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MP122 ‘Operational Metrics’

June 2020 Working Group Meeting summary

Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Ali Beard	SECAS
Joe Hehir	SECAS
Joey Manners	SECAS
Damian Bevan	Gemserv
David Walsh	DCC
Chun Chen	DCC
Mari Toda	DCC
Remi Oluwabamise	DCC
Robbie Macintosh	DCC
Michael Walls	Ofgem
Simon Trivella	British Gas
Paul Saker	EDF
Chiko Wade	Imserv
John Noad	Npower
Mahfuzar Rahman	Scottish Power
Emslie Law	SSE
Matthew Alexander	SSE
Fotis Tsompanidis	Trilliant
Daniel Davis	Utiligroup
Gemma Slaney	WPD

Overview

Issue

In its monthly review of the Performance Measurement Report (PMR), the Operations Group found it increasingly difficult to report to the Panel on the issues within the report and therefore the Operational Metrics review was carried out.

It found:

- Instances where the reported performance is contradictory to the operational experience of Users;
- the metrics, although correct, did not appear to reflect the impact of performance issues on Users; and
- gaps in reporting whereby aspects of operational performance are not being addressed by the current set of metrics.

Proposed Solution

As a result, the Operational Metrics Review (OMR) was carried out which made several recommendations to improve the transparency and accuracy of the PMR to Users.

MP122 has been raised to implement those recommendations that require amendments to the Code. The following five business requirements were identified from the recommendations the Data Communications Company (DCC) has carried out a Preliminary Assessment against each of these:

1. The DCC will report and measure monthly service performance for User business processes using Service Reference Variants (SRVs)
2. The DCC shall add specific outcome-based measures to the PMR to provide a Measure of performance as well as Indicators on the success of the key business processes
3. The DCC will measure end to end service availability across the DCC environment and report this by Communication Services Provider (CSP) region
4. The DCC shall reduce the time it takes to create the PMR to within ten Working Days from the end of the measurement reporting period
5. In relation to Code Performance Measure (CPM) 5, the DCC will improve transparency in the reporting provided for incident Categories 3, 4 and 5

DCC's Preliminary Assessment

Requirement 1

The DCC noted that whilst requirement 1 is achievable, the requirement identifies multiple SRVs to measure against ten business processes. This inevitably carries a degree of complexity which the Technical Operations Centre (TOC) would have to design a solution to facilitate.

The DCC also noted that certain SRVs are harder to measure than others, given that Users follow business processes in different ways e.g. Install and Commission.

Whilst the DCC noted possible limitations as to how the TOC could measure each SRV in the way the business requirements outlined, it will work with Users to make sure any alternatives still meet the overarching principal.

Requirement 2

Further to the point above, the DCC noted that measuring Install and Commission processes is dependent on Users sharing their business practices due to way in which different Users may follow

this process. Therefore, further workshops in the form of Working Group meetings are required to identify the best way forward for this business process.

The DCC believes that the measures and indicators for Change of Supplier, Billing, Prepayment and Alerts business processes are fully achievable. However, further Working Group meetings are needed to ensure the DCC's solution meet the needs of Users.

The DCC highlighted that measuring Device Firmware business processes i.e. not Communications Hub Firmware, is complex. Therefore, the DCC will seek to address this business process via Working Group meetings noting the limitations of the data set available.

For measuring the Communications Hub Firmware business process, the DCC advised that it does not have data available to report on the delivery of a Communications Hub firmware Images to the Communications Hub. The DCC highlighted that it has raised this limitation with Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) and that a possible workaround has been agreed; instead of measuring the distribution of the Image, the DCC would instead measure the activation of the Image. This alternate approach will be detailed in the DCC's Impact Assessment.

Requirement 3

The DCC advised that by facilitating a solution for Requirements 1 and 2, it can split the data by Communications Services Provider (CSP) Region. It noted two approaches to fulfil the requirement:

1. Monitoring service activity (DCC's preferred approach)
2. Sending test Service Requests

Approach 1 would identify a lack of activity across parts of the network, which will denote an outage or a reduction in service availability. The DCC's rationale for this approach is that even when there are outages or maintenance for DCC Interfaces, some Users still continue to use them. Therefore, a lack of activity would be a better reflection of the service performance

Approach 2 would utilise "dummy" Service Requests across the networks to measure service performance. However, it noted the OMR has recommended against this approach. In addition, the Operations Group was not in favour of this approach.

Requirement 4

The DCC advised that in order to fulfil requirement 4, it will require contract amendments with the CSPs, which could increase costs and take at least six months to implement.

SECAS had suggested to the Operations Group this requirement be implemented as a "part 2" under this modification, possibly in the June 2021 SEC Release. This would give the DCC more time to negotiate the contracts and allow them to comply with the obligation once it is implemented. However, the Operations Group was unanimous in the preference not to take this approach. Therefore, this requirement will follow the same implementation approach as the other requirements in this modification.

A Working Group member noted a possible workaround to be used in the period of the contract negotiations. An agreement could be made with the CSPs to deliver the reporting data sooner than the 25 working days in the SEC if their Systems were capable of delivering it. However, if they delivered the necessary data later than agreed, but within the 25 working days under the SEC, they would not be in breach of their obligation.

The extent of the CSP contract negotiations will be assessed during the DCC Impact Assessment.

Requirement 5

The DCC advised that the current monthly PMR already fulfils the request to provide the breakdown of the number of Category 3, 4 and 5 incidents closed in the period, and the number that achieve the Service Level Agreement (SLA) (Target Resolution Time).

However, the DCC believes it better to report the Incidents closed in the period instead of opened, as this ensures that all Incidents raised are reported on. Otherwise, if an Incident is raised and not closed in the period, it would not appear in a future report. It also means that Incidents raised towards the end of the reporting period and are not resolved but still within SLA are accurately reported on.

The DCC noted it does not currently provide an indicator on whether Incidents are meeting the Target Response Time. This would be complex and require business process changes for the DCC, and integration with the Service Provider systems. Further Working Group meetings will assess this in further detail to best understand User needs for this indicator.

DCC Costs

Design, Build and Testing for this modification will cost £340,000. The cost for the DCC to undertake an Impact Assessment will be £51,190.

The DCC noted that Application Support, infrastructure improvements, and Service Provider contract changes are not in the scope of these costs. These will be drawn out in the Impact Assessment.

There were no comments on either cost.

Impacts

The DCC noted that the DCC System changes are confined to the TOC and that this solution will not impact any of the SEC Technical Specifications. However, further TOC staffing will be required to facilitate the solution in an enduring basis post-implementation. Furthermore, there are no expected changes impacting SMETS1 or SMETS2 Service Providers.

Further Working Group meetings

SECAS noted that the DCC intends to hold further meetings during the Impact Assessment to ensure the assessment provides a true reflection of the solution being delivered by the DCC. This would also ensure Users expectations are met as to how each requirement will be delivered.

SECAS noted the DCC's preference to hold its own workshops to accommodate these discussions. However, the Operations Group was not in favour of DCC-led workshops and preferred them to be held in the form of Working Group meetings. The Working Group agreed and SECAS advised these would likely be held through ad hoc Working Group meetings with possibly two occurring in the same week. This would ensure there is no undue delay to the modification, noting Ofgem's request to have made a decision on this modification by November 2020.

Modification timetable

The DCC Impact Assessment is expected to take 30 working days. SECAS highlighted that this was ten working days more than initially agreed, but if ad hoc Panel and Change Board meetings are held, if required, then it would still be possible for the Authority to make its determination in October 2020.

Next steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS will issue a Refinement Consultation on week commencing 8 June including the DCC's Preliminary Assessment and the draft legal text.
- SECAS will schedule ad-hoc Working Group meetings in close succession. These will give the DCC a chance to workshop the requirements whilst preventing any undue delay to the modification.