



The DCG Community of Technical Experts

Promoting choice and value for all gas and electricity customers

Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Direct Dial: 020 7901 7000
Email: DCG@ofgem.gov.uk

Date: 26 October 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

Smart Metering: DCC Interim Interoperability Information Request

You recently agreed to act as one of the DCG Community of Technical Experts (CoTEs), supporting the Smart Metering Implementation Programme (the Programme) in the development of options for the DataCommsCo (DCC).

The Prospectus¹, and the supporting Communications Business Model², set out proposals (subject to consultation) for 'Staged Implementation' under which energy suppliers would be required to commence the rollout of smart meters before the DCC is operational. In the course of stakeholder engagement, the Programme has examined a number of options that might facilitate customers switching supplier during this period. For the purposes of this Information Request these options are referred to as the 'Interim Interoperability Arrangements Options'.

The Programme is continuing to work with stakeholders to undertake cost/benefit analysis of these Interim Interoperability Options. As part of this ongoing activity, we are issuing the attached DCC Interim Interoperability Information Request, which seeks information about the likely costs, benefits and timescales associated with the options currently being examined.

This Information Request is not part of any procurement process and is specifically being used to provide information that the Programme team can use to assess these Interim Interoperability Options.

The objective of this exercise is to assess the incremental costs and benefits associated with the Interim Interoperability Options. In responding to this information request, respondents should recognise that the Programme team needs strategic estimates for input to a cost benefit analysis, not detailed prices that might form part of a services contract. Accordingly the relative cost of each scenario – and the drivers of cost differentials – are of significant importance.

¹ Smart Meter Implementation Programme Prospectus, July 2010,
http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/consultations/smart_mtr_imp/smart_mtr_imp.aspx

² <http://www.decc.gov.uk/assets/decc/Consultations/smart-meter-imp-prospectus/226-smart-metering-imp-comm-business.pdf>

As stated in the letter inviting you to join the CoTEs:

1. Responses provided to the information request will be treated as public domain information unless clearly marked as commercially sensitive.
2. We will seek to ensure that any published documentation predicated on these responses will be anonymised, subject to contrary legal opinion.
3. Information provided should be clearly labelled as to whether it is a personal opinion or that of a company / organisation.

A query has been raised as to whether Ofgem would have to release any CoTEs submission in response to an FoI request. Responses and any other information provided may be the subject of valid disclosure requests under the Freedom of Information Act and other statutory schemes or in accordance with other legal or regulatory requirements and as a general rule Ofgem has a duty to disclose information held by it if requested. There are statutory exemptions which may mean that Ofgem is not obliged under the FoIA to disclose responses and any other information provided, however whether these exemptions apply will depend on the content of the information sought and the circumstances of the information request.

The return date for responses to this information request is 10 November 2010 although earlier responses would be welcomed.

Please can you confirm that you will be responding to DCG@ofgem.gov.uk. Please also use this email address for any questions or requests for clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Dora Guzeleva
Smart Metering
E-Serve, Ofgem