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DP117 'Bulk CH returns'

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.

Contents

1. Summary.....	3
2. Issue.....	4
3. Assessment of the proposal	5
Appendix 1: Progression timetable	6
Appendix 2: Glossary	7

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1. Summary

This proposal has been raised by Sasha Townsend from the Data Communications Company (DCC).

Smart Energy Code (SEC) Section F5 'Communication Hub Forecasts & Orders' allows any SEC Party to place orders for Communications Hubs (CHs) from the DCC. Specified SEC Parties can notify the DCC under SEC Section F8.7 in the event of needing to return the CH. This is done by submitting either DCC User Interface Specification (DUIS) Service Requests 8.14.3 or 8.14.4.

Currently, these Service Requests allow DCC Users to input one Global Unique Identifier (GUID) per request. This means that DCC Users must send an individual Service Request to notify the DCC of each CH return. This takes a significant amount of time and effort when multiple CHs require return. DCC Users have stated that this is not a sustainable approach in dealing with returns and have requested the ability to upload and trigger all the necessary Service Requests relating to a bulk CH return.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

SEC Section F5 'Communication Hub Forecasts & Orders' allows any SEC Party to place orders for CHs. Any Supplier Party can notify the DCC under SEC Section F8.7 if they need to return a CH. A Party wishing to return a CH is entitled to do so at any time.

Parties currently return Communications Hubs to the DCC for several reasons, including:

- A CH fault/defect is identified either prior or post installation;
- CHs are destroyed or damaged in transit/storage; or
- The DCC requests that Parties return CHs to the DCC because of a Product Recall/Technology Refresh.

SEC Appendix I 'Communications Hub Installation and Maintenance Support Materials' (CHIMSM) currently sets out the procedures for notifying the DCC of a CH return. It requires DCC Users to submit one of two Service Requests (SR) depending on the reason for return:

- SR 8.14.3 'Communications Hub Status Update – Fault Return'; or
- SR 8.14.4 'Communications Hub Status Update – No Fault Return'.

On submission of a SR 8.14.3 or a SR 8.14.4, a Returns Remedy Record is automatically generated, which starts a CH returns process (approx. 90 days) from the DCC User back to the DCC.

What is the issue?

Currently, these SRs allow DCC Users to input one GUID per request. This means that DCC Users must send an individual Service Request to notify the DCC of each CH return.

DCC Users are reporting that to trigger an individual Service Request can take a significant amount of time and effort per CH. They have stated that this is not a sustainable approach in dealing with returns. Therefore, DCC Users have requested the ability to upload and trigger all the necessary Service Requests relating to a bulk CH return.

What is the impact this is having?

If this issue is not addressed, it will continue to cause inefficiencies, duplicating time and effort for DCC Users attempting to return multiple CHs.

3. Assessment of the proposal

Observations on the issue

When this Draft Proposal was taken for initial comment to the Change Sub-Committee (CSC), members didn't have any comments on the proposal. Members agreed it would benefit from seeking additional input from the Panel Sub-Committees and SEC Parties before being considered for conversion to a Modification Proposal.

A Large Supplier enquired into two types of Service Request they have to trigger as part of their business returns process, SR 8.14.1 and SR 8.14.2, which are both CH Status Update (8.14.1 for Install Success and 8.14.2 for Install no Smart Metering Wide Area Network (SM WAN)). The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) took note of these and asked the Proposer if there was scope to include these Service Requests in the Draft Proposal. The Proposer confirmed that they had no plan to include the mentioned Service Requests due to not explicitly being part of the returns process for a CH. They did express however if there was a benefit to grouping those specific Service Requests together, that this should be followed up as a separate Draft Proposal.

The Draft Proposal was taken to the Panel Sub-Committees. The Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) were supportive, with one member stating that there is definitely an issue that needs addressing. It wanted to know whether other areas of the SEC would have to be changed as well as any technical specification impacts. It also enquired if it is down to the individual User and their business processes for how Service Requests are submitted. One TABASC member indicated there was a considerable amount of documentation required alongside Service Requests and wondered how this would be dealt with. SECAS confirmed that the TABASC would be kept updated with any developments in the Draft Proposal and would be involved in the proposal's Refinement Process if converted to a Modification Proposal.

The CSC concluded that the issue was fully understood and that this proposal should proceed as a full Modification Proposal.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

The recommended path for this Draft Proposal is conversion to a Modification Proposal and to enter the Refinement Process. The CSC will be asked to recommend that the Panel converts this to a Modification Proposal on the basis that industry feels this an issue that needs resolving and that the existing process needs improvement. Following conversion SECAS will hold discussions with the DCC to construct business requirements which will be used to request and receive a Preliminary Assessment.

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 TABASC	4 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
CH	Communications Hub
CHISM	Communications Hub Installation and Maintenance Support Materials
CSC	Change Sub-Committee
DCC	Data Communications Company
DUIS	DCC User Interface Specification
GUID	Global Unique Identifier
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SECAS	Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
SM WAN	Smart Metering Wide Area Network
SR	Service Request
TABASC	Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee