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Operations Group Meeting 42

2 February 2021, 09:20 – 16:50

Teleconference

OPSG_42_0202 - Draft Minutes

Attendees:

Category	Operations Group Members
Operations Group Chair	Dave Warner
DCC	Alex Henighan
Network Parties	Gemma Slaney
	Matthew Alexander
Large Suppliers	Tony Shanahan
	John Noad
	Rochelle Harrison
	Martin Christie
	Kevin Donnelly
	Ed Webber
	Ralph Baxter
	Emslie Law
Small Suppliers	Paul Clark
	Kate Frazer
Other SEC Parties	Kate Barnes
	Michael Snowden
	Geoff Huckerby
	Elias Hanna

Representing	Other Participants
	Wendy Liddell
	Lisa Wong
	Darren Robbins
	Joanne Glynn (Part) (<i>Agenda item 4</i>)
	Ian Brown (Part) (<i>Agenda item 7</i>)

Managed by

	Nicholas Ives (Part) (Agenda item 7 & 11)
	Steve Hardy (Part) (Agenda item 11)
	Peter Doyle (Part) (Agenda item 8)
	Kyra Quin (Part) (Agenda item 8)
	Gary Stuart (Part) (Agenda Item 6 & 15)
	Graeme Liggett (Part) (Agenda item 2)
	Abbie Lloyd (Part) (Agenda item 14)
	Bilal Ali (Part) (Agenda item 14)
	Damian Milnes (Part) (Agenda item 3)
	Easton Brown (Part) (Agenda items 9 & 10)
	Robbie MacIntosh (Part) (Agenda item 10)
	Dipu Mantu (Part) (Agenda item 9)
	Helen Metcalfe (Part) (Agenda item 10)
	Chun Chen (Part) (Agenda items 3 & 13)
SECAS	Veronica Asantewaa (Meeting Secretary)
	Joey Manners
	Huw Exley
	Ishti Bhatti
	Anik Abdullah (Part) (Agenda item 15)
	Abhay Soorya (Part) (Agenda item 3)
	Joe Hehir (Part) (Agenda item 9)
TABASC	Julian Hughes
TAG	Robin Healey (Part) (Agenda item 8)
BEIS	Natasha Free
	Dan Chambers
	Jackie Wright (Part) (Agenda item 8)

Apologies:

Representing	Name
Large Suppliers	Rob Short

1. Previous Meeting Minutes

The Chair invited Operations Group (OPSG) members to review the redlined comments to the Draft Minutes from OPSG_40.

The OPSG **AGREED** the redlined comments and **APPROVED** the minutes from OPSG_40 as final.

2. Actions Outstanding

SECAS presented the OPSG Actions Outstanding. Actions were noted as completed where appropriate. It was noted that a number of actions had not been completed by the target date, and new deadlines for these actions were set.

Action ID	Action	Date Raised	Last Target Date	Revised Target Date	Owner
OPSG 38/03	SECAS and the DCC to work with Users to investigate aspects of unexpected meter behaviour that could correlate with the issue of Devices dropping off the HAN.	03/11/2020	On Hold	N/A	DCC
<p>The OPSG Chair noted that Technical Specifications Issue Resolution Sub-group (TSIRS) are overseeing the investigation into the issues of Home Area Network (HAN) stability. Therefore, this action will be closed, and any updates will be monitored via the OPSG Issues Log.</p> <p>The OPSG discussed if all HAN stability issues were being considered. A Large Supplier (LS) member confirmed that BEIS is collating all HAN stability issues which will be investigated by TSIRS. Status: Closed.</p>					
OPSG 39/16	The DCC to provide information on the criteria for future demand modelling.	01/12/2020	15/01/2021	N/A	DCC
<p>The DCC provided information on the core inputs into the Service Request Forecast models. The OPSG noted that there was no information on the assumed number of future Users on the network. An Other SEC Party member also noted that the consumer aspects will need to be considered. For example, prepayment volumes and changes in processes. The DCC noted that it will provide further clarity around these points.</p> <p>SECAS noted that this is also being investigated by the SEC Working Group and any further comments will be overseen by this forum. Status: Closed</p>					
OPSG 40/04	The DCC to provide a strategic view of whether the duration of unplanned maintenance would continue as six hours per month beyond the coming quarter	05/01/2021	02/02/2021	02/03/2021	DCC
<p>The OPSG agreed to discuss this proposal at the next meeting (OPSG_43). A LS member queried how extra Planned Maintenance will impact the Operational Performance Regime (OPR) measure on service availability if included as a new metric. The DCC noted that this will be considered. Status: Open.</p>					
OPSG 40/12	SECAS to confirm what impact assessments had been carried out to date in regard to the SEC and DCC	05/01/2021	02/02/2021	02/03/2021	SECAS

Managed by

Action ID	Action	Date Raised	Last Target Date	Revised Target Date	Owner
	services/infrastructure for the Faster Switching solution.				
SECAS noted that an impact assessment has been completed on the faster switching solution and it is currently being reviewed. Status: Open.					
OPSG 35/09	The DCC to provide a view of end to end capacity showing a forecast reflecting service traffic, using traffic profiles and to reflect peak usage	04/08/2020	02/02/2021	The DCC to provide a revised date.	DCC
<p>The DCC provided a graph for this action which illustrated forecasting capacity utilisation against predicted traffic volumes until December 2021 for different Communication Service Providers (CSPs). The Chair questioned whether more granularity was necessary to demonstrate 'pinch points' within the service. The Chair also noted that a summary picture of end to end capacity was also needed, in addition to that for individual components of the infrastructure.</p> <p>The DCC explained that it has a daily profile of expected transactions by communication mast and can provide details of this if required. The Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) Chair commented that this level of granularity is not necessary, and the issue is with transmitters in concentrated areas that have more utilisation than others which causes traffic on the network.</p> <p>The OPSG noted that it was difficult to determine the constraints on capacity from the graph provided. The OPSG Chair requested for members to provide comments offline. Status: Open.</p>					

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

3. OPSG Issues Log – Progress Report

SECAS updated the OPSG on the progress of current issues.

The DCC proposed a manual solution for correcting MPxN cross meters. This would only apply where a Supplier is not the responsible Supplier for the impacted MPxNs (after the Change of Supplier (CoS) process).

A Distribution Network Operator (DNO) member commented that it has an open Incident on this issue, noting that as this is a manual process DNOs will need to be contacted to ensure that they are clearly informed of the configuration steps.

A DNO member and the DCC discussed the issues of work orders used in the solution. The OPSG noted that the work order sub process, whilst important for DCC, would not normally be expected to be visible to Users. The OPSG requested that the DCC provide more information on how the work order process might impact the operational process seen by Users.

The OPSG required the DCC to consult with Users on the details of the proposed process. The DCC requested that the OPSG provide details of the number of Incidents related to this issue. The OPSG agreed that this topic be discussed at the next meeting (OPSG_43).

ACTION OPSG 42/01: The DCC to provide for information of how the DCC workorder process impacts the operational process seen by Users in the MPxN cross meter solution.

ACTION OPSG 42/02: The OPSG to provide details of the number of Incidents related to the MPxN cross meter issue.

ACTION OPSG 42/03: The DCC to engage with Users for input on the proposed process for MPxN cross meter issue.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

4. DCC Operational Update

The DCC presented an update on its operations.

The DCC noted that there were no Category 1 and 2 Incidents in January. The OPSG noted this achievement, and that such incidents had been on a downward trend for some months.

The DCC also noted that the number of Incidents of all categories had reduced.

The DCC reported that there has been a further reduction in installation volumes. The DCC noted that daily installations have peaked at 12K in January. However, Service Request volumes are in line with current trends.

The DCC reported on its findings of its investigation in to SMETS2 Pre-payment top up failures. The DCC noted that the Technical Operating Centre (TOC) has corrected its processes for reporting Pre-Payment data and it is now reporting accurately. The DCC noted that the reported failure rate was adversely impacted by failures for one Service User. The OPSG requested a summary of this impact. A LS member asked what the Pre-Payment success rate looks like when the data for that one particular User is removed. The LS member noted that this would help assess whether there is a systemic issue with SMETS2 prepayment.

The DCC explained that there is an increase in the overall volume of failures but that this correlates with an increase in prepayment top up attempts. However, there is no increase in the underlying failure rate. The DCC noted that there is an open Problem to review the trends in more detail. The DCC agreed to provide an additional Pre-Payment graph with the data for the User experiencing a high failure rate removed.

The DCC reported that it currently has 132 open Problem tickets. The DCC provided a plan for closing open Problems based on upcoming Releases. The OPSG requested that the DCC provide a breakdown for SMETS1 and SMETS2. The OPSG noted that the graph labelled 'Open problems – target completion date = February 2021' was not required going forward.

The OPSG noted that one of the Problem graphs contained an error for 'average age' of Problem and the DCC agreed to amend and reissue.

The DCC presented the Forward Schedule of Change. The DCC reported that it had achieved 99.44% success rate with no adverse impact as a result of change.

The DCC reported that [MP092 'New Planned Maintenance Methodology'](#) has been approved by the Change Board and thanked the OPSG members for their support. The DCC noted that it will send a survey for OPSG members to select their preferred timings for high priority Planned Maintenance windows.

4.1. SMETS1

The DCC reported that the overall meter enrolment success rate continues to be high at 96.6% for over 3.5 million migrated meters.

The DCC noted that there had been an increase in 8F40 Alerts passed to Users due to DNOs becoming DCC User Interface Specification 3 (DUIS3) compliant. The OPSG suggested that some User guidance may be needed to support onboarding of DNO members.

ACTION OPSG 42/04: The DCC to send a survey to OPSG members to select their preferred timings for high priority Planned Maintenance windows.

ACTION OPSG 42/05: The DCC to check if there are some User guidance notes on Alerts available to DNOs Users as they become DUIS3 compliant.

ACTION OPSG 42/06: The DCC to provide the additional Prepayment graphs from the operational update with the anomalous User's data removed.

ACTION OPSG 42/07: The DCC to amend the 'average age' of Problem on the Problem Management graph and reissue this to members.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

5. Aged Incidents & CH Exceptions

The DCC provided an update on Aged Incidents and Communication Hub Exceptions.

5.1. Aged Incidents

The DCC reported that it currently has 27k aged Incidents, the majority of these being 'Incorrect Communication Hub (CH) Variant Installed'.

A DNO member noted that it has given its approval to close all Incidents related to 'Incorrect Credentials' and, since they were the only Party raising these, would expect to see the reported number at or close to zero. The DCC explained this was the case but there was a time lag in reporting. DCC has also needed to close these Incidents manually, slowing the process.

5.2. CH Exceptions

The OPSG questioned the large number of 'No Incident for Outage' Exceptions in Communication Service Provider North (N). The OPSG noted that if the totals presented are correct, this represents a high volume of Devices that are being excluded from Performance reporting. Therefore, it was important the number was clarified as soon as possible due to the implications of this being incorrect.

The OPSG asked for clarification on the reported volumes for CH Exceptions.

A LS member noted that it is difficult to understand which Exceptions pose the biggest risk and which have mitigation. The LS noted that a qualitative scale would make this clear and the DCC confirmed it would investigate producing such a scale.

ACTION OPSG 42/08: The DCC to provide a qualitative scale of CH Exceptions.

ACTION OPSG 42/09: The DCC to clarify reported volumes for CH Exceptions for 'No Incident for Outage'.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

6. SMETS1 Stability Plan Review

The DCC reported that it has achieved 98 days of stable service. The DCC noted that it continues to work with the Dual Control Organisation (DCO) on the database architecture and performance as part of its remediations actions.

No further comments were raised by members.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

7. Spurious Alerts

The DCC noted that spurious Alerts are being successfully managed.

The DCC reported that the mass Over the Air (OTA) roll out for the Toshiba Release 12.36 began on 11 January. This is expected to reduce the 8F3E Alerts in CSP Central and South (C&S).

8F12 Alerts have reduced as the Release 2 EDML firmware upgrade continues to be rolled out in CSP N with 95% of installed devices having been upgraded now. The DCC noted reduced installation and Covid-19 restrictions may affect the timeline for upgrades.

A LS member noted that it had approximately 1k CHs with 8F12 alerts and asked how many of these have been upgraded.

In response to a query, the DCC noted that it continued to investigate the root cause of the increase in 8F3E Alerts in CSP N which had become apparent during the Release 2 firmware rollout.

ACTION OPSG 42/10: The DCC to confirm if the 1k CHs generating 8F12 Alerts on the Release 1 firmware have been upgraded.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

8. FOC TAG Briefing

The DCC presented an initial description of the Final Operating Capability (FOC) Testing Issue 201089. The Testing Advisory Group (TAG) Chair noted that the OPSG was requested to assess the operational impact of the defect.

The DCC noted that conclusions about the root cause of the defect and the scope of its impact were still to be finalised.

The OPSG members were keen to move forward with FOC Go-Live without further delays and saw the workaround for the defect as generally acceptable, subject to the confirmation of the impact of the defect.

The OPSG agreed that the mitigation steps, which would need to be applied by Suppliers, were acceptable and should not hinder Go-Live of the FOC Release.

The OPSG agreed that, based on the initial description provided, the testing issue was a Category 3 defect.

The OPSG requested confirmation of the scope of the defect, a schedule for the implementation of the enduring solution, and on that basis, an estimate of the number of meters that might be impacted.

The OPSG will review the Live Service Criteria and readiness for Go-Live at an extraordinary meeting to be held on 12 February 2021.

ACTION OPSG 42/11: The DCC to provide the OPSG with the confirmed scope of the impact of the FOC defect 201089.

ACTION OPSG 42/12: The DCC to provide a schedule for the implementation of the enduring solution for the FOC defect 201089.

ACTION OPSG 42/13: The DCC to provide an estimate of the number of meters that will be impacted by FOC defect 201089.

The OPSG:

- **NOTED** the presentation;
- **AGREED** that, on the basis of DCC's initial description, the FOC Testing Issue 201089 was a Category 3 defect; and
- **AGREED** that the outlined mitigation steps were acceptable and should not hinder Go-Live of the FOC Release.

9. Live Service Criteria - February 2021 SEC Release

SECAS outlined the scope of the February 2021 SEC Release which seeks to implement [MP122A 'Operational Metrics'](#) and [MP092 'New Planned Maintenance Methodology'](#).

SECAS reported that the changes to the legal framework for MP122A were ready for implementation. SECAS noted that the Operational costs for this Modification have significantly reduced from what was originally stated.

The DCC reported changes to components as a consequence of the Release are limited to internal DCC processes and TOC services. The DCC noted that it is developing an application to provide reporting to Users, which will be implemented in April 2021.

The OPSG noted that it was unable to assess the readiness of the DCC capabilities to provide the service required by MP122A. The DCC agreed to present readiness information before the planned Go-Live date.

The OPSG noted the success of the trial for MP092, which had been operating for some time. The OPSG were not aware of any issues and agreed with the DCC's statement of readiness for the February 2021 SEC Release.

ACTION OPSG 42/14: The DCC to provide an assessment of readiness of the DCC capabilities for [MP122A 'Operational Metrics'](#), necessary to meet the requirements of the February SEC 2021 Release.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

10. DCC TOC - Service User Reporting

The DCC demonstrated capability to produce performance reports for individual Users. This utilised an application developed to implement [MP122A 'Operational Metrics'](#).

The DCC noted that it will hold a number of workshops to collate requirements for User specific data. A LS member was concerned that information on meter types may be shared with other DCC Users.

A LS member queried whether the DCC would monetise the data used for these reports. The DCC confirmed that it would not.

The OPSG strongly supported this work being carried out by the DCC and asked when the application will be available to Users. The DCC noted that this it is still under review, but its conclusion will be available in the near future.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

11. RF Noise

The DCC provided an update on its plans for managing the impact of Radio Frequency (RF) noise produced by meters.

The DCC reported that the CSPs agreed to accept installation of the remaining derogated stock, noting that Suppliers will have 12 months to do so.

The OPSG queried whether the deadline was suitable due to the current circumstance of Covid-19 restrictions. The DCC confirmed that it saw installed volumes as a key parameter and would discuss whether there is any flexibility in deadline dates. The DCC noted that it will continue to monitor the volumes.

The DCC presented evidence of the impact of noisy meters on firmware downloads. The DCC confirmed it will be supplementing this with information of the impact on other transactions (for example, meter reads).

The OPSG was concerned with possible external costs (for example, due to CSPs requiring compensation for dealing with the impacts of noisy meters on their network), and that the nature and allocation of such costs needed to be understood as part of the strategy. (for example, the OPSG commented that it might be more cost effective not to install these meters).

The DCC noted that it will provide confirmation of the process by which SEC Parties can engage with and consider non modification costs (e.g. change requests).

ACTION OPSG 42/15: The DCC to confirm the process for SEC Parties to engage with and consider non modification costs (e.g. change requests).

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

12. Other Users - Service Management

The DCC outlined actions to address the issue of Other Users that feel inadequately supported by DCC in respect to Incident reporting and management.

The DCC noted that only a small number of Other Users are experiencing issues, adding that only 14 open Incidents are affecting these types of Users.

A LS member noted that the issues with Consumer Access Devices (CADs) in DCC migrations in SMETS1 had been discussed at the Security Sub-Committee (SSC), to consider any security implications.

The DCC noted that testing had started on 25 January to investigate the issues raised by Other Users and early findings will be provided at the next meeting.

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

13. DSP Motorway Cache – Modelling

The DCC provided an update on the revised prioritised list of message delivery of the Data Service Provider (DSP) motorway cache.

The DCC noted that Business as Usual (BAU) messages will be the priority after a User outage followed by time Critical Alerts.

A DNO member noted that the DCC should not assume that the historic low level of BAU service requests they send, would continue into the future. The same DNO member noted that the prioritisation of DNO messages may therefore need to be reconsidered in the future. The DCC noted that there may be an approach to review the list in the future based on changes in behaviour.

The OPSG:

- **NOTED** the update; and
- **ENDORSED** the revised list of the prioritised messages and the list of critical Alerts.

14. DSP Engagement and Programme

The DCC presented an outline of the scope of the Network Evolution DSP Programme. The DCC emphasised that it wished to engage actively with the OPSG. The OPSG noted the scope for the program, which will focus on the procurement of core DSP services.

A LS member questioned how the DCC will be able to track the core dependencies from other programmes that could impact the DSP procurement. The DCC is working on a portfolio level roadmap that will identify any key dependencies that impact the DSP over the next few years. The DCC is reviewing the lessons learnt from other programmes and are adapting these into the DSP Programme to mitigate any delays.

The OPSG noted that User needs should be considered concurrently with technology investigations, and not deferred to later in the programme.

The OPSG noted that there have been previous issues with the DSP regarding managing the capacity of the system. A LS member asked if the DCC could provide a strategy for maximum capacity and the required cost before starting the procurement of DSP Services.

The DCC requested that members provide any further queries or comments on the engagement programme by 9 February.

ACTION OPSG 42/16: As part of the programme, the DCC to provide a strategy for maximum capacity of the DSP and the required costs.

ACTION OPSG 42/17: The OPSG to provide any further queries or comments on the Network Evolution DSP Programme by 9 February.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

15. CSP N Performance & Reporting

The DCC provided an update on CSP N performance.

The DCC reported that CSP N had achieved 60 days of stable service.

Some progress had been made towards achieving the required performance for firmware downloads, but overall, this remained unsatisfactory (being reported as 50.25% for metric PM2, against a minimum requirement of 96.00%).

The DCC noted that it continues to make progress with the Heightened Service Management (HSM) plans and has completed two Service Improvement Plans (SIPs).

The DCC reported that the batching trial was successful, and it is working with CSP N on the final proposals for an enduring solution using batching. The OPSG were keen to see how a batching solution would work on a busy network rather than in the quieter network conditions in which the trial took place.

The OPSG noted its concerns about how remedial actions, required in essence to meet existing requirements, would be paid for. OPSG members noted they believe these costs should not fall to SEC Parties.

The DCC noted that it will provide the findings from the audit at the April meeting (OPSG_46).

The OPSG **NOTED** the update.

16. SMETS2 Interoperability - Firmware Guidance

SECAS presented an overview of guidance which seeks to provide useful and practical information to Suppliers in relation to the management of firmware for SMETS2 meters (ESME and GSMEs).

The OPSG noted that firmware guidance will be published on 23 February 2021 via the SEC website.

[Post Meeting Note: The Firmware Guidance will be sent to the OPSG for review this week. SECAS requested that the OPSG review the guidance and provide any further comments by close of play 22 February 2021.]

ACTION OPSG 42/18: The OPSG to provide any further comments on the SMETS2 Interoperability Firmware Guidance by close of play 22 February 2021.

The OPSG **NOTED** the presentation.

17. Customer Perspective

No customer perspective items were proposed by OPSG members.

18. Any Other Business (AOB)

A LS member highlighted that there is an open Ofgem OPR Guidance consultation and asked that SECAS engage with the OPSG on responding to the consultation, and also to provide an impact assessment of the impact of the revised OPR on the OPSG.

ACTION OPSG 42/19: SECAS to engage with the OPSG on responding to the Ofgem OPR Guidance consultation.

ACTION OPSG 42/20: SECAS to provide an impact assessment on the impact of the revised OPR on the OPSG.

Extraordinary Meeting: 12 February 2021

Next Reporting Meeting: 22 February 2021

Next Main Meeting: 2 March 2021

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