

Request for Feedback by Friday, 9 August 2024 - Impacted Parties: Suppliers / DNOs / IDNOs / CVA Registrants / Crowded Meter Room Coordinator / Safe Isolation Providers

Dear Colleague,

Request

DCP 419 will soon progress to Change Report for Party voting and will then be issued to the Authority for decision. If approved, it will lead to the creation of a new Market Message (proposed specification attached). Parties are invited to provide feedback on the proposed specification to ensure that, if this CP is approved, it would deliver the information required.

Summary

What?

Distributors have been developing their systems and processes to make full use of the data that is now available from smart meters. One of the key opportunities to deliver improved services to customers is offered by the availability of Power Outage Alerts (POA) and Power Restoration Alerts (PRA) from the smart metering system. If a customer has a smart meter installed and suffers a supply interruption to their property, the smart metering system delivers a POA to the Distributor within a few minutes. For low voltage network faults this provides a clear understanding of the extent of the network that has been affected faster than was ever possible through the receipt of calls from customers, as has traditionally been the case for faults on the low voltage network.

When a Distributor receives a single POA they need to determine whether the supply interruption is a planned event or a network fault. There are various non-network fault scenarios that would trigger an POA to be sent to the Distributor.

1. Withdrawal of the Distributor's fuse by a Meter Operator to enable safe working on metering equipment.
2. Withdrawal of the Distributor's fuse by a Crowded Meter Room Co-ordinator (CMRC) to enable safe working on metering equipment.
3. Withdrawal of the Distributor's fuse by a Safe Isolation Provider (SIP) for an isolation to enable safe working on the customer's electrical installation by a third party.
4. Withdrawal of the Distributor's fuse by a Distributor field operative (e.g., joiner) to enable safe working on Distributor's equipment.
5. Supplier firmware upgrade to the metering equipment.
6. Supplier live replacement of a comms hub.
7. Unauthorised removal of the Distributor supply fuse by an electrician undertaking electrical installations work in the consumer's premise.

Why?

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.

In order to meet their regulatory requirements and to maintain a positive customer experience Distributors will need to receive prior notification of any planned supply de-energisations which are being undertaken by DCUSA Parties in the course of their normal works. This proposal seeks to make the necessary changes to DCUSA legal text that satisfies this requirement.

Having prior notification of planned supply interruptions will enable Distributors to identify the POAs that should be ignored and help to avoid contacting the customer unnecessarily while maintaining a positive experience for the customer when dealing with DCUSA Parties.

How?

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.

Could you please review the attached specification and provide any feedback by Friday, 9 August 2024.

Kind regards,

DCUSA Team.