SEC
Smart Energy Code

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Smart Energy Code

MP191

‘Extending CHTS v1.0 & v1.1 IVP and MVP end dates’

Modification Report

Version 1.0

1 December 2021

Corporate member of Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication
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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 one annex:

- **Annex A** contains the redlined changes to the Smart Energy Code (SEC) required to deliver the Proposed Solution.

Contact

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1. Summary

This proposal has been raised by Sasha Townsend from the Data Communications Company (DCC).

An issue has been identified relating to Communications Hub stock compliant to SEC Schedule 10 'Communications Hub Technical Specifications' (CHTS) v1.0 and v1.1 and SEC Schedule 8 'GB Companion Specification' (GBCS) v1.1 and v2.1 being held by Parties in volume. Parties are unlikely to be able to install them before the current Installation Validity Period (IVP) dates which are 31 January 2022 and 30 April 2022 respectively.

The current Maintenance Validity Period (MVP) end date for CHTS v1.0 and v1.1 and GBCS v1.1 and v2.1 means there is a risk that there will a period where Communications Hubs will be non-compliant with a version of CHTS/GBCS with valid maintenance end dates. Furthermore, if the current IVP end dates remain, there is a high risk that Suppliers will have stock that they can no longer install and will need to be scrapped.

The Proposed Solution is to extend the IVP and MVP end dates for CHTS v1.0 by 12 months. These dates would be changed to 31 January 2023 and 28 February 2023 respectively. For CHTS v1.1 the IVP and MVP end dates will be extended by two years to 30 April 2024 and 31 May 2024 respectively.

This modification will impact Suppliers and the DCC. There are no costs associated with this change. If approved this change will be implemented one Working Day after decision. This is a Self-Governance Modification.

2. Issue

What are the current arrangements?

The SEC sets out the smart metering Technical Specifications, including the CHTS and GBCS. SEC Schedule 11 'TS Applicability Tables' (TSAT) specifies the dates in which Devices built to these specifications can be installed (the IVP) and maintained (the MVP). The TSAT also specifies the Applicability Period end date for the relevant version of GBCS. This is the date by which Parties should have taken all reasonable steps to ensure a Device is no longer operating on that version of the GBCS.

What is the issue?

The issue relates to Communications Hub stock compliant to CHTS v1.0 and v1.1 and GBCS v1.1 and v2.1. Such Devices are being held by Parties in volume and these are unlikely to be installed before the current IVP which is 31 January 2022 and 30 April 2022 respectively.

DCC Release 1 Communications Hubs across all Regions were manufactured to CHTS v1.0 with firmware versions supporting both GBCS v1.0 and v1.1. These remain in warehouses pending installation. Until they have been successfully installed and commissioned, they cannot be upgraded to a compliant CHTS v1.1 baseline. This means that the IVP and MVP end dates for CHTS v1.0 and GBCS v1.0/v1.1 needs to be extended, otherwise these Devices will be non-compliant and will be scrapped.

Furthermore, an issue has been identified with CHTS v1.3 and GBCS v3.2 Communications Hubs at installation. It has become apparent that some Supplier processes are impacted and as a result, some installation efficiency is reduced for metering equipment. The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) consequently consulted on changes to the GBCS and designated GBCS v4.1 as part of the November 2021 SEC Release to resolve this issue.

Respondents to the consultation stated that consideration should be given by the DCC to adjust the release plan for the GBCS v3.2 Communications Hub firmware delivery approach, such that Single Band Communications Hub releases should be Over the Air (OTA) upgrade only. This is because the issue only arises during installation. Whilst the DCC will assess the release plan, it is noted that CHTS v1.5, GBCS v3.2 and GBCS v4.1 will not be ready for manufacture and deployment until late 2023 or early 2024. Therefore, the DCC considers there a need to extend the CHTS v1.1 and GBCS v2.1 IVP and MVP end dates to ensure there are Communications Hubs available for Parties to install.

What is the impact this is having?

The current MVP end date for CHTS v1.0 and v1.1 and GBCS v1.1 and v2.1 means there is a risk that there will a period where Communications Hubs will be non-compliant with a version of CHTS/GBCS with valid maintenance end dates. Furthermore, if the current IVP end dates remain, there is a high risk that Suppliers will have stock that they can no longer install and will need to be scrapped.

There is also a high risk that there will be a period where Suppliers can no longer install Communications Hubs due to the issues identified with installation of CHTS v1.3 and GBCS 3.2 Communications Hubs and CHTS v1.4 and GBCS v4.1 compliant Communications Hubs not being available.

Impact on consumers

If this modification is not implemented, then SEC Parties will have stock that is not SEC compliant and therefore should not be installed and will have to be scrapped. It is highly unlikely that any compliant Single Band Communications Hub stock will be available and therefore the rollout for consumers may be significantly delayed.

3. Solution

Proposed Solution

The Proposed Solution is to extend the IVP and MVP end dates for CHTS v1.0 by 12 months. These dates would be changed to 31 January 2023 and 28 February 2023 respectively.

For CHTS v1.1 the IVP and MVP end dates will be extended by two years to 30 April 2024 and 31 May 2024 respectively.

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

Supplier Parties

This modification will enable Suppliers to install and maintain CHTS v1.0 and v1.1 Communications Hubs for a longer period of time, preventing any wastage of excess stock in warehouses.

DCC

This modification will enable the DCC to continue to provide CHTS v1.0 and v1.1 Communications Hubs to Suppliers for a longer period of time, preventing any wastage of excess stock in its warehouses.

DCC System

This modification does not impact the DCC Systems.

SEC and subsidiary documents

The following parts of the SEC will be impacted:

- Schedule 11 'TS Applicability Tables'

The changes to the SEC required to deliver the proposed solution can be found in Annex A.

Technical specification versions

This modification only seeks to extend the IVP and MPV end dates for CHTS v1.0 and v1.1. The versions of the other technical specifications will not be impacted by this modification, and there are no changes to the technical specifications themselves.

Consumers

If this modification is not implemented, then SEC Parties will have stock that is not SEC compliant and therefore should not be installed and will be scrapped. It is highly unlikely that any compliant Single Band Communications Hub stock will be available and therefore the rollout for consumers may be significantly delayed.

Other industry Codes

This modification does not impact other industry Codes.

Greenhouse gas emissions

This modification may prevent the scrapping of Communications Hubs which would have a negative impact for the environment.

5. Costs

DCC costs

There are no DCC costs associated with this modification.

SECAS costs

The estimated Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) implementation cost to implement this as a stand-alone modification is one day of effort, amounting to approximately £600. This cost will be reassessed if this modification is included in a scheduled SEC Release. The activities needed to be undertaken for this are:

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

SEC Party costs

This modification will not incur SEC Party costs.

6. Implementation approach

Approved implementation approach

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

- **One Working Day after decision**.

This is a document only change and needs to be implemented before the first impacted IVP end date, which is 31 January 2022, requiring an ad-hoc SEC Release. Due to the time-critical nature, SECAS is recommending this modification be implemented one Working Day after the Change Board vote (if approved). This would be before the ten Working Day Self-Governance decision referral window closes. If the decision was subsequently referred and overturned, the changes would be backed out of the SEC.

7. Assessment of the proposal

Observations on the issue

The Sub-Committee Chairs considered the proposal during a joint triage session with SECAS. The Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC) Chair questioned whether a year's extension was long enough but accepted the dates had to be extended either way.

The Chairs all agreed that the proposal could progress directly to the Report Phase given the urgency with the first IVP end date currently set for 30 January 2022.

The group questioned if the issue of excess CHTS v1.0 and CHTS v1.1 Communications Hub Stock in warehouses would ever be resolved in the short term if the DCC continued to manufacturer them at CHTS v1.0 and CHTS v1.1. It was noted that this is due to some Suppliers' processes preventing them from installing Communications Hubs on higher firmware versions. Instead, they must install these Devices at CHTS v1.0 or CHTS v1.1 with the CSPs later updating these via OTA updates.

Views against the General SEC Objectives

Proposer's views

The Proposer believes this modification better facilitates SEC Objective (a)[1] as it will prevent Communications Hubs being scrapped and will help to better facilitate the efficient provision and installation of smart metering systems.

Views against the consumer areas

Improved safety and reliability

The modification is neutral against this consumer benefit area.

Lower bills than would otherwise be the case

The modification is neutral against this consumer benefit area.

Reduced environmental damage

This modification would provide a positive impact in this area by preventing Communications Hubs from being scrapped. This would be achieved by extending the time Suppliers can install and maintain the Communications Hubs in question.

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

Improved quality of service

The modification is neutral against this consumer benefit area.

Benefits for society as a whole

The modification is neutral against this consumer benefit area.

Appendix 1: Progression timetable

On 30 November 2021, the CSC agreed to convert this Draft Proposal to a Modification Proposal and approve the final Modification Report. A Modification Report Consultation has been issued closing on 7 January 2022. The Change Board vote will then be held on 26 January 2022 under Self-Governance.

Timetable	
Event/Action	**Date**
Draft Proposal raised	22 Nov 2021
CSC converts Draft Proposal to Modification Proposal	30 Nov 2021
Modification Report approved by CSC	30 Nov 2021
Modification Report Consultation	6 Dec 2021 – 7 Jan 2022
Change Board Vote	26 Jan 2022

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**
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
CHTS	Communications Hub Technical Specification
CSC	Change Sub-Committee
DCC	Data Communications Company
GBCS	Great Britain Companion Specification
IVP	Installation Validity Period
MVP	Maintenance Validity Period
OTA	Over the air
SEC	Smart Energy Code
SECAS	Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat
TABASC	Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee

Glossary	
Acronym	**Full term**
TSAT	TS Applicability Tables

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Annex A

Legal text – version 1.0

About this document

This document contains the redlined changes to the SEC that would be required to deliver this Modification Proposal.

Schedule 11 'TS Applicability Tables'

These changes have been redlined against Schedule 11 version 13.0.

Amend CHTS applicability table as follows:

CHTS and Relevant Versions of GBCS

CHTS Version	Installation Start Date	Installation End Date	Maintenance Start Date	Maintenance End Date	Relevant GBCS Version	Applicability Period Start Date	Applicability Period End Date
1.0	30/09/16	31/01/2~~2~~3	30/09/16	28/02/2~~2~~3	1.1	06/11/17	Not determined
1.1	28/10/18	Not determined	28/10/18	Not determined	2.0	28/10/18	28/02/22
1.1	28/10/18	30/04/2~~2~~4	28/10/18	31/05/2~~2~~4	2.1	28/10/18	Not determined
1.3	29/11/19	Not determined	29/11/19	Not determined	3.2	29/11/19	Not determined
1.4	29/11/20	Not determined	29/11/20	Not determined	4.0	29/11/20	Not determined
1.5	04/11/21	Not determined	04/11/21	Not determined	4.1	04/11/21	Not determined