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## MP223 ‘WAN Coverage Reporting’

### September 2023 Working Group – meeting summary

#### Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Rachel Black (RBI)	SECAS
Ben Giblin (BG)	SECAS
Alison Beard (AB)	SECAS
Elizabeth Woods (EW)	SECAS
Anik Abdullah (AA)	SECAS
Patricia Massey (PM)	BEAMA
Julie Brown (JB)	British Gas
Beth Tatton (BT)	Calvin Capital
David Walsh (DW)	DCC
Robin Seaby (RS)	DCC
Chris Thompson (CT)	DCC
Amy Cox (AC)	EDF
Alex Hurcombe (AH)	EDF
Daniel Davies (DD)	ESG
Sharon Armitage (SA)	EON
Ian Turner (IT)	EON
Martin Bell (MB)	EUA
Kelly Kinsman (KK)	National Grid Electricity Distribution
Stuart Blair (SB)	Northern Powergrid
Ralph Baxter (RB)	Octopus Energy
Joey Manners (JM)	Octopus Energy
Audrey Smith-Keary (ASK)	OVO
Mahfuzar Rahman (MR)	Scottish Power
Jeff Studholme (JS)	Smart Meter Assets
Shuba Khatun (SK)	SSEN

#### Overview

The Smart Energy Code Administrator and Secretariat (SECAS) provided an overview of the issue, impact and the proposed solution.

## Issue

There is currently no obligation or requirement in the SEC on the DCC to report current WAN coverage percentages or any work which is ongoing to improve them.

## Impact

Currently there is no measure or way to understand the current WAN coverage that is critical to Users wanting to enrol Devices in the DCC Service. Without reporting on WAN Coverage, SEC Parties may waste resources by organising smart metering installs in areas reported on the WAN Coverage Checker as having WAN but when attending site there is no WAN.

## Business Requirements

Business Requirements	
Ref.	Requirement
1	Wide Area Network (WAN) coverage level for each Communication Services Provider (CSP) region (CSP North, CSP South, CSP Central), to be made available every three months.
2	Reporting to be produced every three months on addresses where there is no WAN or the WAN status has changed within the previous three months.
3	Monthly reporting on sites where Suppliers raise WAN-related incidents in each CSP region.
4	The WAN coverage checker to be updated monthly when Suppliers raise WAN-related incidents to the DCC Service Desk.
5	On an informal basis, request information from CSPs about planned work and work that is ongoing to improve WAN at sites which are currently declared to have no WAN.
6	On an informal basis, request information from CSP's about WAN outages which will then be provided to SEC Parties.

## Proposed Solution

The DCC Preliminary Assessment showed that new reports will be created to satisfy Business Requirements one to four.

The first report produced by DCC will be taken from the existing DCC Data Lake which contains information about WAN Coverage from each CSP region. This will be produced in Excel format which will include a high-level summary of the percentage WAN coverage level in each CSP region. It will also include reporting on addresses where there is no WAN or the WAN status has changed since the last report.

To satisfy requirements three and four, the DCC will create a template that will allow WAN-related incidents to be logged and reported on. The submissions using this template will be collated into a second report so that SEC Parties are able to see where incidents have been raised. A CSP version of the report will also be produced, showing incidents relevant to each region.

For requirements five and six there is no contractual obligation for CSPs to report on planned or in-progress work to improve WAN. There is also no contractual obligation to report on planned WAN outages. In lieu of contract changes to require this to be provided, the DCC will ask for this information on an informal basis from the CSPs.

## Working Group Discussion

SECAS (BG) provided an overview of the modification, noting the issue and the Proposed Solution.

A Working Group member (JS) noted that SECAS was targeting this modification for inclusion in the November 2024 SEC Release. They added that in their opinion this modification was low cost and should be easy to implement given it relates to existing reporting, noting the 14-month timescale until implementation. They noted their belief that this modification is an example of how the SEC modification process can be slow. SECAS (BG) explained the SEC modification process, noting the meetings and consultations which still need to take place before the modification can undergo six months of testing prior to implementation. SECAS (AB) added that time is also needed for the DCC Impact Assessment. The DCC (RS) added that the six-month timing provided in the DCC Preliminary Assessment may be shortened once further investigation has taken place in the full Impact Assessment. The DCC (DW) noted that it cannot begin work on the proposed solution until there has been formal approval from the Change Board that the modification should be implemented. The DCC (RS) clarified that this modification is not a DCC System change and will not impact Service Providers therefore there will be no overlap in testing between this modification and other approved modifications in a scheduled SEC Release. A Working Group member (RB) questioned the testing timescale of six months in the Preliminary Assessment, noting their belief that it should not take six months to test reports and create a new template. SECAS (AB) noted that although this was targeted for the November 2024 Release, SECAS could implement this modification as an ad-hoc release. A Working Group member (JS) noted that as well as altering the targeted implementation date, SECAS could also add Manufacturers to the Parties impacted by approval of this modification as they would be interested to see whether meters are non-communicative because of a fault with the Device or due to a lack of WAN.

A Working Group member (DD) questioned whether this modification could consider any changes with reporting on 4G Communications Hubs. SECAS (BG) confirmed that 4G reporting will be included in the new reports associated with this modification. A Working Group member (AH) questioned whether there would be a difference between the reporting on 2G/3G Communications Hubs and 4G Communications Hubs. The DCC (RS) noted that as part of the modification, 4G coverage will be included but reported as if it was a separate CSP region. They noted that there will be an overlap of addresses given there will be multiple addresses with different types of Communications Hubs in each postcode. Working Group member (MB) questioned whether the information available in the reporting would be based purely from CSP data. They questioned the accuracy of the reporting, noting that on many occasions Suppliers had visited sites where WAN was reported, but on site there was no WAN. The DCC (RS) noted that CSP data will be used and this is updated regularly based on where incidents have been raised. SECAS (AB) questioned whether there are any SLAs upon DCC to update the WAN Coverage Checker is updated when incidents are raised. The DCC (RS) noted there is nothing in the requirements for this modification for a new SLA when incidents are raised, but added that the contracts DCC has with CSPs already require the WAN Coverage Checker to be kept up to date.

A Working Group member (RB) noted that as part of the proposed solution, a new template will be created for Parties to report on WAN-related incidents. They questioned whether there would be the possibility for qualitative reporting, noting they had experienced issues with birthing events due to intermittent WAN. They noted that it would be useful to have a template that was flexible to enable Suppliers to provide details about the issues they are experiencing on site. The DCC (RS) noted that this could be explored further during the Impact Assessment. They added that currently Suppliers will

send a Service Request noting there is no WAN and incidents are generated automatically from there. (ASK) noted they had raised WAN-related incidents and then after the event had been asked for supporting evidence which they deemed irrelevant. They noted it would be useful to have space on the new template to enable all information to be provided by Suppliers at once when the incident is reported.

A Working Group member (MB) noted that they are aware of installation failures which take place in rural areas due to a lack of WAN and questioned whether additional reporting on problem areas would be included in reporting with this modification. SECAS (BG) noted that this modification does not seek to alter the existing reporting arrangements. The DCC (RS) added that in CSP North the information is at postcode level, whilst in CSP South and CSP Central reporting is at address level. They noted that any alteration to the existing reporting would involve high costs and changes to the existing reporting is not a requirement of this modification.

A Working Group member (BT) questioned whether requirements five and six would be delivered as part of this modification. SECAS (BG) noted that requirements five and six were included as the Proposer sought information about WAN outages and work ongoing to improve WAN coverage in areas declared to be no WAN. They added that the Preliminary Assessment showed that the DCC does not have any contractual obligation for CSPs to report on this work, therefore the requirement to have monthly reporting on this cannot be delivered. They mentioned that changing contracts between the DCC and CSPs to fulfil this requirement would have high costs and therefore this has not been pursued by the Proposer. A Working Group member (BT) questioned whether the contracts between DCC and CSPs regarding 4G reporting would include this reporting. The DCC (RS) noted they would check the contract for 4G, adding that if this wasn't included in the contract it would incur high costs.

A Working Group member (JB) noted that if requirements five and six cannot be fulfilled then there is no alteration to current reporting as the DCC would not be obliged to provide information on a regular basis. They questioned whether this was a valid requirement given there would be no change. SECAS (BG) noted these comments but added that this would oblige the DCC to ask for information on an informal basis. They added that the Proposer raised the modification as there was no obligation to report on WAN coverage in the SEC. The DCC (DW) noted the comments by (JB) and added that it was strange to add something into the SEC which the DCC cannot provide. SECAS (BG) agreed to review the legal text and amend it if necessary.

## Next Steps

The following actions were recorded from the meeting:

- SECAS (BG) to determine whether the legal text should be amended to reflect the fact requirements five and six cannot be fulfilled by DCC.
- SECAS (BG) to work with DCC to determine if there is any obligation in new 4G contracts between DCC and CSP to report on planned WAN outages and work which is ongoing to improve WAN in areas which are currently declared to be no WAN.
- SECAS to issue the Refinement Consultation.