

DCG - Terms of Reference

This paper sets out agreed terms of reference for the Data and Communications Group (DCG).

From	Dora Guzeleva
To	DCG Members
cc	
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Data and Communications Group

Purpose

1. The purpose of establishing the Data and Communications Group (DCG) is to inform government decisions by:
 - providing advice to the Smart Metering Implementation Programme team (the programme team) on data and communication issues raised in the Smart Metering Implementation Programme Prospectus (the Prospectus);
 - providing advice to the programme team on the achievability and implications of relevant consultation proposals set out in the Prospectus, and indicating where consensus can be reached and providing an indication of diverse views where it is not;
 - Evaluating and analysing a set of robust design and delivery options;
 - actively identifying any security and data privacy issues related to each of the aspects covered in the DCG's scope of work; and
 - actively identifying risks to the Smart Metering Implementation Programme and proposing mitigation measures.
2. The DCG operates in an advisory capacity and holds no decision-making powers.

Background

3. The programme team outlined proposals as part of the Prospectus published on 27 July 2010. We have identified a number of specific areas where stakeholder input is required.
4. As part of our broader engagement strategy, the programme is setting up two expert groups to draw upon the experience of industry participants and other stakeholders: the Data and Communications Group (DCG) and the Smart Metering Design Group (SMDG).

Review Point

5. The Terms of Reference and membership of the DCG may be reviewed at any time by the group leader to ensure that they remain appropriate for the requirements of the programme team.

Rules of Participation

6. Participants should endeavour to provide resources to assist in the development of the outputs.

7. Any discussion in meetings and views expressed or implied in such discussion or associated documents are without prejudice to and shall not limit the discretion of the programme team with regard to government decisions. Equally, views expressed by participants during meetings will not be treated as the formal position of the organisation they are representing, and will in no way prejudice consultation responses.

Community of data and communications experts

8. A community of data and communications technical specialists providing services and expertise in the data and communications sector will be invited by the programme to express an interest in being available to receive and respond to information requests to assist the DCG in completing its deliverables.

Scope of Work and Deliverables

9. Based on information to be gathered and analysis conducted by DCG, the following outputs, in the form of papers, are the key deliverables of the DCG:

DCC Scope and Services (Sub-Group 1)

- Agree a work plan for the DCG, including necessary sub-groups, agreed deliverables and a timetable for delivery and review and amend this plan as appropriate;
- Assessment of the user requirements related to DCC's proposed communication and data services, including development of user requirements specifications for consideration by the programme team;
- Assessment of the impact of the proposed DCC scope options on existing regulatory and commercial frameworks, and industry processes, systems and flows;
- Cost-benefit analysis of the proposals regarding DCC's scope of activities outlined in the Prospectus;

Interim Interoperability (Sub-Group 2)

- Assessment of options for commercial and technical arrangements to facilitate the proposed staged implementation approach of the programme, including any necessary interoperability arrangements;

DCC Establishment Timescales (DCG)

- Assessment of proposed implementation timeframes for establishment of DCC and its services;

Regulatory and Commercial Framework (Sub-Group 3)

- Assessment of options with respect to key aspects of the establishment and operation of DCC, including:
 - Extent of regulation of DCC's functions and activities, including procurement and contract management, service levels, and security requirements;
 - Incentive mechanisms;
 - DCC's cost recovery; and
 - Viability and financing.

- Assessment of options with respect to roles and responsibilities for smart metering equipment at the customer premises.
- Critique of proposals for a Smart Energy Code, including proposed contents and governance arrangements;

Resources

10. The DCG will be led by **Dora Guzeleva**.
11. Ofgem E-Serve will provide secretariat support to the group in terms of meeting organisation and minute taking.
12. The preparation of deliverables is expected to be undertaken by group members.
13. Meetings will be held at Ofgem's offices at Millbank, London.

Membership

14. Membership is by invitation only.
15. The group leader will have the discretion to invite interested parties to attend any meeting to maximise participation in the expert group process.
16. Membership of the expert groups is at the discretion of the group leader and will reflect the issues being addressed and therefore the expertise required.
17. DCG members shall cease to be a member of the expert group if they:
 - fail to contribute actively to the group's work programme; or
 - are otherwise notified by the group leader.

DCG sub-groups

18. The group leader will have discretion to establish sub-groups with a particular focus on specific deliverables.
19. Sub-groups may not need to be led by a programme team representative but a representative from the programme team will attend any sub-group meeting.
20. The group will review the outputs and papers provided by the Sub-Groups and provide further instructions to the Sub-Groups as necessary.

Transparency

21. The schedule of meeting dates and times, agendas, minutes and papers for the meetings will be published on the Ofgem website in a timely manner.
22. Where issues that are out of scope of the DCG and its Sub-Groups are raised in discussion, these will be noted within the minutes of the relevant group.
23. The contact details of the DCG members will be published on the Ofgem website.

Timetable and frequency of meetings

- 24.** Meetings will initially be scheduled on at least a monthly basis from September 2010 to January 2011. This will be reviewed by the group leader as appropriate.