

# Safe Isolations Working Group Draft Minutes

Meeting 07

30 March 2021 at 10:00

Microsoft Teams/ Teleconference

Attendee	Representing
Geoff Huckerby [GHu]	AMO
Peter Skirvin [PS]	ENWL
John Heague [JH]	Scottish Power Energy Retail
Boz Clowes-Laird [BCL]	BEIS
Ian Crawley [IC]	SSEN
Jonathan Elliott [JE]	Electrical Safety First
Paul Morris [PM]	UKPN
Paul Abreu [PA]	Energy Networks Association
Dave Wright (DW)	Npower
Simon Wilson [SW]	EDF Energy
Richard Hill [RH]	British Gas
Frank Bertie	NAPIT
Richard Brady [RB]	WPD
Martyn Allen [MT]	Electrical Safety First
<b>Secretariat</b>	
Richard Colwill (RC) Chair	ElectraLink

## 1. Welcomes and Apologies

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- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the 7<sup>th</sup> DCUSA Isolations for Safe Working, Working Group.
- 1.2 The Working Group agreed to act in accordance with the terms set out in the DCUSA “Competition Law Guidance”.

## 2. Purpose of the Meeting

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- 2.1 The Chair set out that the purpose of the meeting was to review the current options available and determine next steps. The Working Group would also review an AMO proposal to change MOCOPA.

## 3. Electrician petition to allow pulling DNO fuses

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- 3.1 GH presented a MOCOPA presentation providing details on a recent Facebook petition by electricians, which was circulated prior to the meeting (Attachment 1). The petition was titled “allow qualified electricians to pull DNO fuses to be able to work safely” and shows comments expressing frustrations from electricians.
- 3.2 The Working Group members acknowledge and understand the frustrations being expressed from electricians and this reinforces the need to have a clearly defined process for the delivery of safe isolations. It was also noted that this issue is likely to become more frequent with the likely increase in uptake of EVs and new legislation such as a recently introduced regulation for the private rented sector to have mandatory electrical safety checks.

## 4. AMO Proposal to change MOCOPA

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- 4.1 GH presented an AMO proposal to change MOCOPA, which was circulated prior to the meeting (Attachment 2).
- 4.2 It was noted that, it has become apparent over the last few years that the fitting of an isolator between the electricity meter and the consumer unit has been frustrated by the current rules which require the work to be undertaken on the instructions of the electricity Supplier appointed to that property or where the Operator is already appointed to that property. This has caused many issues where, for example, a local authority wishes to refurbish many dwellings but first needs the consent of the electricity Supplier. There are currently over 100 licensed domestic electricity Suppliers.
- 4.3 It is proposed to add the below text in red to the following MOCOPA clause to broaden who can instruct an Operator to undertake the work.

## **MOCOPA Operator Scope (Page: 51 version 4.9)**

*A MOCOPA Operator is only able to break the seals on and work upon Metering Equipment and Distribution Business Equipment, if: at the relevant Metering Point, they are the appointed MOCOPA Operator and are instructed by the electricity Supplier appointed to the relevant Metering Point; or, for whole current metering only, at the relevant Metering Point, they are not the appointed MOCOPA Operator, but they are required, by **the property owner, or with the express permission of the property owner**, a third Party electricity Supplier or by the gas Supplier responsible under the Use of System Agreement for the equipment used for the communications with gas meters at the Site, to carry out the following work at the Metering Point (excluding replacing meters):*

- i. Minimal reposition of third Party Supplier's meter in communal meter position, to accommodate space for appointed smart meter installation;*
- ii. Work on looped neutral(s) on Metering Equipment;*
- iii. Work on a shared supply;*
- iv. Investigation/remedial revenue protection work;*
- v. Installation of an isolator; and/or*
- vi. Install, operate, inspect, maintain, repair, renew, reposition, replace and/or remove equipment used for communications with gas meters at the Site (including minimal repositioning of electricity metering equipment as allowed under Use of System Agreement*

- 4.4 The above proposed solution maintains the requirement that only MOCOPA parties can undertake this work but broadens who can instruct that party to undertake the work.
- 4.5 It was noted that for the above rules to be changed it would require a change to DCUSA. A DCUSA Party would need to raise a DCUSA Change Proposal, and an action was taken to seek a sponsor for this change.

## **5. Review of proposed solutions**

- 5.1 PA provided an update from the Service Terminations Issues Group (STIG). It was noted that STIG members believe that the Supplier is responsible for the provision of safe isolations and they believe that this is already covered in Clause 25 of DCUSA. An extract of the relevant Clauses from DCUSA can be found in Attachment 3. An action was taken for the Secretariat to seek legal advice on whether Clause 25 of DCUSA confirms a responsible party. It was noted that previously the legal opinion was that there was not anything to definitively identify a responsible party for customer-requested isolations.

- 5.2 PA noted that at present DNOs are minded to submit a DCUSA Change Proposal seeking to require Supplier parties to publish their process for the provision of safe isolations for planned electrical installations work within consumer premises. It would also seek that the published details should include contact details plus the inclusion of guaranteed service standards (KPIs) for the provision of the safe isolations service by the Supplier as the responsible party.
- 5.3 After discussions, some Supplier members expressed a different view as they consider that there is nothing to stop Network Operator parties providing the service to customers and some Supplier parties commented that it should not be assumed that Supplier parties have any obligation to provide the service themselves. Some members believe that this is a problem that should be shared by both Network Operators and Suppliers and that there should be a commercial offering to customers allowing for choice.
- 5.4 As stated above, it was also discussed whether any MOCOPA authorised meter operator party could undertake safe isolations at a customer's request, even in circumstances where the MOP party is not appointed by the incumbent Supplier at the premises. This would require a change to DCUSA, and it was agreed that this should be progressed as a separate change.
- 5.5 It was acknowledged that at this stage the Safe Isolations Working Group is not in a position to put forward one agreed solution, due to the varying views from members.
- 5.6 Despite not reaching full consensus on an agreed solution, all members acknowledged that there is a need to define a process detailing how a customer can obtain timely main supply electrical isolations to allow for safe working on their electrical installations.
- 5.7 After discussion, it was agreed that a DCUSA Change Proposal should be raised acknowledging the difference in views and to offer alternative options to accommodate those differences. This would mean that both options mentioned above could be fully scoped out and then DCUSA Parties would have the opportunity to vote on their preferred choice. A final report would then be forwarded to the Authority, detailing both options, articulating DCUSA Parties preferred solution and requesting a decision on which solution should be implemented.
- 5.8 It should be noted that a DCUSA Change Proposal Working Group established to fully define both solutions, would include an industry consultation seeking views that could feed into any proposals.

**Post meeting note:**

- 5.9 PA shared a draft Change Proposal with members via email on 6<sup>th</sup> April and members are encouraged to provide feedback by end of Monday, 12 April.

## 6. Next Steps

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- 6.1 A DCUSA Change Proposal to be drafted articulating the various views of Safe Isolation Working Group members and seeking to define a process detailing how a customer can obtain timely main supply electrical isolations to allow for safe working on their electrical installations.
- 6.2 A DCUSA Change Proposal to be raised seeking to broaden who can instruct a MOP to undertake certain work as detailed in paragraph 4.3 above.
- 6.3 A DCUSA Party sponsor will be needed for both changes and Working Group members will be kept informed on progress.

## 7. AOB

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- 7.1 No items were raised.