

Project Nexus
AMR Workgroup 1 Minutes
Wednesday 31 March 2010
Energy Networks Association, London SW1P 2AF

Attendees

Bob Fletcher (Chair)	(BF)	Joint Office
Ann Jackson*	(AJ)	Scottish and Southern Energy
Brian Durber	(BD)	E.ON UK
Chris Warner*	(CW)	National Grid Distribution
Dave Harries	(DH)	Total Gas and Power
Elaine Carr	(EC)	Scottish Power
Fiona Cottam	(FC)	xoserve
Gareth Evans	(GE)	Waters Wye Associates
Graham Wood	(GW)	Centrica
Hazel Ward	(HW)	RWE Npower
Joanna Ferguson	(JF)	Northern Gas Networks
Joel Martin	(JM)	Scotia Gas Networks
Lisa Harris	(LH)	Shell Gas Direct
Michele Downs	(MD)	xoserve
Peter Thompson	(PT)	Customer Representative
Sean McGoldrick*	(SMcG)	National Grid NTS
Shirley Wheeler	(SW)	xoserve
Simon Trivella	(ST)	Wales & West Utilities
Stefan Leedham	(SL)	EDF Energy
Steve Mulliganie	(SM)	Gazprom
Steve Nunnington	(SN)	xoserve
Tim Davis (Secretary)	(TD)	Joint Office

* *via teleconference*

1. Introduction

BF welcomed all to the meeting.

*Copies of all materials are available on the Joint Office web site at:
www.gasgovernance.co.uk/nexus/310310.*

2. Consider Terms of Reference

2.1 xoserve to explain scope and intended outcomes

SN introduced the proposed approach for looking at the AMR area and ran through the Terms of Reference.

SM suggested that, consistent with CW's aspiration, developments and requirements should be set in the context of an unbundled DM service. He indicated that, if necessary, Gazprom expected to raise a Modification Proposal to take this forward.

CW suggested that legal drafting and clearly defined business rules was an essential output and should be included in the group report.

The proposed scope and approach was also agreed subject to clarifying that there was potential for NDM processes to be considered where relevant.

3. Scope & Deliverables

3.1 Consideration of As-Is Current Principles

On behalf of ICOSS, GE presented some thoughts on AMR and Smart Metering. The intention was to frame the Workgroup debate in light of DECC's proposed rollout of high technology metering.

It was noted that a number of carve-outs exist in DECC's proposals that need to be borne in mind, and that definitional issues remain.

BD suggested that, notwithstanding the present mandation, consideration of the valve in the Business Sector would be important.

GE emphasised that the Business Smart and Domestic Smart solutions identified by DECC were different, and were separate to AMR. However, ICOSS believed current AMR equipment met all the Business Smart requirements.

PT asked whether the existence of differing equipment and practical approaches to meet the obligations could impede competition and switching. SM said this should not be an issue and a number of solutions were possible to ensure any barriers were avoided. FC added that existing AMR devices are a bolt-on device and so a meter would continue to exist and could be read and used by an alternative Supplier. GW suggested that an incoming Supplier could choose whether or not to deploy a different metering service provider and/or different AMR equipment – that would be a commercial decision for the Supplier. SM agreed and suggested the key was accessing the data, not how it was generated.

SL questioned the role of the CCP and its implications, for example whether the CCP would automatically be sent data or would request it. SL added that optionality was key and the question was about data flows and responsibilities, which needed to be reflected in the development of options. SL also asked whether it was envisaged that different Licence conditions would be included for I&C only Shippers/Suppliers as a route to defining and mandating AMR. GE suggested this was not clear at this stage, and SM that the key was defining the term AMR – which required defining the functionality, not the equipment. If any installed device delivered the required functionality, then it should be seen as fitting the AMR definition.

GW emphasised that there is a distinct difference between the smaller end of the market being considered and the largest businesses, and this should be reflected in the Nexus solution. Meter read data would be available in future through various metering routes and there would be a need to allow for granularity and variety. GE agreed that identification of AMR sites would be critical since some SSP sites would have AMR capable devices installed, notably when multi-site organisations sought a single solution for all of their sites irrespective of usage.

There was some debate about the potential number of sites with AMR capability, with 1.4m having been quoted elsewhere but seen as being very much the upper end and unlikely to be reached. However, the number would be significant. SN emphasised that xoserve would be hoping for a firm number by the end of the process. SL accepted there would be a significant population of AMR supported sites in future, but offered the challenge as to why this should necessarily mean the Nexus solution for reconciliation should be different for these sites - the equipment and functionality between Business and Domestic Smart Metering was fundamentally the same.

GE accepted that a single solution could be appropriate, although SM added that the key issue may be throughput rather than functionality as far as reconciliation is concerned and may mean a different solution is justified in different market sectors. GE felt that the AMR issue was immediate and a solution was needed prior to the full rollout of Domestic Smart Metering and that this should ensure that whatever was implemented through Nexus did not disadvantage other sectors nor create barriers to the desired final solution for the market as a whole. SW emphasised that xoserve remained open to looking at phasing if it was concluded that was appropriate and cost effective.

MD then ran through the document provided by xoserve setting out the Meter Point Life Cycle

FC introduced AMR related issues that had been raised. She highlighted issues recorded in the Initial Requirements Register and identified whether or not the requirements are provided by the DME regime. It was suggested that dual fuel considerations might be an additional issue, and the ongoing development of a data hub should be factored into discussions. HW suggested it was essential to ensure switching timescales were not overlooked, which included reducing timescales for gas only customers rather than looking solely at dual fuel concerns.

xoserve's suggested prioritisation approaches for taking considerations forward was discussed. CW suggested a process flow approach would be a good way to tease out issues, and this was agreed.

SN then ran through the DME Business Rules with a view to highlighting areas where the approach does not meet attendee's AMR aspirations.

Read Provision - SM indicated that deadlines for submission of daily reads was an issue. Bottlenecks need to be avoided with the expansion in the number of reads; and Shippers should be able to provide their own estimates when needed, although a backstop would still be needed if no read is provided.

Replacement Reads – SM suggested allowing correction of an actual read within a window should be considered, given that estimates can be corrected. BD suggested this raised concerns about balancing. HW felt the issue should also be considered by the Retrospective Updates Workgroup. MD offered to seek to clarify why the DME regime made no provision for actual reads to be corrected.

Action AMR001: xoserve (MD) to seek to clarify why the DME regime made no provision for actual reads to be corrected.

BD questioned restrictions on the suppression of reads and it was agreed this should also be considered, with the aim being to get actual reads into the process on a daily basis.

Reconciliation and Resynchronisation – SM questioned whether further thresholds would be needed.

Data logger faults – SM questioned the reference to notifying faults “on the day they became aware” which may not be practical with increased volumes.

Ratchets – SM suggested the application of ratchets should be considered as an issue, but ST emphasised this would extend beyond Nexus if any change were proposed.

Having run through the outline of the DME requirements, it was agreed that this was a suitable platform for developing an AMR Nexus solution.

SN then ran through the DME process flows and sought views on whether change was desired, seeking to capture issues to be developed at future meetings.

Site set-up - SM questioned what information the GT or its agents required other than reads and consumption. ST believed this went beyond AMR and was an issue that needed to be set in the context of the developing CCP concept. He added that Transporter data usage goes beyond consumption, such as asset data that is used to inform emergency situations. However, it was recognised that continuing to collect hourly data at D+1 may not be appropriate.

GW suggested that the rules should allow for the existence of agents that may discharge Shipper obligations.

DM Reads – timelines need to be reviewed. PT questioned whether these reads are used for interruption, and JM confirmed within day hourly consumption information is used to monitor interruption. It was recognised this would need to be considered under any anticipated regime change.

Action AMR002: All to consider the material presented and provide any further feedback in time for the next meeting.

3.2 Consideration of Options

SN asked if attendees wished to start delving into the information presented and consider issues or if they would prefer xoserve to work up a straw man for consideration at the next meeting. The latter was agreed.

Action AMR003: xoserve (SN) to develop a straw man.

3.3 Transitional Arrangements

No issues raised.

3.4 Risk Monitoring

No issues raised.

4. Workgroup Report

4.1 Preparation of Monthly/Final Report

It was agreed that BF should provide a verbal update to the Workstream.

5. Workgroup Process

5.1 Agree actions to be completed ahead of the next meeting

It was noted that xoserve had invited all to provide feedback on the material presented and that this would help to inform the development of a straw man, which xoserve would seek to ensure was available and published at least five business days ahead of the next meeting.

6. Diary Planning

AMR meetings have been scheduled for:

Tuesday, April 20, 1030, Energy Networks Association

Wednesday, May 12, 1030, Energy Networks Association

7. AOB

None raised.

Appendix 1

Action Table - 09 March 2010

Action Ref	Meeting Date	Minute Ref	Action	Owner	Status Update
AMR001	31/03/10	3.1	Seek to clarify why the DME regime made no provision for actual reads to be corrected	xoserve (MD)	Update due at 20/04/10 meeting.
AMR002	31/03/10	3.1	Consider the material presented and provide any further feedback in time for the next meeting	All	In time to inform a straw man
AMR003	31/03/10	3.2	Develop a straw man.	xoserve (SN)	To be published ahead of 20/04/10 meeting