

## Interventions Working Group Meeting 46

29 July 2020 at 10:00am  
Teleconference on Teams

| Attendees                    | Company   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Dave Wright [DW]             | Npower  |
| Geoff Huckerby [GH]          | Power Data Associates (PDA)                       |
| Dave Brogden [DBr]           | Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) |
| David Brown [DB]             | E.ON  |
| John Heague [JH]             | Scottish Power                                    |
| Martin Murphy [MM]           | NPg   |
| Paul Abreu [PA]              | Energy Networks Association (ENA)                 |
| Paul Morris [PM]             | UK Power Networks (UKPN)                          |
| Rachael Williams [RW]        | SPEN  |
| Richard Brady [RB]           | Western Power Distribution (WPD)                  |
| Richard Hill [RH]            | Centrica  |
| Robin Mellish [RM]           | SSEN  |
| Simon Wilson [SW]            | EDF Energy  |
| Peter Skirvin [PS]           | Electricity North West (ENW)                      |
| <b>Secretariat</b>           |   |
| Richard Colwill [RC] (Chair) | ElectraLink                                       |

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| Amina Uddin [AU]    | ElectraLink |
| Elliot Firth [EF]   | ElectraLink |
| Natasha Voysey [NV] | ElectraLink |

## 1. Administration

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- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the 46<sup>th</sup> IWG meeting. Apologies were received from Andy Clay and Colin Gentleman, who could not attend the meeting.
- 1.2 The Working Group agreed to be act in accordance with the terms set out in the DCUSA “Competition Law Guidance” for the duration of the meeting.

## 2. Minutes and Actions

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- 2.1 The minutes from the previous meeting held on 15 July 2020 were reviewed and the minutes were accepted as an accurate reflection of the discussions of the previous meeting. A version of these minutes can be found in Attachment 1.
- 2.2 The Chair informed the group that the RFI regarding D0126 and D0135 dataflows would be circulated post meeting. The Chair also noted that the group should seek to hold a workshop in early September.
- 2.3 The Chair informed the group that the action to investigate the use of customer contact details from aligned dataflows was still ongoing and that a response from the legal team was still required. An update would be provided to the group once received.
- 2.4 The group agreed to discuss and schedule a date for Safe Isolations Working Group later in the meeting.
- 2.5 The Chair reminded SW of the action to provide an update on EDF’s Smart Clinics. SW acknowledged this and agreed to revisit this during the next meeting as ongoing works were being carried out in August.

## 3. COVID-19 Member Update

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- 3.1 IWG members provided their company updates. Key points are detailed below:
  - Members agreed that there was no clarity on the correct procedures to follow in areas affected by local lockdowns. The group highlighted the current situation in Oldham and

the absence of any definitive communication on the restrictions for Suppliers in that area. It was agreed by many that unless given explicit instruction that work cannot take place, operations should continue as before. It was indicated by some members that their respective companies were returning to “a form of business as usual” already until told otherwise.

- It was raised and discussed if the IWG could consider returning to a business as usual meeting and agenda. It was noted that each business had their own processes established on how to deal with situations during the COVID-19 emergency period and that regular discussions and updates were no longer required. If there was a need for the agenda item to arise again due to another spike, this could be considered as and when required.
- The Chair suggested that the IWG could go back to business as usual and proposed for IWG to take place on the first Wednesday of every month from 10:00 to 15:00 to allow standard agenda items to be discussed. The group agreed to this.
- The Chair noted that it would be appropriate to review the six IWG workstreams at the next meeting to remind the group of the discussions to be had, allowing members to determine actions on how to progress the work. The Chair took an action to compile a list of actions and items to be considered before the next meeting.
- Members acknowledged the lack of centralised and consistent communication from BEIS, and that businesses are compelled to review each local authority’s website in order to understand the relevant restrictions in place in that area. One member noted that this would require businesses to check the websites of 350 different local authorities, which would be impractical. It was agreed that a continued push to get better clarity from the government is necessary.

**Action 46/01: The Chair to compile a list of actions and items to be considered before the next meeting.**

## 4. Smart Meter Installs

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4.1 Members reviewed paper IWG 20200714 on Smart Meter Installs, which provides comprehensive, market-wide dataset covering smart meter installations, DNO and site visit issues undertaken by all Suppliers for electricity installs going back to May 2012. The first graph in the paper shows the smart meter installs for June 2020, indicating that **68,590** SMETS meters were installed.

4.2 The Group was invited to note the contents of this paper.

## 5. Any Other Business

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### Emergency Contact for Out of Hours Situations

- 5.1 Members of the group noted that the experience customers have with helplines for enquiries or escalations continues to have issues. It was noted that in some scenarios, helpdesks are not always manned, especially at weekends, and that this needs improvement to provide the level of customer service required of Suppliers.
- 5.2 PA stated that customers continue to have difficulty in getting in contact with Suppliers and that the DNOs have found themselves involved where they should not be, but have nonetheless done what is in their power to help customers get in contact with Supplier. It was recommended that improvements be made to Supplier websites to discourage customers from using the emergency number, as well as reminding agents of the process for non-emergency escalations. JH commented that this needs to be viewed in the context that the pressures faced by COVID were unprecedented and that whilst there were initial difficulties in keeping customers in contact with helplines, this issue has been mostly rectified. Any continuing problems should be dealt with on a bilateral basis with individual Suppliers, rather than trying to implement a significant change at this moment which would ultimately add time to the matter.
- 5.3 PA suggested investigating the current communication methodology for out of hours business so that customers are sent to the correct place in case of an emergency. The ability to contact the DNOs in case of emergency should not be abused as it is more appropriate that Suppliers deal with customer issues. JH noted that a request for information can be made to establish these details information is. DB also highlighted that emergency Supplier contacts have been issued but do not actually get used, with customers still opting for escalation.
- 5.4 PA noted that there was also an issue of smaller Suppliers struggling to provide the required out of hours service, whilst larger Suppliers already have teams set up and in place to deal with business as usual-type matters.
- 5.5 The Chair suggested drafting a communication notifying all relevant parties of the requirement, from November, to update their contact procedures. In this communication, they can also be asked to complete what they can beforehand.

### Pod-Point – Safe Isolations

- 5.6 RB explained to the group that there was a situation regarding Pod-Point pulling cut-out fuses where an isolation switch was present. Pod-Point had been contacted by a Supplier regarding the issue which was a breach of conduct and had been instructed to not use a cut out fuse.
- 5.7 SW highlighted that Pod-Point is a subsidiary of EDF and have been instructed to not operate on any cut-out fuse as per Meter Operation Code of Practice Agreement (MOCOPA) guidance. Where carrying out work for EDF customers, EDF was able to support Pod-Point to ensure for

safe isolations, following the same processes used with contractors through EDF. SW noted that EDF has identified no malice in Pod-Point's actions.

- 5.8 It was also noted that several DNOs had been offering a course on operating a cut-out fuse, which under regular circumstances is not permitted unless registered with MOCOPA. SW questioned whether this presented a loophole to obtaining a MOCOPA registration. PA confirmed that only MOCOPA-registered personnel or DNO staff were allowed to operate on cut-out fuses, and JH indicated that both a MOCOPA Competence Certificate and working for MOCOPA company was required, allowing for a traceable route of competence for the operator and giving customers confidence that they would not risk either undue charges for reseal jobs or legal action if a broken seal was identified.
- 5.9 SW commented that the MOCOPA guidelines were not universally known, particularly by independent electricians who have their own guidelines and regulations to follow, and whose understanding would be that a safe isolation can be achieved by simply pulling the fuse. Electricians would need to be trained on the appropriate practices so they understand that only MOCOPA-registered operatives could work on cut-out fuses. DW suggested that it would be worth consulting with IET and establishing the correct processes for safe isolations; in so doing, there would be no excuse for any registered electrician to not know what the rules were. It was also noted that a common standard needed to be established across the industry covering things such as the time it takes to install EV charging points and ensure for safe isolations.
- 5.10 SW was concerned with ensuring that companies were not in breach of anti-competitive regulations. It was noted that bigger companies with in-house teams would have an unfair advantage over smaller/independent companies, and that preferential treatment could not be given to staff over independent contractors. It was agreed that this needed to be referred to the Safe Isolations Group.
- 5.11 The group discussed expanding the scope of the Safe Isolations Group, with DW noting that an isolator was not the only option. The Chair also commented that they would need to look into getting permission from the DCUSA Panel to extend the Safe Isolations Group, as the next meeting would actually be the group's final, approved meeting, and it was unlikely that these issues would be resolved at the final meeting.

#### Photo Portal

- 5.12 PM shared UKPN's proposed photo portal, which UKPN established alongside EDF for operators to upload pictures of meter tampering or other issues so that the industry had a central repository for operators to understand problems and how to resolve them.
- 5.13 The IWG was supportive of the photo portal.

## 6. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

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6.1 The group had no items to add to the agenda for the next meeting.

## 7. Next Meeting

7.1 The next IWG meeting was scheduled to be held on 02 September 2020 via Microsoft Teams. The meeting was expected to start at 10:00am.