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MP122B 'Operational Metrics – Part 2'

Working Group Meeting summary – 27 April 2021

Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
David Kemp *(Chair)*	SECAS
Joe Hehir	SECAS
Joey Manners	SECAS
David Walsh	DCC
Easton Brown	DCC
Oliver Bridges	DCC
Charlotte Semp	DCC
Aakifah Mohammed	DCC
Wahab Siddiqui	DCC
Richard Haigh	BEIS
Rochelle Harrison	British Gas
Michael Walls	Ofgem
Jean Roch Donsimoni	Ofgem
Ayena Gupta	Ofgem
Emslie Law	OVO
Mahfuzar Rahman	Scottish Power
Matthew Alexander	SSEN
Rachel Norberg	Utilita
Gemma Slaney (Proposer)	Western Power Distribution
Kelly Kinsman	Western Power Distribution

Summary

MP122B 'Operational Metrics – Part 2' impacts the DCC and all its Service Providers. The latest DCC estimated implementation costs for the combined set of Change Requests are between £7,100,000 to £7,950,000. **These costs cover system changes only; contractual changes and Application Support costs will be identified in the Impact Assessment**. These costs have only been provided in a Preliminary Assessment and have been split out over several Change Requests (CRs).

Due to the significantly high costs associated with these Change Requests, the DCC has investigated alternative Technical Operations Centre (TOC) solutions, each of which were discussed by the Working Group.

Using TOC data to measure Service Provider performance

SECAS questioned whether the use of TOC data would enable the DCC to hold its Service Providers accountable for their performance. The DCC advised that when measuring Target Response Times (TRTs) it can hold its Service Providers accountable where they are the cause for any drop in performance. However, whilst the DCC can measure Round Trip Time (RTT) as recommended by the Operational Metrics Review (OMR), it had concerns about holding its Service Providers accountable for this. This was due to RTT including time spent on the Home Area Network (HAN) which the DCC's Service Providers cannot be held accountable for.

The Proposer advised that they have concerns with all the DCC's reporting, and that Users should be able to validate the reporting irrespective of whether it was generated by the Service Providers or the TOC. The DCC accepted this.

TOC reporting on Alerts

Existing Change Requests

CR1418 and CR1438 'Throughput of Alerts' have been raised to cover the full scope of the original Alert reporting requirements and the Preliminary Assessment indicates a combined cost of up to £2,110,000. The DCC confirmed that its measure of Alerts will include DCC Alerts as well as Device Alerts.

A member queried why the Communications Service Provider (CSP) South & Central have been excluded from CR1438. The DCC confirmed that the CSP South & Central already timestamps its Alerts and that CR1418 had been raised for the DSP to extract these timestamps. However, the DCC does not have timestamp information from the CSP North or the SMETS1 Service Providers and CR1438 has been raised to address this.

In relation to CR1438 a member questioned whether the DCC could just extract the Alert timestamp from within the payload for the CSP North to measure the time between Device/Communications Hub to the DSP.

TOC reporting option

The DCC clarified that the TOC option it is proposing involves measuring Service Requests as a proxy for Alerts, not the Alerts themselves. This was based on the understanding that Service Requests and Alerts tend to have very similar timescales, other than Power Outage Alerts which are a small subset of Alerts.

One of the drawbacks noted of using the TOC option is that it cannot measure time spent on the SMETS1 Wide Area Network (WAN) or the SMETS1 platform. A member questioned the drawback noting the SMETS1 Service Providers have now been enrolled under the DCC. They considered that the DCC could access the data it needs but that it's just not currently held in the TOC.

The Proposer and other members were concerned with this approach and did not believe Service Requests form a good proxy for measuring Alerts. Members noted that the TOC option is significantly cheaper but was unclear if it provided a good enough proxy for the full solution. It was agreed the DCC will provide a demonstration of its proposed TOC option at a later Working Group meeting. The Working Group will use this to assess if the TOC option will provide sufficient information to meet the reporting requirements and decide on whether to take it forward or not.

ACTION: The DCC to produce a mock-up and demonstration of the output of its TOC option for CRs 1418 & 1438.

Other comments

The DCC questioned whether Alert performance is incentivised under the Operational Performance Regime (OPR). SECAS confirmed that is not the case and that the OPR will incentivise the DCC for the following areas only:

- Install and commission
- Prepayment
- Firmware management
- Service availability

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) suggested that part of the decision making on MP122B could be dependent on the DCC's initiative to improve its reporting against the MP122A 'Operational Metrics' requirements. The BEIS representative queried the purpose of this reporting, and if it was for the OPSG or the OPR.

TOC reporting on Incident Categories 3, 4 and 5

CR1420 'Incident Reporting' has been raised to enable the DCC to report against Incident Categories 3, 4 and 5 with a Preliminary Assessment cost of £1,080,000. These statistics would be reported by Category, with statistics identifying the number of Incidents per Category, the number that met the Target Initial Response Time and the number that met the Target Resolution Time.

However, the DCC confirmed that it can extract the required data from its own Remedy systems within the TOC, rather relying on the Service Providers. Also, this would not require any contractual negotiation. The costs of this solution would be reduced from £1,080,000 to around £100,000.

The Working Group agreed to progress with using the DCC Remedy data to fulfil CR1420 which would be cheaper, rather than the Remedy data held by the Service Providers.

Reducing the PMR SLA

The DCC is currently reviewing the fastest service level agreement (SLA) that all its Service Providers can achieve to deliver the Performance Measurement Report (PMR). The SEC currently requires the DCC to produce the PMR 10 working days from the end of the measurement reporting period. However, the DCC's Service Providers cannot currently achieve this.

One member queried whether the DCC could more easily achieve a faster SLA for delivering the PMR if all the DCC's proposed TOC solutions were taken forward. However, the DCC advised that this would not be the case as there would still be existing data that needed to be validated by the Service Providers.

The DCC informed the Working Group that it was in the process of completing its assessment. A further Working Group meeting will be scheduled to discuss the DCC's findings once these have been circulated to members to consider.

Communications Hub and SMETS1 firmware reporting

CR1423 'Comms Hub Firmware Image Data' was raised to provide reporting to the TOC on the attempts and success activations to download Communications Hub firmware images. CR1440 'Update Firmware SMETS1 Process' has been raised to provide reporting on attempts and activations of firmware update on SMETS1 Devices. CR1423 costs between £1,450,000 to £1,750,000 and CR1440 costs between £1,450,000 to £1,850,000.

The DCC's proposed TOC alternative solution would costs £100,000 plus any costs for it to secure the data needed from its Service Providers. If the DCC could secure data from the CSPs and SMETS1 Service Providers, it would be possible to provide code in the TOC that would match the firmware updates (SR11.1) to the firmware activations (SR11.3) and provide a time to activate and a success rate of activations from updates. The results could be split by CSP, Communications Hub manufacturer, and the firmware version before and after the update.

Members queried what the cost would be for the DCC to secure the data needed from its Service Providers to facilitate the TOC alternative solution, noting these could be just as expensive as the Change Requests. The DCC advised it does not currently know this cost, but that in theory, it is easier to secure this data than having to develop the solution under the two Change Requests, and so should be notably lower than the cost of the CRs. The DCC did confirm that the cost for it to undertake a Full Impact Assessment for the full suite of Change Requests would be around £65,000. This cost would decrease if Change Requests were dropped.

ACTION: The DCC to provide a cost estimate for securing the data from its Service Providers required for CRs 1423 & 1440.

The DCC advised that the TOC option doesn't rely on the Communications Hub Alerts being introduced by SECMP0007 'Firmware updates to IHDs and PPMIDs', but it would still expect improved reporting once it is fully implemented.

The Working Group asked whether the TOC solution would be satisfactory from an OPR perspective. Ofgem advised that the OPR is designed to deliver performance reporting that reflects customer expectations. The DCC advised that whilst the TOC solution will provide an improved level of performance reporting, it would not be suitable to be held accountable from the OPR due to the amount of "fuzzy" logic being used. The accuracy of this fuzzy logic was estimated to be at least 95%. The DCC also noted that securing the data from the SMETS1 Service providers is a significant risk in being able to obtain the data and there might be attendant costs.

ACTION: SECAS and the DCC to liaise with Ofgem to confirm if the TOC option for CRs 1423 &1440 would be satisfactory for the OPR requirements.

A Working Group member asked how long it would take to implement the TOC options. The DCC considered the lead time could be a few months and that development would be three to six months