



Making a positive difference
for energy consumers

Mr Mark Shurmer
Chair, UNC Modification Panel
c/o Joint Office of Gas
Transporters
Radcliffe House
Blenheim Court
Warwick Road
Solihull
B91 2AA

Direct Dial: 020 7901 7371
Email: rachel.clark@ofgem.gov.uk

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Dear Mr Shurmer

Improving meter point data held in UK Link

Ofgem's Switching Programme will transform switching for gas and electricity consumers, making the process faster and more reliable. A key component of the new switching arrangements will be a new Central Switching Service (CSS), which will replace the switching components of the existing registration services. In addition, we have proposed a number of remedies to improve the data that is held across the industry, including the creation of a new Address Service within the CSS.

The creation of a CSS will require population with data from existing Central Data Services,¹ which will be achieved through migration of data into the CSS in the programme's Design, Build and Test (DBT) phase. With this in mind, we are looking to update and improve the data held in these services, prior to migration into the CSS during the DBT phase.

We have identified a number of changes to the data held in UK Link that we consider are important to achieve the outcomes that we want to see.² The changes are outlined in detail in an annex to this letter. One of these changes will involve transfer of data from outside of UK Link into that system, whereas the other change will involve the creation of an indicator to make identification of particular characteristics of meter points easier. In addition to being necessary for the population of data in the CSS, we consider that these changes will improve consumers' overall experience of switching. We would also like the existing data owners to cleanse and improve existing data, to ensure that data migrated to the CSS is of as high quality as is possible.

These improvements are necessary before migration of data to the CSS commences during the DBT phase of the Switching Programme, and are essential to ensure that the new CSS is able to function effectively. However, creation of these datasets will improve customers' experience of switching in the existing arrangements, and for this reason we believe that this work should be initiated as soon as possible. We would like to see fully developed proposals to implement the outcomes above by early Summer 2019, to allow changes to be made in releases of UK Link functionality, with a view to the changes being fully implemented in UK Link by late Summer or early Autumn 2019.

We consider that all of these changes are achievable by improving existing data in UK Link, and have discussed these changes with colleagues from across industry at Switching Programme 'roadshows' in March. At these sessions Xoserve indicated that thinking was

¹ In this context, Central Data Services are industry systems such as UK Link in gas and Meter Point Administration Service in electricity.

² These changes are outlined in our end-to-end Delivery and Design products

already underway to determine the best technical approach to implementing these changes. From a regulatory position, we would like these improvements to be progressed through existing UNC governance processes. We would be grateful if the UNC Panel would take the following actions (or direct the appropriate party to act):

- To make provision for this activity in Xoserve's budget. We consider that these activities are relatively limited in scope and therefore direct funding through Xoserve is the most appropriate mechanism to undertake this activity;
- To ensure that appropriate provision is made in order to enact these changes in time for late Summer or early Autumn 2019; and
- To set out a detailed plan for making the appropriate improvements through the UNC Change Management process, and then communicate this plan to us at Ofgem.

We would be happy to work with colleagues from Xoserve or Joint Office of Gas Transporters to assist in the production of the required modifications or change requests, if this is required.

We would be grateful if you would reply to this letter to indicate your plan for taking these proposals forward, before 31 August 2018. If you have any questions about these proposals or our Switching Programme, please contact James Crump at james.crump@ofgem.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Rachel Clark
Switching Programme Director