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DP138 'DCC Service Testing in ETAD'

Modification Report

Version 0.1

27 July 2020

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 Richard Collard on behalf of the Data Communications Company (DCC).

The scope of the 'Enduring Testing Approach Document' (ETAD) was initially to ensure DCC Users had appropriate provisions to undergo the user entry process tests. However, this scope does not include the Testing Services that the DCC offer.

Consequently, the DCC has been working with Device Manufacturers to develop Testing Services. DCC propose that service testing be added to the scope of ETAD and moving forward the ETAD to be aligned accordingly.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

A recent review of interoperability on change commissioned by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) included a recommendation to update the Smart Energy Code (SEC) testing approach documentation to include Device Manufacturer related Testing Services and to validate with industry to ensure that these services are fit for purpose.

The initial SEC Appendix J 'Enduring Testing Approach Document' (ETAD) was designed to deliver support to DCC Users to qualify through entry process testing and to operate freely within the User Integration Testing (UIT) environment. However, there has been increasing recognition amongst industry of the value of providing Testing Services to Device Manufacturers.

DCC has therefore been in discussion with industry, particularly Device Manufacturers, to help shape and test services that DCC offer.

What is the issue?

The ETAD does not currently include existing and new Testing Services DCC offer. These Testing Services are summarised in the below table:

Testing Service	Customers	Description
Interoperability and Innovation Events	Device Manufacturers	Occasionally (and at their discretion), DCC host Interoperability and Innovation Events. These developmental events provide Device Manufacturers with a platform to test connectivity, interoperability, interchangeability and functionality between Home Area Network (HAN) Devices. These events often provide Device Manufacturers with access to real life Communications Hubs.
Great Britain Companion	Device Manufacturers,	This is a free tool developed by DCC. It comprises of software and a ZigBee HAN interface to simulate

Specification (GBCS) for Industry (GFI)	Suppliers	<p>DCC and Communications Hubs for testing HAN Commands and Responses with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity Smart Metering Equipment (ESME) Gas Smart Metering Equipment (GSME) In-home Display (IHD) Prepayment Interface Device (PPMID) Consumer Access Device (CAD) HAN Connected Auxiliary Load Control Switch (HCALCS) <p>The tool allows users to emulate sending and receiving GBCS messages to help identify any potential differences between how Parties have interpreted the Technical Specifications in comparison with the DCC interpretation. The tool has the capability to emulate a Communications Hub to enable testing with real smart metering devices.</p> <p>Obligations in relation to GFI are currently in SEC Section X9 'Interim Device and User System Testing'. It has been proposed by DCC that this be removed and included in ETAD.</p>
Radio Frequency (RF) Noise	Device Manufacturers	<p>DCC previously worked with industry to develop the RF Noise requirements in the Intimate Communications Hub Interface Specification (ICHIS) and the associated test specification. Following industry consultations in 2018, DCC funded a temporary central test lab facility, provided by Plextek, to support testing to the ICHIS test specification. DCC provided funding to support the eight-meter testing to ICHIS 2.0 in Quarter 3 2019.</p> <p>DCC reviewed the need for an enduring central lab facility with the ICHIS Working Group and Energy Suppliers through Q3 and Q4 2019. DCC has concluded an enduring central test facility is required to enable Device Manufacturers to test their Devices and ensure they meet the ICHIS so they do not impact the Wide Area Network (WAN) or HAN performance.</p> <p>A general RF testing capability was procured as part of DCC Brabazon House in 2019 as it was required for network technology tests. DCC is migrating the test facility from the temporary appointed sub-contractor (Plextek) to DCC Brabazon House, this is expected to complete in Q3 2020.</p>
Wired Instrumented Test	Device Manufacturers	<p>Wired ITCH is a Communications Hub used in test environments that allows Device Manufacturers to send WAN Commands from a GFI through a wired interface. This is required as Device Manufacturers</p>

Communications Hub (ITCH)		do not have the ability to send Commands to DCC for delivery over the WAN. A Wired ITCH can be used with emulators and real-life ESME/GSME. Device Manufactures are able to order Wired ITCH in accordance with SEC Section F10.
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What is the impact this is having?

The DCC propose that these Testing Services are added to the ETAD and appropriate charging arrangements are added to the SEC to ensure the DCC can offer them. The DCC Charging Methodology (SEC Section K) only allows for DCC to charge Testing Participants for “additional testing support” (SEC Section K7.5(i)). This “additional testing support” charge is currently an Explicit Charge and is based on the cost of a consultant per day. Testing Participant may request additional testing support in accordance with SEC Section H14.33 to understand and resolve issues associated with:

- the DCC Total System and the results of such Testing Participant’s Device and User System Tests.
- the Systems of the Testing Participant that are (or are intended to be) User Systems.
- communications between the DCC and any Device or between Devices which comprise (or which the Testing Participant intends will comprise) a Smart Metering System.

This Explicit Charge is therefore not currently fit for the purpose of charging for the applicable proposed new Testing Services.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

This Draft Proposal was raised on 24 July 2020 and will be presented to the Change Sub-Committee (CSC) for discussion on 28 July 2020.

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
Draft Proposal raised	24 Jul 2020
Presented to CSC for initial comment	25 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
BEIS	Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
CAD	Consumer Access Device

Glossary	
Acronym	Full term
DCC	Data Communications Company
ESME	Electricity Smart Metering Equipment
ETAD	Enduring Testing Approach Document
GBCS	Great Britain Companion Specification
GFI	Great Britain Companion Specification For Industry
GSME	Gas Smart Metering Equipment
HAN	Home Area Network
HCALCS	Home Area Network Connected Auxiliary Load Control Switch
IHD	In-Home Display
ITCH	Instrumented Test Communications Hub
PPMID	Prepayment Interface Device
RF	Radio Frequency
SEC	Smart Energy Code
UIT	User Integration Testing
WAN	Wide Area Network