

User Pays User Group Minutes

Monday 09 February 2009

at

Energy Networks Association, 6th Floor, Dean Bradley House,
52 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Attendees

Tim Davis (Chair)	TD	Joint Office of Gas Transporters
Lorna Dupont (Secretary)	LD	Joint Office of Gas Transporters
Collette Baldwin	CB	E.ON Energy
Dave Ackers	DA	xoserve
David Hayton	DH	RWE npower
Graham Frankland	GF	xoserve
Helen Barratt	HB	xoserve
James Crosland	JC	Corona Energy
Kevin Woollard	KW	British Gas
Lorna Gibb	LG	Scottish Power
Richard Phillips	RP	RWE npower
Sharon Cole	SC	Scottish and Southern Electricity

1.0 Introduction and Status Review

TD welcomed attendees to the meeting.

1.1. Minutes from the previous UBUG Meeting (12 January 2009)

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

1.2. Review of Actions from previous meetings

The outstanding actions from previous meetings were reviewed.

UPUG 0021: Transporters to reconsider signing the User Pays contract and return to next meeting with reasons for their decisions.

Update: The Transporters were not present; no further update. **Action carried forward.**

UPUG 0028: Password resets: xoserve to review the file/form functionality.

Update: Covered under agenda item 5.1. **Action closed.**

UPUG 0051: Consumer Focus – charges for use: RM to confirm charging arrangements in other areas (eg SPA Schedule 23, ECOES, etc).

Update: HB reported that a set number of accounts had been made available free of charge to Consumer Focus, with any extra accounts to be paid for. **Action closed.**

UPUG 0056: xoserve to clarify policy and practice on the recycling of passwords.

Update: GF had investigated but had not reached a conclusion on the perceived recycling of passwords.. **Action carried forward.**

UPUG 0057: xoserve to update the UPUC Terms of Reference to reflect the changes agreed.

Update: Covered under agenda item 2.1. **Action closed.**

UPUG 0058: xoserve to update the UPCEG Terms of Reference to reflect the changes agreed.

Update: Covered under agenda item 2.2. **Action closed.**

UPUG 0059: xoserve to present an overview of the passwords reset process and provide a contact list at the February meeting.

Update: Covered under agenda item 5.1. **Action closed.**

UPUG 0060: IAD Transactional Data – xoserve to share with each company its individual relevant data and identify whether it would be a ‘winner/loser’, under a change to the methodology.

Update: Completed. **Action closed.**

2.0 Review of Terms of Reference

2.1 User Pays User Committee

The Terms of Reference had been updated following the discussion at the last meeting. A comparison table of the key points encapsulated within the UPUC and UPCEG Terms of Reference was presented and discussed.

Rosie McGlynn (RM) had submitted an email prior to the meeting containing various comments which GF had discussed with RM. There appeared to be some concern, echoed by the meeting, that it was unclear where xoserve’s obligations would materially increase via any changes that could be made to the Terms of Reference. GF stated that if there was proposal that xoserve’s obligations were to significantly increase, or there was a possibility that one or more could not then be delivered, xoserve would want to have the ability to formally agree, or prevent, any such change. The process envisaged to effect a change would be to table the item in a User Pays meeting for discussion and to seek agreement/explain reasons why it was not possible to meet the proposed change.

In the interests of clarity and mutual understanding it was agreed that xoserve would change the Terms of Reference wording to specifically reference its obligations under the Terms of reference.

TD asked the meeting if this suggestion was acceptable (subject to seeing actual drafting) and the meeting agreed.

Action UPUG0061: xoserve to produce and circulate revised UPUC Terms of Reference including a list of its perceived obligations (to be circulated by Friday 13/02/09).

Section 6.5

The setting of the trigger level for recalculating voting shares at 2% (ie plus or minus two percentage points) was discussed and agreed; xoserve committed to reporting to the UPUC as circumstances warranted should there be a potentially material change to voting shares.

It was agreed to include further wording at the beginning of this paragraph of the Terms of Reference as follows:

“At the request of any User Pays customer or the User Pays User Committee, if there are any material changes ...”

Action UPUG0062: xoserve to produce a final draft of the UPUC Terms of Reference for approval.

2.2 User Pays Contract Expert Group

The Terms of Reference had been updated following the discussion at the last meeting. There amendments were reviewed and there were no further comments.

Summarising the discussions at 2.1 and 2.2, TD stated that formal adoption of both Terms of Reference should be an objective at the next meeting; to this end xoserve would welcome any further comments as soon as possible so that the documents can be produced for final review and approval.

3.0 User Pays Non-code Contract Update

GF gave an update, and reported that no additional comments had been received. One change had been proposed by xoserve at Section 10, enabling it to seek written confirmation that the relevant committee had approved or agreed a specific document, if at anytime this was unclear to xoserve, and confirming that it would not be in breach of the Framework Agreement should it defer processing a Service Change where it had not received the relevant confirmations.

JC suggested that a timescale end point would be prudent, to avoid potential abuse of this clause as a delay mechanism. This was briefly discussed, with a suggestion that customers should respond within 10 days, and that failure to respond will be deemed as acceptance. Subsequent discussion concluded that it may be simplest if the approval/agreement remained unclear that it be brought to the next meeting of the appropriate body.

It was agreed that xoserve would update the contract to reflect this discussion.

Action UPUG0063: xoserve to send a draft of the two paragraphs (10.1 and 10.2) for immediate review and comments and then update the Contract prior to issue for signing.

It was the intention that the Contract should be signed by parties by the end of February.

4.0 Agency Charging Statement (ACS) Review

GF reported that xoserve had updated the demand and cost forecasts for 2009/10 and had reviewed and revised the ACS. The majority of prices were broadly the

same as this year, with a price reduction to IAD and SARS, and price increases for Telephone Enquiries and E-mail Reports.

It was assumed that Modification Proposal 0213V may be given Authority approval in March and it was the intention to revise the ACS in the April.

TD added that Ofgem had written to the UNC Modification Panel asking if it was happy with the proposed ACS change in respect of Proposal 0192 as the prices in the ACS are different to the indicative costs set out in the Final Modification Report (FMR); HB explained that the FMR charges were always billed as indicative charges and that these have now been finalised.

The forecast costs, demand costs, and prices were then explained and discussed.

It was questioned why the telephone usage had increased against expectations. This was due in part to additional bands being taken up, as some customers were running close to the top of their existing bands. LG also commented that the information item 'Last Supplier ID' is missing on IAD, but this can be obtained using the telephone service. It was probable that this was also contributing to the level of telephone usage. xoserve noted this point.

GF confirmed there was no change proposed to the ACS methodology other than minor rewording. The Must Read position was discussed, with the charges being under review by the Transporters. xoserve had made the Transporters aware of the timeline involved (any changes made by the Transporters will need to dovetail with 01 April) and had stressed that customers were keen to get an early view of any change. Must Read prices had not changed for some while and it was probable that they will go up. CB observed that Shippers now have a better feel for what the market price may be and may be of a mind to challenge a price increase if it appears out of line with market evidence.

A comparison of the revenue forecast between 08/09 and 09/10 was presented; the forecasts for the two periods were very similar, with a 6% return forecast for both periods.

xoserve requested that formal comments on the Review Report and the revised ACS be submitted by Friday 20 February 2009; it would then review the Report and revise the ACS in light of any comments received and this would be sent to Ofgem by 27 February 2009. Ofgem then has 28 days in which to veto the proposed revision to the ACS. Assuming that no veto is forthcoming, the new process will be effective from 01 April 2009.

5.0 Operations Update

5.1 Password Reset Process

In response to Action UPUG 0059, DA, on behalf of xoserve, presented an overview of the passwords reset process. The self service activities were explained and an indication was given as to when to approach the Helpdesk for assistance, and when the User Pays email account should be contacted. xoserve would welcome any suggestions to improve the customer experience.

LG commented that that some of the onscreen text display regarding when to contact an LSO was unclear and added to confusion (the spacing needed attention). DA noted this point.

HB added that xoserve was still receiving requests for actions/activities that were self service and asked whether there was anything else that xoserve could do to communicate the correct process to follow. LG responded that Scottish Power recycled accounts so requests for resets may still be generated; there were still

users who had not logged in since the changes had been effected, so it was probable that requests for resets would stem from these also.

JC had noticed apparent inconsistency in case sensitivities for password and user names on certain screens. DA believed that these fields should not be case sensitive and would investigate further.

Action UPUG0064: xoserve to investigate apparent inconsistencies in respect of case sensitivity.

DH observed that the process may be open to abuse if bulk resets were surreptitiously divided up into lots of 5 or under and sent in over the course of a day; this would add significantly to the administrative burden and adversely affect the turnaround time of D+1 for legitimate requests. Use of the process would be monitored by xoserve, and any cause for concern would be reported on. SC requested that any excessive use by SSE be brought to her attention.

DA added that xoserve was keen to gain in understanding of its customers' end to end processes. An articulation of any problems from persons immediately involved in the processes would be very much welcomed and, if invited to do so, xoserve would be very pleased to visit a customer to discuss problems and resolutions.

5.2 Customer Survey November 2008

xoserve presented the results of the online customer satisfaction survey (carried out every 6 months), and had noted there was a downward trend from 'very satisfied' to 'satisfied'; action plans and a timetable had been put in place to address this swing in customer perception.

The surveys were seen to be valuable tools for xoserve and DA planned to speak to every participant to talk through and address any issues raised.

GF also made reference to the Mavern survey on User Pays and thanked attendees for their participation. A presentation on the report was to be given to xoserve shortly; following which xoserve would return to UPUG and explain any actions that may result from the findings.

5.3 Operational Update

DA gave a presentation on the performance to date. RP suggested that it would be more meaningful if the percentages were also displayed, as this would give a feel for any movement and also enable the attendees to help xoserve address any improvements that could be made.

Action UPUG0065: xoserve to include percentages in the operational performance slides.

Performance in relation to IAD Account Transaction Volumes remained unacceptable and extra resources had been assigned to address this; xoserve will continue to monitor the position.

In response to questions on the disappointing level of performance, HB reported that a meeting at a senior level had taken place in January; part of the problem appeared to be a lack of understanding on the part of the service provider in respect of the amount of activity and its priority, and new processes were being put in place. The service provider had committed to address the backlog and an action plan had been agreed.

TD suggested that monitoring other performance levels, such as 'within 15 days', may provide visibility and comfort that requests were actually being delivered albeit

later than targeted. xoserve agreed to consider the addition of column displaying performance figures.

HB added that xoserve was looking at strategic options for April 2010.

6.0 Any Other Business

None raised.

7.0 Diary Planning for User Pays User Group

7.1 User Pays Contract Expert Group

No further meetings have been arranged.

7.2 User Pays User Committee

Meetings are held at 10:30 on the second Monday monthly, at the ENA Offices, 6th Floor Dean Bradley House, 52 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF. Subject to the Contract being signed, this will be the first formal UPUC meeting under the terms of the Contract.

The following dates have been arranged for 2009:

09 March 2009

06 April 2009 (date brought forward due to Easter Bank Holiday)

11 May 2009

08 June 2009

13 July 2009

10 August 2009

14 September 2009

12 October 2009

09 November 2009

14 December 2009.

Action Table

Action Ref	Meeting Date	Minute Ref	Action	Owner	Status Update
UPUG0021	14/07/08	2.2	Transporters to reconsider signing the User Pays contract and return to next meeting with reasons for their decisions.	All Transporters	Carried forward
UPUG0028	14/07/08	3.2	Password resets: xoserve to review the file/form functionality.	xoserve (AM)	Closed
UPUG0051	17/10/08	7.2	Consumer Focus – charges for use: RM to confirm charging arrangements in other areas (eg SPA Schedule 23, ECOES, etc).	EDF Energy (RM)	Closed
UPUG0056	12/01/09	1.2	xoserve to clarify the policy on the recycling of passwords.	xoserve (GF)	Carried forward
UPUG0057	12/01/09	2.1	xoserve to update the UPUC Terms of Reference to reflect the changes agreed.	xoserve (AM)	Closed
UPUG0058	12/01/09	2.2	xoserve to update the UPCEG Terms of Reference to reflect the changes agreed.	xoserve (AM)	Closed
UPUG0059	12/01/09	5.0	xoserve to present an overview of the passwords reset process and provide a contact list at the February meeting.	xoserve (GF)	Closed
UPUG0060	12/01/09	5.0	IAD Transactional Data – xoserve to share with each company its individual relevant data and identify whether it would be a ‘winner/loser’, under a change to the ACS methodology.	xoserve (GF)	Closed
UPUG0061	09/02/09	2.1	UPUC Terms of Reference - xoserve to produce and circulate a list of its perceived obligations (to be circulated by 13/02/09), and change the wording to specifically reference its obligations under the Terms of Reference.	xoserve (GF)	
UPUG0062	09/02/09	2.1	xoserve to produce a further draft of the UPUC Terms of Reference for approval at the next UPUG meeting.	xoserve (GF) xoserve (GF)	

Action Ref	Meeting Date	Minute Ref	Action	Owner	Status Update
UPUG0063	09/02/09	3	xoserve to send a draft of the two paragraphs (10.1 and 10.2) for immediate review and comments and then update the Contract prior to issue for signing.	xoserve (GF)	
UPUG0064	09/02/09	5.1	xoserve to investigate apparent inconsistencies in respect of IAD username and password case sensitivity in password.	xoserve (DA)	
UPUG0065	09/02/09	5.3	xoserve to include percentages in the operational performance slides.	xoserve (DA)	