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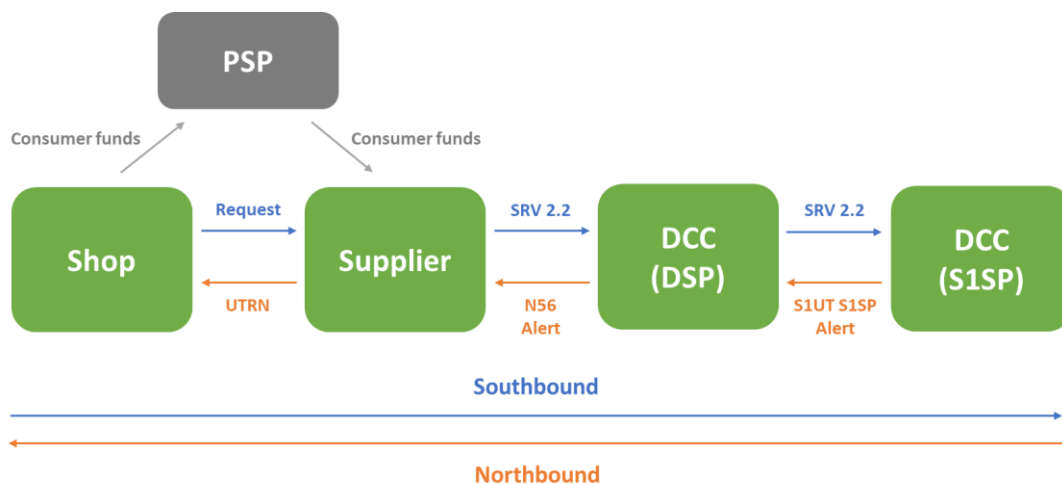
Paper Reference:	TABASC_86X_1602_05
Action:	For Discussion

MP208 ‘Northbound Prioritisation of N56 Alerts’ DCC Preliminary Assessment

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide a summary of the DCC Preliminary Assessment for the modification [MP208 ‘Northbound Prioritisation of N56 Alerts’](#). It also requests that the TABASC provides views on the delivery of the Proposed Solution and its relation to other prioritisation workstreams.

2. Summary of MP208



When a consumer requests a Prepayment top up at a shop, the request is sent via the Responsible Supplier to the Data Communications Company (DCC). The DCC responds by sending an N56 Alert, which contains the Unique Transaction Reference Number (UTRN) required to process the consumer’s payment. Simultaneously, the consumer’s funds are ‘held’ by the Payment Service Provider (PSP), ready to transfer to the Supplier’s bank account.

If the UTRN is not returned to the shop within 30 seconds of the initial request, the transaction will time out. When the consumer sees that their transaction has failed, they will likely make further

attempts to request a top up, resulting in further funds being held by the PSP and thereby making them unavailable for use by the consumer until such time as the PSP refunds them. This can take several days.

The DCC is aware that 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 Proposer seeks to introduce a method of prioritising N56 Alerts within the DCC System to ensure that they are returned with enough time for the other parts of the process to be completed before the 30 second time limit, thereby preventing consumer funds from being withheld.

Further information can be found in the Modification Report in Appendix A.

3. Relevant prioritisation workstreams

- CR4630: DCC reporting which will record timing points for SRV 2.2 and the S1UT between the DSP and the S1SP
- SECMP0028: SEC modification which looks to introduce four-tier prioritisation for all System messages in both Northbound and Southbound pathways
- CR4879: part of the DCC solution for delivering [MP162 'SEC changes required to deliver MHHS'](#) which prioritises On-Demand Responses over Scheduled Responses.

4. Business Requirements

The following business requirements were used to complete the DCC Preliminary Assessment.

Ref.	Requirement
1	To apply prioritisation at the Data Service Provider (DSP) level to N56 Alerts such that they are processed ahead of other messages when they reach the Supplier gateway.
2	To introduce a mechanism to ensure that non-prioritised messages do not wait indefinitely to be processed.

Business requirement 2 was given as a 'could-have' for the solution. Due to the urgency of delivering requirement 1, SECAS requested the DCC include requirement 2 if it could be delivered without causing significant delays to the Proposed Solution.

5. DCC Preliminary Assessment

5.1 Technical solution

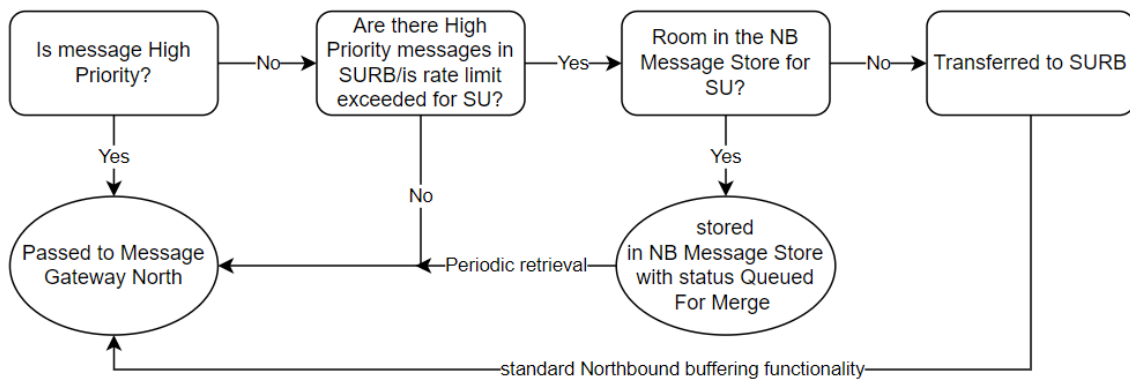
DSP Northbound processing shall be changed to prioritise selected High Priority messages over Low Priority messages. The configuration shall be such that Northbound Prioritisation is always applied.

The prioritisation categories are outlined below:

1. High priority alerts – a list of Northbound High Priority Alerts. For this modification, the N56 Alert shall be the only alert configured in the list. Other Alerts could be added to the list.

2. Service Responses other than Scheduled Service Request Responses.
3. Other Alerts – Device Alerts and DCC Alerts other than high priority Alerts.
4. Scheduled Service Request Responses – i.e., Responses to Commands sent out as a result of a scheduled operation.

The proposed process which will be applied to Northbound messages is as follows:



5.2 Implementation and costs

- Total cost to complete the Full Impact Assessment of £15,260.
- The timescales to complete the Full Impact Assessment of 40 working days.
- Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) costs up to the end of Pre-Integration Testing (PIT) of £350,000 to £750,000.
- Design, Build, and PIT is expected to take about six months to complete following approval.

6. Configuration of Priority Levels

The DCC recommends and SECAS agrees that any specific ordering of messages should not be encapsulated in the SEC. If it were included in the SEC any changes to the ordering, changes to business processes or changes to the nature and attributes of Alerts, Commands, or Responses would require a SEC modification.

SECAS proposes that changes to priority levels for specific messages should be raised to the Operations Group for consideration and recommendations approved by the SEC Panel. These proposals could also be raised to the TABASC to consider any impacts on business processes. These changes could be enduring, owing to changes in processes or new benefits cases coming to light, or temporary, as certain messages may become more urgent for the continuity of the Smart Metering Service (e.g. emergency Firmware upgrades).

7. Questions for the TABASC

We seek the TABASC's views on the following questions:

- Does the Proposed Solution fulfil the business requirements?
- Considering the overall delivery strategy for the different prioritisation workstreams, should the Proposed Solution be delivered under MP208?
- Is the governance model for assigning Priority Levels a sensible approach, and are there any considerations for inclusion in the legal text?
- Are there any other factors we should consider in developing the solution?

8. Next steps

The DCC is creating a delivery roadmap for the different prioritisation workstreams and has an action to advise the TABASC if the MP208 solution can be delivered sooner than set out in the Preliminary Assessment. SECAS will continue to progress the modification so that the Proposed Solution is closer to implementation should the delivery be dependent on the modifications process.

9. Recommendations

The TABASC is requested to:

- **PROVIDE** any views and comments on the questions set out in this paper.

Mike Fenn

SECAS Team

9 February 2023

Attachments:

Appendix A: MP208 Modification Report v0.3

Appendix B: MP208 DCC Preliminary Assessment v0.3