Data Communications Company

Switching Programme

D-4.2.3 Switching Service Management and Operational Approach

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1   Introduction

The current change of supplier processes for gas and electricity operate independently, and are based predominantly on batch systems. Each organisation involved operates its own Service Management (SM) processes.

The Ofgem Switching Programme will improve consumers' experience of switching by delivering a reliable, faster switching and cost-effective service that will facilitate dual fuel switches to all customers. Many of the Switching processes will operate in real time.

The new Switching Arrangements will require a co-ordinated and integrated Service Management service across all the systems and service providers that are part of the Switching arrangements.

A centralised Switching Service Desk will be established to provide a single point of contact for Market Participants (specifically energy suppliers, distribution network operators, gas transporters, MAPs and supplier agents). This will work with the new and existing providers of central data services (CDS) to ensure that incidents are resolved effectively and within Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

The Switching SM Strategy (D-4.1.9) identified and selected the Service Management approach that is to be developed and progressed for the new Switching Arrangements.

1.1   Document Purpose and Objective

The main objective of this Switching Service Management and Operational Approach document is to ensure that all parties have a common understanding of the service management approach for switching and which organisation has responsibility for each activity.

It builds on the SM Strategy and describes the overall approach that will be taken to ensure that the Central Switching Service (CSS) is operated effectively by the providers of all Central Data Services (CDSs) and how this will be managed, monitored and reported on by the Switching Operator.

Whilst this Approach is based on ITIL to provide the Switching Programme with a set of best practices to manage Switching services, this will be adapted as appropriate to meet the specific needs of Switching.

It will explain the overall Service Management landscape and the roles, responsibilities and interfaces within it. It will:

- explain all the components of Service Management (people, processes, systems);
- show how the components and service providers will fit together and the responsibilities of each;
- mechanisms that will be available to market participants to enable access to service management activities and support;
- explain how Service Management will be monitored, managed and reported by the Switching Operator (the company with the CSS licence obligations).

It is intended primarily for the new and existing providers of the CDSs but will also be of interest to Market Participants.

This document will inform a set of requirement specifications that will be used:

- by the procurement process to define the SM requirements that each bidder must satisfy; and
- to clarify the SM requirements that existing providers of CDSs must meet to support the Central Switching Service.

1.2 Scope

This document covers the Switching SM systems, processes and people of:

- the Switching Operator organisation;
- existing providers of CDSs (including Xoserve (UK Link, DES), Distribution Network Operators (MPASs), Gemserv (ECOES), DCC (DSP for Smart Metering) and any existing Communications Network providers that are to be used by Switching); and
- the new providers of CDSs that will be procured as part of the Switching Programme including the Central Registration Service, the Address Service and potentially a new Switching Network Provider.

It also explains how workarounds and manual processes will be managed.

1.3 Associated Products

The following diagram shows the expected Service and Operational Management products that form the Service Management and Service Operations product set.

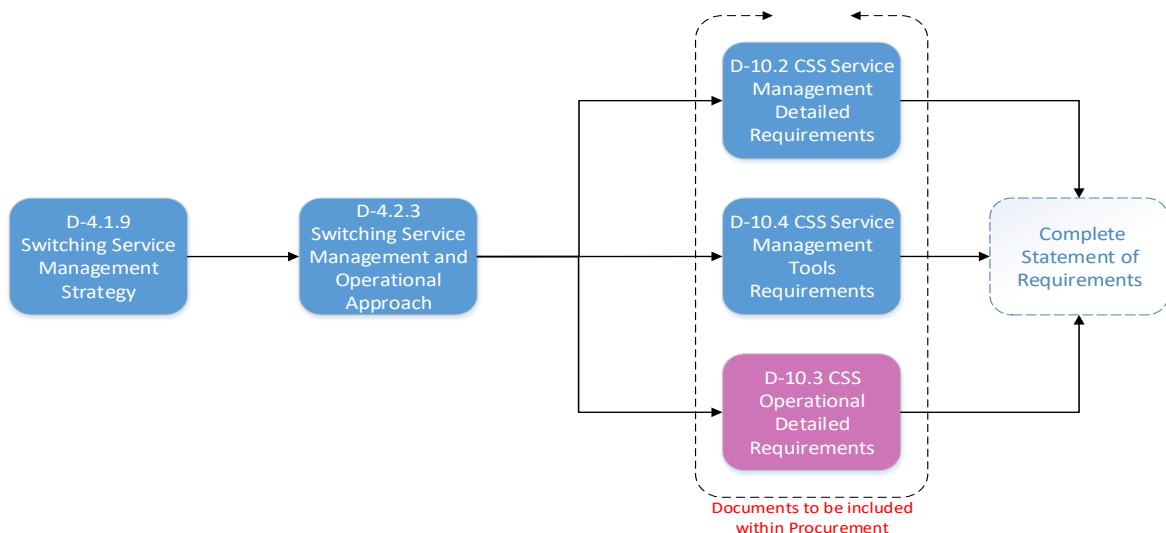It also shows the order in which they will be produced.

Figure 1 – Service Management and Operations Products

This approach will be reflected in the Service Management Requirements documents:

Product Name	Description
Service Management Requirements	The detailed requirements for all Service Management functions, for the procurement of new CSS services as defined in the CSS URS and the statement of requirements for existing providers of CDSs, for translation into regulation.
Service Management Tools Requirements	The requirements for the underpinning Service Management System and any User Portal required to support Switching.
CSS Operational Detailed Requirements	The requirements for the Switching Operator that will monitor and report on the service management across all existing and new service providers. This will include the operation of workarounds and manual processes.

2 Switching Service Management

2.1 Why is Service Management Required?

Switching Service Management is the service coordination layer of the new Switching Arrangements and is required to ensure that Switching and all the CSS CDSs providers (both new and existing), provide IT Services to meet the needs of the Ofgem Programme and Energy consumers.

Without a centralised Switching SM function to coordinate activities and information, the CSS would have no end to end service ownership or responsibility to ensure that the Switching objectives were achieved or that SLAs were met. This could lead to energy consumer dissatisfaction and the loss of confidence in Switching.

There would also be limited visibility across the end to end Switching Arrangements for Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reporting and to identify areas of improvement.

2.2 Service Management Strategy

The Switching SM Strategy proposed that a centrally managed, co-ordinated Service Management function across all CSS CDSs (new and existing) should be operated to ensure that all switching services are provided to meet the requirements of the Ofgem Switching Programme, and to deliver reliable, faster switching to energy consumers. This co-ordinated SM function will be accountable for:

- providing a Business to Business Switching Service Desk as a single point of contact for the use of Market Participants for switching issues and information;
- communicating Switching Service information to market participants;
- managing and resolving Switching related incidents and issues within SLAs;
- understanding and anticipating demand for services;
- coordination of activities that span multiple service providers;
- collating Switching Service key performance indicators;
- performing service measurement and reviews to identify areas of improvement.

Service Management will be managed by the Switching Operator which will have the licence obligations to effectively and efficiently manage the coordination of the new Switching Arrangement services.

SM Option Proposed

The Switching SM Strategy considered a number of options for service management. It concluded that the best option would be for:

- key SM processes to be integrated;
- others to be co-ordinated; and
- some to operate independently:

This will enable a smooth, effective, centrally co-ordinated service management function to be provided to industry, without the need for unnecessary, expensive changes to the systems of the providers of the existing CDSs.

As per the Switching SM Strategy, each SM process will be analysed to determine the level of commonality and co-ordinated approach that is needed across all CSS SPs, and the requirements to be fulfilled by each party. Some processes need to be integrated, but others may only require the transfer of information from one party to another. Others (e.g. access control) may operate independently. This will be defined in detail in the SM Detailed Requirements documents described in **Figure 1** above.

3 SM Landscape

The diagram below shows the individual components of Service Management and how they relate to the various Switching stakeholders. Each box is explained in more detail in the following sections.
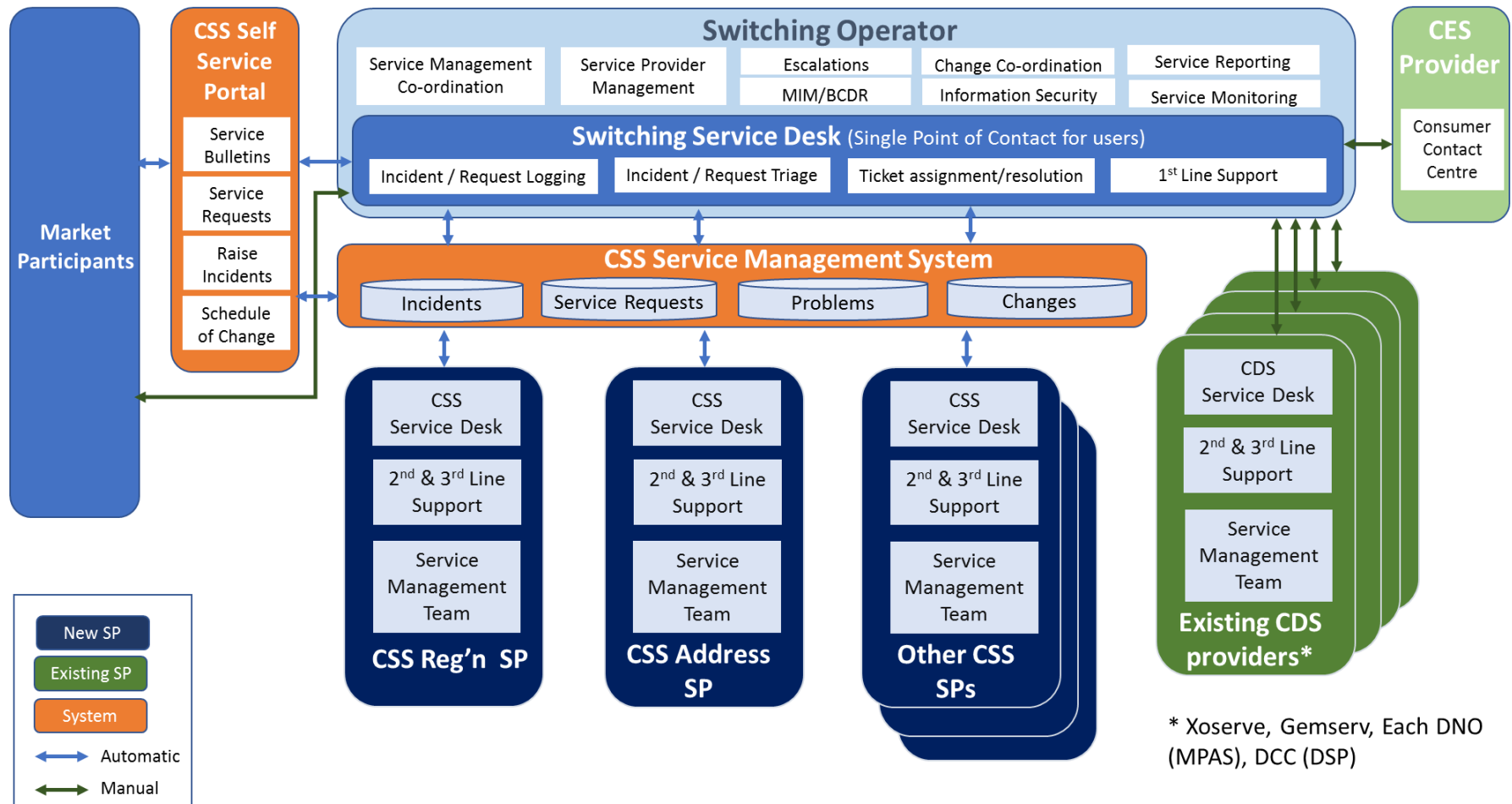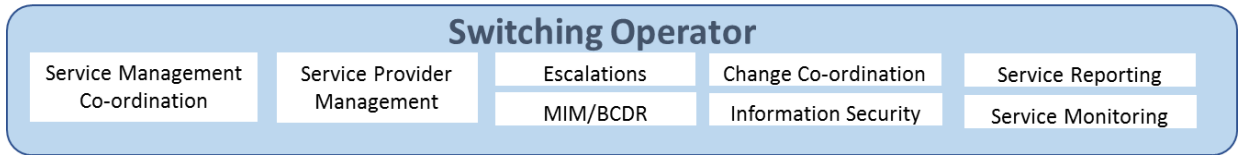

Figure 2 - Service Management Landscape

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4 Switching Operator

The **Switching Operator** will operate CSS under licence conditions introduced by Ofgem and it will manage live operations and the SM model for CSS.

Its primary role will be to manage the delivery of CSS services effectively, to support more reliable, faster switching for energy consumers. The team will manage the new CSS Service Providers and co-ordinate information from both these and the existing providers of CDSs.

It will monitor and review the service performance of each CSS CDS to ensure that the overall obligations, requirements, data stewardship activities and SLAs are met.

The Switching Operator will manage key processes in Live Operations; leading Major Incidents, Change Management, Problem Management and Incident investigation.

The team will also be responsible for leading the other stages of the ITIL lifecycle i.e. the Service Strategy, Service Design, Service Transition and Continuous Service Improvement stages.

The key operational activities that Switching Operator will carry out are:

Service Management Co-ordination across Switching	Provision of Service Management Reports
Management of all Service Providers in the new Switching Arrangements	Management of Switching Change Co-ordination across all CSS SPs.
Management of the Switching Service Desk	Major Incident Management
Management of relationships with all Switching users	Information and Security Operations
Escalations	Management of Technical Operations
Demand and Availability Management	BCDR Management and Testing
Performance Reports	Release Management

4.1 Governance

It is expected that Switching obligations will be defined in a new Retail Energy Code (REC) and the REC will be administered by a REC Code body on behalf of a REC Panel.
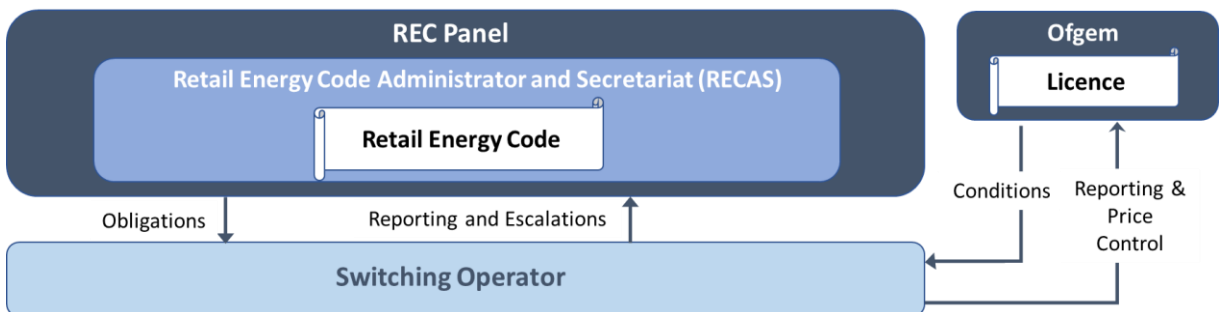
In this model, the Switching Operator will be accountable to the REC Panel for Code obligations with required escalations being submitted through this route.

The Switching Operator will also be accountable to Ofgem for its licence conditions and for ensuring that it is cost-effective as part of Price Control.

4.2 Switching Business Processes

In addition to the core ITIL service management processes, there are a number of specific business processes that need to be undertaken by the Switching Operator and the CSS CDSs.

These will all be managed by the Switching Operator and defined in the Switching Operations Requirements document (D-10.3).

The requirements for each CSS CDS to undertake or support these business processes will be defined in the Service Management and SM Tools Requirements documents (D-10.2 and D-10.4). These documents will also define the responsibilities, frequency, scale and activities required from each party.

Bidders to provide CSS services will be required to support these business processes and build appropriate capability into their development and operational plans.
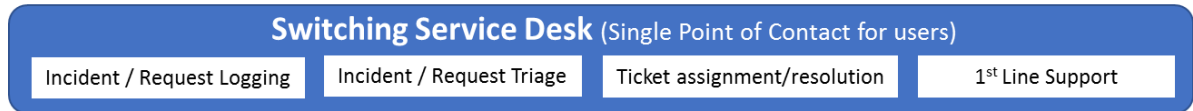
These business process activities will then be included in the CSS Service Provider contracts and operation of these business processes with be monitored as part of the Service Management of each service provider.

Examples of these processes include:

- Switching User Entry and On-boarding
- User Exit
- Loading, changing and use of Switching Domain Data (e.g. market participants, Shipper/Supplier relationships)
- Maintenance and use of Switching parameters (e.g. objection windows)
- Supplier of Last Resort
- Address issue resolution
- Managing anomaly detection processes and thresholds
- Supplier or user suspension (if required).
- Setup of anomaly detection thresholds (ADTs)
- Supplier requests to override the ADTs they have set
- Synchronisation audits – to make sure RMPs haven't been lost
- Management and verification of security credentials.

5 Service Desk

The Switching Operator will provide and manage a **Switching Service Desk** that will be a 'single point of contact' for Switching Users, CSS SPs and other relevant Market Participants. It will not be available to consumers.

Switching Service Desk (Single Point of Contact for users)			
Incident / Request Logging	Incident / Request Triage	Ticket assignment/resolution	1st Line Support

The Switching Service Desk will work with all CSS Service Providers to manage the system and resolve all Switching incidents and requests.

All CSS CDS Providers will maintain 2nd line service desk and support capabilities and as needed for Switching Services.

The Switching Service Desk will:

- log all incidents, service requests and queries (tickets) on the Switching Service Management System (SMS) and assign to the correct resolver teams;
- triage all tickets using automated/scripted diagnostic information and tools that enables the resolution of a high proportion of incidents without recourse to the 2nd line SP support teams;
- provide 1st line support using knowledge provided by each SP;
- work with the service desks of each CSS SP to manage and resolve all incidents and service requests within the required SLAs;
- escalate tickets where required through the Switching Operator and SP organisations;
- receive information from all CSS CDSs relating to the availability of Switching systems;
- provide co-ordinated information on the E2E Switching Service to all stakeholders;
- be available during each calendar day to support Market Participants; and
- provide a 24x7 service to support the systems and services of the new Switching Arrangements.

Where existing CSS SPs do not directly use the Switching SMS, the Switching Service Desk will receive and load ticket updates on behalf of the SP.

6 Systems

6.1 Service Management System (SMS)

Switching will be supported by a **Service Management System**.

This will be a central repository or database that will store all incidents, requests and queries for the end to end CSS and will provide the history and audit trail of the resolution of each ticket.

The SMS will consist of a number of applications, reports and interfaces that together will provide full Service Management support for Switching.

It will enable the Switching Operations, Switching Service Desk, Service Providers and Market Participants to perform their Service Management responsibilities collaboratively.

The Switching SMS could be:

- an off the shelf SM tool e.g. ServiceNow, ServiceDesk Plus[1] configured to support Switching;
- a purpose-built product; or
- a solution that is already in operation within the industry for another Programme e.g. DCC Remedy for Smart Metering.

Whatever the SMS selected is, it will have core modules/functionality to support:

- Incident Management
- Problem Management
- Knowledge Management
- Service Level Management
- Change Management
- Service Catalogue
- Service Request Management
- Analytics and Dashboard Reporting

The SMS will be accessed in different ways by the Market Participants and Service Providers.

- Switching Service Management teams and Service Desks will be able to access the SMS directly.
- Switching Market Participants will be able to access their incidents and requests through a Switching Portal.

Note:

Smart Metering uses a highly customised version of BMC Remedy as its Service Management System. This has been tailored to the needs of smart metering and again uses the DCC Key Infrastructure to manage access over a dedicated Gamma link.

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[1] This mention of these products as an example does not suggest any preference regarding the SMS product that is required for CSS.

It could be possible to change this Remedy system to support switching. However, as with the smart metering self-service interface, this is likely to be expensive and would build a dependency on a smart metering service provider, and changes would need to be co-ordinated with smart metering changes which would mean that Switching did not have control over its own SMS.

There a number of alternative options for a Switching SMS:

- *An 'out of the box' Remedy solution configured to support CSS services.*
- *A different service management system that is available and configure it for Switching.*
- *An independent custom-built service management system.*
- *A custom-built module built into the CSS Registration Service.*

All these options will be considered by the procurement process.

6.2 Portal

The best service will be provided to market participants if they are able to serve themselves from the available services.

CSS Self Service Portal			
Service Bulletins	Schedule of Change	Service Requests	Raise Incidents

To facilitate this, Switching will provide a **Self-Service Portal** that authorised representatives of market participants can use.

It will be the first point of contact for general Switching queries and will enable market participants to become largely self-sufficient, thereby getting a fast service.

The portal will enable users to:

- view service announcements and communications;
- access user guides and the switching knowledge base;
- access useful data and any diagnostic tools available;
- raise, update and resolve their own incidents;
- request available Switching services;
- view the progress and resolution of their incidents and requests;
- raise queries;
- access available reports;
- provide data to the Switching Operator e.g. demand data.

It is expected that the Portal will be available at all times, except during planned or unplanned maintenance windows.

Note: Smart Metering has a user portal called Self Service Interface (SSI).

Due to the confidentiality and sensitivity of smart metering data and the fact that the smart metering network is considered as critical national infrastructure, the security arrangements that are used to secure the network and systems are highly secure and use a dedicated network.

The SSI is secured by the DCC Key Infrastructure (DCCKI) and is only available via the Gamma Network.

It is provided by one of the DCC SPs for smart metering. It could be possible to amend the SSI system for Switching, but this is likely to be an expensive option and would also build a dependency for switching on smart metering.

As with the SMS, there are a number of options for the portal and these will all be considered by the procurement process.

7 Service Providers

7.1 New CSS Service Providers

As part of Switching, a number of new service providers (SPs) will be procured.

These will include:

- CSS Registration Service
- Address Service

Other potential new SPs are:

- A new CSS Switching Network
- CSS SMS
- CSS Portal
- Customer Enquiry Service

The service management requirements that each new SP will be required to meet, will be included in Service Management Detailed Requirements documents that will be in the procurement packs. Successful bidders will be responsible for the design, build, testing and maintenance of their individual services plus a full, service management wrapper.

At a high level, for service management, each new CSS SP will be required to:

- provide a service management team to deliver the set of Switching SM requirements;
- use the CSS SMS to support its Switching activity;
- provide a service desk to interact with the Centralised Switching Service Desk and provide 1st line support;
- provide knowledge to enable the Switching Service Desk to triage and provide first line support for their services;
- provide 2nd and 3rd line support for its service(s).

The new CSS Registration Service and Address Service Providers will also be required to provide sufficient Service Management resources to enable the timely resolution of address matching issues and discrepancies.

7.1.1 Data Stewardship

The CSS Registration Service Provider will be responsible for data stewardship of the premises addresses and for resolving any issues identified with address matching, with support from the Address Service Provider.

It will require access to the master address database to assist with this.

It is expected that this will require a number of data analysts to be assigned to this activity to resolve issues and facilitate the associated switches.

No changes to the underlying source address database are expected as a result of this activity, although manually entered (ME) addresses can be entered into the CSS Registration Service.

7.2   Existing Providers of Central Data Services

The existing industry change of supplier processes use systems and services that will also be used in the new Switching Arrangements.
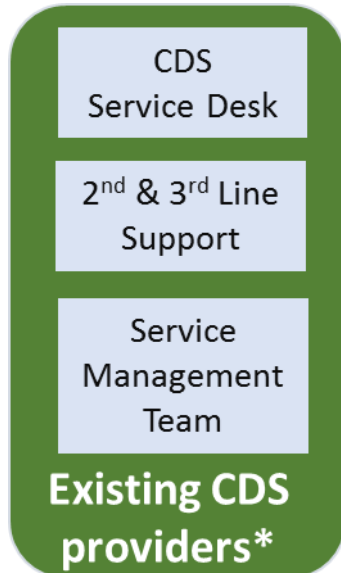
The existing providers of CDSs are:

- Xoserve for UK Link and DES;

- Gemserv for ECOES;

- Each DNO (or its chosen Registration Data Provider), for MPAS;

- DCC (DSP) for Smart Metering.

The Switching Network may also use the existing gas and electricity communications networks, if they can support the requirements of the new Switching Arrangements:

- Information Exchange (IX) provided by Xoserve;

- Data Transfer Network (DTN) provided by Electralink

If not, a new Switching Network will be procured.

Switching requires a centrally managed, co-ordinated end to end Service Management function to ensure that all switching services are provided to deliver reliable, faster switching to energy consumers.

However, it would not be cost-effective to require each existing SP to change all its service management processes and systems to use those developed for CSS.

Therefore, the service management requirements will be less prescriptive for existing service providers, and will concentrate on the 'what' rather than the 'how'.

Each existing CDS will be responsible for its own parts of the new Switching Arrangements and will manage its own services, technology and tools to support these.

However, the end to end Switching SM function will also require existing providers of CDSs to provide data, support and reports to the Switching Operator. This will include:

- Changes to be implemented;
- System availability and status information;
- Responses and resolution of service requests and incidents;
- Performance measurement and KPI information;
- Continuous improvement reporting.

SPs may also need to make changes to deliver improved support arrangements or hours, and tighter SLAs.

The set of service management requirements that each existing CDS will be required to meet, will be included in Service Management Detailed Requirements document to enable the regulatory approach to be developed. They will not be included in the Procurement packs for new CSS SPs.

An existing CDS may use the Switching Service Management System if it wishes to, but may continue to use its own SMS and provide information to the Service Desk to load into the Switching SMS to provide a full end to end picture to market participants.

Each provider of a CDS will be required to provide a service desk facility to interact with the Centralised Switching Service Desk and must provide 1st, 2nd and 3rd line support and knowledge for the Central Service Desk and Market Participants.

7.2.1 Summary of SM Interactions

Processes

- Provide Service information for Switching Service Catalogue;
- Assist with the creation of new CSS ITIL process & procedures to ensure alignment;
- Ensure adequate ITIL process & procedures are in place to meet Switching requirements for all service management areas;
- Ensure that adequate Event Management & Major Incident Management processes are in place;
- Provide Service Continuity/Disaster recovery plans and procedures.

Pre-live

- Manage, control and predict the performance, utilisation and capacity of resources;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of your Information Security Management process;
- Take part in Switching BCDR testing;
- Ensure adequate security is in place;

Operational Activity

- Provide Switching Service Availability information and plans;
- Report security vulnerability when identified;
- Submit non-standard Change & Emergency Change notifications;
- Submit forward schedule of change to agreed timescales;
- Report service affecting Incidents;
- Undertake tasks or provide information to resolve Incidents;
- Report known Problems;
- Undertake tasks or provide information as required to resolve Problems;
- Knowledge articles for known issues and workarounds;
- Deliver services as defined in the Service Catalogue.

Meetings

- Switching Service Management steering group
- Change Co-ordination Group;
- Service Provider review meetings;
- Risk Management;
- Operational Acceptance Board.

Produce Reports

- Switching Service SLA reports;
- Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reports;
- Service and resource utilisation;
- Continuous improvement plans.

7.3 Consumer Enquiry Service (CES)

Some customers do not switch energy provider because they do not know who their energy provider is or what their meter point reference number (MPxN) is.

This is particularly relevant when a customer moves into a new property.

This information is not available from the Switching Service Desk as this is a business to business service only.

CES Provider

Consumer Contact Centre
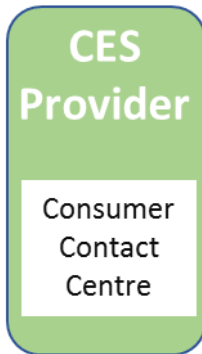
Currently there are facilities for a customer to obtain this information about their energy supply, although there is no central source of this . Customers can contact Xoserve for Gas or the relevant Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) for electricity.

As part of the Switching Programme Ofgem is considering the procurement of a single, dual fuel Consumer Enquiry Service (CES) that would be available to all customers to obtain their energy supplier name and reference numbers via web access or telephone.

Should this procurement proceed at a future date, the procured CES would provide a Consumer Contact Centre that will be responsible for the Service Management and Operation of their Services and ensure they meet their requirements and contractual obligations.

The CES will not be required to coordinate activities with the CDS Service Providers, however, they will be expected to notify Market Participants (via the Switching Operator) of any CES service-affecting issues.

Any contact from CES with the Centralised Switching Service (if, for example, the CSS data was unavailable), would be via the Switching Service Desk which would log an incident and then manage its resolution.

Note: The CES is part of Reform Package 2a, but is on hold at the current time.

It has been included in this document to show that apart from using data from CSS, it would otherwise be independent from the new Switching Services.

8   Market Participants

Market Participants will interact with the Switching Service in a number of ways:

- Self Service Portal – the preferred route. See section 6.2 above for details;

- Email – if the portal does not cover the information required, or the user does not have access;

- Telephone – if neither of the above mechanisms can be used. This is the least preferred option as it is hard to establish the identity of the caller, so limited information can be provided.

Market Participants

Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

Acronym / Term	Definition
BCDR	Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery
CDS	Central Data Service (including new and existing providers)
CES	Consumer Enquiry Service
CR	Change Request
CSI	Continuous Service Improvement
CSMS	CSS Service Management System
CSS	Central Switching Service
CSS SP	All new CSS Service Providers.
DCC	Data Communications Company
DES	Data Enquiry Service, operated by Xoserve
DSMS	DCC Service Management System
DSP	Data Services Provider
E2E	End-to-End
ECOES	Electricity Central Online Enquiry Service
ITIL	Information Technology Infrastructure Library
MAP	Meter Asset Provider
Market Participant	Means the combination of a Retail Energy Company and a Role Code
MIM	Major Incident Management
MRASCo	Administers the Master Registration Agreement.
REC	Retail Energy Code
RECCo	Retail Energy Code Company
RP2a	Ofgem's preferred Reform Package for the Switching Programme
SEC	Smart Energy Code

Acronym / Term	Definition
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SM	Service Management
SOC	Strategic Outline Case
SPAA	Supply Point Administration Agreement
SPOF	Single Point of Failure
SSP	Self Service Portal
Switching Operator	The organisation or team that operates the Centralised Switching Services and will manage and co-ordinate the SM Model.
Switching User	Any organisation that is allowed to 'use' the CSS under REC
TOM	Target Operating Model
TPIs	Third Party Intermediaries
UK Link	Provider of systems that support the competitive gas market, operated by Xoserve.