SEC
Smart Energy Code

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Action:	**For Decision**

November 2019 SEC Release update

1. Purpose

Following the Panel's consideration of the proposed scope of the November 2019 SEC Release (due to go live on 7 November 2019) in February 2019, we have sought further views from SEC Parties on the impacts and timing of this release. This paper summarises the current status of this release and the views we have received from Parties.

The Panel are requested to confirm whether they wish to proceed with a November 2019 SEC Systems Release and, if so, to agree the scope of this release on the DCC Systems.

2. History of this release

At the September 2018 Panel meeting[1] the Panel considered the scope of the November 2019 SEC Release. They noted that the total implementation costs would be significant and believed that implementing the changes proposed at the time in the November 2019 SEC Release, would not be cost-effective. They believed it would be more cost-effective for the changes to be implemented in the June 2020 SEC Release alongside other modifications and determined the November 2019 SEC Release should be a document-only release.

At the December 2018 Panel meeting[2] the DCC stated that any modifications delivered as part of the November 2019 SEC Release would incur no additional release costs beyond those stated up to the end of Pre-Integration Testing (PIT). The DCC would instead absorb the costs of the subsequent testing and release activities, leveraging other activity planned for the same period, such as the Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications 1 (SMETS1) Enrolment and Adoption programme happening at around the same time, and there would be no incremental costs to the Charging Statement for 2019/20. If this position were to change, the risk would be raised to the SEC Panel. The Panel agreed to this approach.

At the January 2019 Panel meeting[3] the Panel reviewed the scope of the November 2019 SEC Release, in light of the DCC's view of additional modifications they believed could be included within this release. Noting this and the DCC's proposed approach to costs for this release, the Panel believed it would now be cost-effective to include DCC System impacting modifications in the November 2019 SEC Release.

[1] Please see Panel paper SECP_60_1409_19 for full details.
[2] Please see the minutes for Panel paper SECP_63_1412_16 for further details.
[3] Please see Panel paper SECP_64_1101_09 for further details.

The DCC costs provided in the Modification Reports for all candidate modifications are up to the end of PIT. As the costs for subsequent stages are not being incurred under this release, these are the complete costs of implementing these modifications, as long as they are included in this release.

At the February 2019 Panel[4] meeting, the Panel reviewed and baselined the Release Implementation Document (RID) for this release. It was highlighted that some of the proposed changes may have significant implications for some Users, and that a further release in between the Middle and Final Operating Capability (MOC and FOC) releases may place too much impact on Parties. The Panel noted there would be cost-savings associated with implementing modifications in November 2019, and that this presents an opportunity to implement approved modifications. However, the Panel were not clear whether Parties would want this release at this time, or what the benefits of implementing these changes at this time would be compared to implementing them in a later release. It was noted that SEC Releases fall under the Panel's jurisdiction, and it is therefore the Panel's decision whether or not to proceed with a release and what is included in it.

The Panel requested SECAS to consult with Users on the scope and the timing of this release and on whether the impacts of the release would be manageable if implemented at this time. The Panel determined to provisionally agree the scope of the release, and to revisit this in March 2019, in light of any responses received from Parties. The DCC noted that the scope for the November 2019 Release will need to be confirmed by the end of March, in order for them to proceed.

3. Update on the scope of this release

The November 2019 SEC Release currently has six DCC System impacting modifications for which approval has or could be obtained in time for them to be implemented in November 2019. The latest progress on these modifications are summarised in the table below:

Modification	Status
SECMP0023 'Correct Units of Measure for Uncontrolled Gas Flow Rate'	Approved for implementation on 7 November 2019.
SECMP0025 'Electricity Network Party Access to Load Switching Information'	The Change Board recommended this modification be rejected on 27 February 2019. SECMP0025 will be implemented on 7 November 2019 if the Authority approves the change by 31 March 2019.
SECMP0039 'Communication Hub returns notification mechanism for Other SEC Parties'	The Change Board voted to approve SECMP0039 on 20 February 2019 under Self-Governance for implementation on 7 November 2019.
SECMP0053 'Amend Target Response Times for Service Requests Critical to Installation and Commissioning Processes'	SECMP0053 is currently undergoing Preliminary Assessment. We are anticipating the Modification Report to be presented to the Panel at the May 2019 meeting. The DCC has highlighted that a later date would mean it would be unlikely to be included in the November release.
SECMP0060 'Amend Requirements to remove 'Pending' devices from SMI'	The Modification Report is being presented to the Panel this month. If the Panel approves this report, the Change Board will vote on SECMP0060 on 24 April 2019 under Self-Governance.

[4] Please see Panel paper SECP_65_1502_16 for full details.

Modification	Status
SECMP0062 'Northbound Application Traffic Management – Alert Storm Protection'	SECMP0062 has undergone Preliminary Assessment and the Working Group is preparing its Working Group Consultation. The Impact Assessment also needs to be completed; we are proposing doing this in parallel with the consultation, although note the cost of this assessment would be around £17,000. We are anticipating the Modification Report to be presented to the Panel at the May 2019 meeting. The DCC has highlighted that a later date would mean it would be unlikely to be included in the November release

Following this meeting, we will update the published RID to reflect the current status of the release.

4. Views on this release

4.1 Views from Parties

We issued a request for views and comments from Parties following the February 2019 Panel meeting. Two Parties responded with views and comments.

One respondent noted that the RID states that the changes will be delivered via an uplift of the DCC User Interface Specification (DUIS) to version 3.1 (rather than version 4.0) which they welcomed. They also sought confirmation that there will be no mandatory user testing for this release, and also that there will be no requirement for User Systems to be upgraded to this release on or by a specific date. As this release comes at a time of other significant change, noting in particular MOC and FOC, they consider there will need to be a degree of flexibility provided to SEC Parties in terms of the timing of their own upgrades to make use of the new functionality.

The other respondent did not have any material concerns regarding the scope of this release and the impact that the changes listed might have on their organisation. They note these are mainly minor changes to DUIS and most of the changes will not directly impact their systems or processes.

They did express significant concerns regarding the timing of this release, noting MOC and FOC, meaning that there is likely to be a lot of change going on within a relatively short period of time. This is likely to increase the risk associated with implementing the November 2019 SEC Release. The scale of this risk is impossible to determine without further details of the exact timings for the implementation of any changes.

They also noted the uplift in DUIS to version 3.1, which they assumed means that those Users operating on version 3.0 would be forced to upgrade. It is not clear how long the period will be between these two versions, and whether this might need to be extended if there are post-implementation issues with version 3.0 that would make it impossible (or at least not sensible) to implement version 3.1.

They also felt it was unclear what this might mean for the availability of testing environments. They assumed that some Users would still be on DUIS version 2.0 at the time that these changes are due to be implemented, and so would need access to a test environment at that version. It would need to be confirmed that the DCC will be able to make available and support the relevant testing environments that would be required to support the proposed release strategy.

They concluded that they would require further detail, especially in regard to timings and testing, before they could say that it would be possible for them to implement the proposed November 2019 SEC Release.

The DCC has informed us that mandatory user testing would be required for this release, due to the uplift to DUIS. For this, the DCC will be seeking at least two or three Users to have successfully tested against the new version. Other participants will not need to get involved in user testing unless they wanted to. We are reviewing what this means for the testing timelines in the RID and will provide an update at the Panel meeting. We will also work with the DCC to accelerate production of the first draft of the Testing Approach Document (TAD).

The DCC confirmed that the Data Service Provider (DSP) will support both versions 3.0 and 3.1 of DUIS, noting this is a period of significant change for Users which they would not want to complicate with removing support for version 3.0. However, they did highlight the longer-term cost of maintaining support for both versions, which are due to the additional regression testing that would be required when changes are made and not to the complexity of the software. The DCC have no immediate plans to stop supporting version 3.0, and certainly would not do so whilst MOC and FOC were being implemented. They highlight their obligation to deliver value for money, which would mean seeking to reduce regression testing costs, noting that as well as these two versions, the DCC also provides support for DUIS versions 1.0 and 2.0. They therefore reserve the right to stop supporting older DUIS versions (with sufficient notice given to Users, likely at least 12 months) in the longer term.

On testing, the DCC will continue with the current test environments strategy whereby User Integration Testing environment A (UIT-A) will mirror the production system, and environment B (UIT-B) will contain the next major release. Therefore, Users will be able to access a test environment (UIT-A) against which they can reproduce problems they find in production.

We have passed the DCC's comments back to the respondents and will update the Panel on any further developments.

4.2 Views from Sub-Committees

At their meeting on 21 February 2019, the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) raised concerns over the number of different dates when new versions of the GB Companion Specification (GBCS) changes were planned to be released in 2019. They highlighted that:

- SECMP0018 'Standard Electricity Distributor Configuration Settings' has been approved for implementation on 27 June 2019 (June 2019 SEC Release) with SECMP0055 'Incorporation of multiple Issue Resolution Proposals into the SEC' (if approved) originally targeted for the same release; both of these modifications introduce changes to GBCS.
- BEIS are currently consulting on changes to GBCS that would likely be implemented around September 2019.
- SECMP0023 and SECMP0025 (if approved) would then introduce a further version of GBCS on 7 November 2019.

We have spoken with BEIS over the potential to implement their changes on 7 November 2019, to align with the November 2019 SEC Release, and they are supportive of this approach. We will also propose SECMP0055 for inclusion in the November 2019 SEC Release.

We recommend to the Panel that SECMP0018 is moved to the November 2019 SEC Release, consolidating all the GBCS changes into one release to go live at the same time.

5. Next steps

In order to allow the DCC to be able to commence work, the Panel needs to confirm at this meeting whether to proceed with the proposed November 2019 SEC Systems Release for implementation on 7 November 2019.

If the Panel decides to proceed, they will need to confirm which modifications are to be included. If any or all of the candidate modifications are to be postponed to a later release, the Panel will need to determine which release to move these to (with the June 2020 SEC Release expected to be the next available release, subject to agreement on how full DCC implementation costs are to be managed). For SECMP0023, SECMP0025 (if approved) and SECMP0039, revised implementation dates would also need to be requested from the Authority.

In either case, modifications that do not impact on the DCC Systems (document-only changes) could still be included in the November 2019 SEC Release.

6. Recommendations

The Panel are requested to:

- **AGREE** whether to proceed with a November 2019 SEC Systems Release;
- **AGREE** the modifications (that impact the DCC Systems) to be included in the scope of the November 2019 SEC Release; and
- **AGREE** to request a revised implementation date from the Authority for SECMP0018 of 7 November 2019.

David Kemp

SECAS Team

8 March 2019