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MP137 ‘Sharing Information on Defects and Issues’

March 2021 Working Group – meeting summary.

Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Ali Beard	SECAS
Khaleda Hussain	SECAS
Holly Burton	SECAS
Huw Exley	SECAS
Brad Baker	SECAS
Joey Manners	SECAS
Anik Abdullah	SECAS
Chun Chen	DCC
David Walsh	DCC
Remi Oluwabamise	DCC
Alex Hurcombe	EDF
Julie Geary	E.ON
Terry Jefferson	EUA
Laurie Walker	Gilmond Consulting
Ralph Baxter	Octopus Energy
Emslie Law	OVO-SSE
Elias Hanna	Smart ADSL
Matthew Alexander	SSEN
Daniel Davies	Utiligroup
Rachel Norberg	Utilita
Gemma Slaney	WPD

Overview

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) provided an overview of the issue identified by [MP137 ‘Sharing information on Defects and Issues’](#), feedback since the previous Working Group, the Proposed Solution options and intended next steps.

Issue:

- Currently, there is no approach which allows SEC Parties and the DCC to share information on known issues and defects (except Communications Hubs), except via forums such as the DCC’s Top Issues Forum. However, this forum operates without the recording of the issues

and resolutions discussed to adhere to commercial sensitivity, despite this hindering the ability for relevant information to be shared to wider stakeholders. The additional functional requirements are not explicitly codified in the Technical Specifications and they have been interpreted differently by different Manufacturers, resulting in different functionality.

- Due to the current arrangements, there is no current methodology or approach for SEC Parties to access, share and understand defects that relate to specific Devices or Device Model Combinations (except Communication Hubs).
- Consequently, it is not possible for SEC Parties to easily share knowledge about the behaviour of Devices when paired in various combinations which means that information is siloed and limits the industry in the provision of workarounds or fixes.

Feedback since previous Working Group Meeting

- The DCC have reported that Service Providers have separate remedy systems, and any solution would be complex and expensive.
- SECAS has worked alongside the Proposers, TSIRS and the HAN WAN Working Group chair to understand the existing forums available.
- There is support to formalise a process for the existing platforms in the way of documenting and publishing minutes and recording actions against issues for the industry

Solution Options:

- Look to formalise the process using the Issues log and having some degree of naming to be encouraged i.e., high material issues may require naming vs low material issues which require no naming.
- Look to create and put in a governance process structure to share issues and defects with the industry.
- Synergising information from Forums with the DCC problem and incident management.

Working Group discussions

SECAS summarised the issue identified by the Proposer and the Working Group agreed that the issue was clear.

SECAS presented a list of existing forums as solution options. The Working Group did not specify any preference to any of the options. A Working Group member (an Other SEC Party) expressed concerns stating Suppliers could choose which Device they installed however they were not able to choose which Communications Hub is installed. This could potentially mean Suppliers preferring to install a Device which has no compatibility issues with the Communications Hub present which could pose commercial damage to Device manufacturers. As a result, the Working Group member was opposed to the modification stating that it would be a form of naming and shaming and cause considerable reputational damage.

Another Working Group member highlighted perhaps there needs to be a clear distinction whether there is a defect in the specification or whether there is a defect with the Device. It advised there should be a solution across all impacted systems for the industry. SECAS asked the Working Group

whether Communication Hubs were treated differently to Device Model Combinations. The Working Group member advised the industry was treating the symptoms of the problem but not the root cause. They questioned when a risk comes to light does it need to be raised with SEC Parties immediately.

SECAS asked the Working Group members if there was a forum, from the list of solution options, which was more suitable than any other. The Working Group acknowledged the question and advised issues and defects are discussed at forums at a very high level and are subject to Competition Act Law and confidentiality rules. It was highlighted that the existing forums are governed by rules and regulations, and as a result these forums are unable to declare certain information due to confidentiality and commercial sensitivity. Another Working Group member highlighted the Top Issues Forum was by invitation only and the forum was made available to certain members and not others.

SECAS asked the Working Groups if members were looking for an organisation to hold information about Device Model Combination issues and defects. For example, if SECAS were to hold the information Suppliers would then be able to contact SECAS to find out if the Device in question had any issues which SECAS would then be able to advise. A Working Group member advised there is currently one place where all information is being held, and that it is through the Data Communications Company (DCC). However, the DCC would not know the fix.

The Working Group members suggested SECAS contact the DCC problem and incident management and engage with them to further define a method which could be used. SECAS acknowledged the suggestion and noted to contact the key individuals at the DCC who may help assist further and bring the findings back to the Working Group.

Next Steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS were advised to investigate further with the DCC Incident Management and look for alternative methods.
- SECAS will present MP137 to the Working Group once the solution is further refined.