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MP164

‘November 2021 SEC Release supporting changes’

Modification Report

Version 1.0

20 August 2021

Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer
communication

592



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About this document

This document is a Modification Report. It sets out the background, issue, solution, impacts, costs, implementation approach and progression timetable for this modification, along with any relevant discussions, views and conclusions.

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This document also has two annexes:

- **Annex A** contains the redlined changes to the SEC required to deliver the Proposed Solution.
- **Annex B** contains the redlined changes to the GB Companion Specification (GBCS) to deliver the Proposed Solution.

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1. Summary

This proposal has been raised by David Walsh from the Data Communications Company (DCC).

This modification consists of a series of consequential changes arising from [SECMP0007 'Firmware updates to IHDs and PPMIDs'](#) which is already approved for the November 2021 SEC Release. These additional changes to the SEC were not available when SECMP0007 was approved.

The DCC detailed system design associated with the SECMP0007 changes occurred after the approval of the modification and associated legal text. As part of this detailed system design process some additions and amendments have been identified as being required to align to the legal text with the required SECMP0007 solution design. These consequential changes to the SEC Technical Specifications are needed to ensure that the SEC accurately reflects the agreed SECMP0007 solution. As well as several housekeeping changes, additional validation steps in the over-the-air (OTA) firmware process need to be referenced.

The costs of this proposal are limited to Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) time and effort to implement the changes. No SEC Parties are expected to be impacted by the proposal, as it will only deliver clarifications to the SECMP0007 legal text. This modification does introduce clarifications to the SECMP0007 changes to the DCC User Interface Specification (DUIS) Extensible Markup Language (XML) Schema, but this would be implemented in a DUIS impacting release and therefore would not pose any additional impact on Users in the given release. This modification is targeted for the November 2021 SEC Release in parallel with the implementation of the SECMP0007 legal text.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

SECMP0007 will provide OTA capability to deliver firmware updates to Prepayment Meter Interface Devices (PPMIDs) and Home Area Network (HAN) Connected Auxiliary Load Control Switches (HCALCSs). It will be implemented in phases:

- The SEC documentation and Data Services Provider (DSP) system changes will be implemented first on 4 November 2021 (November 2021 SEC Release).
- The Communication Services Provider (CSP) system changes will be delivered in the June 2022 SEC Release with the subsequent Communications Hub firmware updates being rolled out as soon as they are available.

More information on the SECMP0007 implementation approach and associated benefits at each phase can be found [here](#).

What is the issue?

The DCC detailed system design associated with the SECMP0007 changes occurred after the approval of the modification and associated legal text. As part of this detailed system design process

some additions and amendments have been identified as being required to align to the required solution design to deliver the required intent of the SECMP0007 solution.

The nature of the consequential changes required vary, with some being cosmetic changes and others required to ensure full accuracy of the SECMP0007 solution.

The changes to the existing SECMP0007 legal text create the consequential changes found in Annexes A and B.

What is the impact this is having?

If these issues are not resolved, the Technical Specifications will not reflect the DCC solution that is implemented as part of the November 2021 SEC Release. It will also create ambiguity with inconsistent wording in the specifications.

Impact on consumers

The DCC is designing its solution as SECMP0007 had intended and therefore on the assumption that DP164 is approved.

As a result, this modification will not impact consumers, but if it is not implemented in the November 2021 SEC Release, the impacted Technical Specifications will not fully align with the DCC's solution design.

3. Solution

Proposed Solution

The Proposed Solution is to make consequential changes to the versions of the GBCS, the Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications (SMETS)2, the DUIS and the Message Mapping Catalogue (MMC). No changes are required to the Communications Hub Technical Specifications (CHTS) legal text approved under SECMP0007.

These changes have been reviewed by the following groups and organisations:

- The DCC
- The DSP
- The GBCS Working Group
- The Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC)
- The Technical Specification Issue Resolution Subgroup (TSIRS)

The GBCS and the DUIS contain most of the additional changes, whilst only very minor changes are needed to the SMETS and the MMC.

4. Impacts

This section summarises the impacts that would arise from the implementation of this modification.

SEC Parties

SEC Party Categories impacted			
	Large Suppliers		Small Suppliers
	Electricity Network Operators		Gas Network Operators
	Other SEC Parties		DCC

No SEC Parties are expected to be impacted by the proposal, as it will only deliver clarifications to the SECMP0007 legal text.

DCC System

This modification will not impact the DCC Systems.

SEC and subsidiary documents

The following parts of the SEC will be impacted:

- Schedule 8 'GB Companion Specification'
- Schedule 9 'Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications 2'
- Appendix AD 'DCC User Interface Specification'
- Appendix AF 'Message Mapping Catalogue'

The changes to the SEC required to deliver the proposed solution can be found in Annexes A and B.

Technical specification versions

These changes will be bundled with other GBCS, SMETS, DUIS and MMC changes for efficiency and will apply to the same versions that are already being uplifted in the given SEC Release. Assuming this modification is implemented in the November 2021 SEC Release, the legal text will be implemented in the following versions:

- GBCS v4.1
- PPMIDTS v4.4
- HCALCSTS v5.1
- DUIS v5.0
- MMC v5.0

Consumers

There are no impacts to consumers.

Other industry Codes

There are no impacts on other industry Codes.

Greenhouse gas emissions

There are no impacts on greenhouse gas emissions.

5. Costs

DCC costs

There are no DCC implementation costs associated with this modification.

SECAS costs

The estimated SECAS implementation costs to implement this modification is two days of effort, amounting to approximately £1,200. The activities needed to be undertaken for this are:

- Updating the SEC and releasing the new version to the industry.

SEC Party costs

There are no SEC Party implementation costs associated with this modification.

6. Implementation approach

Approved implementation approach

The Change Sub-Committee (CSC) has agreed an implementation date of:

- **4 November 2021** (November 2021 SEC Release) if a decision to approve is received on or before 21 October 2021.

The Proposed Solution needs to be implemented at the same time as the Proposed Solution for SECMP0007 in the November 2021 SEC Release. This will ensure the SEC accurately reflects the DCC design for the SECMP0007 Proposed Solution.

7. Assessment of the proposal

Observations on the issue

DCC and SECAS views

Following the approval of SECMP0007 the DCC and its Service Providers began the detailed design and development activities. The DCC's Service Providers highlighted several anomalies within the SECMP0007 legal text that arose out of this work. This included the lack of a validation step to check the GBCS Compatibility for the Communications Hubs associated to the specified target Device (and to a lesser extent the target HCALCS Device for SRV11.1 'Update Firmware') when a User attempts a firmware update.

The GBCS Working Group also reviewed the GBCS, SMETS and CHTS legal text and recommended several changes be made in order to reflect the intended SECMP0007 solution.

SECAS reviewed the points and agreed that several consequential updates to the SECMP0007 legal text were required.

Solution development

DUIS and MMC

The DCC drafted the DUIS and the MMC legal text changes it believed were needed to address the issues raised. These were reviewed by the DCC and SECAS, both of which agreed with the intent of each change.

SECAS believed the proposed new validation step for SR11.1 'Update Firmware' and new SR11.4 'Update PPMID Firmware' to check the GBCS compatibility of the PPMID and HCALCS should be split into a separate item for each Device, for ease of readability. The DCC advised that doing so would have a material impact on the DSP's solution design and increase implementation timescales. SECAS therefore agreed to use the DCC's proposed drafting.

GBCS and SMETS

The GBCS Working Group, which includes members of the DCC, reviewed the GBCS, SMETS and CHTS legal text for SECMP0007. It raised several housekeeping changes and improvements related to the SECMP0007 legal text for these specifications. SECAS and the DCC reviewed these in detail and agreed which points required changes and which were consistent with the intent of the drafting.

The discussions mostly resulted in amendments to the GBCS and two minor housekeeping changes for the SMETS. No changes were needed to the originally agreed SECMP0007 CHTS legal text.

Following SECAS drafting the agreed changes, these were reviewed by and agreed with the GBCS Working Group.

TABASC and TSIRS reviews

Once the legal text had been updated following reviews by the DCC, the DSP and the GBCS Working Group, views were sought from the TABASC and TSIRS on whether the legal text accurately delivered the technical solution.

SECAS received two responses from members of these groups. One responded queried the inconsistent use of the terms 'TimeStamp' and 'Timestamp' within the DUIS document and the DUIS XML Schema Definition (XSD). There were previously three instances of 'TimeStamp' in the DUIS, with the DP164 DUIS legal text proposing to change these to 'Timestamp'. Specifically, these are found at the following three areas:

- PPMIDAlert
- CSPFirmwareDeliveryStatus
- CommsHubAlert

However, the respondent highlighted that the DUIS XSD still contained two references to 'TimeStamp' and one reference to 'Timestamp'. Therefore, a new inconsistency had inadvertently been created between the DUIS document and DUIS XSD with the terminology each used. As a result, SECAS cancelled the changes within CSPFirmwareDeliveryStatus and CommsHubAlert in the DUIS with the terms reverting back to 'TimeStamp' (with capital S in the middle). SECAS then updated the term within PPMIDAlert from 'TimeStamp' to 'Timestamp' to align it with the PPMIDAlert item within the DUIS XSD.

In summary, terms within each given section have been aligned between the DUIS document and the DUIS XSD, with a known inconsistency left between the PPMIDAlert use of Timestamp versus the other sections that use TimeStamp. This was due to there not being enough lead-time for the DCC to update the XSD so close to implementation as well as the impact it would have on testing. The respondent agreed that the issue had been resolved.

The second respondent suggested several minor typographical amendments be made in the GBCS legal text as well as the deletion of redundant blank lines. SECAS agreed to all of the changes suggested and made amendments to reflect these.

Views against the General SEC Objectives

Proposer's views

Objective (g)¹

The Proposer believes this proposal will better facilitate SEC Objective (g). This is due to aligning the GBCS, SMETS, DUIS and MMC to the DCC design for the SECMP0007 Proposed Solution.

In addition, this proposal will remove ambiguity from the impacted Technical Specifications and make several housekeeping changes leaving the documents consistent and easier to read.

Views against the consumer areas

Improved safety and reliability

This modification will be neutral against this consumer benefit area.

Lower bills than would otherwise be the case

This modification will be neutral against this consumer benefit area.

¹ To facilitate the efficient and transparent administration and implementation of this Code.

Reduced environmental damage

This modification will be neutral against this consumer benefit area.

Improved quality of service

This modification will be neutral against this consumer benefit area.

Benefits for society as a whole

This modification will be neutral against this consumer benefit area.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

SECAS and the DCC began drafting the legal text for this modification in January 2021 and it has been extensively reviewed within both organisations as well as by the GBCS Working Group. SECAS and the DCC agreed the legal text was ready to progress to wider industry consultation in July 2021.

The CSC approved the final Modification Report ex-committee in mid-August 2021. A Modification Report Consultation has been issued with responses requested by 10 September 2021. The Change Board vote will then be held on 29 September 2021 under Self-Governance.

The expedited timescales are due to this modification requiring a decision as soon as possible. This is to ensure the SEC accurately reflects the designed SECMP0007 solution and to give the industry certainty on the technical specifications being implemented in the November 2021 SEC Release.

Timetable	
Event/Action	Date
Draft Proposal raised	18 May 2021
Presented to CSC for initial comment	25 May 2021
TABASC and TSIRS review of legal text	19 Jul 2021 – 6 Aug 2021
CSC converts Draft Proposal to Modification Proposal	19 Aug 2021
Modification Report approved by CSC	19 Aug 2021
Modification Report Consultation	20 Aug 2021 – 10 Sep 2021
Change Board Vote	29 Sep 2021

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
CHTS	Communications Hub Technical Specifications
CSP	Communication Services Provider
DCC	Data Communications Company
DSP	Data Services Provider
DUIS	DCC User Interface Specification
GBCS	GB Companion Specification
HAN	Home Area Network
HCALCS	Home Area Network Connected Auxiliary Load Control Switch
HCALCSTS	Home Area Network Connected Auxiliary Load Control Switch Technical Specification
IHD	In-Home Display
MMC	Message Mapping Catalogue
OTA	over-the-air
PPMID	Prepayment Meter Interface Device
PPMIDTS	Prepayment Meter Interface Device Technical Specification
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SECAS	Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
SMETS	Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications
SRV	Service Reference Variant
TABASC	Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee
TSIRS	Technical Specification Issue Resolution Subgroup
XML	Extensible Markup Language
XSD	XML Schema Definition