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Action:	For Discussion
Acronyms and Defined Terms SEC Glossary	

SEC Change Update Report – March 2023

1. Purpose

This document provides an update on the progress of Smart Energy Code (SEC) Modifications and Releases and the recent and upcoming decisions of the Change Sub-Committee (CSC) under delegated authority from the Panel.

The Data Communications Company's (DCC's) performance report on Preliminary Assessments and Impact Assessments is included as Appendix A to this report.

2. Recommendations

The Panel is requested to:

- **NOTE** the contents of this report; and
- **PROVIDE** any views and feedback on the modifications raised in section 2.

Rachel Black

SECAS Team

21 March 2023

Attachments:

- **Appendix A:** DCC Assessments Performance Report (**WHITE**)

1. Overview

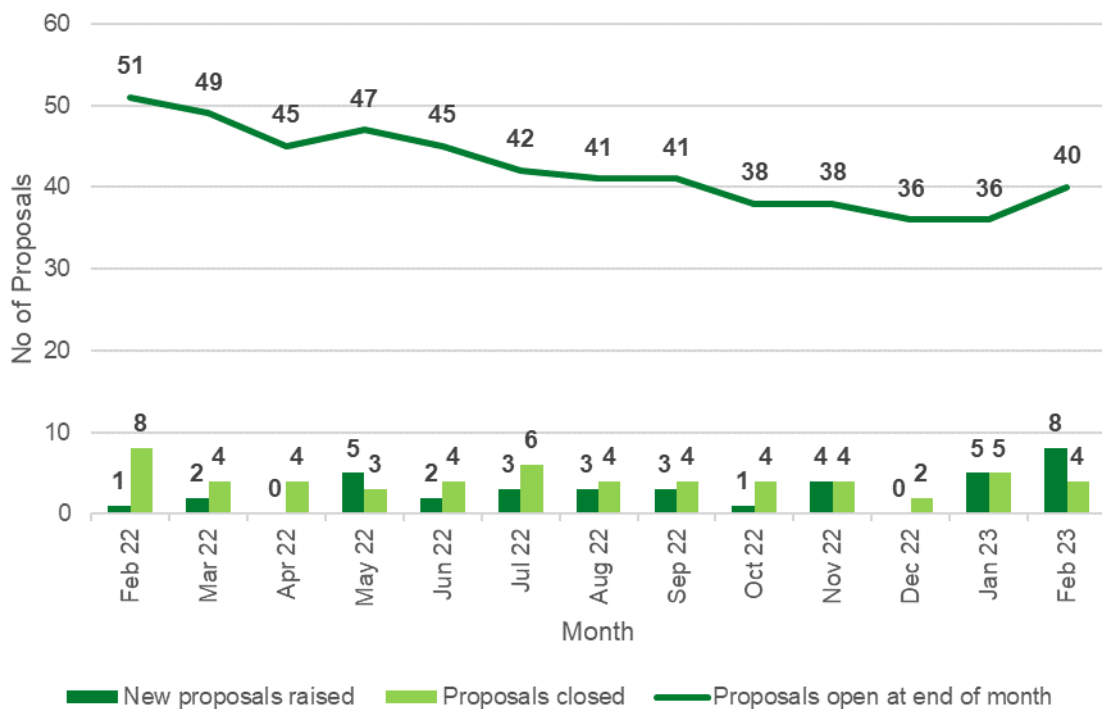
This information is correct as at the end of February 2023.

More detailed information can be found in the [Modification Register](#).

Number of proposals in each stage of the modification framework



Volume of proposals going through the modification framework



2. Modification updates

MP208

[MP208 'Northbound Prioritisation of N56 Alerts'](#) is seeking to resolve an issue where payments are being held for Prepayment top-ups but not credited to the meter. When a consumer requests a Prepayment top-up at a shop, the request is sent via the Responsible Supplier to the DCC. The DCC responds by sending an N56 Alert, which contains the Unique Transaction Reference Number (UTRN) required to process the consumer's payment. If the UTRN is not returned to the shop within 30 seconds of the initial request, the transaction will time out and the consumer's funds may be held by the Payment Service Provider (PSP) until a refund is processed. While the majority of Prepayment top-up requests are processed and N56 Alerts returned to the Supplier within the necessary timeframe of 16 seconds, there are instances where this part of the process is taking too long.

The DCC is developing a Northbound prioritisation system as part of its Network Enhancement programme but suggests that MP208 and other prioritisation modifications should continue. We are working to ensure that the different prioritisation workstreams are aligned to a coherent strategy and that SECAS, the Operations Group (OPSG) and the Panel have oversight of this. For the moment both MP208 and [SECMP0028 'Prioritising System Messages'](#) are proceeding as normal, however we are working with the modification Working Groups and the DCC to ensure that efficiencies in costs and resource are realised across any shared solution architecture.

The DCC has advised that it can deliver Northbound prioritisation of N56 Alerts outside of the SEC modification process. The Proposer is awaiting confirmation before withdrawing MP208, on the understanding that the DCC is progressing a solution and not because a solution is no longer needed. The Proposer has also advised they will re-raise the modification if the DCC does not deliver a solution.

DP218

SEC Section K 'Charging Methodology' sets out how the DCC charges SEC Parties, including how the types of Fixed Charges are apportioned between DCC Users and how communications services (the sending of Service Requests) are charged. The Smart Energy Code Company (SECCo) Board previously queried how much work is generated by Other Users. The SEC Panel has also looked at Other Users' and Other SEC Parties' usage of SEC and DCC services. It was agreed that further investigation into the current charging arrangements would be beneficial. To support this, the DCC raised [DP218 'Review of the SEC Charging Methodology'](#) with the agreement of the Panel to holistically review the DCC Charging methodology and determine whether any change should be taken forward. Two distinct issues have been identified under this Draft Proposal:

- Who uses the DCC Systems and how they are charged; and
- How the DCC Fixed Charges, which includes SEC administration costs, are apportioned between different Party types.

Following the request for information (RFI) which closed at the end of January 2023, an ad hoc Working Group meeting will be held on 22 March 2023 to review the responses and agree the next steps. The Draft Proposal will then be formally split into separate parts, and each progressed under separate proposals before entering the Refinement Process. We will provide the Panel with a verbal update of the Working Group's discussions at the Panel meeting.

Potential modification on the oversight of the costs and financing of DCC projects and programmes

A Party has approached us about raising a Draft Proposal to allow SEC Parties oversight of the costs and financing of DCC projects and programmes.

The DCC is responsible for multiple projects and programmes. However, there was no formal assurance until January 2023 when the [SEC Programme Assurance Policy \(PAP\)](#) was formed. Programme Assurance¹ is owned by the SEC Panel. SEC Parties are able to obtain some assurances through Sub-Committees and DCC workshops, which provide various steers and inputs throughout the multiple stages of the project lifecycle for DCC projects and programmes. The Proposer believes even with the PAP, the SEC Panel does not currently have a group dedicated to have a detailed review of the intricacies of the DCC's project planning or assessment of the costs and benefits case associated with individual DCC projects and programmes. Although the PAP is looking to achieve this, it is too early to tell if this would resolve the current lack of transparency.

The Proposer believes that as part of clearly defining the Programme Governance cycle², there is a need to understand how to achieve more transparency and sharing of details with SEC Parties of DCC's costs and benefit cases associated with any major programme or project initiation.

The Proposer further believes the programme costs oversight remains fragmented and that responsibilities are ill-defined, leaving SEC Parties unable to verify the time and economic efficiency of DCC projects and programmes. This has the potential to impact customers by driving up costs and leaving suppliers without the confidence that projects and programmes are being delivered in an economic efficient manner.

We do not believe that setting up such a Sub-Committee will resolve the Proposer's issue. We understand the DCC is already experiencing challenges with sharing some of the information sought by the Proposer with the Panel and is exploring how this could be shared with a sub-set of members.

The Panel can choose to set up a new Sub-Committee at any time without a modification using the provisions in SEC Section C6, as it has done with the Operations Group (OPSG) and the Communications Transition Group (CTG). We therefore seek the Panel's views on whether such a group should be set up, and if so if this modification should be raised and progressed to define such a group within the SEC, or whether the Panel wishes to explore the Proposer's request separately.

3. Change Sub-Committee decisions

Recent decisions

The CSC last met on 21 March 2023.

The CSC was not asked to approve any Modification Reports for progression to the Report Phase.

¹ Programme Assurance is being used here to describe the oversight of major DCC projects and programmes, such as 4G transition or Service Provider re-procurement.

² This will be provided by the SEC Panel's PAP

The CSC converted the following Draft Proposal to a Modification Proposal for progression to the Refinement Process:

- [DP230 'Review the SLA for delivery and completion for SMETS1 firmware'](#)
- [DP233 'Review of Appendix AG Incident categorisation'](#)
- [DP234 'Addition of GDPR Principles of Public Task and Legitimate Interests into the SEC'](#)
- [DP235 'Enhanced Meter Data Access for Other Users'](#)

The CSC considered the following new Draft Proposals and agreed to leave them in the Development Stage for further work to understand the issue:

- [DP236 'Commissioned Communication Hub SMI Status Remains as Pending'](#)
- [DP237 'Management of Emergency Firmware Updates'](#)
- [DP238 'TSAT Expired Communication Hubs'](#)

Upcoming decisions

The next CSC meeting will be on 18 April 2023.

We currently expect to ask the CSC to approve six Modification Reports for progression to final decision:

- [MP178 'Removing DSP validation against the SMI join status for SR8.8.x'](#)
- [MP214 'Clarification of Acceptable DCC User IDs for Import and Export Suppliers'](#)
- [MP219 'Accessing Consumption Data on behalf of SEC Parties'](#)
- [MP222 'CPL submission efficiency improvements'](#)
- [DP226 'Incorporation of Category 3 Issue Resolution Proposals into the SEC - Batch 10'](#)
- [DP229 'Notification of material change to User Systems to include decommissioning'](#)

We currently expect to ask the CSC to convert the following Draft Proposals to Modification Proposals for progression to the Refinement Process:

- [DP218 'Review of the SEC Charging Methodology'](#)
- [DP238 'TSAT Expired Communication Hubs'](#)
- [DP236 'Commissioned Communication Hub SMI Status Remains as Pending'](#)

Further Draft Proposals may be raised nearer the meeting that could be progressed directly to the Refinement Process or the Report Phase.

4. New Draft Proposals

DP237

[DP237 'Management of Emergency Firmware Updates'](#) was raised by the DCC on 14 March 2023.

Over-the-air (OTA) firmware upgrades are applied to deliver improvements or fix bugs within Devices. There may be instances where a very large number of Devices are impacted and could require an emergency fix. The DCC would be responsible for deploying firmware updates to Communications Hubs, and Suppliers would be responsible for deploying firmware updates to other Devices, using the DCC system.

Whilst there are emergency processes to follow in the event of security incidents, there are none for operational incidents. There is currently no reference within the SEC to allow the DCC to manage User traffic to shorten the timeframe required to deploy a firmware upgrade to all affected Devices.

DP238

[DP238 'TSAT Expired Communication Hubs'](#) was raised by the DCC on 14 March 2023.

Communications Hubs must be installed before the relevant Installation end date as recorded in SEC Schedule 11 'Technical Specification Applicability Tables' (TSAT). Where a Communications Hubs is not installed before the end date it should be returned to the DCC. The DCC will then try to refurbish that Communications Hub for redeployment. If it is not able to do so, then the Communications Hub will be reported lost or stolen. Parties are charged for these services by DCC once the outcome of a refurbishment attempt is known. The charges are: £8.27 for a Communications Hub that can be redeployed, or £30.87 for a Single Band and £58.75 for a Dual Band Communications Hub that is returned but cannot be redeployed. If a Communications Hub is not returned, the responsible Party continues to be charged the pre-installation Communication stock level charge on the Device indefinitely.

5. DCC Assessments

DCC Impact Assessment requests

The Change Board has not been asked to consider any Impact Assessment requests since the last Panel meeting.

DCC Assessment timescales

This information is correct as at the end of February 2023.

More information is available in the DCC's update in Appendix A.

DCC Assessment timescales		
Assessment	Total	Average duration
Preliminary Assessments open	2	114 WD

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DCC Assessment timescales		
Assessment	Total	Average duration
Preliminary Assessments completed in the last 12 months	13	25 WD
Impact Assessments open	4	49 WD
Impact Assessments completed in the last 12 months	7	48 WD

DCC Preliminary Assessments

The DCC's Collaborative Design Review recommended the target duration for Preliminary Assessments be increased from 15 Working Days (WD) to 25WD. Durations marked in amber in the tables below missed the current 15WD target but would have met the proposed 25WD target.

DCC Preliminary Assessments in progress			
Modification	Accepted	Target duration	Current duration
MP168	18 May 22	15 WD	205 WD
MP217	30 Jan 23	15 WD	22 WD

DCC Preliminary Assessments completed in the last 12 months			
Modification	Returned	Target duration	Actual duration
MP137	27 May 22	15 WD	15 WD
MP172	13 Jun 22	15 WD	28 WD
MP155	15 Jun 22	15 WD	60 WD
MP134B	14 Jul 22	15 WD	12 WD
MP176	15 Jul 22	15 WD	25 WD
SECMP0028	23 Aug 22	15 WD	20 WD
MP211	21 Sep 22	15 WD	12 WD
MP178	21 Oct 22	15 WD	15 WD
MP202	21 Oct 22	15 WD	17 WD
MP216	31 Oct 22	15 WD	26 WD
MP207	30 Nov 22	15 WD	17 WD
MP208	19 Jan 23	15 WD	24 WD
MP169	10 Feb 23	15 WD	50 WD

DCC Impact Assessments

DCC Impact Assessments in progress			
Modification	Accepted	Target duration	Current duration
MP176	30 Sep 22	40 WD	108 WD
MP178	9 Jan 23	40 WD	37 WD

DCC Impact Assessments in progress			
Modification	Accepted	Target duration	Current duration
MP211	9 Jan 23	40 WD	37 WD
MP202	8 Feb 23	40 WD	15 WD

DCC Impact Assessments completed in the last 12 months			
Modification	Returned	Target duration	Actual duration
MP162	7 Mar 22	40 WD	45 WD
MP143	9 Mar 22	40 WD	29 WD
MP125	14 Mar 22	40 WD	48 WD
MP102B	21 May 22	40 WD	41 WD
MP170	25 May 22	40 WD	78 WD
MP176	1 Jun 22	40 WD	25 WD
MP122B	11 Jul 22	40 WD	70 WD

6. Modification outcomes

Change Board votes

The Change Board voted on the following modifications on 22 February 2023:

- [MP198 'Further Changes from the Review of the SMKI and DCCKI Document Set'](#) – approved under Self-Governance on the basis it would better facilitate SEC Objectives (a)³ and (f)⁴.
- [MP216 'Incorporation of Category 2 Issue Resolution Proposals into the SEC – Batch 9'](#) – approved under Self-Governance on the basis it would better facilitate SEC Objectives (a) and (f).

Authority decisions

The Authority has not issued a decision on any modification since the last Panel meeting.

There are no modifications currently with the Authority for decision.

³ Facilitate the efficient provision, installation, and operation, as well as interoperability, of Smart Metering Systems at Energy Consumers' premises within Great Britain.

⁴ To ensure the protection of Data and the security of Data and Systems in the operation of this Code.

Withdrawn proposals

The following Modification Proposal has been withdrawn since the last Panel meeting:

- [SECMP0010 'Introduction of triage arrangements for Communication Hubs'](#) – withdrawn on 14 March 2023.

7. Releases and Designations

SEC versions issued

The following SEC versions have been released since the last update:

SEC versions issued		
Version	Date	Key changes
68.0	21 Feb 23	Update to SEC Appendix AL 'SMETS1 Transition and Migration Approach Document' (SMETS1 TMAD) following a re-designation issued by the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ). This is in support of the DCC Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications (SMETS) 1 service.
69.0	23 Feb 23	Updates to nine SEC Sections and four SEC Appendices due to the implementation of the February 2023 SEC Release .

Implemented SEC Releases

February 2023 SEC Release – 23 February 2023		
Modification	DCC System impacts?	Status
MP167A 'Review of SEC documents (Testing Approach Document criteria)'		Implemented
MP172 'Reduced CPA & CPL requirements for innovation and Device field trials'		Implemented
MP210 'RSA forecasts, orders and pay stock charges for Alt HAN Equipment'		Implemented

Upcoming SEC Release scopes

June 2023 SEC Release – 29 June 2023		
Modification	DCC System impacts?	Status
MP102B 'Power Outage Alerts triggered by an OTA firmware upgrade - enduring solution'	✓	Approved
MP125 'Correcting Device Information for the ESME Variant'	✓	Approved

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June 2023 SEC Release – 29 June 2023		
Modification	DCC System impacts?	Status
MP128A 'Gas Network Operators SMKI Requirements'		Approved
MP183 'Post Commissioning Obligations Reporting'		Approved
MP215 'Communications Hub Ordering and Forecasting'		Targeted
MP220 'MMC Changes resulting from GBCS v4.1 Device Testing'		Approved

November 2023 SEC Release – 2 November 2023		
Modification	DCC System impacts?	Status
MP122B 'Operational Metrics – Part 2'	✓	Approved
MP137 'Sharing information on Defects and Issues'		Targeted
MP216 'Incorporation of Category 2 Issue Resolution Proposals into the SEC – Batch 9'		Approved
DP226 'Incorporation of Category 3 Issue Resolution Proposals into the SEC - Batch 10'		Targeted

February 2024 SEC Release – 29 February 2024		
Modification	DCC System impacts?	Status
<i>No modifications currently targeted</i>		

June 2024 SEC Release – 27 June 2024		
Modification	DCC System impacts?	Status
MP162 'SEC changes required to deliver MHHS'	✓	Approved
MP178 'Removing DSP validation against the SMI join status for SR8.8.x'	✓	Targeted
MP202 'Enduring Solution for SMETS1 and SMETS2+ PPMIDs'	✓	Targeted
MP211 'Aligning the SMI with the CPL'	✓	Targeted

Ad-hoc SEC Releases			
Modification	Date	DCC System impacts?	Status
MP198 'Further Changes from the Review of the SMKI and DCCKI Document Set'	17 Apr 23		Approved

8. Cross-Code working

Code Administration Code of Practice (CACoP) Forum update

The CACoP Forum now meets bimonthly, and there has been no meeting since the last update. The next Forum meeting will be on 11 April 2023.

Cross Code Steering Group (CCSG) update

The CCSG last met on 17 March 2023.

There were no new changes identified as impacting SEC from other Codes.