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MP102B ‘Power Outage Alerts triggered by an OTA firmware upgrade – enduring solution’

July 2022 Working Group – meeting summary

Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Mike Fenn	SECAS
David Kemp	SECAS
Joe Hehir	SECAS
Joey Manners	SECAS
Bradley Baker	SECAS
James Hosen	SECAS
Kev Duddy	SECAS
Rainer Lischetzki	SECAS
David Walsh	DCC
Robin Seaby	DCC
Matthew Davies	AltHANCo
Patricia Massey	BEAMA
David Steel	British Gas
Julie Brown	British Gas
Alex Hurcombe	EDF Energy
Daniel Davies	ESG Global
Martin Bell	EUA
Danish Mahmood	Landis+Gyr
Ralph Baxter	Octopus Energy
Stephen McLaughlin	Scottish Power
Gordon Hextall	SSC
Audrey Smith-Keary	SSE - OVO
Shuba Khatun	SSEN
Matthew Alexander	SSEN
Robert Johnstone	Utilita
Kelly Kinsman	WPD

Overview

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) provided an overview of the issue identified, the Proposed Solution, and a summary of the Data Communications Company (DCC) Impact Assessment.

Issue

- Firmware updates can cause meters to reboot which cuts the power to the Communications Hub for more than three minutes. This generates a Power Outage Alert (POA).
- There is currently no governance regarding the duration of the meter cutting the power supply to the Communications Hub via the Intimate Communications Hub Interface Specification (ICHIS).
- Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) have no means of identifying or suppressing erroneous POAs.

Proposed Solution

- Data Service Provider (DSP) to build a mechanism that will suppress POAs which have been caused by a firmware update to L+G Electricity Smart Metering Equipment (ESME) Devices.
- Solution applies to Devices contained on the Global Unique Identifier (GUID) list only.
- AD1 Alerts suppressed for 30 minutes following a firmware activation.
- All suppressed AD1s will be contained within a Suppression Log which will be available to DNOs.

DCC Impact Assessment key points

- Business requirements can be met in full – including future dated firmware activations.
- Solution applies to Devices contained on the GUID list only.
- On receipt of a firmware activation Service Request (SRV 11.3 only), the motorway records the Device's Communications Hub Function (CHF) as 'activation in progress' if the following are true:
 - the Target Device is a Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications (SMETS) 2 ESME;
 - the Manufacturer is included in the configurable list of Manufacturers subject to AD1 Alert suppression; and
 - the Device is included in the list provided to the DCC.
- DNOs will be able to more reliably interpret POAs as an indication of a genuine supply outage at a consumer's premises.
- Implementation cost: £197,524 (£144,252 up to Pre-Integration Testing (PIT), £53,272 for Systems Integrations Testing (SIT) and implementation).

- Application Support cost: £1,722 per month (costs are business as usual (BAU) and won't be incurred if no queries are raised).

Working Group Discussion

SECAS provided an overview of the issue, Proposed Solution, the DCC Impact Assessment findings, legal text and the business case.

Application Support costs

SECAS informed the Working Group that the DCC Impact Assessment highlights an anticipated Application Support cost of £1,722 a month. This cost relates to an expected increase in call volumes from SEC Parties to the DCC as a result of the Proposed Solution. A Large Supplier representative (ASK) queried who would be responsible for paying these costs. The DCC responded stating that this is a general DCC/DSP cost that gets combined with general running costs that are paid for by SEC Parties. The DCC commented that the Application Support costs will not be incurred if there is no influx in SEC Party queries.

Discarding AD1 Alerts

When discussing the business case of the modification, the Proposer (MA) advised that the issue impacts DNOs' ability to process AD1s, as they cannot tell if they are spurious. This may result in a situation where DNOs discard all AD1 Alerts.

Costs associated with doing nothing

SECAS provided a breakdown of the costs associated with not addressing the issue. The [MP122A 'Operational Metrics'](#) May 2022 report was used to calculate that approximately 17,000 AD1s a month would relate to an OTA firmware upgrade. Multiplied with an average site visit cost of £80 resulted in a rough order of magnitude (ROM) cost of £1,369,040. SECAS confirmed that this monthly cost is across all DNOs and regions.

Hardware issue

When discussing the legal text, an Other SEC Party representative (DD) queried if the AD1 Alerts would still be generated. SECAS confirmed that the issue relates to hardware, and so the Alerts will still be generated and then be suppressed at the DSP. All suppressed AD1 Alerts will be recorded in the Suppression Log.

Next Steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS will present the modification to the Change Sub-Committee on 19 July 2022.
- SECAS will issue the Modification Report Consultation.