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SECMP0028 'Prioritising Service Requests'

April 2021 Working Group – meeting summary

Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Joe Hehir	SECAS
Holly Burton	SECAS
Brad Baker	SECAS
Joey Manners	SECAS
David Kemp	SECAS
Harry Jones	SECAS
David Walsh	DCC
Remi Oluwabamise	DCC
Abhijit Pal	DCC
Charlotte Semp	DCC
Eleanor Taylor	BEIS
Rochelle Harrison	British Gas
Lynne Hargrave	Calvin Capital
Mudhuban Kumar	Carbon Laces
Julie Geary	E.ON
Alex Hurcombe	EDF Energy
Catherine Duggan	Electricity North West
Daniel Davis	ESG Global
William Wilson	Global 365
Alastair Cobb	Landis + Gyr
John Noad	NPower
Ralph Baxter	Octopus Energy
Jessica Mullen	Octopus Energy
Emslie Law	OVO Energy
Mafs Rahman	Scottish Power
Matthew Alexander	SSEN
Andy Knowles	Utilita
Rachel Norberg	Utilita
Gemma Slaney	WPD
Kelly Kinsman	WPD

Overview

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) provided an overview of the issue identified by SECMP0028 'Prioritising Service Requests', and the proposed business requirements

Issue

The Proposer notes that periods of high Service Request volumes going through the DCC Systems will result in Service Request queuing and increased processing times. As a consequence, consumers may be adversely impacted. This is because increased processing times for Service Requests driven by Energy Consumers (prepayment meter tops ups) could cause consumers being off supply for longer periods than necessary.

Solution

To reduce potential impacts on consumers, the Proposer suggests adding a priority ranking to each Service Request. During periods of high Service Request volumes, were a queue to form, this would result in the DCC processing higher priority Service Requests first. Among these high priority Service Requests would be Service Requests relating to pre-payment top up and ensuring supply is available for vulnerable consumers.

Working Group discussions

Business case

Members contested the issue being raised under SECMP0028. They noted that SECMP0067 'Service Request Traffic Management' had been raised to resolve a similar issue but was rejected.

The Proposer advised SECMP0028 seeks, in the event of an overload, to prioritise the Service Requests which are deemed essential to vulnerable consumers. Some members believed that it would be more of an effort to prevent the issue rather than dealing with the issue in the rare event that it arises. The rationale for making the change was that in the case of the DCC Systems being overloaded and not processing Service Requests, this would create cost and reputational damage to the industry, which the Proposer believes should be mitigated by creating a system that could ensure consumers remain on supply in the event of the DCC Systems not being operational.

Members questioned the modifications' business case given the lack of numerical data that could underpin the costs which this proposal looks to prevent against. There was a wider question from members whether the modification was necessary and whether there would be support for addressing the issue given SECMP0067 has been rejected.

Members noted that SECMP0028 had been raised in 2016 and that this was the first time SECMP0028 had been discussed with the Working Group since SECMP0067 had been rejected. Therefore, it was agreed that SECAS would issue a Request for Information (RFI) to seek views on whether this was an issue that was still relevant and if it should be progressed further.

Business requirements

SECAS summarised the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub Committee (TABASC) views on the proposed business requirements. The TABASC's view was that the business

requirements should be revised to differentiate between the Communication Services Provider (CSP) and Data Services Provider (DSP) components of the DCC System and to ensure the requests were being delivered within the Target Response Times (TRTs) rather than prioritising individual requests ahead of each other. The Proposer agreed to the amendment to place the prioritisation in the DSP and CSP into separate business requirements for the Proposed Solution, but believed the focus on TRTs would not resolve the issues in the event of the DCC Systems not being operational and leaving prepayment consumers without supply.

One member echoed this and believed that any prioritisation of Service Requests needs to include prioritising Prepayment top-ups, believing they were among the most crucial of Service Requests that need accepting in the event of a DCC System failure. Another member stated that SRV 7.4 'Read Supply Status' should be prioritised given they use it to ensure their consumer's supplies are restored after an outage. Other members believed there were other valid Service Requests related to ensuring Certificates are correctly placed on meters. This prompted discussion that SECMP0028 is similar to the SECMP0067 Proposed Solution of creating a Priority Service Request List, and posed the same issues as before, only that individual Service Request activity couldn't be constrained.

Next Steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS will produce an RFI document and issue it to industry.
- SECAS will return SECMP0028 to the Working Group with the RFI responses.