

Resolution of Gas “Old Chestnuts”

Paper to MAMCoP – 6th July 2010

1.1. Purpose

The impending smart meter roll-out is expected to increase the meter replacement rate by at least three times over today's activity. This increase is expected to accentuate any installation related issues that may already occur but are currently 'muddled through' by MAMs & GTs. This document proposes a way forward to consider the issues so a consistent and effective method of addressing them can be agreed in advance of the ramp-up of activity.

1.2. Background

In December the AMO created a document entitled 'Old Chestnuts' which identified predominantly electricity related issues that have been known about but the industry has not clearly addressed. The electricity issues are now being addressed through a working group under the governance of MOCOPA®. This working group includes representatives of Meter Operators, Distributors, Suppliers, Ofgem & the HSE. The participants have all been positive seeking to develop an effective and pragmatic way forward.

Ofgem held a meeting on 27th April of smart metering stakeholders relevant to training, competency and safety. The process being used with electricity issues was described. Ofgem asked if similar issues existed in the gas market, to which the group believed there were. Ofgem asked if the AMO & ENA could facilitate the same process of identifying issues in the gas metering market, and create a subgroup under MAMCoP to consider solutions. The AMO & ENA agreed to initiate this process and bring a paper to the next MAMCoP seeking further issues, participants and agreement. Ofgem smart metering team will reconsider the progress of these industry initiatives in September 2010.

Both the AMO & ENA have already identified relevant issues from their members. The ENA runs a Smart Metering Operations Group (SMOG) who consists of electricity & gas transporter representatives.

Many of the issues under consideration are common to gas & electricity – such as accessible location of meter, damaged meter boxes, etc. Achieving a common approach to similar issues across both fuels would probably benefit stakeholders and be more understandable to customers.

Independently, Ofgem have already initiated a review of MAMCoP through IGEM. Although there will be some cross-over of issues it is important that neither activity delays the other. It is probably appropriate to ensure at least one person is involved in both groups to ensure consistency of approach and help avoid duplication.

1.3. Process

The proposal is to create a sub-group under the MAMCoP Scheme Management Board governance. The group should be formed of representatives of MAMs, GTs, Suppliers, Ofgem & the HSE.

The ENA SMOG group has four representatives willing to represent GTs.

It is important to ensure that the group remains small to be effective, whilst also being large enough to be sufficiently informed and representative.

1.4. Recommendation

To form sub-group under the MAMCoP Scheme Management Board to identify, address operational and safety issues which may impact upon the effective roll-out of smart meters.

The group is not a decision making group. The group will propose solutions to issues which can then be developed within the appropriate governance arrangement, which may be MAMCoP or other industry governance documents. Where appropriate governance already exists, the group may develop guidance for industry on how to resolve specific situations.