

# Mahler Ventures

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS ACCELERATION

FTAO Margaret Coaster,  
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Delivered by e-mail and post

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Dear Sirs

## **Smart Metering**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Smart Metering Implementation Programme.

In responding to the Prospectus, Mahler Ventures is representing the owners of patents relating to Smart Meters and data communications.

### **Chapter 2, Question 3: Response**

For the customer's ready acceptance of smart meters, the whole process from meter design to installation and use [information] must clearly be seen as both secure and value for money; each element of software and hardware should also be future-proofed as far as practically possible. This applies particularly to the necessary communication links/networks.

We are pleased to learn that some Government offices have already promulgated that the Smart Meter rollout programme and the delivery of broadband connections to every home and business (which is becoming the default standard for Smart Grid management) should ideally be executed concurrently (and particularly so for the Digital Britain initiative). We believe this to be the only means to maximise the value of both programmes for the customers benefit.

However, whilst we have recorded very positive responses to this collaborative approach, concern has been expressed that a combined /comprehensive timetable would delay the implementation of one or both of the programmes.

Our response to this issue is for the Smart electricity meters to be designed to incorporate on the supply side, a long range radio WAN and WiFi broadband

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data hub (transceiver). We have patented such a device (which we have dubbed SmartGate™) that will deliver fast, secure, and tamper free, “always on” services; it will thereby deliver the services required for both Smart Meters [to the Smart Grid] and provide a 2 meg broadband connection.

Also, the installation of SmartGate™ describes a known physical address it can be used for a wide range of secure payment/data transfer services ranging from Medicare to education. This delivers customers a full range of broadband services through the meter – even in areas where current broadband service is poor or unavailable. These value added services/benefits would support an important feature of the programme that must ensure “*customers will have a positive experience of the smart meter rollout*”.

### **Chapter 3, Questions 6, 7 & 16: Response**

We believe that both functional requirements and technical specifications should be developed in parallel by industry - particularly noting that the communication network should not be limited to servicing only the needs of the gas and electricity providers. Apart from the additional benefits described above an obvious function that should be accommodated is the ability to incorporate water metering.

All meter designs should be provisioned with the connections and space to accommodate a SmartGate™ module or equivalent.

Partitioning the Smart Meter rollout either by supplier or geography may delay the programme due to competitive positioning where the existing ownership of an “element” of the total service may be uniquely held for a particular territory. Beyond the utility functions, the content providers may bid competitively for access to SmartGate™ - perhaps via the DCC.

The need for new/replacement networks for remote rural areas, and the cost involved could in part, be covered by the utilities. With this in mind, it is our view that Ofgem would be best placed to project manage the Smart Metering programme and play a significant role in coordinating the competitive procurement of hardware and software in order to deliver the earliest completion date.

#### **Chapter 4, Questions 17, 18, 19 & 20: Response**

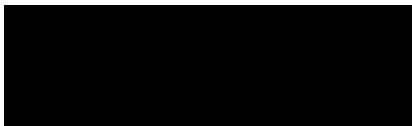
Our view is that none of the proposed implementation strategies fully accounts for the possible rapid market response that will follow an unequivocal announcement of the detailed plan to implement smart metering.

Also a greater emphasis should be made to finalise a common meter specification to bring forward the initial rollout.

Incorporating a communications device in the Smart meter would allow the communications industry to play a significant influence in the plan and DCC should incorporate this strategy to accelerate the smart meter roll out.

We look forward to learning of the outcome of this consultation process

Yours Faithfully

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On behalf of Mahler Ventures Ltd