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Paper Reference:	CSC_32_2610_06
Action:	For Decision

Approval to implement the November 2021 SEC Release

1. Purpose

The November 2021 SEC Release is due to be implemented on 4 November 2021. Before the changes can go live, the Change Sub-Committee (CSC) is required to review progress against the acceptance criteria in the Release Implementation Document (RID) and give final approval to proceed.

This paper summarises the views and recommendations of the Operations Group (OPSG) and the Testing Advisory Group (TAG), and requests that the CSC approves the SEC Release to go live.

2. Release scope

The November 2021 SEC Release will include the following Modification Proposals:

Modification	Status	Impacts DCC Systems?
SECMP0007 'Firmware update to IHDs and PPMIDs'	Approved for inclusion.	✓
MP077 'DCC Service Flagging'	Approved for inclusion.	✓
MP090 'Incorporation of Non GBCS Non-Mandated Alerts into the SEC'	Approved for inclusion.	✓
MP105 'Sending SR11.2 to Devices in Suspended State'	Approved for inclusion.	✓
MP138 'DCC Service Testing in ETAD'	Approved for inclusion.	
MP149 'Effecting Changes to the Smart Energy Code efficiently'	On 29 September 2021, the Change Board voted to recommend the Authority approves MP149. MP149 is currently with the Authority for decision and will be	

Modification	Status	Impacts DCC Systems?
	included in this release if the Authority determines to approve this modification by 21 October 2021.	
MP150 'Removing Table 28c from the GBCS'	Approved for inclusion.	
MP157 'Removal of DUIS v1.0 and v2.0'	Approved for inclusion.	
MP158 'Incorporation of multiple Issue Resolution Proposals into the SEC – Batch 5'	Approved for inclusion.	
MP164 'November 2021 SEC Release supporting changes'	Approved for inclusion.	
MP180 'Market-wide Half-Hourly Settlement Implementation'	On 29 September 2021, the Change Board voted to recommend the Authority approves MP149. MP149 is currently with the Authority for decision and will be included in this release if the Authority determines to approve this modification by 28 October 2021.	

3. Review of readiness against the acceptance criteria

The Panel agreed a set of acceptance criteria in the RID that will need to be met before the November 2021 SEC Release can go live. These were split into operational acceptance criteria, which were reviewed by the OPSG, and testing acceptance criteria, which were reviewed by the TAG. These criteria can be found in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

3.1 Views of the OPSG

The OPSG considered the operational readiness against the operational acceptance criteria on 5 October 2021. A summary of the views of the OPSG against the operational acceptance criteria and the statements from the DCC can be found in Appendix 1 below. The OPSG agreed Green status for the criteria, with the following qualifications:

Acceptance Criterion 2: Service Stability

The OPSG raised concerns regarding the stability of the existing Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications (SMETS) 1 services following significant incidents on the SMETS1 Final Operating Capability (FOC) service and the SMETS1 Initial Operating Capability (IOC) firmware download impacted by Dual Control Organisation (DCO) capacity. The OPSG noted the DCC response that there are Supplier Service Rectification Plan (SSRP) tracking remediation and that the release has minimal to no impact on SMETS1 services. Whilst recognising the continued operational risk to service stability, the OPSG agreed that this criterion should be Amber but accepted the DCC's assurance that:

- the November 2021 SEC Release would not substantially increase this operational risk; and
- the November 2021 SEC Release itself was not at risk due the existing service problems.

Acceptance Criterion 3: New services can be operated alongside existing services

The OPSG questioned whether the Data Service Provider (DSP) Technical Refresh activities that the DCC has proposed for November 2021 could be impacted by the implementation of the November 2021 SEC Release, given the close proximity and changes. The DCC noted that there were no technical interactions, although any risk will be considered during the DCC's Operational Acceptance for the SEC Release and DSP Technical Refresh. The OPSG agreed that the operational acceptance criteria have been adequately satisfied and that the November 2021 SEC Release is ready to be set live.

Note, the DCC has since taken the decision not to pursue with the DSP Technical Refresh activities in November 2021 and has delayed these until a later date.

Acceptance Criterion 7: No detrimental impact on consumers' experience

An OPSG member raised concern that there may be an impact to Service Users in reference to [MP077 'DCC Service Flagging'](#). If incorrect data were to be provided from the Registration Data Provider (RDP) then this could cause issues with operational activities for Users. The DCC acknowledged that this scenario could happen, although as the root cause would be within data, rather than the process, an RDP incident would be raised to investigate.

The OPSG agreed that the operational acceptance criteria have been adequately satisfied and that the November 2021 SEC Release is ready to be set live.

3.2 Views of the TAG

The TAG considered the results of the DCC's testing against the testing acceptance criteria on 29 September 2021. A summary of the views of the TAG against the testing acceptance criteria can be found in Appendix 2 below.

The TAG noted that four Severity 3 Testing Issues (TIs) remained outstanding at the end of Systems Integration Testing (SIT) after the TAG had agreed to exclude 24 TIs for the following reasons:

- Five identical TIs were treated as a single TI;
- Nine TIs related to existing, known, defects in the production or User testing environments;
- Eight TIs related to issues with Devices; and
- Two TIs related to issues with the relevant test environments.

This is within the tolerances agreed with the TAG. The TAG reviewed the DCC's evidence and agreed with the severity rating of all the remaining four TIs.

The TAG noted that SMETS2 testing was undertaken with only two meter sets, one of which failed to work. Most of the testing had gone as planned, with a small subset of testing that could not be performed against Meter Manufacturer (MM) 1 performed against MM2 instead. The TAG concluded that the issue with the DCC being unable to access enough Devices and support from manufacturers is much broader than the November 2021 SEC Release and agreed to address it as a separate issue.

The TAG agreed that SIT had been completed, that the testing exit criteria had been met and that the November 2021 SEC Release is ready to be implemented as part of the production Services.

After the TAG had made its decision, the implementation of two SMETS1 Uplift releases (Uplift 2.2 and Uplift 3.0) were delayed and those Uplift releases will now be deployed into the production environment alongside the November 2021 SEC Release. Whilst this increases implementation risk slightly for all three releases, the TAG agreed that the approach to testing and deployment proposed by the DCC should be sufficient to protect the November 2021 SEC Release.

4. Residual risks

The DCC noted that there were no Medium or High risks that have been identified under the November 2021 SEC Release. The DCC will continue to review any risks during the transition process with regular engagements between DCC Operational stakeholders and senior management.

SECAS queried whether there should be a risk relating to the inability to test the full End-to-End solution on [SECMPP0007 'Firmware updates to IHDs and PPMIDs'](#) as the modification has been split into two parts and requires a Communications Hub firmware to be available in testing. The DCC noted that it had acknowledged this risk when discussing the split between the modifications. The DCC decided to only implement minimal changes in the November 2021 SEC Release to minimise the risk to testing and discovering defects once the full end-to-end solution was available.

The OPSG accepted the DCC's view on residual risks and did not raise any additional significant risks for consideration.

5. Approval to proceed

Based on the views of the OPSG and the TAG, we believe that the November 2021 SEC Release is ready to be set live on 4 November 2021. We therefore recommend that the CSC approves the release to be implemented.

6. Recommendations

The CSC is requested to:

- **NOTE** the views and recommendations of the OPSG and the TAG; and
- **AGREE** that the November 2021 SEC Release can be set live on 4 November 2021.

Joe Hehir

SECAS Team

19 October 2021

Attachments

- **Appendix A:** November 2021 SEC Release Implementation Document v12.0

Appendix 1: OPSG's view on the DCC's statement of readiness

Acceptance criteria	DCC statement	OPSG's views	Status
1. The DCC has brought to readiness all the new and changed components needed to provide the new services. This will include completing the service design and proving the service operations capability	<p>DCC Service Architecture has identified all new and changed components to be delivered as part of the November 2021 SEC Release. The November 2021 Service Design and associated artefacts have been assured by the DCC Service Architecture governance process with DCC internal stakeholders providing their approval.</p> <p>Business Acceptance Testing (BAT) has tested the Service Architecture, and new and amended artefacts and the Test Completion Report will be reviewed and approved by DCC Operational stakeholders.</p> <p>DCC Transition is working with all the DCC Operational capabilities to confirm their readiness to support the service in live. Ahead of the Go Live, formal Operational Acceptance will be undertaken to confirm this. Go live will be confirmed with external and internal stakeholders on 3 November 2021 through a Go/No Go decision that all DCC, DSP and Communications Service Provider (CSP) systems are stable and ready for go-live.</p>	The OPSG accepted the DCC's statement of readiness with no further comments.	GREEN
2. The DCC has demonstrated that all pre-existing services will be stable in the run-up to deployment of the release	<p>The DCC monitors the overall stability of the production environment ensuring continuity of SMETS1 and SMETS2 services. DCC Service Transition will set up pre-go-live steady state calls with all associated Operational teams, the DSP and the CSPs.</p> <p>Post November 2021 SEC Release, the Technical Operations Centre (TOC) will maintain its heightened awareness</p>	The OPSG raised concerns regarding the stability of the existing SMETS1 services following significant incidents on the SMETS1 FOC service and the SMETS1 Initial Operating Capability (IOC) firmware download impacted by DCO capacity. The OPSG noted the DCC response that there	AMBER

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Acceptance criteria	DCC statement	OPSG's views	Status
	<p>communications to assure that network and any associated services have not been affected post implementation.</p> <p>There have been two Category 2 incidents in August impacting the delivery of FOC Service Requests and the completion of FOC Migrations. Root Cause investigations are currently ongoing. There have been two Category 2 incidents in September one which was caused by a DCO HSM issue and another caused by DXC HSM issues. Root Cause investigations are currently ongoing.</p> <p>The DCC has placed DXC and Trilliant under a SSRP to ensure the improvements to system stability are made where required and confidence in the solution is restored.</p> <p>Previously, the DCO was entered into a similar plan and significant improvements have been seen in its performance and stability.</p>	<p>are SSRP tracking remediation and that the release has minimal to no impact on SMETS1 services. Whilst recognising the continued operational risk to service stability, the OPSG agreed with the DCC's statement of readiness but that this criterion should be Amber.</p>	
3. The DCC has proven that the new services can be operated alongside, and integrated with, the existing services	<p>All impacted service designs and processes have been identified and subject to an impact assessment. Where amendments have been identified as needed, this activity has been included in the overall Service Architecture activities and assurance provided as detailed in acceptance criteria 1.</p> <p>The DCC has undertaken regression testing which DCC Operations has been engaged with; any associated defects have been fixed and closed.</p> <p>The DCC and the DSP have confirmed there are no impacts to reporting as part of the November 2021 SEC Release.</p>	<p>The OPSG questioned whether the DSP Technical Refresh activities that the DCC had proposed for November 2021 could be impacted by the implementation of the November 2021 SEC Release given the close proximity and changes. The DCC noted that there were no technical interactions although any risk will be considered during the DCC's Operational Acceptance for the SEC Release and DSP Tech Refresh.</p>	GREEN

Acceptance criteria	DCC statement	OPSG's views	Status
		<p>The OPSG accepted the DCC's statement of readiness with no further comments.</p> <p>Note, the DCC has since taken the decision not to pursue with the DSP Technical Refresh activities in November 2021 and has delayed these until a later date.</p>	
4. The DCC has assessed the risk posed by existing problems and defects in the existing live service, and the implications these will have for the revised service	The DCC Problem Management team has reviewed and impact assessed the existing problems against the November 2021 SEC Release change, and confirmed that there is no adverse impact.	The OPSG accepted the DCC's statement of readiness with no further comments.	GREEN
5. The DCC has assessed and addressed the impact on Users arising from any issues, defects or workarounds within the new services	DCC Service Transition has facilitated defect reviews between technical and operational teams to impact assess all defects against Operational, DCC Service User and end consumer perspectives. On the basis of these impact assessments the defect position has been accepted. All associated workarounds documented and assured through the Service Architecture governance process.	The OPSG accepted the DCC's statement of readiness with no further comments.	GREEN
6. The DCC has demonstrated that lessons learnt from previous SEC Releases and other	DCC Transition has conducted lessons learned reviews through the November 2021 project lifecycle and the below have been captured:	The OPSG accepted the DCC's statement of readiness with no further comments.	GREEN

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Acceptance criteria	DCC statement	OPSG's views	Status
DCC changes have been taken on board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition has had early engagement with the project, leading to much earlier identification and resolution of risks and issues. This in turn has assisted with Operational readiness. Scope was defined much earlier in the process compared to previous releases. This meant the DCC had clarity on scope, and when a change request was reintroduced at a later stage, the impact controlled. <p>Additionally, the DCC complete a lesson learned review as part of the closedown activities for every SEC release and these are reviewed at the start of each SEC Modification release project.</p>		
7. The DCC has demonstrated there will be no detrimental impact on consumers' experience	<p>The DCC has undertaken a thorough impact analysis on the components of the November 2021 SEC Release. The overall impact is a positive one for Service Users.</p> <p>The DCC has undertaken a thorough analysis of potential impact on consumers during the service design phase and can state that the November 2021 SEC Release will have no detrimental impact on end consumers.</p>	<p>An OPSG member raised concern that there may be an impact to Service Users in reference to MP077 'DCC Service Flagging'. If incorrect data were to be provided from the RDP then this could cause issues with operational activities for Users. The DCC acknowledged that this scenario could happen, although as the root cause would be within the data, rather than the process, an RDP incident would be raised to investigate.</p> <p>The OPSG accepted the DCC's statement of readiness with no further comments.</p>	GREEN
8. The DCC has completed assurance of the Business	<p>The DCC Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR) team confirmed there are no new capabilities introduced by the November 2021 SEC Release that impact the BCDR or require</p>	<p>The OPSG accepted the DCC's statement of readiness with no further comments.</p>	GREEN

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Acceptance criteria	DCC statement	OPSG's views	Status
Continuity and Disaster Recovery processes	an update to the BCDR plan. This assessment was undertaken as part of the activities during the operational readiness phase. The impact on BCDR was also reviewed by the DSP and the CSPs and documented in the Full Impact Assessment and has been assured by DCC BCDR.		

Appendix 2: TAG's view on the DCC's statement of readiness

Acceptance criteria	TAG's views	Status
1. The DCC has developed the coding for each approved change and confirmed it will be able to deploy this to the production environment on the agreed implementation date	<p>Each change has been tested in accordance with the Test Approach Document (TAD) and testing has not highlighted any risk to the implementation date.</p> <p>After the TAG had made its decision, the implementation of two SMETS1 Uplift releases (Uplift 2.2 and Uplift 3.0) were delayed and those Uplift releasees will now be deployed into the production environment alongside the November 2021 SEC Release.</p> <p>Whilst this increases implementation risk slightly, the TAG agreed that the approach to testing and deployment proposed by the DCC should be sufficient to protect the November 2021 SEC Release.</p>	GREEN
2. The DCC has completed and closed each test phase against the agreed exit criteria specified in the TAD	All testing has completed in accordance with the TAD, with any excluded tests assessed and agreed by the TAG.	GREEN
3. The DCC has successfully completed regression testing	<p>The required pass rate for regression is 100%, but 99% was achieved for the November 2021 SEC Release. This represents four failed tests, all of which are due to either existing issues with the test environments or accepted Meter Manufacturer defects.</p> <p>The TAG reviewed the DCC's evidence and agreed that these tests should be excluded from the exit criteria.</p>	GREEN
4. The DCC has allowed adequate opportunity for Users to test the changes prior to deployment	The DCC enabled User testing in line with the requirements of the TAD agreed with the TAG.	GREEN
5. The DCC has confirmed that there are no Severity 1 or 2 defects outstanding that would be deployed to the live environment	There were no Severity 1 or 2 defects reported as outstanding at the end of SIT.	GREEN

Acceptance criteria	TAG's views	Status
6. The DCC has produced a clear resolution plan for any outstanding Severity 3, 4 or 5 defects and that the number of remaining testing issues is within the agreed threshold figures specified in the TAD	All Testing Issues that require a code change have a plan and target date for resolution. This is due to the already agreed delivery date by the Service Provider. The issues encountered were not related the code changes for the November 2021 SEC Release. The number of outstanding Testing Issues is within the tolerances agreed with the TAG.	GREEN
7. The DCC has demonstrated that the SIT and User Integration Testing (UIT) test environments were aligned to the solution being deployed to the production environment; if there were any differences, these were identified and the risks these posed demonstrably managed	The DCC has set out the environment specification for SIT and the TAG has not raised any issues.	GREEN