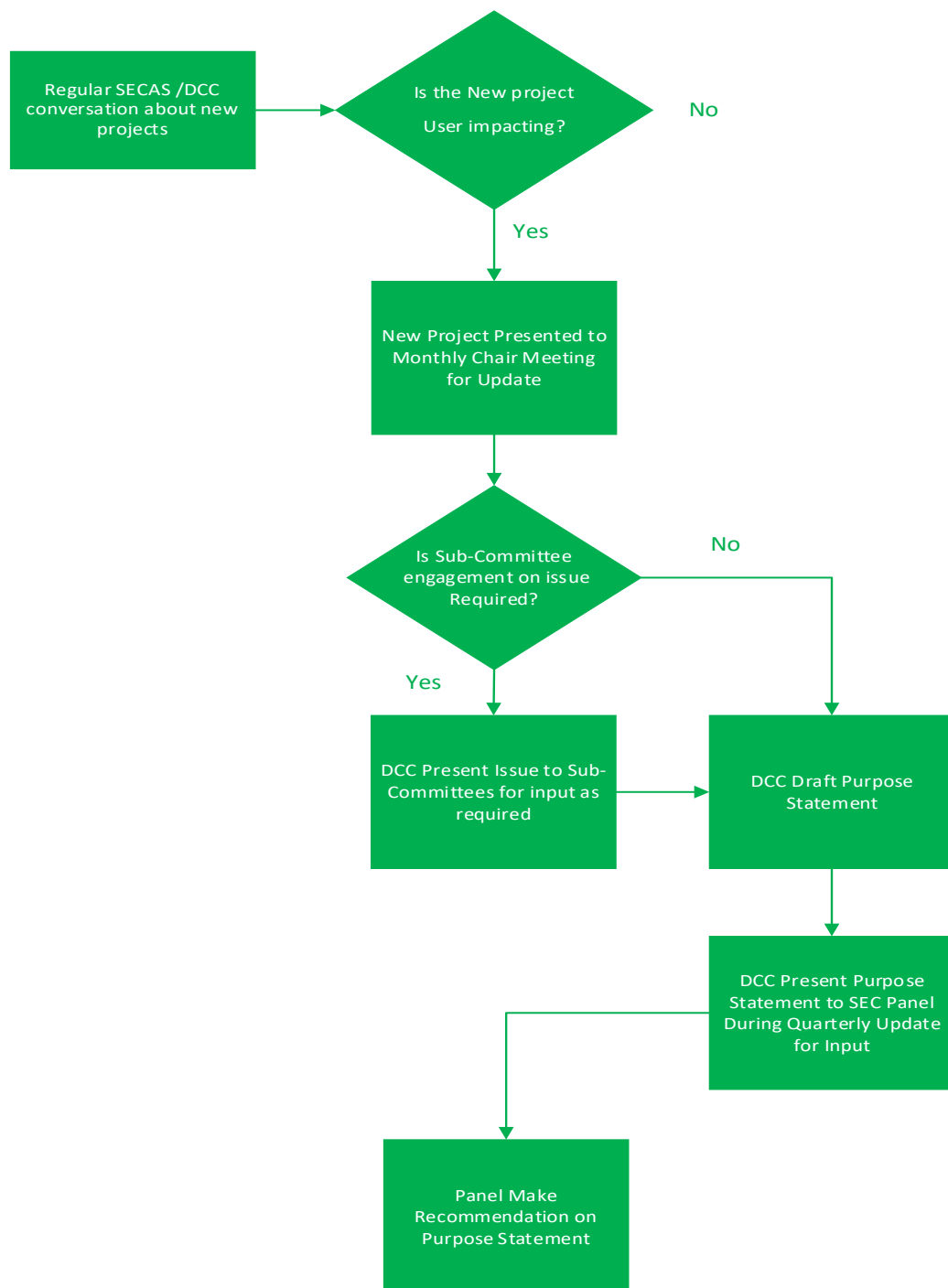
Where the Panel raise questions or concerns with the Purpose Statement, the DCC should respond with a Panel paper setting out their response and/or clarifications. Such a response should be delivered to the Panel within reasonable timescales.

3.4 Reporting

Once the Panel has made a recommendation on a Purpose Statement, it will be added to the appropriate SECAS reporting that sets out all ongoing projects. Information on the progress of all open projects will be made available to all Users on a regular basis by SECAS.

If required, a reciprocal risk or issue will be added to the Panel risk and issues log or relevant Sub-Committee) reflecting the risk/issue identified in the Purpose Statement.

In addition to new Purpose Statements being raised, the quarterly brief will also contain the latest information and progress on all open projects, so the Panel have a clear view of where each programme is within the framework, and what the next steps are.



4. Stage 1 - Investigate

The purpose of this stage is to investigate the scope, approach and potential impact of the project so an informed view of whether or not to proceed can be made, based on User impact. This stage should proceed in line with the plan as set out in the Purpose Statement from Stage 0 above.

4.1 DCC front door

To help define the potential impact and approach, the DCC will undertake a review of the project through its “front door” process which will help identify the path a project will take through the DCC’s Change Delivery Methodology (CDM) and the equivalent route through the Panel project framework. It will also identify the key documentation that will be required.

Once DCC have undertaken assessment of the project the DCC will liaise with SECAS to discuss and agree the appropriate project path.

4.2 Document matrix

Following conclusion of the ‘front door’ process, the key document matrix will be used to identify the documentation that is expected to be produced for that project and shared with Users via SEC governance. The matrix categorises two types of project documentation to be produced:

- **Governance:** e.g. Project Briefs, PIDs and Readiness Reports; and
- **Specification:** e.g. Business Requirements, Transition plans and Testing documentation.

The matrix also states the Committees the documentation will be produced for, and the purpose of the document e.g. for information, for input or for recommendation. This establishes the interaction points the Panel and its Sub-Committees will have for any given project upfront, and allows for transparency over the level of anticipated interaction at Sub-Committees and how a project will progress through the framework.

Once populated, the key document matrix will be presented to the Chairs of the Sub-Committees to seek their endorsement of the approach. Once agreed, it will form part of the Project Brief to be completed as part of this Stage 1.

It should be noted that some of the documents listed in the matrix will progress through a series of versions as they evolve. Such iterations should come under clear version control and the intended development stages clearly set out in the project plan contained in the Project Brief. This ensures it is clear when documents such as Business Requirements have been updated or are considered final.

4.3 Business Needs

During this stage User Business Needs will be identified. Business Needs should reflect the desires of Users as to the outcome and purpose of the project. These will form the basis of business requirements that will be refined through the progression of the project.

Input and support for Business Needs should be sought from the Sub-Committees and Users via workshops and/or consultations as appropriate.

Business Needs should not be solution orientated but should set out what Users wish to achieve from the project.

4.4 Strategic Outline Business Case

The Project Brief developed as part of this stage will include an initial Business Case. This is also known as the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for programmes following the BEIS Treasury Greenbook process.

The SOBC will rely upon Business Needs since they will identify the necessity for the project and User support. Further to Business Needs, it is also important for Users to understand assumptions and dependencies that may impact the SOBC. As such, User facing assumptions and dependencies should be issued to Users to seek input. Views on assumptions and dependencies should also be sought from the relevant Sub-Committees with the resulting information forming part of the Project Brief that is issued to the Panel for recommendation.

It is expected that as the project progresses, a review of whether or not the assumptions and dependencies are still valid will occur. Where these may have changed the Panel should be notified and appropriate action taken.

4.5 Project Brief

Information gathered as part of this initial assessment will form part of the Project Brief which is the key document in this stage. Whilst the level of detail contained in a Project Brief may vary from project to project, the document should contain the following:

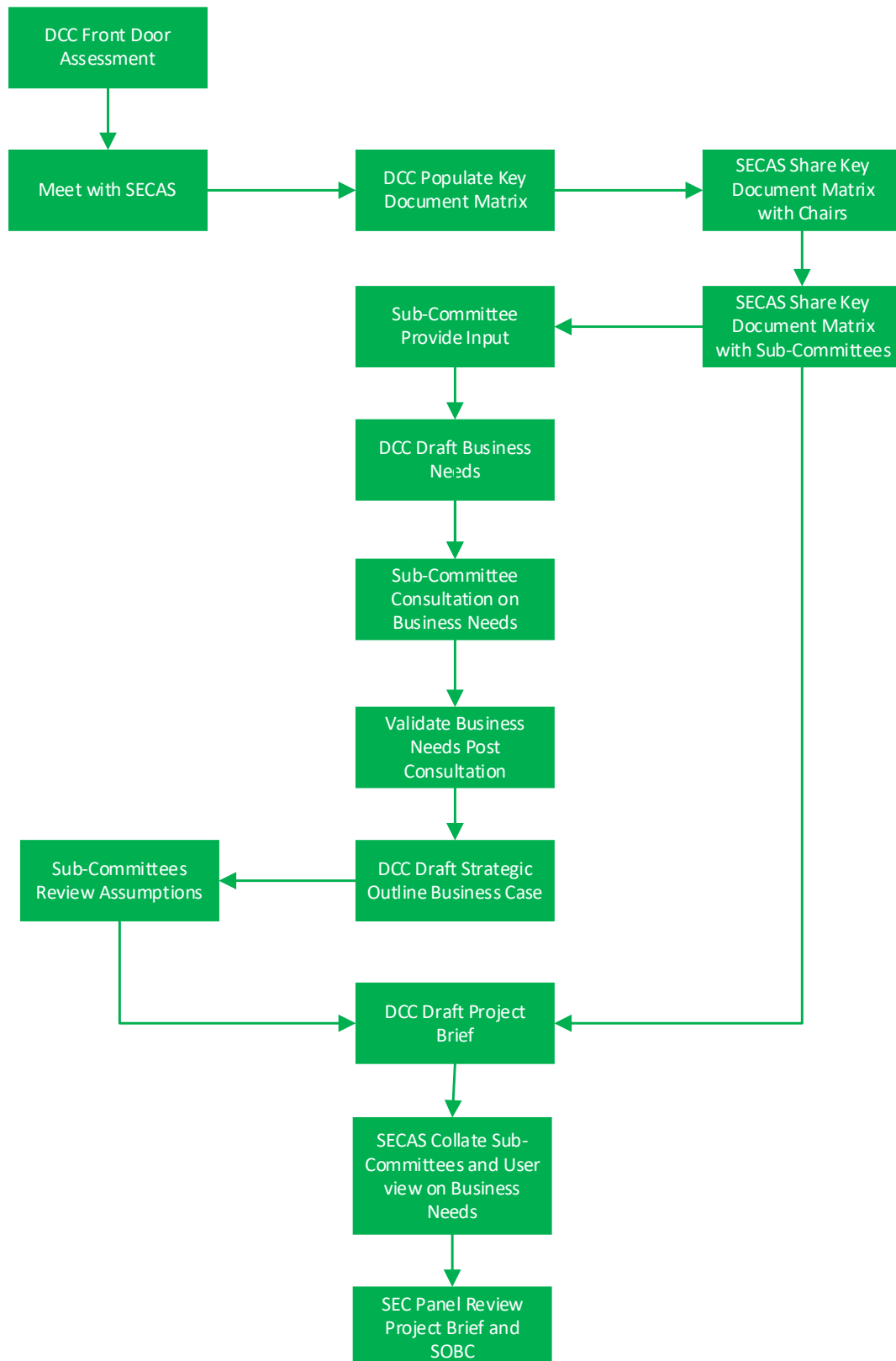
- Purpose of the project (i.e. the Purpose Statement)
- Scope of the project
- High level business needs of Users
- High level business case (also known as Strategic Outline Business Case)
- Potential options/approaches
- Assessment of User impacts
- Assessment of SEC impacts
- High level project plan (i.e. timetable of key milestones)
- Detailed plan to end of next stage
- List of key governance/specification documents to be produced

The Project Brief should be drafted with input from the Sub-Committees to help ensure the plans for the next stage are supported, any potential impacts have been identified, and there has been sufficient User input into User Business Needs.

SECAS will compile the views, opinions and recommendations of Users and Sub-Committees regarding the Business Needs, SOBC and project plan, and present these to the Panel alongside the Project Brief. This will enable the Panel to make an informed recommendation and to escalate any concerns as required.

Where the Panel raise questions or concerns with the Project Brief (or elements within), the DCC should respond with a Panel paper setting out its response and/or clarifications. Such a response should be delivered to the Panel within reasonable timescales.

Note, if the decision of the SOBC sits with BEIS, the Panel would make a recommendation on the Business Needs and SOBC to BEIS, and a recommendation to DCC on the remaining Project Brief information. If DCC is responsible for approving the business case, then the Panel will make a recommendation on the full Project Brief (that includes the business case and Business Needs) to the DCC. In either event, the Authority will be notified of Panel views. It is recognised that this stage may take many months, therefore updates on open projects should be provided as part of the Panel quarterly update.



5. Stage 2 - Define

The purpose of this stage is to further define the project and set out how to deliver the “what” as described in the Project Brief. This will determine if it is feasible to continue the project.

5.1 High Level Requirements

During this stage, User Business Needs are turned into a set of High-Level Business Requirements. The requirements should reflect a condition or capability required to deliver the Business Needs identified in the previous stage. As such, any High-Level Requirements should be mapped clearly back to the Business Needs when shared with Users.

Relevant Sub-Committees should be engaged in the creation of High-Level Requirements, and Users as a whole, should be engaged via consultation once the Sub-Committees have formed an initial view.

High Level requirements should set out where Users believe requirements are essential to delivery of a successful solution, or optional (noting at this stage costs maybe Rough Order of Magnitude and impacts of High-Level Requirements will remain unknown). Any proposed requirements deemed unsuitable in accordance with the Business Needs should also be captured.

It should also be highlighted if any requirements differ from current obligations and/or requirements under the SEC.

5.2 Potential Solutions and Impacts

Once High-Level Requirements have been captured, the DCC should create potential solution options. These solution options should be shared with the relevant Sub-Committees so they can help input and provide feedback (including High Level Designs and Service Definitions).

Once solution options have been explored, an impact assessment should be undertaken on any potential option. This includes, where appropriate, an assessment of User impacts via consultation and/or workshops with Users. It should also include a high-level risk assessment for each solution option with potential mitigations. This should be accompanied with security architecture diagrams per solution option to show the information flows and the proposed security controls for each option.

5.3 Outline Business Case

Using the assessment of DCC and User impacts it will be possible to draft an Outline Business Case (OBC). This allows for a clear understanding of the project before undertaking any major financial commitment.

Again, it is important that any User facing assumptions and dependencies that underpin the business case are clearly set out and User views sought. This includes any estimated costs/impacts on Users.

It is also important that any changes from the Project Brief are highlighted at this stage.

5.4 Project Definition Document

The key document produced at this stage is the Project Definition Document (PDD). The PDD sets out the following:

- Purpose of the project (i.e. the Purpose Statement)

Programme Assurance Policy v1.0

Managed by

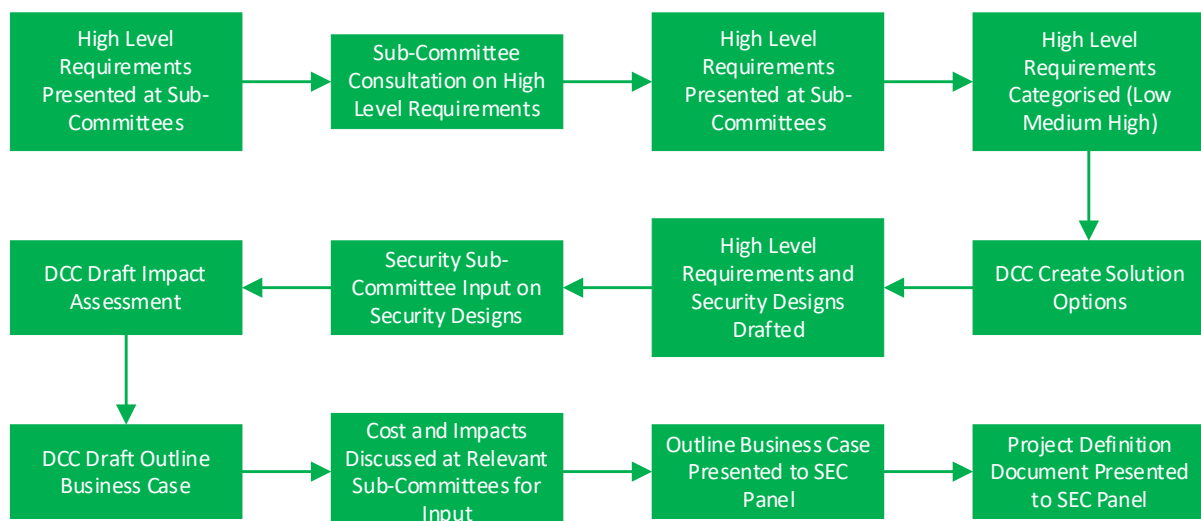


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Classification of **White**

- Scope of the project
- High level business requirements and how they relate to User needs
- Solution options
- Preferred Option (if known)
- Outline Business Case (based on high level costs and benefits)
- Assessment of SEC impacts including Key interfaces (business and technical)
- Assessment User Impacts
- Project plan (based on current understanding)
- Detailed plan to end of next stage
- User facing risks and issues

There may be times when a project will require input from new or different groups with User representation. It is important to spell out these groups and how they interact with the current governance landscape as part of the PDD so Users can see where input is expected. It also provides structure for decision making.



6. Stage 3 - Refine

This stage is to ensure the high-level User input received is refined into detailed User Requirements, a final detailed solution, a full Business Case and detailed plans for Develop and Transition stages. This is the last stage before a project moves into development and then implementation.

6.1 Business Requirements

There should be sufficient engagement with Sub-Committees and Users during this stage to ensure that the final Business Requirements are supported by Users and reflect Business Needs. In order to fully assess if requirements reflect User needs, the costs and delivery timescales of the requirements should be made clear so an informed decision can be made.

6.2 Solution and Impacts

Once requirements have been finalised, solution options should be refined into a single supported solution. This may take iterations of conversations at Sub Committees and consultation with Users to ensure the solution is reflective of the agreed requirements and delivers value for money.

It is also important to complete a full impact assessment so it is clear what will change in the SEC and why. Equally, the anticipated impact on Users to deliver the solution should be captured and form part of the Business Case. Any deviation from current SEC requirements should be clearly stated and the appropriate risk assessments undertaken.

6.3 Develop and Transition Approach

An approach for the Develop and Transition stages needs to be agreed.

The transition approach and plan are important at this stage and need to set out the information necessary to make Users aware of the strategy/assumptions and so that appropriate testing plans can be developed in the next phase.

Once the solution has been finalised, SECAS will review the project and make a recommendation to the Panel as to whether a dedicated transition group is required considering impact on resources to industry, SECAS and the DCC in order to help develop and manage transition for the project. If required, the group's Terms of Reference and working approach will also be presented to the Panel for approval.

In order to develop the transition approach, where a separate group is not required, SECAS will engage the relevant Sub-Committees and the DCC in order to draft an initial approach. This initial approach would be issued to Users via a consultation and supported, where appropriate, by workshops and information sessions. The feedback from Users would be reviewed and an updated transition approach and plan taken to Sub-Committees for endorsement. A final transition approach will then be taken to the Panel for approval alongside any views from Sub-Committees, the DCC and Users. Once the Panel approve the transition approach it will form part of the Project Initiation Document (PID). Any associated costs and impacts of transition should also be included in the Final Business Case.

For the next project stage (Stage 4 – Develop) the Testing Advisory Group (TAG) and Security Sub-Committee (SSC) should be engaged to agree a plan and approach for the drafting and completion of the necessary testing documentation. This should feed into the project plan to be included in the Project Initiation Document (PID).

6.4 Full Business Case

The Full Business Case needs to clearly set out the business benefit to Users of the costs to be incurred. The Business Case needs to clearly set out any User facing assumptions and dependencies and highlight if there have been any changes from the Outline Business Case.

Users should have the chance to comment on the assumptions and dependencies to ensure that their views have been taken into consideration and that the assumptions used are reasonable to Users.

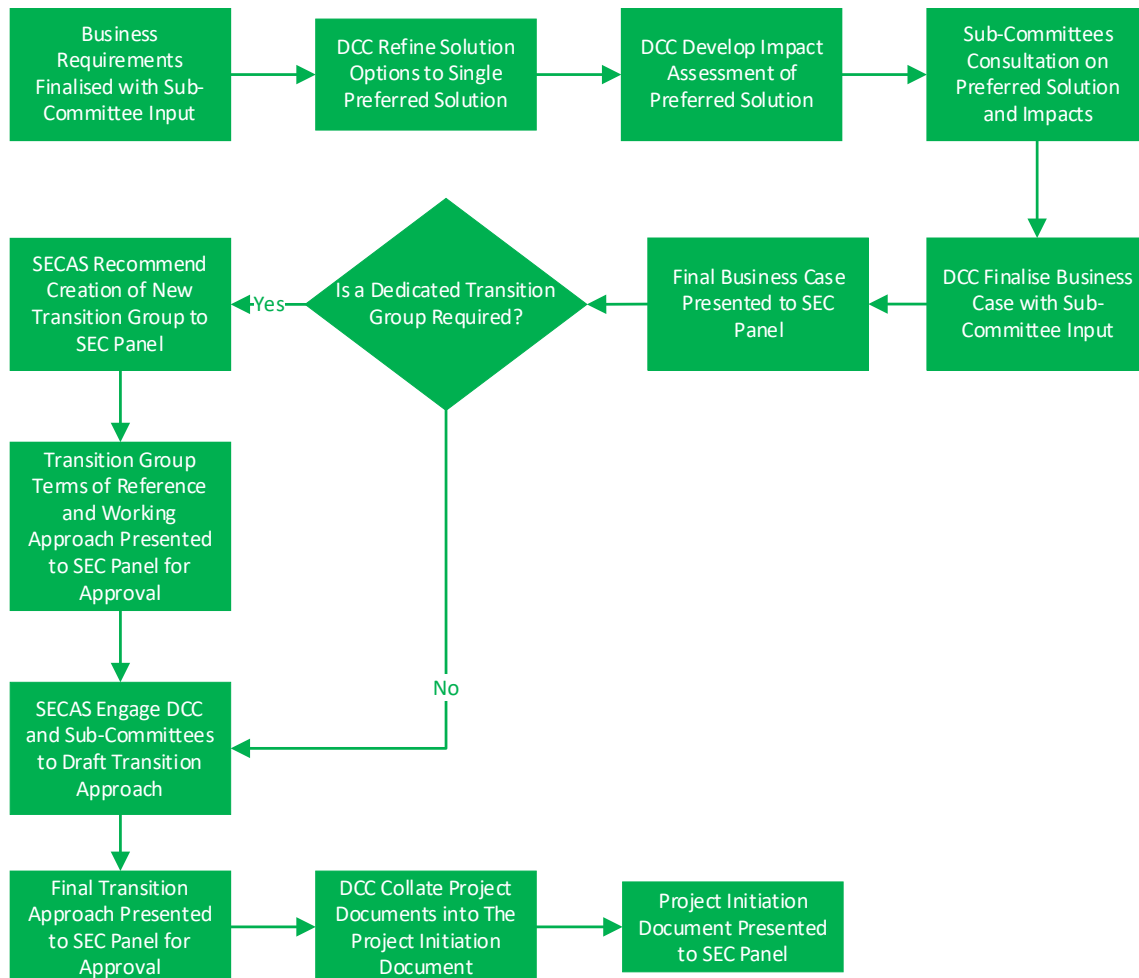
Any changes to the assumptions, dependencies, costs or timescales that the Business Case is reliant upon, should be flagged to the Panel so appropriate action can be taken.

6.5 Project Initiation Document

The key document for this phase is the Project Initiation Document (PID). It should contain the following information:

- Purpose of the project (i.e. the Purpose Statement)
- Scope of the project
- Agreed Solution
- Full Business Case including reference back to Purpose Statement
- Detailed Assessment of SEC impacts including Key interfaces (business and technical)
- Detailed User Impacts
- Detailed Project plan including Transition approach and plan
- Detailed plan to end of next stage
- User facing risks and issues

SECAS will collate any User and/or Sub-Committee views on any element of the PID (including assumptions, dependencies, business case) and present that information to the Panel alongside the PID so an informed recommendation to proceed can be made.



7. Stage 4 - Develop

The purpose of this stage is to agree detailed testing plans and keep the Panel up to date as the project progresses through Design, Build and Test.

7.1 Test Approach Documentation

During this stage the detailed testing documentation would be drafted, and required input/approval sought from the Testing Advisory Group (TAG) in line with the plans outlined in the PID.

The TAG will also draft the criteria for the readiness review, which is undertaken as part of the next project stage.

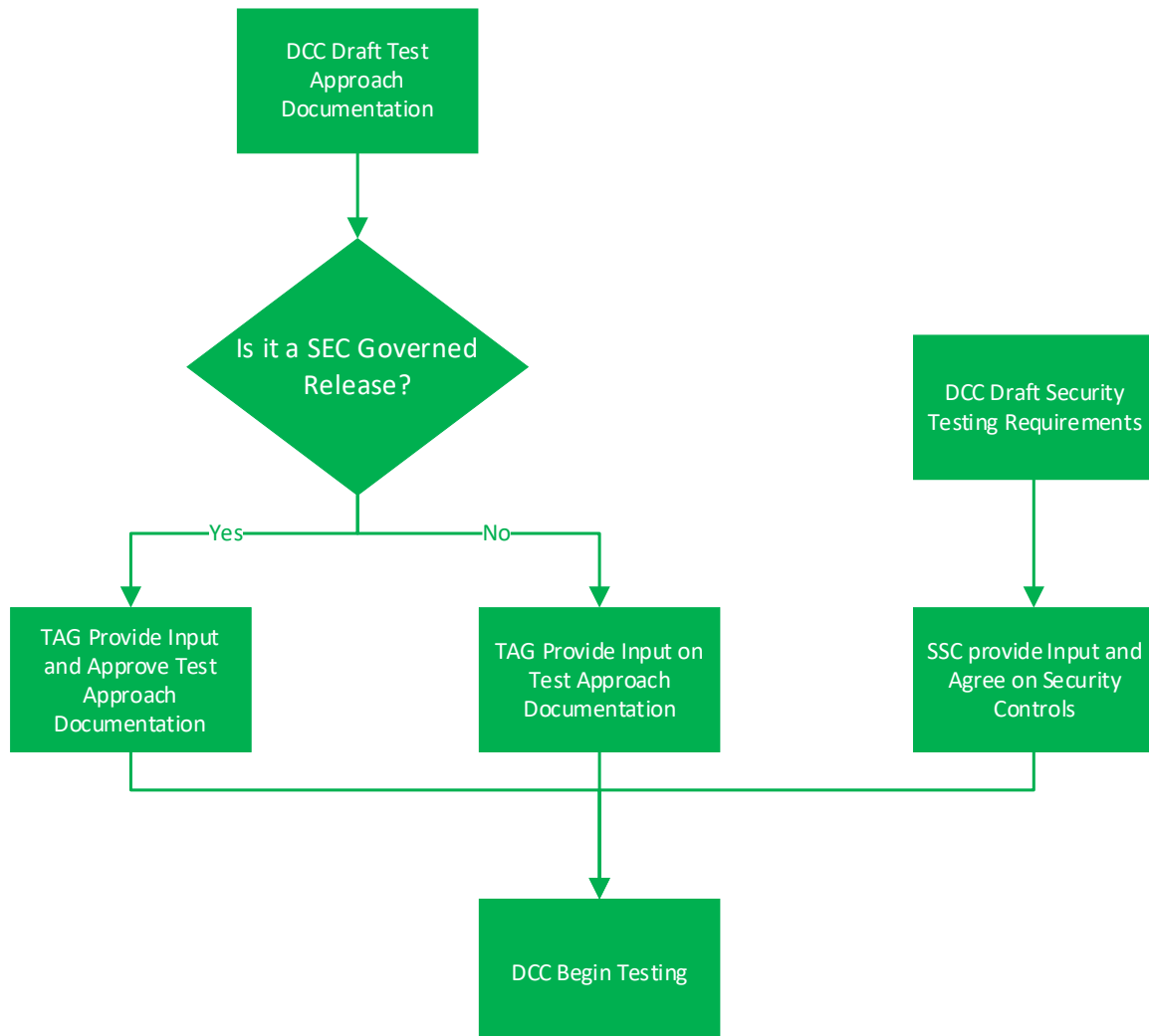
7.2 Security

During this stage, the scope of and approach to security testing and the required security tests that need to be completed would be drafted. For DCC system changes, these will always include Penetration Tests, reports on CIO Assurance and approval of a remediation plan to address any areas identified in the tests.

7.3 Reporting

To ensure the Panel is kept up to date with progression, and to make certain the potential impacts on Users are identified early, an End of Phase report should be shared with the Panel as the project moves from Design through to Build and Test.

Any impacts to timing, cost and/or any other element that may impact the business case should be raised with the Panel so appropriate action can be taken.



8. Stage 5 - Transition

8.1 Readiness Review

The purpose of this stage is to ensure the Panel is clear on the progression of a project against activities on the transition plan (created in Stage 3) and to seek endorsement for a “go-live” decision. This will consist of evidence against a set of defined Live Service Criteria (LSC), Component Readiness and Residual risks/issues.

The DCC when considering and providing evidence against the LSC will ensure it encapsulates the following:

- The Service as it currently stands (pre-Go Live);
- The intended Service following implementation; and
- How the implementation of the new Service(s) will impact the existing Service.

The specified LSCs, and proposed Sub-Committee to review the DCC’s evidence, will be determined as part of Transition plans in Stage 3.

The DCC should also provide evidence for Component Readiness. Component Readiness should ensure that all relevant staff, training, documentation, processes and services are ready for the deployment and not just be an assessment of System readiness.

Furthermore, the DCC will also be expected to provide any identified Risks and Issues in relation to the readiness and operation of the new service, noting any known impacts, mitigations/workarounds implemented and whether enduring mitigations are required.

Sub-Committees will review evidence and provide a recommendation on whether to accept, reject or provide caveats along with a RAG status against each criterion for the DCC’s assessment of readiness. This is collated by SECAS into a Go-Live Readiness Report that will be issued to the Panel so it can make a recommendation to the DCC, or BEIS.

Such a decision needs to occur with sufficient time before Go-live. As a minimum, this should be one month prior to Go-Live date, otherwise there is a risk that the case for Go-live becomes a de facto decision. Therefore, sufficient time needs to be factored into plans to allow Sub-Committees an opportunity to review the appropriate evidence.

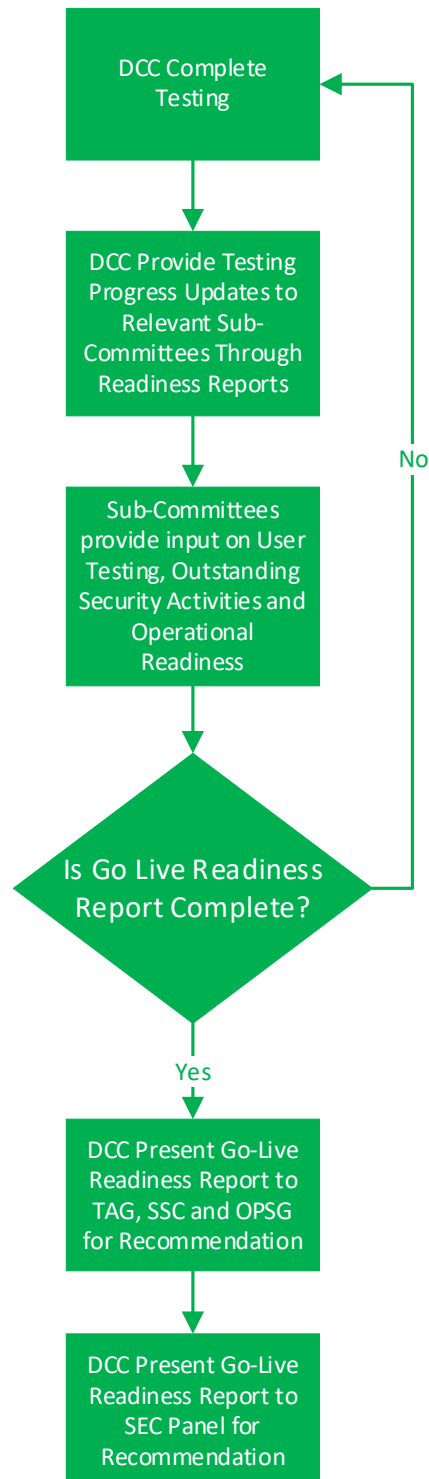
As noted, Transition should follow the plans set out in the previous stages of the project, but it is important to update Users on the progression of implementation and note any issues that have been encountered that would impact the agreed approach or timings. These updates should take the form of Readiness Reports. As the implementation of the project continues, Readiness Reports should be presented at suitable intervals.

It is important for the Panel to agree the Go-Live Readiness Report, since it needs to be assured that there will be no negative impacts to the DCC services or to Users and that all due consideration has been given prior to Go-live.

8.2 Transition Group

Where it has been identified that a Transition Group is required in Stage 3 – Refine considering impact on industry, SECAS and DCC resources, its role will be to agree the transition approach,

ensuring that User impacts and any activities required of Users by the programme, are captured. The Transition Group would then monitor progress against the transition plan, engaging the Sub-Committees as needed.



9. Stage 6 – Deploy/Go-Live

The purpose of this stage is to ensure the Panel is aware of any issues with go-live and to receive confirmation that the project is complete.

The term “go live” is used in conjunction with “deploy” in this stage, to recognise that not all User impacting projects require systems development.

Once the necessary activity is complete, a project closure report should be produced and presented to the Panel. This does not need to be a lengthy document, but it creates a consistent approach for informing Users that the activity is complete, and noting if there were any unforeseen issues or impacts.

As noted above, the project closure report will not contain the same detail for every project. For example, in the case of DCC moving offices, a short update informing the Panel that the move is complete and there was no interruption to the Service Desk would be sufficient.



10. Stage 7 – Realise

The purpose of this stage is to put in place any appropriate monitoring to discover if benefits have been realised and to capture any lessons learnt for future projects.

Where appropriate, it is important to discuss and agree any monitoring that could be used to see if the identified purpose has been achieved. This is often overlooked when implementing change. However, agreeing an approach with the Panel and its Sub-Committees as a project closes means there is a consistent approach to agreeing what, if any, reporting is required.

Equally, a central Lessons Learned Log should be maintained and reviewed periodically to make sure that any issues experienced in one project are not carried over into future projects. There has been feedback from Users that lessons have not been learned across projects in the past. An annual report to the Panel on how any relevant issues have been mitigated would help ensure Users have confidence issues are not repeated.

