MP155 'Communications Hub Re-Flash'

March 2022 Working Group – meeting summary

Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Ali Beard	SECAS
Kev Duddy	SECAS
Anik Abdullah	SECAS
Bradley Baker	SECAS
David Kemp	SECAS
Tom Mudryk	SECAS
Rainer Lischetzki	SECAS
Elizabeth Woods	SECAS
David Walsh	DCC
Tom Rothery	DCC
Leigh Hill	DCC
Eleanor Taylor	BEIS
Emma Johnson	British Gas
Lynne Hargrave	Calvin Capital
Alex Hurcombe	EDF Energy
Julie Geary	E.ON
Nigel King	E.ON
Daniel Davies	ESG Global
Terry Jefferson	EUA
Martin Bell	EUA
Carmen Strickland	Horizon Energy
Peter Hoare	Kaifa Metering
Ralph Baxter	Octopus Energy
Mafs Rahman	Scottish Power
Elias Hanna	Smart ADSL
Gordon Hextall	Security Sub-Committee (SSC)
Matt Alexander	SSE Networks
Audrey Smith-Keary	SSE - OVO
Emslie Law	SSE - OVO
Robert Johnstone	Utilita
Karen Jacks	Vantage Meters

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Attendee	Organisation
Luke Brady	Vantage Meters
Gemma Slaney	WPD

Overview

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) provided an overview of the modification, the draft business requirements, and the proposed next steps.

Issue

SECAS provided an overview of the issue and impacts of the modification.

- Installing older versions of Communications Hubs presents issues for Suppliers

- Over-the-air (OTA) upgrade, when run at installation, can take a significant amount of time and increases the length of installation

- The DCC believes there are more than a million Communications Hubs that are not on the most recent firmware versions being held by SEC Parties

- Communication Service Providers (CSPs) holding Communications Hubs ready for distribution to DCC Users may not be on the latest firmware version

- There is no mechanism for the CSP to re-flash the Communications Hubs before delivery

- There are no provisions that accommodates a Service User returning a Communications Hub to the DCC for the purpose of re-flashing and then retaking delivery

Working Group Discussion

Issue

SECAS presented the issue to the Working Group. One Working Group member (EL) noted that Suppliers may not be installing Communications Hubs on the latest firmware as there are some defects that prevent them from using this version, citing the implementation of CRP535 onto the latest firmware versions. They noted that this will cause the number of affected Communications Hubs to increase until this defect is resolved. They supported this proposal as a long-term service.

SECAS (JM) questioned whether this process had been developed with consideration to the 4G Communications Hubs. The DCC (LH) confirmed that it had been.

Business Requirements

SECAS described the business requirements for the process, noting that they were for the logistical process for delivery to DCC, and subsequent return to the Service User after the reflashing process. The reflashing process itself would follow the guidance developed by the Security Sub-Committee (SSC), although the specifics of this would need to be determined in advance of implementation.

One Working Group member (JG) queried what the potential rejection reasons would be for delivery. SECAS (KD) stated that these were listed in the Business Requirements document but would be for logistical reasons such as damaged packaging, Communications Hub not registered with that Supplier or delivery addresses not matching.

A Working Group member questioned what the acceptable delivery sizes would be, querying whether they could use this process for individual Communications Hubs, or cartons, or if it had to be full pallets. The DCC (LH) noted that they had initially explored this and thought it was likely that the process would be by the pallet load but asked the Working Group whether there was a preference.

A Working Group member (GS) suggested that the Working Group should determine the likely volume size they would want to return, whether that is by the unit, carton or pallet, for inclusion in the DCC Preliminary Assessment. If not, there is a risk the DCC to come up with an option which Parties subsequently state is too big a volume for them.

SECAS noted this question will be circulated outside of the Working Group to gain feedback from Parties and include within the DCC Preliminary Assessment to ensure that Parties could provide an accurate view from their organisation.

A Working Group member (RB) queried if there was an overlap between this modification and the proposals around recommissioning faulty Communications Hubs, and whether these were similar activities. SECAS (TM) noted this modification is setting out the process for returning Communications Hubs for reflashing. This approach will avoid security concerns as it reuses existing methodologies.

SECAS asked the Working Group to confirm that the business requirements were complete. The Working Group had no further comments.

SECAS summarised from earlier conversations that SEC Parties would be keen to see this potential service develop further.

Next Steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS will present the business requirements to the Operations Group for comment;

- SECAS will issue an email asking for Parties' preferred minimum delivery load size that can be returned to the DCC for reflashing, for inclusion in the business requirements; and

- SECAS will request the DCC Preliminary Assessment.