

xoserve – Shipper escalation process

A paper by NGT for DISG 14, 20th July 2004

Background

Under the proposal for xoserve to provide services to Shippers on behalf of the Network operator, the existing account management function within NGT would remain as a network operator activity in support of the contractual relationship between GT and Shipper. Shippers have therefore raised concerns that they will need to interact with multiple account managers for resolution of issues related to service delivery, change and contract relevant to xoserve.

NGT has been asked to provide clarification on the role xoserve will provide in managing issues and the escalation of those issues in seeking resolution.

Purpose

To describe the roles and responsibilities in resolving issues associated with the delivery of services by xoserve and to minimise the requirement on Shippers to have to interact directly with individual networks as part of the issue/contractual service escalation processes.

Scope

xoserve as the sub contractor of the network operators will operate a Customer relationship management process that seeks to provide efficient and effective management of customer issues related to the scope of services.

It is intended that this process should satisfactorily address most service complaint issues therefore providing a cost-effective and efficient interface to the benefit of both shippers and transporters.

For the purpose of resolution of issues the relevant parties are identified as xoserve, Network Operator (UKT, RDN & IDN) and User.

xoserve is not party to the Network Code but acts as sub contractor for the GTs in the delivery of GT obligations and other services, xoserve is not in a position to make Network Code contractual agreements.

The xoserve user interface does not detract from the Shippers right to seek resolution directly from the Network Operator through the contract (Network Code)

xoserve ‘User’ Services

Within the xoserve Services Contract, a number of specific User services have been defined:

- **User Relationship Management**
xoserve shall continue to provide a day-to-day management interface with Users in relation to the delivery of services. In addition, xoserve will operate an operational forum on behalf of Network Operators (formerly known as the CPM and Billing Operations forum) to provide opportunity for wider community feedback about service performance issues.
- **Representation at Industry Forums**
Where requested by the Network Operator, xoserve will attend such other forums, which require relevant knowledge and experience, related to the services provided.

- **User Satisfaction and Feedback**

xoserve shall continue to deal with User feedback via a managed process recording, tracking and responding in agreed timeframes (service standard 10 Business Days) until complete resolution has been achieved.

- **User Communication**

xoserve will continue to provide (where required) a central and coordinated communication with Shippers relevant to information standard to all network operators.

Contact Points – Users

In recognition of the concerns raised by Shippers, NGT proposes the following set of additional arrangements through which operational issues can be managed and escalated.

In the first instance, the day-to-day operational contacts shall continue to provide the interface for discussion of issues, which are not within the remit of usual query management processes and data enquiry services.

Where the ‘day-to-day’ contact is unable to resolve the issue, it shall be referred to a lead Operational Manager within xoserve who represents the specific services defined in the service schedules.

Where the Operational Manager cannot resolve the issue, it shall be referred to the Commercial manager within xoserve and where appropriate the Network Operator(s) contract manager for resolution. At this stage, xoserve would determine whether there is a need to escalate the issue to one or more network operators (i.e. specific to a network or generic service delivery).

Where the xoserve commercial manager is unable to reach agreement with Network operators on the resolution of an issue, a dispute resolution process exists within the xoserve Services Contract to escalate the issue to the xoserve CEO and Network Managing Director level.

In addition to the outlined escalation process, NGT has proposed the creation of an xoserve user group to support resolution of generic issues. Whilst distinct proposals have yet to be defined, a key purpose of this forum is to bring together Shippers / Suppliers, Network Operators and xoserve to manage the service delivery and consider the requirement for, or impact of, change.

NGT have taken an action in SPAWG to propose the terms of reference and operating basis of the ‘User Group’.

Other Contact Points

xoserve will assign a change manager who will be responsible for the management of issues related to the delivery of change, including the operation of the UK-link committee.

xoserve will appoint a contract manager to deal with the day-to-day management of the contract between xoserve and the network operators, including the review of User feedback.