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SECMP0024 ‘Enduring Approach to Communication Hub Firmware Management’

Conclusions Report – version 1.0

About this document

This document summarises the responses received to the Modification Report Consultation and the decision of the Change Board regarding approval or rejection of this modification.

Summary of conclusions

Change Board

The Change Board voted to approve SECMP0024 under Self-Governance. It believed by majority that the modification did better facilitate SEC Objectives (a)¹ and (b)².

Modification Report Consultation

SECAS received three responses to the Modification Report Consultation. They all believe the modification should be approved. Those that stated considered the modification did better facilitate SEC Objective (a).

¹ Facilitate the efficient provision, installation, and operation, as well as interoperability, of Smart Metering Systems at Energy Consumers' premises within Great Britain.

² Enable the DCC to comply at all times with the General Objectives of the DCC (as defined in the DCC Licence), and to efficiently discharge the other obligations imposed upon it by the DCC Licence.

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Modification Report Consultation responses

Summary of responses

Support for approval of SECMP0024

Three responses were received to the Modification Report Consultation, two from Large Suppliers and one from a Network Party, all of which believed the modification should be approved.

One respondent noted this modification has formalised and documented a transparent, collaborative industry process for introducing new firmware versions to DCC Communications Hubs. They believed the DCC implementation costs were relatively small and that Supplier costs will only be incurred if the Supplier wishes to take advantage of the new Alert to better serve customers. They added that the new Alert will result in the Supplier benefits noted in the Modification Report. The respondent acknowledged the modification has progressed over several years with it being adapted to deliver a cost-effective solution. Noting the targeted implementation date of the June 2022 SEC Release being dependent on a decision at the Change Board meeting on 25 August 2021; they strongly recommended it be approved. This is to prevent delay that could potentially see this modification slip back to the next DCC User Interface Specification (DUIS) impacting release in 2023.

The other two respondents were supportive of the modification with one noting the Alert would allow Suppliers to better manage the Communications Hubs in its portfolio and the other noting the benefit against SEC Objective (a).

DCC CH Firmware Management Overview

One respondent had concerns over the DCC's 'CH Firmware Management Overview' document, which had been developed alongside this modification. They noted they had previously fed back comments on the document but have not had a response or seen it be published.

The DCC published the document on the DCC website earlier on the same day of the Party submitted their response. However, the respondent could not take this into account given the lack of time they had been given to review it. The DCC has since reached out to the respondent to try and address their concerns.

Change Board vote

Change Board vote

The Change Board voted to **approve** SECMP0024 under Self-Governance.

The vote breakdown is summarised below:

Change Board vote				
Party Category	Approve	Reject	Abstain	Outcome
Large Suppliers	1	3	0	Reject
Small Suppliers	2	0	0	Approve
Network Parties	0	0	3	-

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Change Board vote				
Party Category	Approve	Reject	Abstain	Outcome
Other SEC Parties	1	0	1	Approve
Consumer Representative	0	0	0	-
Overall outcome:				APPROVE

The Network Party members and one Other SEC Party member abstained from voting. This was due to their not wanting to sway the decision considering their Party Categories are not impacted by the modification. Members noted that consultation responses were in support of approving the modification. However, the majority of Large Suppliers on the Change Board were voting to reject. Therefore, they were unsure what decision to make and felt it appropriate to abstain.

Views against the General SEC Objectives

Objective (a)

The majority of the Change Board believed that SECMP0024 will better facilitate SEC Objective (a). They noted the rationale in the Modification Report which was that the provision of a Communications Hub firmware update framework that is coordinated, controlled and transparent to the relevant parties will facilitate the efficient provision, installation, and operation and interoperability of Smart Metering Systems at Energy Consumers' premises within Great Britain.

Those who voted to reject SECMP0024 believed it would be neutral against SEC Objective (a) and would not provide any benefit.

Objective (b)

Two of the four Change Board members that voted to approve SECMP0024 did believe it will better facilitate SEC Objective (b) for reasons noted in the Modification Report.

The other two Change Board members that voted to approve SECMP0024 and those who voted to reject SECMP0024 believed it would be neutral against SEC Objective (b) and would not provide any benefit.

Change Board discussions

Benefits and business case

Three Large Supplier members did not believe the modification provided a positive business case. They advised that their organisations were unlikely to take advantage of the new Alert considering its lack of benefit and the internal costs to update to a new version of the DCC User Interface Specification (DUIS) to facilitate the new Alert. They advised that they would rather know in advance when updates to Communications Hubs were going to happen before they were activated. SECAS advised that this had been a requirement under a previous iteration of the Proposed Solution but had since been dropped due to the high implementation costs noted in the Preliminary Assessment.

A Small Supplier member agreed with the points raised by the Large Supplier members but still believed the solution contained enough benefits for it to be approved. They considered that new Alert

would automatically update Supplier systems with the new firmware version of the Alert, preventing them from periodically having to read the Smart Metering Inventory (SMI) to gain this information.

The DCC noted the considerable support the solution had received from the Working Group, Refinement Consultation and Modification Report Consultation respondents.

Modification crossover

The DCC highlighted that SECMP00024, if approved would reduce the potential implementation costs under [MP122B 'Operational Metrics – Part 2'](#). However, neither SECMP00024 nor MP122B is dependent on the other.

A member believed that all modifications should be judged on their own merit. They noted that Parties should not be voting to approve modifications just because they are needed to support another modification. The Change Board unanimously agreed with the member's points.