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## MP137 ‘Sharing information on Defects and Issues’

### September 2022 Working Group – meeting summary

#### Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Ali Beard	SECAS
Anik Abdullah	SECAS
Kev Duddy	SECAS
Joey Manners	SECAS
Bradley Baker	SECAS
Elizabeth Woods	SECAS
Ben Giblin	SECAS
Fiona Bond	SECAS
Rainer Lischetzki	SECAS
James Hosen	SECAS
David Walsh	DCC
Tom Rothery	DCC
Chris Thompson	DCC
Mark Pitchford	DCC
Julie Brown	British Gas
Emma Johnson	British Gas
Beth Davey	Calvin Capital
Martin Bell	EUA
Kevin McIntyre	Geo
Alastair Cobb	Landis+Gyr
Mark Powell	Macquarie
Ralph Baxter	Octopus Energy
Audrey Smith-Keary	OVO Energy
Mafs Rahman	Scottish Power
Michael Snowden	Secure Meters
Lorna Clarke	SMDA
Tom Wooley	SMS PLC
Matt Alexander	SSE Networks
Shuba Khatun	SSE Networks
Robert Johnstone	Utilita
Karen Jacks	Vantage Meters
Luke Brady	Vantage Meters

Attendee	Organisation
Kelly Kinsman	WPD

## Overview

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) provided an overview of the issue identified, the business requirements, the Proposed Solution, the DCC Preliminary Assessment and the proposed next steps.

## Issue

- There is currently no approach to allowing SEC Parties and the DCC to share information on known issues and Devices except via non recorded forums, due to commercial sensitive information surrounding the Devices.
- There is no accessible means to share such information across the industry.
- The lack of an industry approach to tackling issues and defects posed by Devices and Device Combinations means that issues fixes are slow for the end energy consumer.

## Business Requirements

1. The Data Communications Company (DCC) to develop and maintain a searchable database for storage of information relating to issues, defects and fixes including Device Model Combination (DMC) and firmware versions.
2. Device Manufacturers will provide an initial file (type to be specified by the DCC) of known issues, defects and fixes.
3. Defects and issues on DMC including CH which are voluntarily declared by manufacturers will be recorded on the database on an ongoing basis.
4. Defects and issues for DMC including CH and firmware versions which are raised by SEC Parties to the DCC will be recorded on the database.
5. Known fixes for DMCs provided by any Party and confirmed by the Manufacturer will be recorded on the database.
6. The DCC to populate the information on the platform based on DMC.
7. The DCC and SEC Parties to have access to the database.
8. A glossary of terms to be used should be developed and published.

## Proposed Solution

- The DCC will create a blank database or a spreadsheet to hold the required information and maintain it.

- The DCC have suggested to initially create and then maintain the database, Device Manufacturers and CSPs will be asked to provide this information to the DCC Devices team by CSV format. This will not be mandated.
- The DCC Device and Service Design team will collate the inputs then verify the data by checking the data. The DCC will save a version of the data and send a version containing only defects and issues where a fix has been provided to SECAS to publish on the webpage.

### **DCC Preliminary Assessment**

- The Design, Build and PIT cost range is between £15,000-£25,000.
- The Full Impact Assessment cost is £3,500. There is a likely additional one DCC Full Time Employee to maintain the supporting material.
- Regarding the implementation the release lifecycle duration will be confirmed as part of the Full Impact Assessment.

### **Issues with Remedy**

- The DCC was requested to populate the database with DCC held data, both in DSMS Remedy database as held by DCC Product team. This information is already accessible to Suppliers.
- Unlike SMETS1, SMETS2 Devices are still being ordered and purchased. Any data published could be perceived as a DCC recommendation.
- The DCC does not hold all defect data for all Device Manufacturers and publishing that data might be seen as favouring.
- Publishing data provided by Device Manufacturers to the DCC could be seen as a breach of confidence.
- Data held in Remedy is in freeform text and extracting the data would be difficult.

### **Information Provision**

- Manufacturers voluntarily provide a one off CSV format list of issues/defects and fixes.
- Manufacturers voluntarily update issue when they arise.
- DCC should provide Communications Hub defect information.
- As currently happens with Remedy – any party can report an issue/defect to DCC.
- By providing the list on a voluntary basis manufacturers have more chance of ensuring accuracy of defect/issues data.

### **Working Group Discussion**

SECAS (AB) provided an overview of the meeting objectives, the issue, business requirements, Proposed Solution and DCC Preliminary Assessment findings. They also noted that this modification

will be Authority-Determined in order to ensure commercial sensitivities are considered. The Working Group noted the issue and provided no further comments.

SECAS (AB) presented the business requirements to the Working Group. The Proposer (RB) expressed concern that the business requirements and solution didn't align with the intentions of the modification. The Proposer originally wanted the information already recorded in Remedy to be used to populate the database, not start from a blank database and ask only manufacturers to populate it. The original intention was to make the information in the DCC's 'Remedy' database easily searchable by Suppliers and Network Parties. However, this was not specifically included in the business requirements and during the Preliminary Assessment the DCC had identified some legal challenges with using the data in Remedy. SECAS (AB) reported that in response SECAS had sought its own legal advice and this had confirmed that it was possible to use the existing data with certain caveats. SECAS (AB) recorded an action to find out if this could be shared more widely and incorporate it into the Modification Report prior to being issued for Refinement Consultation.

It was further noted that there should be clarity between whether this information was being provided by Suppliers or manufacturers.

A Working Group member (KM) raised concerns regarding Suppliers reporting faults rather than manufacturers. They noted that information is available to Suppliers about defects and defect lists are distributed upon request.

A manufacturer party (KM) also highlighted that they regularly issue Release Notes that detail issues and defects with their Devices and they are also provided to Suppliers who do not have a contract with the manufacturer but inherit their Devices on customer churn.

Another Working Group member (JB) stated that it was good that Release notes were being issued about known defects and issues. However, from a Suppliers point of view they noted that these usually only listed the defects/issues at a very high level and do not relate to a Supplier's business processes. Nor do they explain what behaviour might be expected or interoperability issues that might be experienced. They also stated the notes would not highlight future interoperability issues which may occur after initial release. They continued to highlight that issues in production are not necessarily picked up in testing, noting that in many cases time and money will have been spent by several parties on identifying the issue and solution, but this is not then widely distributed.

A Working Group member (MB) raised concerns about issues relating to procurement from having a document listing issues with specific Devices. The Proposer replied that the information is already known and shared between some parties but that it should be available to all Parties.

Another Working Group member (JB) suggested that Supplier purchasing decisions had already been made some time ago and listing defects relating to a manufacturer are unlikely to affect those decisions as the contracts will already be agreed.

SECAS (AB) reiterated that the intention was not to bias purchasing decisions but to help all industry Parties resolve interoperability issues, allowing Device Model Combinations to work together rather than to be replaced.

SECAS (AB) noted that the information on issues and defects was available and could be accessed by Suppliers, however it was not easy to search or find specific information. The Proposer (RB) agreed the information was available, however they felt this was dependent on the relationship between Parties as to what was shared with whom.

A Working Group member (MB) highlighted a comment from the Proposer about a specific code used in the Remedy database (MM1/MM2 etc) stating that these were testing codes to ensure the DCC systems were working and readily available from the DCC.

Another Working Group member (JB) noted that if it was only mandatory for manufacturers to provide the initial data then they may not continue to do so in the long term. They advised that if there were no SLAs regarding updating this tracker that manufacturers may submit an initial amount of information and then no more. Another Working Group member (AH) highlighted the intention of the modification was to prevent Suppliers from duplicating time and resource analysing a problem and maybe a fix which has already been identified.

SECAS (AA) stated that a new DCC Service Management System (DSMS) is being procured which may include a new alternative to Remedy and may help with the searching. A question was raised about the transfer of data currently in Remedy to the new system and how easily searchable it is. They also noted that any DCC solution needed to consider the future migration of data into that new database if this is implemented prior to the procurement.

Another Working Group (MB) member suggested an appeals process should be included to ensure manufacturers were able to make representations if they felt something should not be included.

## Next Steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS to identify how much information will be transferred to the new DSMS system and the process for this transfer and timings
- SECAS to issue a Refinement Consultation