

BUSINESS RULES

Introduction of a Process to Manage Vacant SSP Sites

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1 Introduction

This document provides detailed “**Business Rules**” of proposed enduring arrangements to support consultation on Modification Proposal 0282 “**Introduction of a process to manage Vacant sites**”

1.1 Impact of Vacant

- When a site enters the Vacant process, the following charge items will not apply:
 - NCO - National Transmission System Commodity
 - ZCO - LDZ Commodity

For information the shipper/supplier will retain charges for non transportation related areas such as:

- Meter Read Agent Costs
- Meter Rental Charges

The proposed model has been developed following discussions at the Development Work Group.

High Level Definitions

	2 Definition
Vacant	Vacant – a premise that has been unoccupied for a minimum time period of 75 calendar days.
Vacant candidate	A premise that has received one notification from the Meter Read Agent to verify that it is a vacant premise.
Meter Read Agent	The Agent, working on behalf of the shipper/supplier who is responsible for obtaining meter readings in behalf of the shipper/supplier
Vacant Timeframe	No less than 75 and no more than 215 Calendar days since the previous Vacant notification.

Entry to the Vacant Process

1. Supply point must be in the requesting shipper's ownership and the meter point must be at a status of live.
2. Supply point must be NDM SSP.
3. The shipper/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 contrary data, and has not received any advance Meter readings.
4. The supplier/shipper 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 shipper/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 shipper/supplier may have its own way of meeting this criterion.
5. If the owner is already known, the shipper/supplier must make attempts to contact them to arrange a Meter Reading. (e.g Local Authority).
6. The shipper/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 shipper/supplier has evidence of consumption on the Metering System, the site must not be identified as Vacant.

Start Date for Vacant

The supplier/shipper should identify the start date for Vacant period as the earlier of the following:

1. The date in last 'site not occupied' flow received from the MRA, at the point that the validation criteria has been met for progression.
 2. The customer has closed an account, the last consumption date for that customer provided that:
 - a) this is no more that 215 calendar days before the date of the first 'site not occupied' update from the MRA
 - b) No contrary site visit code has been received from the MRA between the customer's last consumption date and the first 'site not occupied' update from the MRA.
 - c) No advancing meter readings have been received between the customer's last consumption date and the first 'site not occupied' update from the MRA.
 - d) Meter reading from the customer is on the last consumption date.
- *Where 2 vacant notifications have been received within the timeframe, and in conjunction with the appropriate auditable checks (carried out by the shipper/supplier) no responsible party can be found, a flag must be sent to the Large Gas transporter Agent to notify of the Vacant status.*
 - *At the point that xoserve update the Vacant flag on their system, Commodity charges will be removed from invoicing, at a period to be confirmed by xoserve to be feasible, in terms of system constraints.*
 - *Where a site is in the vacant process it will not be included in the following processes:*
 - AQ Review*
 - For RBD, AQ's for vacant sites should not be included in the determination of Market Share.*
 - Evidence must be available for audit purposes for all sites within the Vacant process

Confirmation that a supply point remains vacant

Where a shipper/supplier has identified a supply point as Vacant and has instructed xoserve (to either reduce AQ to 1 or remove from commodity charging regime), the shipper/supplier must warrant that all of the following criteria have been met to continue treating the site as Vacant:

- The Shipper/supplier must receive a 'site not occupied' update from the MRA at least once every 215 calendar days
- The shipper/supplier must not have received an update which is contrary to the vacant indicator (i.e. Unsafe Premises, Call not made on routine visit, No access, Unable to gain access due to insufficient address details).
- The shipper/supplier must not have received any advance Meter readings for the meter.
- At least once every 215 calendar days, the shipper/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 shipper/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.

Identification that a site no Longer Qualifies for Vacant Treatment.

A supply point will no longer qualify for Vacant Treatment if any of the following occur:

- It has been longer than 215 calendar days since the shipper/supplier has received a Site Visit Check Code data item populated with, 'Site not Occupied' from the MRA.
- The shipper/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' from the MRA.
- The shipper/supplier has received a site visit code that is populated with a code that indicates other than a 'Site not occupied' status.
- The shipper/supplier is aware that there is consumption at the supply point, including where the shipper/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.
- The shipper/supplier has an actual advance Meter reading. In this scenario, the shipper/supplier would have passed this information to xoserve who would remove from the Vacant process via their internal validation.

If any of the above occurs, the shipper/supplier must no longer treat the site as Vacant and must notify to xoserve to update.

End Date for the Vacant Period.

If the shipper/supplier identifies that the supply point no longer qualifies for Vacant treatment it should determine the end date of the Vacant period as follows:

- Where there has been a change of tenancy, then the date of the change of tenancy should be used as the end date for the Vacant period;
- Where a Meter reading has been obtained, the day before the date that the Meter reading was obtained should be used as the end date for the Vacant period.
- Where no Meter reading that shows a consumption advance has been obtained (i.e. the shipper/supplier has received a Site visit check code that is other than 'site not occupied') then the date of this update will be used as the end date for the Vacant period.
- Where the supply point has been at a status of Vacant for a period of >24 months within the ownership of one shipper/supplier, the site will be removed from the Vacant process, and charges will recommence (this may not be a 'one of' event, as the supply point may in theory be vacant for the period of 24 months, become occupied at 25 months, and 12 months become vacant again).
- Where supply point has been through the Isolation/Withdrawal process the Vacant process will no longer apply and all charges will cease.
- When another shipper/supplier requests ownership of the supply point. In this instance for SSP sites the AQ will revert to previous or Commodity charges will be reinstated at the effective confirmation date.

Audit Requirements

Retention of Records by shipper/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 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.

