SECAS Guidance Notes: SEC Release Guidance

Contents

1. Introduction

The Smart Energy Code (SEC) Panel and the Data Communications Company (DCC) each have a Release Management Policy.

- The SEC Release Management Policy sets out the detail of how approved Modification Proposals are implemented. This policy can be found here.
- The DCC Release Management Policy covers the implementation of changes to the DCC Internal Systems and the Parse and Correlate Software. This policy is available from the DCC's website.

This guidance note summarises the process for SEC Releases. More detail is available in the SEC Release Management Policy.

2. What is a SEC Release?

A SEC Release is when one or more approved Modification Proposals are implemented. There are two types of SEC Release:

SECAS Guidance Notes: SEC Release Guidance
November 2022
Version 2.0

Managed by
Gemserv

Corporate member of Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication
592

Page 1 of 4

This document has a Classification of Clear

- **SEC System Releases** consist of modifications that impact DCC Systems as well as modifications that only impact SEC documentation. These may or may not affect the Technical Specifications documents.
    - **Technical Specifications Releases** consist of modifications that impact the SEC Technical Specifications. These are:
        - SEC Schedule 8 'GB Companion Specification' (GBCS)
        - SEC Schedule 9 'Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications' (SMETS)
        - SEC Schedule 10 'Communications Hub Technical Specifications' (CHTS)

      These releases are limited to one a year and will be one of the SEC System Releases

- **SEC Documentation Releases** consist of modifications that only impact SEC documentation and do not impact the DCC Systems. Whilst a SEC Documentation Release may have a User impact, if there is no impact on the DCC Systems it is still referred to as a SEC Documentation Release.

It is possible that a SEC System Release may contain only modifications that impact SEC documentation and contain no DCC System impacting modifications. The purpose of having SEC System Releases is to provide defined points in the year where DCC System impacting changes may occur. It doesn't seek to limit when other changes to the SEC may happen.

3.   When do SEC Releases happen?

The intent of a release schedule is to provide certainty over when changes will be delivered. As such, there are three scheduled SEC Releases a year. Two of these are SEC System Releases and one is a SEC Documentation Release. They occur in the following frequency:

Release	Timing of Release	Type
February	Last Thursday in February	SEC Documentation Release
June	Last Thursday in June	SEC System Release
November	First Thursday in November	SEC System Release

Ad-hoc SEC Releases may occur where it is not appropriate or efficient to implement a modification in a scheduled SEC Release. These ad-hoc releases may include modifications that impact both SEC documentation and/or DCC Systems. However, the intent is to limit DCC Systems-impacting modifications to the scheduled System Releases wherever possible.

4.   Setting the scope of a SEC Release

4.1   Implementation dates

The implementation date for a Modification Proposal will be set by the Change Sub-Committee (CSC) when it reviews the Modification Report. This is the date the modification will go live, should it be approved.

SECAS Guidance Notes: SEC Release Guidance
November 2022
Version 2.0

Managed by
Gemserv

Corporate member of Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication
592

Page 2 of 4

This document has a Classification of Clear

4.2   Release Implementation Document

Once a Modification Proposal has been approved it will fall into the scope of the corresponding SEC Release.

Each SEC Release will have a Release Implementation Document (RID) which will be prepared when the first modification is approved for inclusion. It will then be updated as subsequent modifications are approved, until the scope of the release is closed. The RID sets out the implementation plan, impacts, cost, testing approach and Go-Live criteria for the release.

The RID is published on the SEC website and any Party may comment on its contents.

4.3   Release scope

Any Modification Proposals that impact the DCC and/or User Systems will be set in scope 12 months prior to the implementation date of a release. Modification Proposals that impact SEC documentation only, and not the DCC Systems, will be set in scope six months prior to the release implementation date. These modifications do not necessarily need to have been approved at the point they are added to the release scope, as long as there would be enough time to implement them following a later approval date. If the proposal is delayed or rejected, it would subsequently fall out of scope of the release. The intention is to provide greater certainty of the maximum expected scope as early as possible.

There may be occasions where it would be more efficient, or necessary, to deliver a modification as part of a release after the release scope has been set. In this situation, the CSC may choose to add a Modification Proposal into a SEC Release after the scope has been set.

5.   SEC Release implementation

5.1   Testing Approach Document

The RID will include an implementation plan setting out key dates, acceptance criteria and, once approved, the DCC's Testing Approach Document (TAD).

The TAD is created by the DCC. It will set out the DCC testing activities needed to deliver the release and how User testing will be carried out.

The TAD is expected to be issued to the Testing Advisory Group (TAG) for review at least nine months before the Go-Live date of a release. The TAD should then be finalised and published for all SEC Parties at least six months prior to the Go-Live date of a release. Note these dates are a minimum requirement and should not be seen as the standard approach, especially if a longer period is needed for testing.

5.2   User testing

Users will be kept informed as to what type of testing will be required and when it will take place, in line with the approach set out in the TAD. This information will be communicated to Users via email and through the SEC website. In addition, any supplementary testing information will be made available on the respective release page on the SEC website.

SECAS Guidance Notes: SEC Release Guidance
November 2022
Version 2.0

Managed by

Gemserv

Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer
communication

592

Page 3 of 4

This document has a Classification of
Clear

5.3   Go-Live

Prior to the Go-Live date SECAS and the DCC will present the CSC with sufficient information to show that the acceptance criteria have been met, allowing them to make an informed Go-Live decision for the SEC Release.

SECAS and the DCC will seek input from the Operations Group and the TAG on the corresponding acceptance criteria before a final submission of evidence to the CSC. The acceptance criteria may also require other Sub-Committees to be consulted depending on the scope of the release.

6.   SEC Release updates

The latest information on SEC Releases can be found on our 'Releases' webpage. It sets out all SEC Releases and their potential scope. Within each SEC Release you can find links to the relevant modification webpages, the accompanying RID and TAD (which are kept updated with any changes to the release scope) and any supporting changes to the Technical Specification documentation.

In addition to updates on the website and newsletters, we will also issue notification of the approval of a Modification Proposal following decision.

SECAS Guidance Notes: SEC Release Guidance
November 2022
Version 2.0

Managed by
Gemserv

Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication
592

Page 4 of 4

This document has a Classification of Clear