Review Group 0122

'Review of Query Management Requirements'

Review Report

1.0 Executive Summary

Review Group 0122 has facilitated the publication of a Query Management Service Standard document, which has addressed all of the objectives established at the outset of this group. An industry document has been delivered which sets out a series of Query Management business rules and performance measures, which for the first time has provided a uniform set of standards by which the industry can gauge query performance.

Over the period of RG0122, standards and performance have steadily increased. The ongoing developments and refinements to the Query Management process lend themself to further increases in performance.

Review Group 0122 has successfully taken Query Management to its existing level whereby performance can be consistently measured against defined targets. To build on this platform it is recommended that ongoing development of Transco's Query Management services, be advanced via existing industry workgroups taking account of significant industry initiatives (Transco's Query Management Programme).

2.0 Introduction

The February 1997 meeting of the Network Code Modification Panel directed that Network Code Modification Proposal 0122, 'Review of Query Management Requirements', should be subject to Review procedures. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for this group were as follows:

    i)   Identify Shipper and Transco requirements for Query Management.

    ii)   Recommend a mechanism for effectively managing queries.

    iii)   Agree a definition of what a query is and what constitutes query resolution.

    iv)   Determine the business requirements for an automated Query Management System (QMS), if appropriate.

v) Identify potential timescales for delivery of any automated QMS.

vi) Consider if there are any amendments that could be made to the Network Code to facilitate the query process.

vii) Consider potential changes to the scale and type of queries.

Delivery against the ToR is best illustrated by drawing a distinction between developments prior to and beyond April 1998, and their respective outputs.

3.0 Progress Against ToR

February 1997 - March 1998

To deliver the ToR a number of key definitions and principles were explored and agreed during the initial phase of RG0122. Analysis of the requirements for a QMS identified that the development of an automated QMS with electronic submission, would not, on its own, significantly improve Transco's query management performance. The group concluded that such a system would need to be implemented alongside process and other business changes.

The first major deliverable of the Review Group was a "Query Definition" paper, agreed in October 1997. This document provided:

a. *Definition of a query as distinct from a Request for Information (RFI),* that being "reasoned opposition to the validity of data held or issued by Transco which is related to a specific customer". The recognition of the difference was deemed important, as it correctly allowed for the potential of separate resourcing to accommodate individual shipper needs. Subsequent to the Review Groups findings, Transco established a RFI bureau which in the twelve months to September 1999 managed 800,000 RFI's from shippers.

b. *Definition of query resolution* - "a query is resolved when the customer agrees with Transco's diagnosis of the problem and any corrective action required from both Transco and the customer". A query is deemed closed "when the customer agrees with Transco's diagnosis of the problem and both parties agree that any corrective action required from both Transco and the customer has been completed.

c. *Definition of a number of query management principles.*

i.	Provision by customers of valid queries, with full supporting information, using standard formats and media.
ii.	Reference to previous and related RFIs.
iii.	Avoidance of duplicated queries.
iv.	Provision of clear points of contact and communication channels.
v.	Development of an analytical approach to query resolution.
vi.	Proactive management of query resolution.
vii.	Sharing of information related to query status and resolution.
viii.	Effective transfer of ownership.
ix.	Resolution agreed between Transco and the customer.
x.	Provision of an equitable process.
xi.	Provision of confidentiality.
xii.	Priorities will be agreed.
xiii.	Provision of a controlled and auditable process.
xiv.	Monitoring query management performance.
xv.	Reasonable expectation of the turnaround time for queries.
xvi.	Analysis of common problems and trends.

To support the objective related to an automated QMS, Transco undertook a parallel exercise to assess the likely cost of developing a fully functional, cross Transco system to track and manage queries. This resulted in a cost of £5.8m being identified. The Review Group agreed that the estimated cost of £5.8m did not represent a sound investment for Transco or the industry as a whole. However, the Review Group did endorse Transco's decision to develop and implement an interim QMS, to provide a common query database for use by Meter Reading and Customer Portfolio Management.

From these base principles and recommendations, three key work areas were identified for progression.

(i) To define the cross Transco query management business processes that would provide an effective and efficient Query Management process which fully supported the previously defined Query Management principles. As well as providing the basis for the adoption of common and good practice across Transco, this work also provided the foundation for the development of Standards of Service document; see (iii).

(ii) To define the management information that should be shared between Transco and its customers to facilitate the management of queries. A key factor was an agreement to a consistent approach to monitoring query status, allowing more

effective reconciliation of shipper and Transco understanding of the status of queries.

(iii) To define reasonable and balance Standards of Service applicable to both Transco and its customers in the management of queries.

April 1998 - October 1999

Taking the three work areas identified above, the Review Group continued beyond April 1998, with a new chair and an additional commitment from Transco to establish and work to a set of agreed industry standards with effect from August 1998. The period between April to August was spent agreeing on the appropriate business rules and performance targets.

In August 1998 the Review Group approved the implementation of an interim Standards of Service document entitled, "Interim Standards of Service for the management of Shipper Operational queries".

4.0 Standards of Service Document

Building on the concept of an end to end process, the SoS document identified (as described below in Figure 1) the key stages during query resolution. This model formed the basis of the SoS and a set of principles, business rules and performance targets were developed to support it.
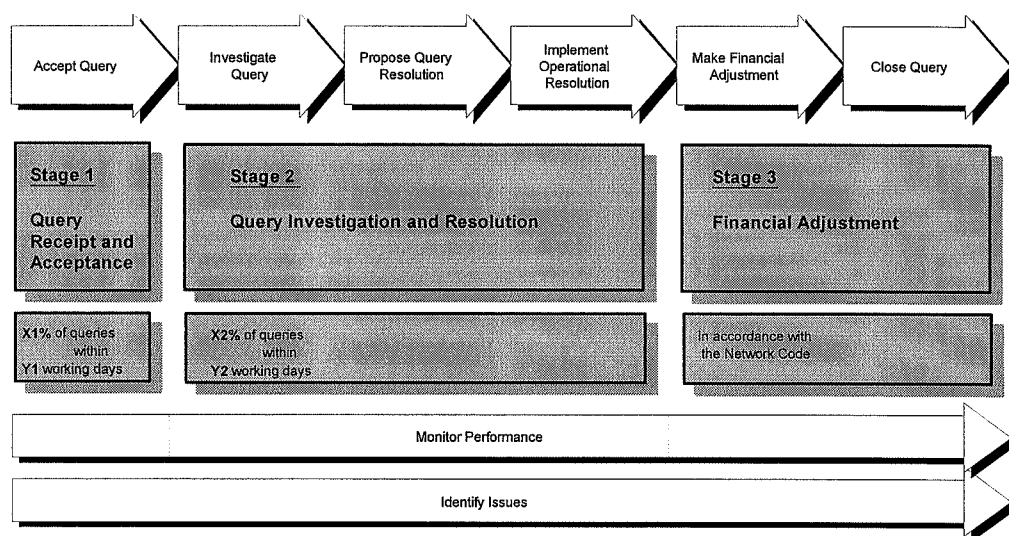

| Accept Query | Investigate Query | Propose Query Resolution | Implement Operational Resolution | Make Financial Adjustment | Close Query |

| Stage 1 | Stage 2 | Stage 3 |
| Query Receipt and Acceptance | Query Investigation and Resolution | Financial Adjustment |

| X1% of queries within Y1 working days | X2% of queries within Y2 working days | In accordance with the Network Code |

Monitor Performance

Identify Issues

Figure 1

V:\TEAM_CHANGE\MODPROPS\101-125\0122R\0122Review Group Report
Review Group Closure Report: November Modification Panel

The document has three key sections:

1) *Principles and Business Rules* - this detailed the rules to be used by both Shippers and Transco.

2) *The Standard of Service* - detailed the performance targets Transco are tasked with achieving.

3) *Performance monitoring* - the reports to be produced in support of the SoS.

The principle achievement of the SoS, was that it defined a regime with which parties were able to consistently measure and communicate actual against target performance for the resolution of queries.

A further principle running through the document and the recommendations emanating from the Review Group, was that Query Management business rules must be able to react swiftly to industry requirements. In view of this, amendments that could have been made to the Network Code were deemed unnecessary. Some Review Group members expressed concern that Transco's commitment to improve its service standards would be best met by including the business rules within the Network Code. In light of SoS performance, Review Group consensus has been that the approach adopted has met the requirements.

Development of the SoS Document Post August 1998

To allow for the implementation of a SoS document effective from August 1998, initial standards and measurements applied solely to operational queries and specifically excluded invoice queries. The interim SoS was reviewed in February 1999 with a further challenge in July 1999. These reviews increased the service targets, together with better defined and developed business rules. For example, the categorization of queries has resulted in twenty two separate query categories as detailed in Appendix 1. These are all contained in the most recent publication, "Transco Standards of Service for the management of Shipper Operational and Invoice queries (effective 1 September 1999 - 29 February 2000)".

Invoice queries and financial adjustment service standards were included in the document with effect from March 1999. These were also reviewed in tandem with that described above. This has established a six monthly review cycle, with the next planned for January 2000, and will be conducted through specific workshops with interested parties.

5.0 Performance against SoS

Transco is currently tasked with achieving the following standards:

Operational Queries

Stage 1 Submission and receipt of Operational Queries

95% of all queries encompassed within the SoS that have been received by Transco will either be accepted or rejected within three business days.

95% of all queries encompassed within the SoS that have been received in an approved electronic format by Transco will either be accepted or rejected within one business day.

Stage 2 Query Investigation and Resolution.

50% of all queries that have been received by Transco will be investigated and resolved within 10 business days.

90% of all queries that have been received by Transco will be investigated and resolved within 20 business days.

95% of all queries that have been received by Transco will be investigated and resolved within 30 business days.

99% of all queries that have been received by Transco will be investigated and resolved within 40 business days.

Invoicing Queries

Stage 1 Query Receipt and acceptance of invoice queries

80% of all invoice queries, accepted or rejected in 3 business days.

100% of all invoice queries, accepted or rejected in 5 business days.

Stage 2 Query Investigation and Resolution

90% investigated and resolved within 23 business days

95% investigated and resolved within 33 business days

99% investigated and resolved within 43 business days

Transco to resolve or reject 100% of queries on a reasonable endeavors basis.

Stage 3 Financial Adjustment

As per Network Code (S4.4).

Performance against the standards has shown an overall improvement since measurements commenced in August 1998 (as demonstrated in the trend graphs detailed in Appendix 2).

To build on this, the most significant potential improvement in performance is targeted for industry implementation in the third quarter of 2000. Transco's QMP (Query Management

Programme) has had close links with RG0122. It aims to deliver a significantly improved query management system, for example, it aims to reduce the requirement for Shipper/Transco contact, reduce the level and complexity of data required to raise queries and, to reduce paper based communication to a bare minimum. Progress towards these QMP initiatives will be made via existing industry meetings or ad hoc workshops.

In the thirty months since it first met, RG0122 has satisfied the Terms of Reference set out in 1997. A clearly understood set of business rules and processes have been agreed, and articulated in the SoS which are open to challenge and amendment via stated industry workgroups and through six monthly reviews.

6.0 Recommendation

Following the RG122 meeting on 28 September 1999, broad consensus was reached with respect to the recommendation to formally close Review Group 0122 and migrate current activities to Invoicing & Adjustment and SPA/Metering workstreams, together with the CPM Operational forum. This report now seeks the Modification panels support with respect to this recommendation, in the secure knowledge that all initiatives captured since 1997 have been either successfully managed to completion or advanced to a level where other industry meetings are equally capable of progressing specific issues in the context of an overall industry Query Management Standard of Service regime.

Query Classification	Generic Definition	iQMS Codes
Address Amendment Request	*Any query challenging the address*	- ADD
	Any query challenging the postcode	- PAM
	Any query challenging the exit zone details held on SPA for a specific site	- EXT
Aggregation & Deaggregation Queries	*A challenge to a rejected aggregation*	- AGG
	A challenge to a rejected deaggregation	- DAG
	A query dealing with an aggregation across the database partitions	- PAG
Load Details	*A new business request to amend AQ details held on SPA*	- NAQ
	A request to amend load details	- APP
	Any queries challenging the validation of an AQ	- AQQ
Duplicate	*Multiple MPRs created for one meter*	- DUP
Prime & Subs	*Any query disputing the Primary, Sub or Free Standing relationship between meters*	- PRS
M Number Creation	*Request to add a MPR that is not live on SPA*	- MNC
	A MPR awaiting confirmation by the original Shipper	- MCN
Missing Meter	*A MPR with no Meter Serial Number on SPA*	- MIS
SPA Rejection Queries	*Queries challenging the reason for Nomination Rejections*	- NOM
	Confirmation Rejections	- CNQ
Supply Type Issues	*Queries challenging or requests to change the Supply Type of a Supply Point*	- TYP
Isolation Status	*Queries challenging isolation status of a Supply point*	- ISO
Unbundled Assets	*Queries disputing the validity of Unbundled Meter Asset details*	- UMA
	Location details of an Unbundled Meter	- ULC
Supply Point Configuration	*. Queries disputing the validity of a Supply Point's configuration*	- SPC
Previously Submitted Queries	*A Query previously closed by Transco where the resolution is challenged*	- PSQ

Query Classification	Generic Definition	iQMS Codes
Meter Details	*Any query challenging the attributes of a meter or its details e.g. no. of dials, serial numbers etc.*	- MTR
Consumption Dispute	*A challenge to the consumption where the reads are confirmed to be correct.*	- CDQ
Datalogger - NDM	*Queries challenging the Datalogged Read and Asset Data for Non-Daily Metered Sites.*	- DLQ
Faulty Meter	*Report of possible faulty meter.*	- FMQ
Corrector - NDM	*Any NDM Corrector Queries.*	- COR

Query Classification	Generic Definition	iQMS Codes
Correction Factor	*Query challenging the correction factor.*	- CFQ
Meter Read	*Query challenging the validity of a bundled meter reading.*	- MRQ
Previously Submitted Queries (PSQ's)	*A Query previously closed by Transco where the resolution is challenged*	- PSQ
Daily Metered Queries	*Queries challenging the Read and Asset Data for Daily Metered Sites.*	- DMQ