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DP116 'Service Request Forecasting'

Modification Report Version 0.3

Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer
communication

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About this document

This document is a draft Modification Report. It currently sets out the background, issue, and progression timetable for this modification, along with any relevant discussions, views and conclusions. This document will be updated as this modification progresses.

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1. Summary

This proposal has been raised by Graeme Liggett from the Data Communications Company (DCC).

Currently, for each quarter of the year, DCC Users must submit to the DCC an eight-month forecast of the number of Service Requests that the User anticipates sending. It is believed that each forecast takes an average of two days for each User to complete. These forecasts are intended to assist in managing demand on the DCC User Interface Services. The DCC has raised a concern that the accuracy of the forecasts does not meet the level required to produce useful data that will improve the management of demand on the DCC User Interface Services.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

Smart Energy Code (SEC) Section H3.21 requires that by the 15th Working Day of January, April, July and October, each User must provide the DCC with a forecast of future traffic. The forecast must include the number of Service Requests that the User will send in each of the eight months following the end of the month in which the forecast is provided (e.g. in January the forecast would cover February to September). This forecast is intended to provide accurate figures to assist in managing demand for DCC User Interface Services.

What is the issue?

The DCC estimates each of these forecasts requires two days of effort per User to produce. However, as the forecasts provide a monthly estimate of Service Requests due to be sent, the level of granularity hinders the accuracy of each forecast.

The DCC believes that the obligation on Users to provide these forecasts should be removed, as the level of accuracy each forecast provides is insufficient. It has been suggested that there are more detailed methods of capturing the data required by the DCC to provide worthwhile assistance in DCC User Interface Service management.

The increasing breadth and depth of high frequency data captured in real time by the DCC can be used to provide both short-term load forecasts (STLF) and long-term load forecasts (LTLF) for load and system performance prediction. These modelled predictions carry the promise of allowing better control and balance of capacity, through continuous visibility of detailed service usage and consumption patterns, compared to Service User Service Request forecasts. This enables better designs and results in improved triggers of DCC demand response actions. This provides input to the DCC planning for growth and changes. Service Users are also able to gain better awareness of their own consumption patterns with this information.

This should provide a higher level of accuracy compared with the current process, where the forecasts have been found to be approximately 30% accurate.

DCC Load Forecasting types	
Forecasting	Description
Short-term load forecasts (STLF)	In this context, STLF handles predictions of 24 hours (next-day predictions) to 168 hours (next-week predictions) and typically relies on time series analysis and modelling. These methods consider variables such as the date (for example, day of week and minute of the day), weather events and, most importantly, historical load.
Medium-term load forecasting (MTLF)	MTLF used the same information as STLF and handle predictions from one week up to one year.
Long-term load forecasting (LTLF)	LTLF provides predictions over multiple years. These are produced by the regression on input variables, which in addition to historic load, typically incorporate installation and commission projections as well as industry events (for example, the energy price cap).

What is the impact this is having?

If nothing is changed, Service Users will continue to expend resources to submit Service Request Forecasts despite them not providing the granularity required, while modelling based on actual usage is a better indication over multiple timescales of future traffic.

3. Assessment of the proposal

Observations on the issue

The proposal was presented for initial discussion at the Change Sub-Committee (CSC). CSC members approved of the proposal and were supportive of the obligation of DCC Users to submit quarterly forecasts being removed.

The proposal has been presented to each SEC Sub-Committee and has received positive feedback. Each Sub-Committee was happy for the proposal to progress and the Operations Group (OPSG) wished to be kept up to date with the progress of the proposal.

Once feedback was obtained from each SEC Sub-Committee, the proposal was taken to the CSC for recommendation to be converted into a Modification Proposal and enter the Refinement Process. CSC members were happy with the progress made and wanted to make sure it will be clear if the DCC will be adding new requirements to the SEC as well as removing the obligations of DCC Users. A CSC member also suggested that the proposal could proceed straight to the Report Phase. One CSC member queried if the changes proposed under this proposal could create new issues later that would need further modifications to resolve. They wanted to ensure that whatever solution is developed is designed to be enduring. Another member supported the proposal to remove forecasting but queried what the DCC was going to put in its place. Members agreed these questions needed to be answered during the Refinement Process.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

The suggested timetable for DP116 is for the Draft Proposal to be at the next Panel meeting for conversion to a Modification Proposal and to enter the Refinement Process on 17 April 2020.

Timetable	
Action	Date
Draft Proposal raised	18 Feb 2020
Presented to CSC initial comment	25 Feb 2020
Presented to CSC for final comment and recommendations	31 Mar 2020
Panel converts Draft Proposal to Modification Proposal	17 Apr 2020
Business requirements developed with DCC	20 Apr – 8 May 2020
Business requirements discussed with OPSG	2 Jun 2020
Preliminary Assessment requested	8 Jun 2020
Preliminary Assessment returned	3 Jul 2020
Modification discussed with Working Group	5 Aug 2020
Update Panel	14 Aug 2020

Appendix 2: Glossary

This table lists all the acronyms used in this document and the full term they are an abbreviation for.

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
CSC	Change Sub-Committee
DCC	Data Communications Company
LTLF	Long-Term Load Forecasting
MTLF	Medium-Term Load Forecasting
SEC	Smart Energy Code
STLF	Short-Term Load Forecasting