

Review Group 0114R 'Revisions to Maximum Daily Permissible SPA Volumes'.

Review Report

Introduction

Review Group 0114R was convened to review the effectiveness of Urgent Modification Proposal 0114 'Revisions to Maximum Daily Permissible UK-Link Processing Volumes' which was implemented, effective from 17 January 1997. The purpose of the modification was to bring the maximum daily usage volumes for SPA files, for Domestic Competition Phase II, in line with performance indicators demonstrated in a Scalability Benchmarking exercise conducted by Transco.

A concept 'smoothing the peak' was in addition introduced which provided a mechanism to control the maximum number of transactions per day which could lead to a transfer of ownership. The modification also recommended maximum daily volumes for the receipt of meter reads and the generation of opening read requests.

The Review Group were further asked to investigate the requirements for Domestic Competition Phase III. Latterly, the group met as part of the SPA/Metering workstream.

The Review

Effectiveness of revised maximum daily volumes for Domestic Competition phase II.

The group identified that the established maximum daily volumes of supply point confirmations (50,000) submitted during Domestic Competition Phase II were not breached at any time. Transco reported that the maximum quantity of confirmations received on any day was for 7 March 1997 where the following statistics were recorded.

Phase 2a 503 live, 3 lapsed, 48 rejected = 554 confirmations.

Phase 2b 29586 live, 465 lapsed, 1149 rejected = 31200 confirmations.

Total = 31,754 Confirmations.

A limited number of confirmations were also processed by the same server for phase 1 and I&C that day.

In order to establish whether there was any potential constraint on Transco's systems during implementation, the Review Group initially proposed to identify the peak days for file transactions and compare for each day the number of confirmations and transfer of ownership transactions with the processing window in order to identify the percentage of processing time used. This unfortunately proved to be impractical due to the difficulty of extracting the relevant systems data.

A further problem experienced by the group was the difficulty in identifying the data available for the actual days of peak processing as only confirmation day information could be identified.

Transco reported, however, that based on the above statistics, they considered that the additional processing required to approach the anticipated maximum quantity of 50,000 confirmations for DCIII would not have caused significant problems.

Requirements for Domestic Competition Phase III

The group determined that the pattern of confirmations and resultant transfers of ownership was likely to increase as roll-out progressed, peaking at tranche 6. This was because confirmations for each tranche would be an ongoing process. Transco informed the Review Group that for the Interim Solution and for each tranche of DCIII, the existing maximum daily volumes could be accommodated without difficulty based on a maximum level of 50,000 daily confirmations for each tranche and on this basis, the principle constraint on volume was the capacity of shippers to absorb withdrawal notification files.

A maximum daily volume of 35,000 confirmations and specific 'smoothing the peak' requirements were subsequently identified by the Ofgas Programme Team and were established for the 'Interim Solution' phase of Domestic Competition Phase III.

In order to consider requirements for the mainstream phase of DCIII, the group was reconvened within the SPA/Metering workstream.

It was identified that following scalability benchmarking exercises recently undertaken, Transco were able to revise the allowable maximum. This was based on the implementation of new functionality to Transco's Sites & Meters database which has introduced seven new partitions (servers).

It was identified that it is now possible for UK-Link to accommodate a maximum daily volume of 50,000 transfers of ownership per database partition. The group agreed that a Class 3 UK-Link Change Request should be raised by Transco to change the IS Service Definition within the UK-Link Manual to reflect this. This was subsequently raised under the Network Code Modification procedures and numbered 0215.

At the February 1998 meeting, the Modification Panel directed that Class III Change Request 0215 should be discussed by the SPA/Metering Workstream. The proposal was therefore added to the agenda for the meeting held on 18 March 1998. The group subsequently determined that the details of the Change Request adequately met its purposes of updating the UK-link Manual with respect to reflecting Transco's UK-Link system performance constraints and should be resubmitted to the April 1998 Modification Panel as drafted.

The group, however, recognised that there were further industry constraints, ie; industry maximums and 'smoothing the peak' quotas which needed to be determined for the purposes of the roll out of domestic competition. Ofgas therefore gave a presentation to the Domestic Competition Focus Group on the mechanism that was in place to ensure that Shipper and industry quotas were continually monitored. The procedures developed will be in force for the remainder of the roll out of domestic competition

Conclusion

The Review Group identified that the maximum daily volumes specified for Domestic Competition Phase II were not exceeded at any time. No problems were in addition experienced with the 'smoothing the peak' concept although there was little evidence to suggest to what extent the procedure had been adhered to by shippers due to the fact that the maximum daily volumes were not constrained at any point.

With respect to the projected requirements for Domestic Competition Phase III (Interim Solution for Tranche 1), Transco were confident that the existing volumes could be dealt with and performance testing substantiated this.

For the Interim Solution, the maximum daily volume of confirmations for the industry was determined by the Ofgas Programme Team (OPT) as being 35,000 per day. Controls were in addition set in place for 'smoothing the peak'.

For the roll out of mainstream domestic competition, a monitoring mechanism was installed by Ofgas and notified to the Domestic Competition Focus Group which required Shippers to notify Ofgas in advance of their likely transfer requirements.

The SPA/Metering workstream subsequently agreed that Transco should seek to update the UK-Link Manual to reflect a maximum daily volume of 50,000 transfers per Sites & Meters database partition. This would represent the performance constraints of Transco's UK-Link system.

Recommendation

That Class 3 UK-Link Change Request 0215 'Revisions to Maximum Daily Permissible SPA Volumes (Domestic Competition)' is resubmitted to the April 1998 Modification Panel meeting with a recommendation to implement direct.

Representations Received

One representation was received in respect of this report. This recommended the closing down of the Review Group. The respondent made reference to specific requirements for Modification 0215. Transco would comment that the contents of the modification were extensively discussed within the SPA/Metering Workstream. A draft Modification Report is currently with Shippers seeking representation.

Transco's View

As proposers of Modification 0215, Transco are supportive of its implementation.

Timetable

Draft Review Report to Modification Panel Members and Shippers for representations -	21/4/1998
Close out for Representations -	17.00 13/5/1998