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SECMP0063 ‘Ensuring correct Network Operator Certificates are placed on Electricity Smart Meters’

Working Group Meeting summary

2 November 2018, 10:00 – 14:00, Gemserv’s Offices

Scale and cause of the issue

The Proposer advised that Distribution Network Operators track the levels of incorrect Network Operator Certificates placed on Smart Meters and have found that although the overall percentage of affected Smart Meters is dropping, the volumes are still increasing. This issue also seems to be affecting Smart Meters commissioned by Small Supplier Parties more than those supplied by Large Supplier Parties.

Furthermore, an Electricity Network Operator advised that they had seen instances of their Certificates placed on Gas Proxy Functions in their area and that these were generated by an automated process. Furthermore, as Gas Transporters do not communicate with their Smart Meters as frequently, they would not notice these errors as quickly.

One Distribution Network Operator advised that they were confident that they could change their Certificates which had been placed on Smart Meters by suppliers in error. However, they had only carried this out in a test environment.

The Proposer advised that current efforts were focused on preventing the problem by training, increasing awareness and briefing suppliers, but that despite these efforts there will still inevitably be errors in the commissioning process. The Working Group agreed that SECAS could assist in emphasising the repercussions on using incorrect Certificates on Smart Meters

Change in the legal text

The Working Group were asked to consider a solution that would not impact DCC systems and agreed that the wording in the SEC only implied that Supplier Parties should place the correct Certificates on Smart Meters but did not explicitly state that they had to use a ‘correct’ Certificate. The Working Group advised that the modification could amend the wording of this obligation in SEC Appendix AC, 5.2 to be clearer on placing correct Certificates on Smart Meters. However, this wasn’t the preferred option with the Working Group.

Proposed Solutions

The Working Group established that Service Requests 6.15.1 and 6.21 were used to update the security credentials for Smart Meters. A Working Group member advised that most of the Supplier Parties that they had spoken to about this issue were using Service Request 6.21 to update the security credentials on their meters. Taking this into consideration the Working Group proposed that an additional response code to Service Request 6.21 could be used to validate the Certificate against

the first two digits of the MPAN, whilst ensuring DCC would still be able to place recovery keys on the meter.

The method Suppliers used to send Service Requests during commissioning of meters was discussed and the Working Group believed that the majority of Large Suppliers sent these in batches overnight via an automated process. The Working Group agreed that an additional question asking Small Suppliers how they sent their Service Requests requesting security credentials should be added to the Working Group Consultation questions.

A Working Group member advised that under SMETS1, DCC were looking to validate registration data against that of the Registration Data Provider. It was proposed that this method could also be used as a potential solution to this modification and that rather than validating against only MPAN numbers, DCC could validate Certificates against their registration data.

The Working Group agreed that it would be useful to have reporting for the types of error codes and the number of times they were sent to suppliers and that a question should be added to the consultation asking Suppliers how they track the existing error codes.

List of actions

- DCC will feedback to their Service Providers and advise SECAS in the next two weeks if any further points of clarification are required for the Business Requirements.
- SECAS will then submit a request for a Preliminary Assessment using the Business Requirements established in the Working Group meeting.