

SPAA Schedule (Draft)  
Procedure for the Management of Vacant Sites  
with an Annual Quantity <73,200kWh

**Introduction**

Uniform Network Code Modification 282 (if approved by the Authority) permits Shippers (Registered Users) to inform the Large Gas Transporters Agent where a premise qualifies as vacant. This document outlines the procedure to be followed where a Supplier has identified that a premise with an Annual Quantity of <73,200kWh qualifies as vacant and what appropriate action should be taken by Suppliers when managing vacant premises.

**High Level Definitions**

	<b>1 Definition</b>
<b>Vacant</b>	Vacant – a premise that has been unoccupied for a minimum time period of 75 calendar days.
<b>Vacant candidate</b>	A premise that has received two notifications from the Meter Read Agent to verify that it is a vacant premise.
<b>Meter Read Agent</b>	The Agent, working on behalf of the Shipper/Supplier who is responsible for obtaining meter readings in behalf of the shipper/Supplier
<b>Vacant Timeframe</b>	No less than 75 and no more than 215 Calendar days since the previous Vacant notification.
<b>Equivalent non contradictory update</b>	Where a Site Visit Check Code is received with the following description "Site Not Occupied" it can enter the Vacant process. and Where a site is already entered in the "Vacant" process and where a Site Visit Check Code is received with the following description: "No access" with comments that support that the site is unoccupied.

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Further explanation of the use of additional Site Visit Check Codes:

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No access – sometimes used by different Meter Reading Agents for a site where 'Site Not Occupied' has been received previously.

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**Entry to the Vacant Process**

A Supplier may identify a site as “Vacant” if it meets all of the following five criteria:

1. NDM SSP must be in the requesting Supplier’s ownership.
2. NDM SSP must be Non Daily Metered Smaller Supply Point.
3. The NDM SSP that the Supplier has identified as Vacant must not be part of a Prime and Sub configuration
4. The Supplier
  - has received from the MRA at least two ‘Notification of Failure to Obtain a Reading’ data flows which are at least 75 calendar days apart and not more than 215 calendar days apart, with the ‘Site Visit Check Code’ data item populated with, ‘Site not Occupied’,  
and
  - has not received any ‘Notification of Failure to Obtain a Reading’ data flows with anything other than “Site not Occupied”;  
andhas not received any advance Meter readings within the period that the NDM SSP has become vacant. With the exception of the following circumstances:
  - Where no read was available at the point of the first notification, then an advance meter reading on the second notification will be valid.
  - Where a reading is processed which relates to a period before the vacant flag was set.If a “Notification of Failure to Obtain a Reading’ is received with a ‘Site Visit Check Code” data item unpopulated, it can be excluded for the purposes of the criterion.
5. The Supplier has made proactive attempts to identify the owner of the property to obtain a Meter reading; proactive attempts could include;
  - Contacting bodies such as estate agents, letting agents, councils or the land registry to find out who the owner is.
  - If the Supplier supplies both gas and electricity, check to see if the same issues are occurring for the electricity supply.
  - When an owner is identified, attempts must then be made to contact them and obtain a reading. The Supplier may have its own way of meeting this criterion.
6. If the owner is already known, the Supplier must make attempts to contact them to arrange a Meter Reading. (E.g Local Authority).

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The Supplier must keep auditable records showing that all of these criteria have been met in order to identify a site as Vacant.

If all the above criteria have been met, but the Supplier has evidence of consumption on the Metering System, the site must not be identified as Vacant.

Where 2 vacant notifications have been received within the timeframe, and in conjunction with the appropriate auditable checks (carried out by the Supplier) and no responsible party can be found, the Supplier may instruct their Shipper to inform the Large Transporter Agent via the appropriate data flow that the NDM SSP qualifies for a “Vacant” status.

Evidence must be available for audit purposes for all sites within the Vacant process

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### Confirmation that a Supply Meter Point Remains Vacant

Where a Supplier has identified a NDM SSP with a “Vacant” status and has instructed their Shipper to inform the Large Transporter Agent via the appropriate data flow, the Supplier must warrant that all of the following criteria have been met to continue treating the site as Vacant:

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1. The Supplier must receive a ‘site not occupied’, or “No access” with comments that support that the site is unoccupied. from the MRA at least once every 215 calendar days

2. The supplier must not have received an update which is contrary to the vacant indicator.

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3. The Supplier must not have received any advance Meter readings for the meter, for the period that the Vacant status has been applied, With the exception of the following circumstances:

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- Where no read was available at the point of the first notification, then an advance meter reading on the second notification will be valid.
- Where a reading is processed which relates to a period before the vacant flag was set.

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4. At least once every 215 calendar days, the Supplier must make further proactive attempts to identify the owner of the property in order to obtain a meter reading or, if the owner is known, then the Supplier must continue to attempt to contact them to arrange a reading. Auditable records must be kept for all attempts to obtain a Meter Reading.

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Following the initial notification of the “Vacant” status to the Large Transporter Agent, it will not be necessary to continue to provide notifications of the “Vacant” status. However this does not preclude the meter inspection obligation or other required activity under the Uniform Network Code rules applicable to the Supply Meter Point.

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The Large Transporter Agent will provide the Registered User with monthly reports of all “Vacant” Supply Points in their ownership. This report will assist the Supplier in the management of vacant sites.

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### Identification that a site no Longer Qualifies for Vacant Treatment

An NDM SSP will no longer qualify for Vacant Treatment if any of the following occur:

1. It has been longer than 215 calendar days since the Supplier has received a Site Visit Check Code data item populated with, ‘Site not Occupied’ or “No access” with comments that support that the site is unoccupied, from the MRA.

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2. The Supplier has not made any proactive attempts to try to find out who the owner of the property is, and to obtain a meter reading in the 215 calendar day period from the receipt of the last Site Visit Check Code data item populated with, ‘Site not Occupied’ or “No access” with comments that support that the site is unoccupied, from the MRA.

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- 3. The Supplier has received a site visit code that is populated with a code that indicates other than a 'Site not Occupied' status.
- 4. The Supplier is aware that there is consumption at the Supply Meter Point, including where the Supplier has found or been informed of the owner of the site and has been able to obtain a Meter reading. This would include where a change of tenancy event had occurred.

5. The Supplier has received, actual advance Meter reading within the period that the NDM SSP has become vacant,

With the exception of the following circumstances:

- Where no read was available at the point of the first notification, then an advance meter reading on the second notification will be valid.
- Where a reading is processed which relates to a period before the vacant flag was set.

6. The Transporter has identified that the NDM SSP is consuming gas, and has notified the shipper/supplier. Upon investigation the supplier agrees that the site is no longer vacant, and removes the Vacant flag.

7.

Where a site increases AQ during the review period, to a point where it would become LSP, the Transporter would remove it from the Vacants process. This would then be subject to Mod 640 Business as Usual processes.

If any of the above occurs, the Supplier must no longer treat the site as Vacant and must inform their Shipper and instruct that the appropriate data flow is sent to the Large Transporter Agent.

### Remedial Action – Supply Meter Points with a “Vacant” Status for >24 months

Where the NDM SSP has been at a status of “Vacant” for a period of >24 months, the Supplier should take appropriate action to arrange for the Supply Meter Point to be isolated and withdrawn.

Where Supply Meter Point has been through the Isolation/Withdrawal process, the “Vacant” process will no longer apply.

### Audit Requirements

#### Retention of Records by Supplier

- The minimum period (5 years) for the retention of records applies to source data as well as the results of processing, where source data is the raw source data (meter reading and associated data in the format originally obtained by the MRA) or output material, produced following input into the

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system, but prior to any processing or amendments. A history of superseded data must be retained.

- These records must contain such cross references as are necessary to allow verification by tracing data through processing, forwards and backwards, conveniently and old software programs and hardware must, where necessary, be retained to enable these records to be accessed.