

Request for Party feedback by 31 October 2023

DCP 419: Pre-Notifications of Planned Supply De-Energisations

1. Purpose of this Document

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to seek industry feedback on [DCP 419 'Pre-Notifications of Planned Supply De-Energisations'](#), in particular, to understand further the materiality of the issue being resolved by proposing pre-notification of planned works.
- 1.2 To respond to the questions posed in Section 5.1 of this document, please complete the Request for Feedback RFI response form found in Attachment 1.

2. Summary

- 2.1 Within Ofgem's 'Regulatory Instructions and Guidance (RIG): Annex F – Interruptions' document, there is an obligation on Distributors as below:

Section 2.12

Single premises power outage alerts originating from a smart meter are not reasonably expected to indicate no supply. Where an outage alert is received, the DNO should contact the customer as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter to check whether the customer is without power, but only between 8am and 9pm. However, this should not restrict the DNO from contacting a customer outside of those hours if the DNO considers it in the customer's interest to do so. The single premises power outage alert originating from a smart meter will be deemed to have been received at the earliest of either 8am or when there is contact with the customer.

- 2.2 In order for Distributors to meet this regulatory requirement, DCP 419 proposes to place an obligation on DCUSA Parties to notify the relevant Distributor in advance of any planned supply de-energisations, which are being undertaken by DCUSA Parties, in the course of their normal works, at individual properties with smart meters. This proposal seeks to make the necessary changes to DCUSA legal text that satisfies this requirement.

- 2.3 Having prior notification of planned supply interruptions will enable Distributors to identify the Power Outage Alerts (POAs) that are genuine faults at an individual property and help to avoid contacting the customer unnecessarily.
- 2.4 This proposal seeks to ensure that DCUSA Parties, that de-energise metering equipment as part of any planned work, provide the Distributor with advance notification of the supply interruption via a new Market Message. This will enable the Distributor to avoid contacting the customer unnecessarily and improve the customer journey whenever planned activities occur at their premise involving DCUSA Parties.

Note: For the purposes of this CP reference to “DCUSA Parties” means DNO, IDNO, Supplier, Crowded Meter Room Coordinator and SIP Parties.

Note: Single premises POAs are outages occurring at one property only. DNOs can respond quickly to outages affecting multiple properties, because they will receive multiple POAs with, for example, the same time stamp and factors such as these will indicate that this is a network issue and not a single premise issue. Confirmed network issues do not require a call from the DNO to the customer.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 The DCP 419 Working Group issued a consultation on 28 June 2023 for a period of three weeks. The full consultation document, along with industry feedback can be found in Attachment 2.
- 3.2 Whilst all the respondents understood the intent of DCP 419, a common theme that came from Supplier Parties was the request for supporting evidence that the proposed solution is the most efficient, cost-effective way to address the problem that DCP 419 seeks to resolve. For example, one respondent stated that they would be keen to understand what percentage of customers are contacted or attempted to be contacted when a POA is received currently.
- 3.3 Another respondent stated that it places a significant administrative burden and cost on Suppliers with no clear quantification of the benefits to DNOs. It was also noted that there is no evidence that other ways of addressing the issues have been considered, for example undertaking analytics to understand where actual power outages that require their intervention may have occurred.
- 3.4 A further respondent stated that they have concerns regarding how onerous this will become when they move into the realms of mass smart meter replacement with the asset replacement scheme from 2025 with the replacement of 2G/3G Communications Hubs with 4G Communications Hubs.

4. Further Working Group Considerations

- 4.1 The Working Group has considered the consultation responses and agreed that exploring alternative solutions would be of benefit. Initial thoughts on an alternative solution are set out below:
 - It was noted that in addition to receiving POAs, Distributors will receive a power restoration alert once a smart meter is re-energised. One alternative solution put forward was to place a time limit on when a Distributor acts on a POA. For example, the Distributor could wait xx minutes and if a power restoration alert is received within this time, they will not contact the

customer and only act on POAs where no restoration alert is received within xx minutes. The Working group did not conclude on this point. A debate that surfaced here was what is an acceptable amount of time for a Distributor to wait before contacting the customer would be and we would welcome your views on this.

- The Working Group considered the programme for replacing 2G/3G Communications Hubs with 4G Communications Hubs. It was noted that a POA will be received but because the meter is not de-energised it will not trigger a restoration alert. The Working Group are keen to understand how long each comms hub replacement will take.

4.2 The Working Group is also keen to request further information to understand:

- If you have any other solutions that could be considered; and
- If you have information relating to:
 - the number of single POA received by network operators;
 - how many planned works are undertaken by Suppliers involving smart meters (average per month);
 - estimates from suppliers on the average duration of planned metering works before the supply is restored.

5. Feedback Request

5.1 The DCP 419 Working Group is keen to gather further information to fully understand whether the proposed solution is the most appropriate.

1. For Distributors: How many POAs from a single premise, not linked to a network fault, have you received in the last three months (01 June 2023 to 31 August 2023)?
2. For Distributors: Please share your views on what proportions of these individual POAs will be planned work by any DCUSA Party?
3. For Distributors: How do you currently manage/propose to manage the RIG requirement in 2.1 for internal planned supply interruption work?
4. For Distributors: If you have any and are able to share, please provide analytics of supply interruption duration following a POA.
5. For Distributors: If the alternative solution in 4.1 is adopted, what do you consider is an acceptable amount of time between POA and power restoration alert before contacting the customer?
6. For Suppliers/ Meter Equipment Managers (MEM)s: Considering all works that you undertake that require de-energisation at an individual property, as an estimate, what is the typical time (in minutes) the property is de-energised for? Separate out different tasks if possible.

7. For Suppliers: How many planned works have you undertaken involving sites where a smart meter is already installed in the last three month (01 June 2023 to 31 August 2023)?
8. For Supplier: For the comms hub replacement programme how long (in minutes) would a typical replacement take in a property?
9. For Suppliers/ MEMs: Is there a known method for Suppliers or MEMs to suppress the power outage alert whilst works are undertaken on site?
10. For Suppliers: Can parties suggest an anticipated effort/cost for implementing the market message and accommodating this process?

For Distributor/ Supplier/ any other interested Party:

11. What are your initial views on the alternative solution set out in section 4.1 above?
12. Are you aware of any other solutions that could address the intent of DCP 419?
13. Do you have any other comments in relation to DCP 419?

Please respond to the above questions by completing the consultation response form found in Attachment 1.

6. Attachments

Attachment 1: DCP 419 RFI Response Form

Attachment 2: DCP 419 Consultation and Industry Feedback

Attachment 3: DCP 419 Change Proposal