



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

**Department for Energy
Security & Net Zero**
3-8 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2AW

Angela Love
SEC Panel Chair

By email only

3 November 2025

Dear Angela,

REQUEST FOR ADVICE FROM THE SEC PANEL IN SUPPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VIRTUAL WAN ARRANGEMENTS LIVE SERVICES CRITERIA DECISIONS

The Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (the Department') requests Smart Energy Code (SEC) Panel advice as part of the Department's governance and assurance of Smart DCC Ltd.'s (the DCC') operational readiness to deploy changes to live systems before the commencement of the Virtual WAN Service to enable the Soft Launch of the Arrangements to commence on 30 January 2026.

We have publicly stated¹ that DCC must provide assurance that it has met relevant Live Services Criteria (LSC) to the Secretary of State and the SEC Panel. The DCC has been requested by the Department to provide such assurance to the Secretary of State and the SEC Panel in a letter issued today.

The DCC's assurance will take the form of the submission of assurance statements that must include:

- for each of the criteria listed in the Annex, a statement confirming the DCC's view that each of the criteria has been satisfied together with (a) its rationale supported by appropriate evidence for why it considers each of the criteria to have been satisfied, (b) details of any residual risks or workarounds including an impact assessment and a description of mitigations in place in respect of such residual risks, and (c) details of any work-off plans proposed by the DCC; and
- any further information that the DCC considers would be helpful to enable the Secretary of State to understand the DCC's conclusion that it sees no reason that prevents or would prevent the DCC from commencing provision of the relevant Services (or any part of the relevant Services) in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Smart Meter Communication Licence and the SEC.

The DCC must also, no later than 27 January 2026 following the submission of the above-mentioned assurance statements, submit to the Department a statement from the DCC's COO that DCC systems are stable.

Request for Information

In order to support the Secretary of State's decision with respect to the VWAN LSC, the Secretary of State requests the SEC Panel to review the assurance statements produced by

¹ smartenergycodecompany.co.uk/documents/sec/conclusions-for-july-2025-consultation-2-0/

the DCC concerning its readiness to commence provision of relevant Services (or any part of the relevant Services) and provide a recommendation to the Secretary of State in accordance with the following requirements:

- the Panel's recommendation should comprise its views on:
 - the assurance statements made by the DCC's CEO and the chair of the DCC's board of directors;
 - the DCC's rationale against each of the LSC listed in the Annex and
 - any residual risks and any workarounds or work-off plans proposed by the DCC, as well as any other information contained in the DCC's submission;
- the Panel's recommendation should provide views on the DCC's evidence for completion of testing phases pursuant to Appendix AY of the SEC (the SEC Variation Testing Approach Document for the Virtual WAN Solution), confirming that the exit criteria have been met as appropriate; and
- to maintain timelines, the Panel should provide its recommendation to the Secretary of State no later than 23 January 2026.

In this process the Panel should ask for support from SEC Panel Sub-Committees, in particular the Testing Advisory Group, Operations Group, SMKI Policy Management Authority and Security Sub-Committee.

I would be grateful if you would confirm that the SEC Panel is prepared to support the process set out above. I am copying this letter to Chris Lovatt (DCC CEO) and Ayena Gupta (Head of DCC Oversight, Ofgem).

Yours sincerely,



James Cosgrove

Deputy Director

Smart Metering Implementation Programme

(An official of the Department authorised to act on behalf of the Secretary of State)

Annex – Live Services Criteria for Virtual WAN Arrangements

Annex – Live Services Criteria for VWAN Arrangements

LSC Virtual WAN Soft Launch Go-Live Decision Criteria from DCC:

- **LSC1:** The DCC has demonstrated that it is ready to provide the VWAN Services required from the point of Soft Launch, in accordance with the requirements in the SEC.
- **LSC2:** The DCC has demonstrated that pre-existing services:
 - a. are currently stable; and
 - b. shall remain stable in production once changes are deployed and the Services are expanded to support Soft Launch.
- **LSC3:** VWAN SVTAD testing milestones have been completed prior to Soft Launch.
- **LSC4:** The DCC has demonstrated that there should be no detrimental impact to consumers' experience and Users' experience.
- **LSC5:** The DCC has demonstrated that the systems are adequately secure.