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## MP116 ‘Service Request Forecasting’

### October 2021 Working Group – meeting summary

#### Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Ali Beard	SECAS
Khaleda Hussain	SECAS
Bradley Baker	SECAS
Joey Manners	SECAS
Anik Abdullah	SECAS
Tim Newton	SECAS
Graeme Liggett	DCC
Sasha Townsend	DCC
Hayley Robinson	DCC
David Walsh	DCC
Sarah-Jane Russell	British Gas
Lucy Hogarth	EDMI
Julie Geary	E.ON
Alex Hurcombe	EDF Energy
Daniel Davis	ESG Global
Matt Hallchurch	Honeywell
Alastair Cobb	Landis + Gyr
Ralph Baxter	Octopus Energy
Ashton Pearson-Child	Outfox the Market
Mafs Rahman	Scottish Power
Elias Hanna	Smart ADSL
Eric Taylor	SMETS Design Ltd
Matthew Alexander	SSEN
Robert Johnstone	Utilita
Gemma Slaney	WPD

#### Overview

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) provided an overview of the issue identified, the Proposed Solution, a summary of the Refinement Consultation responses and subsequent updates to the legal text and Data Communications Company (DCC) User Guidance

document.

### Issue

- Every quarter each DCC User must submit an eight-month Service Request (SR) forecast stating how many SRs they anticipate they will send in the following eight months.
- Each forecast takes approximately two days to complete per DCC User.
- Experience has shown that the forecasts submitted are often inaccurate.

### Proposed Solution

- The obligation on DCC users to submit SR forecasts will be removed.
- The DCC will produce internally two SR forecasts (spanning six and 48 months) and one variance report which will compare actual figures compared to those forecasted.
- DCC Users are to feed into the new process as per the legal text and DCC User Guidance document to maintain a monthly accuracy target of +/-10%.

### Refinement Consultation

The full responses to the Refinement Consultation can be found [here](#).

### Implementation Approach

SECAS is recommending an implementation date of:

- **24 February 2022** (February 2022 SEC Release) if a decision to approve is received on or before 10 February 2022; or
- **30 June 2022** (Jun 2022 SEC Release) if a decision to approve is received after 10 February 2022 but on or before 16 June 2022.

### Working Group Discussion

SECAS (BB) provided an overview of the meeting objectives, the issue and Proposed Solution. The Working Group noted the issue and provided no further comments. and presented a summary of the Refinement Consultation responses and where applicable, the DCC's response.

### Sign off responsibility

SECAS (BB) informed the Working Group that the DCC had recently confirmed that they are happy to be responsible for the sign off of the new DCC-produced forecasts. A Working Group member (GS) felt that this contradicts the wording in the DCC User Guidance document. The DCC stated that they will hold accountability for forecast accuracy and Users will not be obliged to provide insight into their predicted SR volumes. The DCC added that some rewording may be required to the guidance document to make it clear to DCC Users that while they are expected to advise DCC on expected SR volumes, though will not be obliged to do so.

### **Maintaining forecast accuracy**

The Working Group showed concern in how DCC Users would provide the information the DCC require to maintain a high level of accuracy and subsequent capacity on DCC Systems. (GS) commented that in practice, if a DCC User does not believe that an increase in their own SR volumes will exceed 10% of the global forecast, they may not inform the DCC of the expected increase. However, if several DCC Users were in a similar position and did not provide notification to the DCC, it was questioned who would be responsible for the inaccuracy and potential limitations on DCC System capacity.

A Working Group member (GS) stated that they have 8.5m customers. If their customers were combined with that of a Large Supplier, and a situation arose where SRs were sent to each customer's Devices, the SR volume may exceed 10%. The DCC commented that as more forecasts are completed, the DCC will document events that have seen increased volumes of SRs and factor them into later forecasts. The DCC (GL) advised that their biggest concern in relation to DCC System capacity is firmware updates. The DCC would like DCC Users to notify them in advance of these being actioned to make sure there is a sufficient capacity available.

### **Firmware deployment**

A Working Group member (MR) commented that current limitations Suppliers have when deploying firmware is due to limited DCC System capacity. They questioned what the DCC's course of action will be if there is too great a number of firmware activations waiting to be carried out by Suppliers. The DCC (GL) added that they will engage with Users to discuss the level of urgency of the activations and work together to understand the prioritisation of delivering the firmware updates, while helping the DCC better plan for future capacity increases.

### **The role of forecasts**

A Working Group member (RB) questioned the relevance of SR forecasts as they have been inaccurate for several years. They elaborated further that although it was forecasted that SR volumes were going to increase due to the Aclara Final Operating Capability (FOC) update, there were still issues with DCC System capacity which ultimately caused delays with the FOC deployment. The Working Group member felt that due to the many circumstances that cannot be easily predicted or predicted at all, forecasting is a misuse of resource. The DCC (GL) responded, stating that the better visibility they have of these circumstances through DCC User interaction will allow them to scale up capacity accordingly, thus raising the value of the forecasts. Despite their concerns, the Working Group member did comment that the MP116 Proposed Solution is an improvement on current practices.

### **Top 30 SR prioritisation**

A Working Group member (GS) commented that MP116 appears to go against [SECMP0027 'Amending Service Request Forecasting'](#), which amended the Service Request forecasting to exclude certain Service Reference Variants (SRVs). However, this modification does not allow for any excluded SRVs. They commented further that this might no longer be required but feel that there

needs to be discussion and agreement as these were excluded specifically as Users are unable to accurately forecast them, and this is still the case. This will be discussed offline.

The DCC (GL) stated that although prioritising the top 30 most frequently used SRs, monitoring all SRs allows the DCC to better understand the wider behaviour of SRs which will help inform the DCC of necessary capacity increases. They also advised that less commonly used SRs may show sporadic usage. A Working Group member (GS) queried how Alert Storms may impact the forecast accuracy as they will cause inconsistencies. They also wanted to know who will be held accountable as the DCC User will not have predicted or informed the DCC of the event. As DCC has agreed they will be accountable for the final sign off of the forecasts, the responsibility will be theirs.

### **Implementation Approach**

The Working Group requested that a roadmap would be produced and included within the Modification Report which would indicate how the modification's implementation would impact the current quarterly DCC User SR forecast process. SECAS (BB) and the DCC (GL) agreed with this request and will produce the relevant information when issuing the next iteration of the Modification Report.

### **Conclusion**

SECAS (AB) informed the Working Group that the Proposed Solution is what the Proposer wishes to carry forward and will be voted upon when MP116 enters the Report Phase. The modification has been subject to extensive refinement and is now in a place where it can progress. SECAS (BB) and the DCC (GL) will address a Working Group member's comment regarding the draft legal text and DCC User Guidance document offline before updating the SEC Operations Group on 2 November 2021.

### **Next Steps**

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS to engage with Western Power Distribution to address further draft legal text and DCC User Guidance document comments;
- SECAS to update the OPSG to seek any final views on MP116; and
- SECAS to present to the Change Sub-Committee to progress MP116 to the Report Phase.