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SEC Panel Meeting 38x

Meeting SECP_38x_2411, 24th November 2016

10:00 – 11:30, Gemserv, 8 Fenchurch Place, London, EC3M 4AJ

Final Minutes

Attendees:

Category	SEC Panel Members
SEC Panel Chair	Peter Davies
Large Suppliers	Simon Trivella
	Alex Travell
Small Suppliers	Eric Graham (Teleconference)
	Mike Gibson (Teleconference)
Electricity Networks	David Lane (Teleconference)
Gas Networks	Hilary Chapman (Teleconference)
Other SEC Parties	Hugh Mullens
	Mike Woodhall (Teleconference)
Consumer Member	Morgan Wild (Observer, Teleconference)
DCC	Paul Hawkins

Representing	Other Participants
BEIS (Secretary of State)	Duncan Stone (Teleconference)
	Stuart Featham (Teleconference)
DCC	Jane Eccles
	Dave Broady
	Erika Melen
Meeting Secretary	Mertcan Agir
SECAS	Sarah Gratte
	Jill Ashby

1. DCC Live Panel Considerations and Decision Activities

SECAS informed the Panel of the areas and activities that the Panel are required to consider as part of the DCC Live Release 1.2 (R1.2) decision making process. SECAS highlighted that a similar process had been followed in the lead-up to this meeting, as had been previously conducted for the 3rd November 2016 Panel meeting for the Interim Exit Report for the Central and South (C&S) Regions.

The Panel Chair confirmed that the business for this meeting was:

- receiving:
 - the SIT Exit Report for Systems Integration Testing (SIT) in the North Region;
 - the SIT completion report for SIT Stream 4 in the C&S Regions;
 - the updated independent SIT auditor's report, for C&S Regions; and
 - the independent SIT auditor's report for the N Region;
- approving:
 - the Interface Testing (IT) Exit Report for and N Region; and
 - the IT completion report for SIT Stream 4 in the C&S Regions; and
- considering the DCC Live Criteria Report (Assertion Letter), with a view to determining feedback (if any) that should be included within the Panel letter to BEIS for consideration as part of their DCC Live decision making process.

2. DCC Live (Release 1.2) SIT Exit Report

The Testing Advisory Group (TAG) Chair provided the Panel with an overview of the activities and discussions of the TAG meetings of 21st and 22nd November 2016 in order to consider the evidence provided in support of the above-listed reports. The Panel were informed that a robust and rigorous review had taken place and the DCC had provided expert personnel at the meetings to inform discussions. In summary, the TAG were of the view that the reports provided a fair and accurate representation of testing that had been undertaken against all the Exit Criteria for the Central, South and North Regions.

The TAG Chair confirmed that, as with R1.2, the review included sight of the latest position on Testing Issues that had been raised since the reports had been issued. Whilst some clarifications requested by TAG during the meetings had been provided, there were some outstanding matters that TAG wished to draw to Panel's attention. These are considered in the following sections.

2.1 DCC Release 1.2 SIT Exit Report – North Region

The TAG Chair noted that an erratum had been identified which included misreporting in the number of tests implemented against meters. This had been corrected in version 1.1 of the report provided to the TAG on 22nd November 2016.

Other observations included similar matters raised previously for the C&S Regions, such as maintaining focus on achieving the required timescale for fixes on outstanding Severity 3 and 4 defects and clarity on when they would be implemented. The DCC assured the Panel that any recurrence of the Major Incident experienced with Communications Hubs subsequent to DCC Live in the C&S Regions was avoided for the N Region Go Live.

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The TAG had confirmed they were of the view that the Exit Criteria had been satisfied for all SIT streams in the N Region and the only redactions identified by the DCC related to the removal of individual's names.

The Panel:

- **NOTED** the contents of the SIT Exit Report;
- **NOTED** the contents of the independent SIT auditor's report;
- **NOTED** the observations raised by the TAG;
- **AGREED** the proposed minor redactions to remove individual's names; and
- **DIRECTED** the DCC to make copies of the report available to Parties, the Registration Data Providers (RDPs) and Testing Participants with the agreed minor redactions.

2.2 DCC Release 1.2 SIT completion - Central and South Regions

The Panel were informed that the remaining SIT Stream 4 testing (Registered Supplier Agent (RSA) and Other User Roles (4a) and Mesh Communication Hubs variants (4b)) had been completed. The TAG had no comments on the addendum to the Interim Exit Report issued by the DCC or the independent SIT auditor's report regarding SIT Stream 4. However, the TAG were disappointed that an issue regarding Communications Hub had arisen, which impacted Suppliers' ability to commence End to End (E2E) testing. Whilst the Exit Criteria have been satisfied, experience following DCC Live for SIT Streams 1-3 indicates that system stability may not be at a suitable maturity and that operational readiness considerations must take into account all services that will be enabled.

In terms of any redactions, the DCC had advised these would only relate to the removal of individual's names.

The Panel:

- **NOTED** the contents of the addendum to the Interim SIT Exit Report;
- **NOTED** the contents of the independent SIT auditor's Report;
- **NOTED** the observations raised by the TAG;
- **AGREED** the proposed minor redactions to remove individual's names; and
- **DIRECTED** the DCC to make copies of the reports available to Parties, the RDPs and Testing Participants with the agreed minor redactions.

3. DCC Live (Release 1.2) IT Exit Report

The IT reports and supporting evidence for the N Region and the completion report for IT in the C&S Regions were reviewed and discussed. As before, the TAG were also given sight of testing issues raised by Testing Participants (TPs) since IT had concluded and, in the case of C&S, discussed some production issues that had arisen since DCC Live for SIT Stream 1-3.

The TAG Chair advised that, whilst the exit criteria had now been satisfied for all Regions, there were areas of concern that should be noted, as set out below.

3.1 DCC Release 1.2 IT Completion - North Region

Firstly, three Severity 2 issues¹ had been raised in IT by a TP but had been subsequently classified as Severity 3 defects by the DCC. These defects related to the Gas Proxy Function (GPF) and the workarounds identified by the DCC were not fit for purpose. Consequently, these defects should be fixed as a priority, notwithstanding that, under the DCC's classification, they are within the defect mask. The DCC had confirmed that a fix had been identified and that this was planned for release shortly after the Go Live release. Subject to successful re-testing of the fix by the TP, it was recommended that this defect need not be an impediment to DCC Live, on condition that the planned implementation to a production release is fulfilled shortly after DCC Live².

A disparity between the DCC's and Supplier's expectation of testing coverage for Prepayment Meter Interface Devices (PPMIDs) was identified during the TAG review of open testing issues. This stemmed from Release 1.3 (R1.3) being the target release for pre-payment functionality. During User Entry Process Tests (UEPT), a TP had encountered an unexpected response to a Service Request (SR) to join a PPMID and raised it as a testing issue³, which in the TP's view was a Severity 2 issue rather than the Severity 3 assigned by the DCC. As the indications were that this may relate to a Communications Hub issue, and the scenario had not been tested in the C&S Regions, the DCC raised it as a production issue in order to expedite its resolution. This was still under investigation at the time of the TAG meetings and the recommendation of the issuing paper (*SECP_38x_2411_02 & 03*) was that a mutually agreed resolution plan be a pre-condition to DCC Live. The DCC provided a verbal update to the Panel that the investigation had since determined that the defect did not lie with the Communications Hub and subsequent DCC testing with a PPMID from a manufacturer had successfully joined that device. Subject to the TP agreeing with the resolution the testing issue would then be closed. The DCC confirmed they will continue working in co-operation with TPs who require PPMID tests whilst in UEPT.

The Panel:

- **NOTED** the IT Exit Report in respect of the North Region;
- **NOTED** observations from the TAG and their formal recommendation;
- **DETERMINED** the IT Exit Criteria have been satisfied in respect of the North Region taking into consideration the recommendation from the TAG;
- **AGREED** the proposed minor redactions to remove individual's names; and
- **DIRECTED** the DCC to publish the reports pursuant to SEC Section T3.25 with the agreed minor redactions

3.2 DCC Release 1.2 IT Completion – Central and South Regions

SIT Stream 4a comprised the User Roles of Other and Registered Supplier Agent and 4b comprised of Mesh Communications Hub Variants. As such, no further IT was conducted as this is not required by the SEC. The TAG had no material comments on this report, but the TAG Chair drew Panel's attention to matters raised in discussions of the post-DCC Live experience for these Regions.

The TAG are of the view that there is uncertainty regarding the stability of the systems and services, as evidenced by the Major Incident that has been raised and practical issues arising in E2E testing. Users are dependent on these to ensure they can fulfil their obligations and improvements to the

¹ Testing Issue #10551, #10552 and #10553

² This had been scheduled for a release on the 3rd December 2016

³ Testing Issue #10848

operationalisation of services are imperative. Although these do not relate to IT itself, it was recommended that the Panel take this into consideration when considering their response to the Assertion Letter.

The Panel:

- **NOTED** the completion of IT in respect of the Central and South Regions;
- **NOTED** observations from the TAG and their formal recommendation;
- **DETERMINED** the remaining IT Exit Criteria have been satisfied in respect of the Central and South Region; and
- **DIRECTED** the DCC to publish the report, noting the minor redactions agreed in respect of individual's names.

4. DCC Live Criteria Report – Assertion Letter (Central, South and North Regions)

In order to support the DCC Live Decision making process, the DCC provided the Panel and the Secretary of State (SoS) with the DCC Live Criteria Report. This acts as notification that the DCC are operationally ready for Go Live in the Central, South and North Regions. The Panel were asked to review and comment on the reports and detail the outcomes of the review within a letter to be directed to the SoS.

The DCC noted that Annex B remained broadly unchanged from that issued for DCC Live for the Interim Exit in C&S Regions, and highlighted changes to Annex C. This included changes to the target work-off completion date for one item under the Enrolment and Communication Services Ready criterion. Updates on all items will be provided by DCC through the Implementation Managers Forum (IMF). The DCC also informed the Panel that, for Communications Hubs, two additional tests will be carried out at the end of December 2016 to provide further assurance for the N Region. The DCC representative assured the Panel this additional confidence testing will ensure firmware download and traffic management are fit for purpose. The Panel were informed there will be no User impact as service-management processes are migrated to the Service Management System (SMS) which will be undertaken before the end of December 2016. The Panel agreed that this would provide further transparency to Testing Participants.

The Panel walked through the assurance statement set out against each of the Live Services Criteria in Annex D. The DCC noted that the Transitional Variations had been removed for the Interim Exit in the C&S Regions (relating to SIT Streams 1-3) and a Parse and Correlate (P&C) defect identified in UEPT in respect of all Regions had been resolved.

The Panel recommended the following outstanding items should be complete prior to DCC Live in the North Region:

- the three Severity 2 defects raised in UEPT⁴ associated with the GPF are closed by the Testing Participants and the fix is deployed into production code; and
- to seek assurance from the DCC and the Testing Participants that the Severity 2 defect associated with the PPMID does not lie with the DCC Systems.

⁴ Testing Issue #10551, #10552 and #10553

In addition, the Panel highlighted the concerns of the TAG and requested commitment from the DCC on enduring stable service delivery. The operational readiness of the DCC needs to factor in all the services that are enabled at Go Live in each Region. This includes issues that may affect E2E testing which is on the critical path for Suppliers to appropriately test their devices prior to deployment of smart meters to consumer's premises, which is a fundamental aim of the Programme.

The Panel noted that there were no further comments to be raised in the letter to the SoS, and SECAS agreed to update the letter in line with the discussions and provide a version to the Panel for comment prior to sending it to the SoS by close of play 3rd November 2016.

The Panel further discussed the processes that had been undertaken with a need for a lessons learnt implementation to take place following the completion of the process. A Panel Member expressed that they were satisfied with the support that was provided by TAG, by providing the required expertise through the process.

The Panel:

- **NOTED** the contents of the DCC Live Criteria Report in the form of the Assertion Letter;
- **CONSIDERED and COMMENTED** on the contents of the Assertion Letter; and
- **AGREED** the comments to be captured in the letter to be submitted to the SoS, and copied to the DCC, in response to their letter dated 17th November 2016, reflecting those raised throughout the Panel's discussion.

ACTION SECP38x/01: SECAS to update the draft letter for Panel review prior to submitting the letter to the SoS, in response to their letter dated 17th November 2016, and including the captured comments raised throughout the Panel's discussion.

5. DCC Release R1.3 Consultation

The DCC issued a consultation on a revised approach to the delivery of DCC R1.3 on 21st November 2016. Broadly, the DCC proposed plan involved moving the milestone for R1.3 Live from 12th December 2016 to 3rd March 2017, with one month of contingency (to 3rd April 2017) to be held by the DCC. The plan will contain relevant milestones and Control Points. The key testing changes highlighted included the Pre-Integration Testing (PIT), noting the remaining R1.3 functionality is to occur in parallel to SIT, with completion of PIT by 31st January 2017 being on the Critical Path.

The Panel highlighted a likelihood of the approval process for SIT being more consuming than that for IT. Consequently, it was strongly recommended that the supporting documentation is provided by the DCC in a timely manner. A Panel Member noted that the Panel's role and function in approving the R1.3 SIT Exit process needs to be clear, unambiguous and proportionate to the Panel's responsibilities.

The Panel Chair noted that individual Parties will be identifying their views of the risks of the revised approach and management of defects throughout the phases. Noting the observations from the TAG in regards to the lessons learnt from R1.2, the Panel highlighted the need to increase the efficacy of testing, particularly taking account experience of subsequent testing issues raised in R1.2 UEPT and End to End Testing. However, the Panel response would focus on the governance aspects of the proposed approach, particularly in the absence of any draft SEC provisions supporting the proposal. A Panel Member raised that in regards to the revised approach set out in the consultation, it will need to focus on the end-to-end and overall approach for delivery of DCC R1.3.

The Panel **NOTED** the contents of the update and advised SECAS to prepare a draft response that summarises the views raised in the Panel and TAG discussions for agreement prior to circulating the response to DCC.

ACTION SECP38x/02: SECAS to provide a draft response to the DCC R1.3 consultation to the Panel Members for review prior to submitting to the DCC by the response deadline on 5th December 2016.

6. Any Other Business (AOB)

There was no further business and the Chair closed the meeting.