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MP105 'Sending SR11.2 to Devices in Suspended State'

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
Simon Trivella	British Gas
Paul Saker	EDF
Chiko Wade	Imserv
Elias Hanna	Landis + Gyr
John Noad	Npower
Lauren Irvine	PFP Energy
Steve Walker	PFP Energy
Mahfuzar Rahman	Scottish Power
Emslie Law	SSE
Matthew Alexander	SSE
Fotis Tsompanidis	Trilliant
Daniel Davis	Utiligroup
Gemma Slaney	WPD

Issue

If upon a firmware update the Service Request (SR) 11.3 'Activate Firmware' response for successful firmware activation is not received by the Data Services Provider (DSP), the Device will remain in a 'Suspended' state on the Smart Metering Inventory (SMI). This is the case even though the new firmware is now activated on the Device. There is no other recoverable method unless another new firmware update takes place.

Proposed Solution

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) gave an overview of the Data Communications Company (DCC) Preliminary Assessment. To resolve this issue, the DCC propose adding SR11.2 to the exception list of Non-Critical SRs that can be used whilst a Device is 'Suspended'. This would allow the SMI status to be updated based on the SR11.2 response while the Device is in the 'Suspended' state.

A Working Group member questioned whether the resulting update in the Device SMI status would require manual intervention from Users. The DCC confirmed that the Device status would update automatically in the SMI and that no manual intervention is required from Users.

SECAS noted that the modification does not propose changes Gas Proxy Function (GPF) behaviour. if there is a Gas Smart Metering Equipment (GSME) firmware version mismatch on the GPF, the existing functionality is to send the DCC Alert N52 'GSME Firmware Version Mismatch' to the Service Users. Therefore, in order to update the state of the GSME, a User would have to send SR11.2 directly to the GSME and not the GPF.

SECAS highlighted the positive views of the Security Sub-Committee (SSC) on this modification. SSC members noted that it would give Users greater protection in that their Devices will remain in an operational state.

Alternate approach

Working Group members queried whether the Proposed Solution could be expanded to utilise SR11.3 in addition to SR11.2.

Members discussed that Supplier systems have an automated SR11.3 retry if it does not receive the SR11.3 response for successful firmware activation. Although the SR11.3 retry will respond with the correct new firmware version, it does not update the SMI status for the Device. Therefore, the Working Group asked the DCC to investigate if the response to the SR11.3 automated retry could be used to update the SMI status in the same way in which the DCC is proposing to do with SR11.2.

Members noted that the advantage with this method is that for "lost" SR11.3 responses, the firmware version would be aligned to the SMI not only for 'Suspended' Devices, but all Devices. A Suppler noted that around 20% of all SR11.3 responses are "lost" and so it is a big issue for Suppliers.

The DCC advised that it will investigate if this is possible before progressing the modification. However, the DCC noted that adding SR11.2 to the exemption list of Non-Critical SRs is the cheapest and easiest way to resolve the issue.

Device scope

SECAS advised that only ESME and GSME (both SMETS1 and SMETS2) are in the scope of this modification. A Supplier queried whether GSME is in scope due to the comments made about the GPF above. The DCC confirmed that GSME is in scope and the solution would work the same as it would for ESME. However, SR11.2 must be sent directly to the GSME and not the GPF.

The solution could also be applied to PPMIDs and HCALCSs, but a separate modification is needed to extend SR11.2 to these two Devices. This is currently proposed by SECMP0007 'Firmware updates to IHDs and PPMIDs'.

SECAS confirmed In-Home Displays (IHDs) are not in scope as they are not listed on the Central Products List (CPL).

Impacts

Technical Specifications

SECAS advised there will be no DCC User Interface Specification (DUIS) or Message Mapping Catalogue (MMC) schema changes required to implement this modification. Instead only minor text changes are required for the DUIS.

DCC Users

DCC Users would be positively impacted by this modification as they would be able to update the Device state on the SMI, without having to send repeated firmware updates.

Consumers

If nothing is done about this issue wrongfully 'suspended' Devices. Suppliers may not be able to communicate with the meter and therefore estimate consumption. In addition, if 'Suspended' in prepayment mode, the Supplier cannot send down emergency credit, set up emergency credit or send top ups

DCC costs

SECAS noted the costs highlighted in the Preliminary Assessment. Design, Build and Pre-integration Testing (PIT) will cost £75,000. The cost for the DCC to undertake an Impact Assessment will be £7,693.

Next steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- The DCC will investigate the feasibility of the proposed alternate approach to utilise SR11.3. If it is possible, the DCC will report back to the Working Group.
- If the alternate approach is not possible, SECAS will proceed and issue a Refinement Consultation.