

Enrolment and Adoption

Role of the Data and Communications Company

The Data and Communications Company (DCC) is responsible for establishing and managing the infrastructure necessary to support the main roll out of millions of smart electricity and gas meters to homes and small non-domestic properties across Great Britain. It forms part of the Government's wider Smart Metering Implementation Programme.

Funded by the energy industry, the infrastructure will connect smart meters to the business systems of energy suppliers, network operators and other authorised service users. It offers a secure, consistent service and avoids the complexity and duplicated costs of energy suppliers installing their own networks.

The network will transform how energy is supplied and give consumers greater control over their energy use.

Background

DCC is working towards 'DCC Live' when its infrastructure to support smart meters based on Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification version 2 (SMETS2) will be available. SMETS2 is a standard developed by the Government.

Some energy suppliers are already installing smart meters in advance of DCC Live. Many of these are based on an earlier technical specification, the Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification (SMETS1).

Because energy suppliers are installing SMETS1 meters before the DCC infrastructure is available, each energy supplier has set up their own individual data communications arrangements in order to operate SMETS1 meters.

This means that when a customer with a SMETS1 meter switches energy supplier, the meter may not continue to work as a smart meter, depending on the data communications arrangements the new energy supplier has in place. Where the new energy supplier cannot operate the meter in 'smart' mode, it will operate like a traditional meter. Customers in this position will be no worse off than those with traditional meters.

While energy suppliers can continue to roll out SMETS1 meters following DCC Live, the Government has set an end date of August 2017 after which these meter installations will no longer count towards energy suppliers'

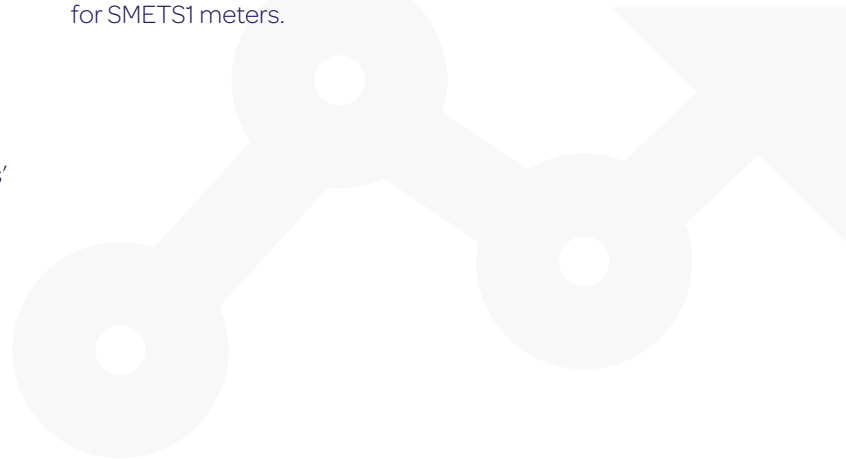
rollout targets. SMETS1 meters will eventually form a small percentage of the total population of smart meters that will be rolled out across Great Britain, the vast majority being SMETS2 meters.

What is Enrolment and Adoption?

The Government has asked DCC to consider how to 'enrol' SMETS1 meters into its infrastructure.

This would allow energy suppliers and other authorised parties to communicate with both SMETS2 and SMETS1 meters via the DCC network. So, a customer with a SMETS1 meter who changes their energy supplier would continue to receive a smart service. The new energy supplier would be able to communicate with the smart meter in the same way as the old energy supplier.

Adoption of SMETS1 meters take place when the contracts that energy suppliers have already established to communicate with these meters are transferred to DCC. Adopting the contracts is just one of the options that DCC could consider in order to provide a common infrastructure for SMETS1 meters.



Next steps

DCC started the process of enrolment and adoption by issuing an invitation to energy suppliers. This asks for details about SMETS1 meters that energy suppliers wish DCC to consider as part of its assessment.

Following this invitation period, DCC is carrying out a significant piece of work to analyse how it could provide a common infrastructure for the SMETS1 meters put forward by energy suppliers. This will take the form of a feasibility report which will set out the feasibility, costs and risks of different options for providing this infrastructure. DCC will consult on the report before submitting it to the Secretary of State who will direct DCC to proceed with one or more options. DCC will publish its timetable for producing and consulting on the feasibility report after reviewing energy suppliers' responses to the invitation.

After receiving a direction from the Secretary of State, DCC will draft and consult on changes to the regulatory framework, specifically the Smart Energy Code, to allow DCC to deliver the chosen option or options. Once these changes have been made, DCC will implement the chosen solution.

Timescales for implementing an infrastructure solution for SMETS1 meters will depend on the nature of the chosen solution. DCC will set out its proposed implementation approach and timescales in its consultation on the feasibility report.

Because there is a significant amount of work for DCC to do, there will not be a common infrastructure for SMETS1 meters at the time of DCC Live which supports SMETS2 meters.

To ensure that DCC's work on the enrolment and adoption of SMETS1 meters does not distract from the delivery of the SMETS2 solution, DCC is establishing a separate project team to carry out this work.

For more information

Please contact the DCC Enrolment and Adoption team at contact@smartdcc.co.uk for further information.

August 2015

www.smartdcc.co.uk

