

# UK Link Technology Refresh

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# UK Link Background

- UK Link applications running since 1996, last Technology Refresh completed 2001
- UK Link Risk Assessment Carried out in December 2004
  - UK Link lifespan indicated as 2008
- UK Link ownership transferred to xoserve May 2005
- UK Link performance deterioration identified 3rd Quarter 2005
- 3 Month UK Link Technology Feasibility Review sanctioned December 2005
- Review recommended upgrade to hardware, database version & application toolset by end 2007

# Scope

- Technology Refresh is an upgrade of the technical components that make up **Sites and Meters** and **Invoicing** systems
- Technology refresh is essential to
  - Enable continued delivery of a reliable and robust set of UK Link systems
  - Allow xoserve to continue to provide services on behalf of Networks
  - Extend UK Link system lifetime for a further 4-6 years from end 2007
- The Technology Refresh **IS NOT** an application re-write
- No functionality changes to be implemented alongside upgrade

# Progress since last update

- Concluded competitive tender process to find a suitable partner
- Contract has been awarded to TCS
  - TCS have previous experience of UK Link, provided application support and maintenance 1998-2002
  - Project start 1<sup>st</sup> November '06
- Upgraded systems will be operated from TCS Data Centre at Peterborough, 2<sup>nd</sup> data centre at Wellingborough, rather than National Grid Data Centres at Hinckley and Leicester
- Similar architecture to now with intra-site and inter-site failover/replication and other high availability features to meet UK Link SOS

# Proof of Concept

- Initial phase is the delivery of a Proof of Concept (POC)
- POC will prove overall technology compatibility of the proposed software and hardware stack
- Will allow testing of Application Migration mechanism
- Selected key business processes will be tested
- POC will provide opportunity to trial data migration approaches
- Expected to conclude in Spring

# Shipper Impact & Testing

- Goal is to minimise any Shipper impact
- No intention to change interface mechanisms or formats
  - Initial analysis has not indicated anything to challenge this view
- Test arrangements
  - Currently reviewing a set of proposals
  - Extensive testing period allowed for in plans
  - Will look to replicate key business processes end to end (not necessarily true parallel running)
  - Shippers involvement in testing phase still being evaluated
- May require additional input from Shippers during cutover

# Cutover

- Fundamental design decision will be cutover mechanism and approach
  - Not yet finalised
  - Expect POC work to be key input to this decision
  - Minimising impact is key consideration
- Data cutover likely to be about a week in advance of main cutover, then will need to apply “delta” data updates
- Still considering optimum timing within the month to undertake the cutover, taking into account the operational schedule
- Not clear at this stage what likely extent of outages will be and if we will need to request/designate additional non-business days
- Cutover will need to have detailed contingency and fall back plans to deal with a variety of failure/non-completion scenarios

# Issues for consideration

- Dataloggers
  - 11am daily deadline adds risk and complexity to cutover
  - Will look to investigate alternatives for delivery
  - Is suspension for duration of cutover an option ?
- Finalisation of implementation dates
- Code-freeze for implementation of additional UK Link changes from July '07



# Next Steps

- Conclusion of Proof of Concept
- Evaluation of outcome of POC
  - Incorporate any required changes to approach etc.
  - Re-validate plan in light of above
  - Finalise cutover implications and communicate