



DCUSA CONSULTATION

DCP 153 - Service Level Agreement for Resolving Network Operational Issues

Executive summary: This consultation seeks industry views on DCP 153 'Service Level Agreement for Resolving Network Operational Issues', which has been raised seeking to introduce establish a Service Level Agreement between suppliers and networks owners for the resolution of network issues.

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Distribution Connection and Use of System Agreement (DCUSA) is a multi-party contract between electricity Distributors and electricity Suppliers and large Generators. Parties to the DCUSA can raise Change Proposals (CPs) to amend the Agreement with the consent of other Parties and (where applicable) the Authority.
- 1.2 This document is a Consultation issued to DNO, IDNO, Supplier, Meter Operator and other interested Parties and the Authority in accordance with Clause 11.14 of the DCUSA seeking industry views on DCP 153 'Service Level Agreement for Resolving Network Operational Issues'. Respondents are invited to consider the questions set out below and submit comments using the form attached as Appendix A to dcusa@electralink.co.uk by **Wednesday, 17 October 2012**.

2 BACKGROUND OF DCP 153

- 2.1 Whilst Suppliers are installing smart meters (both foundation and enduring) they are identifying network issues that are dangerous and are preventing a meter exchange from taking place.
- 2.2 Detailed work has already been carried out by the ENA Smart Meter Operations Group to categorise the network issues that are being or could be identified whilst attending a customer's property. This work has been used to create a new set of 'Asset Condition Codes' within the MRA Data Transfer Catalogue. These Asset Condition Codes are listed in Appendix B.
- 2.3 Data Transfer Catalogue (DTC) Change Proposal 3336 'Revisions to the asset condition reporting process - Revision of D0126 and D0135', which has been accepted by the MRA Development Board and is due to be implemented in December 2012, will introduce the Asset Condition Codes and thus standardise the methods for reporting network issues. It will also place an obligation on network owners to notify the supplier via the D0126 once the issue is rectified for category A and B issues.
- 2.4 DCUSA Change Proposal (DCP) 153 'Service Level Agreement for Resolving Network Operational Issues' has been raised seeking to build on DTC CP 3336,

by introducing Service Level Agreements (SLAs) by which Distributors need to have carried out the work required to rectify the issues that have been brought to their attention, for the most urgent Asset Condition Code Categories A and B. Additional information on the CP is provided in the CP form attached as Appendix C.

- 2.5 The introduction of SLAs will support the installation of smart meters, AMR meters and also legacy meter exchanges. It should be noted that these SLAs will endure beyond the smart meter roll out unless subsequently varied.

3 WORKING GROUP ASSESSMENT OF DCP 153

- 3.1 The DCUSA Panel has established a Working Group to assess DCP 153. This group consists of Supplier, DNO, IDNO, Meter Operator and Ofgem representatives. The Working Group has discussed the CP and is seeking industry feedback on the following areas.
 - 3.2 **Asset Condition Categories**
 - 3.3 Appendix B lists the Asset Condition Codes that will be introduced by DTC CP 3336 for the purposes of reporting in the D0135 (Report Possible Safety Problem) and D0126 (Action Taken to Make Safe) data flows. The codes have been split into three categories (categories A to C). The DCP 153 Working Group proposes to replicate these categories and the network issues classed under each in the DCUSA. The SLAs for resolving network operational issues will then be based around these categories.
 - 3.4 The Working Group notes that the issues classed against each category have been discussed by various groups including at the Energy Networks Association (ENA) and Energy UK and further discussions at the Consumer Engagement and Roll-Out Operational Issues Sub-Group. The Working Group therefore proposes to make no changes to the categories and simply replicate them in the DCUSA.
 - 3.5 For the purposes of DCP 153, the Working Group intends to include a definition of each category within the DCUSA. The group has defined the categories as follows:

Category A – an emergency situation that poses immediate danger, where “danger” includes danger to health or danger to life or limb from electric shock, burn, injury or mechanical movement to persons, livestock or domestic animals, or from fire or explosion.

Category B – The issue is not an emergency situation but it prevents the meter from being exchanged.

Category C – The issue is not an emergency situation and does not prevent the meter from being exchanged.

3.6 The Working Group is seeking responses to the following consultation questions on the categories:

- *Do you agree with the definition for each category? Please provide supporting comments.*
- *Do you agree that the Master Registration Agreement (MRA) Asset Condition Categories introduced by DTC CP 3336 should be replicated in the DCUSA? Please provide supporting comments.*

3.7 The Working Group notes that DCP 153 seeks only to place SLAs against network issues classed as either category A or B. When responding to the consultation please provide your views on the following question:

- *The proposer of DCP 153 does not believe that SLAs should be introduced for Category C as it is not urgent and does not affect the meter exchange. Do you believe it is reasonable for the DNO/LDNO to plan this work as they feel is best?*

3.8 **Current Practices**

3.9 The Working Group notes that currently there are no formalised SLAs for the resolution of network operational issues. The group would like to gain further understanding of current practices to aid it in developing appropriate SLAs. When responding to the consultation please answer the following questions:

- *Distributors: What are your self imposed turnaround times for resolving network issues at the moment?*
- *Does this differ in an emergency situation?*
- *How do you expect these to change under the smart metering roll out?*

3.10 **The SLAs**

3.11 The Working Group discussed what would be an appropriate SLA for Category A issues and agreed to propose an SLA based on the fuse failure remedy timescales covered by reg 12 of the Electricity (Standards Of Performance) Regulations 2010. Accordingly, the proposed SLA is as follows:

Category A SLA – The DNO/LDNO will attend within three hours of receiving notification of a Category A issue (by telephone or other means) on a working day and within four hours on any other day. The working group noted that it may be necessary to remove the reference to other means as this is not within the MRA definition or alternatively to amend the MRA to allow communication by other means to match Electricity Regulations.

3.12 For Category B incidents the Working Group agreed that it would be useful to have a requirement to schedule a visit within a certain time frame and that there should be a further requirement for the visit itself to be within a certain time frame. There was some debate that an alternative would be that the Distributor did not inform the Supplier of the Scheduling of the visit. Accordingly, the Working Group proposes two alternative SLAs for Category B as follows:

Option 1

Category B SLA Part 1 – The DNO/LDNO will schedule a visit date within ten working days of receiving the D0135 flow.

Category B SLA Part 2 – The DNO/LDNO will complete the job within 40 working days of receiving the D0135 flow.

Option 2

Category B SLA - The DNO/LDNO will complete the job within 40 working days of receiving the D0135 flow.

These would both be subject to the fact that the D0135 was received and accepted by the Distributor and that the Distributor had not legitimately rejected it via a D0126 flow.

- 3.13 The Working Group is seeking guidance through this consultation as to which option is preferred.
- 3.14 The Working Group noted that the SLAs do not necessarily need to be identical within each category. For example, it may be possible to rectify some category B incidents fairly quickly and these could have one SLA with the other category B incidents having a different SLA. The Working Group noted that it may be the case that feedback leads to changes in the SLAs once they are implemented.
- 3.15 The group also noted that for category B incidents it would potentially be useful for the Meter Operator to take a photo of the back board, as the exit points can provide a great deal of information. Some Working Group members expressed concerns regarding the system requirements needed to store such photos given their size.
- 3.16 The Working Group is seeking views on the following questions in relation to the proposed SLAs:
- *Do you agree with the proposed SLAs and are the timescales reasonable?*
 - *Is the proposal that category B visits should be scheduled within 10 days reasonable?*
 - *Distributors: What will be the impact of these SLAs on resources? Would you ramp up internal resources or set up contracts with external organisation?*
 - *For category B incidents, do you think that there could be different service levels for different types of incident?*
 - *Do you think it is reasonable for Meter Operators to provide a photo of all category B incidents?*

3.17 **Informing Suppliers of the visit date**

3.18 The Working Group agreed that there would be a point of value for the Supplier in knowing when the DNO/LDNO will attend, and hence developed Option 1 under Category B faults. This would allow the Meter Operator to attend at the same time as the Distributor, enhancing the customer experience. There was some debate as to if this was practical and that it may be difficult to schedule the MOP and Distributor to attend at the same time. The group noted that at present there is not a requirement on Distributors to inform Suppliers of when a job is scheduled for; rather the requirement is to inform suppliers on completion of the job. It was noted that a DTC change could be raised to include this information in a data flow, potentially the D0126 flow.

3.19 It was noted that the additional information section of the D0126 flow could be used to indicate whether the Distributor will be attending during the am or pm¹. The Working Group agreed that ideally it would be good to tie down to a two hour slot but this is unlikely to be feasible.

3.20 The Working Group is seeking responses to the following questions in relation to informing Suppliers of the visit date:

- *Should the Distributors communicate the planned visit date to the Supplier?*
- *Distributors: How do you envisage scheduling these appointments, would it be am/pm (as defined in the guaranteed standards documentation), all day or a two hour slot?*
- *How could Distributors provide this information to Suppliers if not via the D0126?*
- *An alternative is that the Distributor does not inform the Supplier of the scheduled visit date, but only notifies the Supplier once the job is complete. Is this Alternative reasonable?*

3.21 **Reporting on performance against the SLAs**

3.22 The Working Group discussed what format the service level performance reporting should take. It is proposed by the group that reports on performance

¹ Where am and pm are defined as follows:
am appointment = 7.00am to 1.00pm (or 9.00am to 1.00pm on a non-working day)
pm appointment = 12.00 to 7.00pm (or 12.00 to 5.00pm on a non-working day)

against the SLAs should be published within 15 working days of the end of each calendar month on jobs completed within the month. For example, for jobs completed in January, were each of those jobs completed within the SLAs? The reporting should be per licensed area per month.

- 3.23 The Working Group discussed how much detail should be included within the performance reporting. It was suggested that the reporting could list each D0126 sent within the reporting month, the date the corresponding D0135 to instruct the job was sent and the number of days between the two. The Working Group concluded that this would be too much detail and decided that the reporting should be high level, stating for each licence area per month whether the SLA was met.
- 3.24 It was noted that there may be valid exceptions to the SLA, for example if the appointment does not go ahead because the customer refuses access. The Working Group agreed that it should be clearly stated that as long as an appointment has been offered within the SLA period then the SLA has been met.
- 3.25 The Working Group is seeking responses to the following questions in relation to the reporting requirements:
- *It is proposed that reporting on performance against the SLAs should be within 15 working days of the end of each calendar month on jobs completed within the month. For example, for jobs completed in January were each of those jobs completed within the SLAs. Do you agree with this proposal? If not, what alternative would you suggest?*
 - *It is proposed that reporting should be per Distribution licence held licensed area per month. Do you agree with this proposal? If not, what alternative would you suggest?*
 - *Do you agree that the SLA reporting should state for each Distribution licence held per month whether or not the SLA was met? If not, what alternative would you suggest?*
 - *Should the SLAs be reported by DNOs, Suppliers or both?*
- 3.26 The Working Group then discussed reporting relating to erroneous classification of incidents. It was noted that there could be a possibility that a situation is

erroneously classed as category A and the DNO responds as if it is an emergency when it is really Category B or C and also where an incident is classified as a Category B when it is a category A or C.

3.27 The group noted that where erroneous reporting occurs Suppliers will need that reported back to them and this will be a separate bi-lateral conversation, in order to keep these to a minimum.

3.28 The group is seeking responses to the following consultation question on erroneous reporting:

- *The Working Group proposes that the following is reported each month:*
 - *The percentage of category A incidents that were incorrectly reported*
 - *The percentage of category B incidents that were incorrectly reported*
 - *The percentage of category C incidents that were incorrectly reported*

Do you agree? Please provide your rationale.

3.29 **Implementation**

3.30 The Working Group noted that meeting the SLAs will require appropriate resources, and system changes may also be required to facilitate performance reporting. It may be more beneficial to implement the SLAs prior to the reporting in order to not delay the more important aspects of this change. The Working Group is seeking responses to the following questions relating to the implementation of the SLAs.

- *Distributors: How soon would you be able to meet the SLAs for the work to be done?*
- *Distributors: How soon would you be able to meet the reporting requirements (e.g. implementation of systems to record required data)?*
- *If changes to implement reporting could delay the implementation of the SLAs, would you be supportive of different implementation dates?*

3.31 **Environmental Impact**

3.32 The Working Group discussed the potential environmental impact of the Change Proposal and agreed to seek responses to the following consultation question:

- *It is the view of the working group that the environmental impact associated with DCP 153 is negligible. The roll out of smart meters is mandated, therefore, the introduction of SLAs will not change whether or not premises need to be visited to exchange meters. The SLAs may have a slight impact on timescales but the environmental impact is negligible. Do you agree?*

4 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

4.1 The following table provides a summary of each of the consultation questions that the Working Group is seeking responses to.

Question Number	Question
1	Do you understand the intent of the CP?
2	Are you supportive of the principles of the CP?
3	Do you agree with the definition for each category? Please provide supporting comments.
4	Do you agree that the Master Registration Agreement (MRA) Asset Condition Categories introduced by DTC CP 3336 should be replicated in the DCUSA? Please provide supporting comments.
5	The proposer of DCP 153 does not believe that SLAs should be introduced for Category C as it is not urgent and does not affect the meter exchange. Do you believe it is reasonable for the DNO/LDNO to plan this work as they feel is best?
6	<i>Distributors:</i> What are your self imposed turnaround times for resolving network issues at the moment?
7	Does this differ in an emergency situation?
8	How do you expect these to change under the smart metering roll out?
9	Do you agree with the proposed SLAs and are the timescales reasonable and do you believe category A incidents should only be

	reported by telephone?
10	Is the proposal that category B visits should be scheduled within 10 days reasonable?
11	Distributors: What will be the impact of these SLAs on resources? Would you ramp up internal resources or set up contracts with external organisation?
12	For category B incidents, do you think that there could be different service levels for different types of incident?
13	Do you think it is reasonable for Meter Operators to provide a photo of all category B incidents?
14	Should Distributors communicate the planned visit date to the Supplier?
15	Distributors: How do you envisage scheduling these appointments, would it be am/pm (as defined in the guaranteed standards documentation), all day or a two hour slot?
16	How could Distributors provide this information to Suppliers if not via the D0126?
17	An alternative is that the Distributor does not inform the Supplier of the scheduled visit date, but only notifies the Supplier once the job is complete. Is this Alternative reasonable?
18	It proposed that reporting on performance against the SLAs should be within 15 working days of the end of each calendar month on jobs completed within the month. For example, for jobs completed in January were each of those jobs completed within the SLAs. Do you agree with this proposal? If not, what alternative would you suggest?
19	It is proposed that reporting should be per Distribution licence held per month. Do you agree with this proposal? If not, what alternative would you suggest?
20	Do you agree that the SLA reporting should state for each Distribution licence held per month whether or not the SLA was met? If not, what alternative would you suggest?
21	Should the SLAs be reported by DNOs, Suppliers or both?
22	The Working Group proposes that the following is reported each month: The percentage of category A incidents that were incorrectly reported

	<p>The percentage of category B incidents that were incorrectly reported</p> <p>The percentage of category C incidents that were incorrectly reported</p> <p>Do you agree? Please provide your rationale.</p>
23	Distributors: How soon would you be able to meet the SLAs for the work to done?
24	Distributors: How soon would you be able to meet the reporting requirements (e.g. implementation of systems to record required data)?
25	If changes to implement reporting could delay the implementation of the SLAs, would you be supportive of different implementation dates?
26	It is the view of the Working group that the environmental impact associated with DCP 153 is negligible. The roll out of smart meters is mandated, therefore, the introduction of SLAs will not change whether or not premises need to be visited to exchange meters. The SLAs may have a slight impact on timescales but the environmental impact is negligible. Do you agree?
27	Do you have any further comments?

4.2 Responses should be submitted using Appendix A to dcusa@electralink.co.uk no later than **Wednesday, 17 October 2012**.

4.3 Responses, or any part thereof, can be provided in confidence. Parties are asked to clearly indicate any parts of a response that are to be treated confidentially.

5 NEXT STEPS

5.1 Responses to the Consultation will be reviewed by the DCP 153 Working Group. The Working Group will then determine the progression route for the CP.

5.2 If you have any questions about this paper or the DCUSA Change Process please contact the DCUSA helpdesk by email to dcusa@electralink.co.uk or telephone 020 7432 2842.

APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Response Form
- Appendix B – Asset Condition Codes
- Appendix C – DCP 153