SECMP0024 'Enduring Approach to Communication Hub Firmware Management'

January 2021 Working Group – meeting summary

Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Ali Beard	SECAS
Joe Hehir	SECAS
Brad Baker	SECAS
Holly Burton	SECAS
Emmanuel Ajayi	SECAS
Rainer Lischetzki	SECAS
David Walsh	DCC
Robin Seaby	DCC
Dean Florence	DCC
Gary Bailey	DCC
Remi Oluwabamise	DCC
Graeme Liggett	DCC
Wahab Siddiqui	DCC
Chun Chen (part meeting)	DCC
Lynne Hargrave	Calvin Capital
Alex Hurcombe	EDF Energy
Robert Williams	E.ON
Alastair Cobb	Landis + Gyr
John Noad	Npower
Ralph Baxter	Octo Energy
Mahfuzar Rahman	Scottish Power
Eric Taylor	SLS
Elias Hanna	Smart ADSL
Emslie Law	OVO Energy
Daniel Davies	Utiligroup
Rachel Norberg	Utilita
Gemma Slaney	WPD

Summary

Issue

- Lack of a formalised process between the Data Communications Company (DCC) and Suppliers for managing firmware updates to Communications Hubs (CHs)

- Suppliers are not notified when CHs in their estate are updated by the DCC

- Significant risk that a CH firmware update with defects or interoperability issues could be deployed and activated to significant numbers of CHs without Suppliers knowing

Proposed Solution

The Proposed Solution is for the DCC to generate an Alert to the **Responsible Supplier** upon successful activation of CH firmware. This Alert will contain the firmware version of the newly activated firmware.

The DCC is also to update its Firmware Management Policy and make this available to SECAS for publication on its website, ensuring transparency of the CH firmware process.

Update on the DCC Firmware Management Policy

SECAS advised that the DCC Firmware Management Policy has been drafted by the DCC and that SECAS and the Proposer have had sight of it. However, it had yet to be signed-off within the DCC and so it could not be shared with the wider group. The DCC expected it to be shared by week commencing 11 January 2021, after which SECAS would share it with the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) and Working Group members via email for comment.

SECAS noted that the policy, once approved, is to be made publicly available on the SECAS website. However, it will not be referred to in the SEC and therefore SECMP0024 is not dependant on it. SECAS will issue a Refinement Consultation for SECMP0024 on week commencing 11 January 2021 irrespective of whether the policy has been approved. This is to prevent any delay to the proposed the new DCC Alert which is targeted for the June 2022 SEC Release. SECAS expects to seek Change Board approval for the cost of the DCC Impact Assessment at its meeting on 24 February 2021.

Working Group members had no comments on this update.

Next steps

SECAS noted the following next steps and targeted timescales:

Timetable	
Event/Action	**Date**
TABASC review of DCC Alert	7 Jan 2021
Refinement Consultation	11 Jan 2021 – 29 Jan 2021
DCC Firmware Management Policy shared with Parties	Jan 2021
Change Board approval of cost for a DCC Impact Assessment	24 Feb 2021
Impact Assessment requested	25Feb 2021