

# Consultation

## Post-implementation temporary maintenance schedule review

<b>Consultation opens: 16 November 2017</b>
<b>Consultation closes: 29 November 2017</b>

**Date:** 14 November 2017

**Classification:** DCC Public

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## Background

On 19 August 2016 Smart DCC Ltd (DCC) consulted with Parties to the Smart Energy Code (SEC) on its proposal to implement a temporary maintenance schedule in place of the SEC provisions relating to Planned Maintenance for a limited period<sup>1</sup>. These arrangements were intended to address concerns raised by some SEC Parties regarding how DCC would manage the unpredictable volume of potential issues which may arise following DCC Live. With broad support from SEC Parties and with the agreement of the SEC Panel, DCC has been using the temporary maintenance schedule since DCC Services went live on 8 November 2016.

DCC carried out an initial review of the maintenance schedule in April 2017 and consulted with SEC Parties in order to understand how the arrangements had been impacting Users and Registration Data Providers (RDPs), and how the maintenance schedule could be improved<sup>2</sup>. This resulted in some changes to the arrangements to bring them more closely into alignment with the provisions of SEC H8.3 (Planned Maintenance). The maintenance schedule was extended to the end of August 2017.

DCC carried out a further review and consultation<sup>3</sup> during August 2017 and was granted SEC Panel approval to extend the arrangements until the end of November 2017. As the arrangements agreed with the SEC Panel are due to expire shortly, DCC has carried out another review. The findings of this review indicate that the number of unforeseen issues which require rapid resolution has not decreased in line with expectations, and we have concluded that it is necessary to extend the maintenance schedule for a further period.

DCC is keen to avoid delaying fixes which could provide important functionality for Users, whilst also avoiding the need to suspend DCC Services at short notice unnecessarily. We have revised our proposal with the aim of increasing the notice we provide to Users, along with mitigating the impact of any Maintenance on both Users and consumers.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.smartdcc.co.uk/media/420055/consultation\\_on\\_post-implementation\\_temporary\\_maintenance\\_schedule\\_\\_\\_suspension\\_of\\_dcc\\_services\\_during\\_bcdr\\_live\\_testing.pdf](https://www.smartdcc.co.uk/media/420055/consultation_on_post-implementation_temporary_maintenance_schedule___suspension_of_dcc_services_during_bcdr_live_testing.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.smartdcc.co.uk/media/421342/review\\_of\\_post-implementation\\_temporary\\_maintenance\\_schedule.pdf](https://www.smartdcc.co.uk/media/421342/review_of_post-implementation_temporary_maintenance_schedule.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.smartdcc.co.uk/media/437868/consultation\\_on\\_august\\_2017\\_review\\_of\\_the\\_temporary\\_maintenance\\_schedule.pdf](https://www.smartdcc.co.uk/media/437868/consultation_on_august_2017_review_of_the_temporary_maintenance_schedule.pdf)

## Proposal

DCC is proposing that the maintenance schedule is extended to 30 June 2018. We are considering adopting a phased approach which would involve incrementally increasing the amount of notice we provide to Users, whilst also reducing the total amount of Maintenance time permitted each month. The intention is that once we reach 30 June, the maintenance schedule will be fully aligned with the requirements in the SEC.

In addition to this, DCC has received feedback from Users and RDPs which indicates that it may be beneficial to change the requirements under H8.3 in order to reduce the impact on Users and consumers. This could be done by establishing different Planned Maintenance regimes for different DCC Services, for example by increasing the restrictions in relation to key DCC Services. DCC intends to carry out a review of the current arrangements and conduct a trial as part of the phased approach described above, with the intention of raising a Modification Proposal if the trial is successful.

The details of the maintenance arrangements and additional activities that DCC is proposing for each phase are provided below. The changes to the maintenance schedule are made in comparison to the current arrangements, which are summarised in Annex 1:

	<b>Proposed changes to the maintenance schedule</b>	<b>Additional activity</b>
<b>Phase 1</b>  1 December 2017 – 31 March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notice period increases from five Working Days to ten Working Days.</li> <li>▪ Friday maintenance window removed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DCC to review and consult on how best to restrict Maintenance on critical infrastructure (the 'motorway') to an optimum time for Users.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2</b>  1 April 2018 – 30 June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notice period increases from 10 Working Days to 20 Working Days.</li> <li>▪ The maximum maintenance time permitted each month is reduced from 18 hours to 12 hours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DCC to trial any improvements identified under Phase 1.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 3</b>  1 July 2018 Onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notice period increases to 20 Working Days in advance of the month in which the Maintenance is due to take place.</li> <li>▪ The maximum maintenance time permitted is reduced from 12 hours to 6 hours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DCC to raise a SEC Modification Proposal if the trial under Phase 2 is successful.</li> </ul>

**Q1**

**Do you agree that the temporary maintenance schedule should be extended until June 2017? If you do not agree, please set out your reasons.**

**Q2**

**Do you agree with the phased approach proposed by DCC? If you do not agree, please specify which aspects you disagree with and set out your reasons.**

The table below provides details of the proposed maintenance schedule during each phase:

	<b>Current arrangements</b>	<b>Phase 1</b>	<b>Phase 2</b>	<b>Phase 3 (aligned with the SEC)</b>
Maximum Maintenance time each month	18 hours	18 hours	12 hours	6 hours
Amount of notice provided	5 Working Days	10 Working Days	20 Working Days	20 Working Days prior to the month in which the Maintenance is due to take place
Days when Maintenance may take place	Tuesday (or Friday if absolutely necessary)	Tuesday	Tuesday	Not specified
Number of Maintenance windows each week	1	1	1	Not specified
Maximum Duration of each maintenance window	6 hours	6 hours	6 hours	<6 hours

	Current arrangements	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3 (aligned with the SEC)
Earliest maintenance window start time	20:00	20:00	20:00	20:00
Latest maintenance window end time	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00

**Q3**

**Do you agree with the details of each phase proposed by DCC? If you do not agree, please specify which aspects you disagree with and set out your reasons.**

## Consultation questions

1. *Do you agree that the temporary maintenance schedule should be extended until June 2017? If you do not agree, please set out your reasons.*
2. *Do you agree with the phased approach proposed by DCC? If you do not agree, please specify which aspects you disagree with and set out your reasons.*
3. *Do you agree with the details of each phase proposed by DCC? If you do not agree, please specify which aspects you disagree with and set out your reasons.*

## How to respond

Please provide responses by 17:00 29 November 2017 to DCC at [contact@smartdcc.co.uk](mailto:contact@smartdcc.co.uk). If you have any questions about the consultation documents, please contact [contact@smartdcc.co.uk](mailto:contact@smartdcc.co.uk).

Consultation responses may be published on DCC's website. Furthermore, DCC may refer to responses in its consultation conclusions, which will appear on DCC's website. Please state whether all, or any part, of your consultation response is confidential. Please note that responses may be made available to the SEC Panel.

## Annex 1 – current maintenance schedule

The details of the current arrangements are:

- Instead of the maximum time allowed for Planned Maintenance being six hours each month, DCC shall be permitted a maximum of eighteen hours of outage time each month until November 2017.
- These eighteen hours of outage time will be allocated to a single maintenance window each week. Each window will be no longer than six hours in duration.
- Each window will commence no earlier than 20:00 every Tuesday (or Friday only where absolutely necessary) and will end no later than 08:00 the following day.
- DCC shall test each fix in the Pre-Integration Testing (PIT) and Systems Integration Testing (SIT) test environments in sequence. If a need is identified for Users or RDPs to participate in testing they will be invited to undertake testing in the User Integration Testing (UIT) environment prior to the fix being implemented in live DCC Systems.
- DCC shall undertake an assessment of the need to make use of a maintenance window and will notify Users, RDPs and the TABASC five Working Days in advance as to whether a window is to be used or not. The notice will provide the time that any suspension to DCC Services will commence and cease, along with information regarding the nature of any work being carried out.
- Whenever the nature of a fix impairs DCC's ability to queue and manage communications during an outage, DCC will also notify users five Working Days in advance of that maintenance window and will request that Users do not send or trigger any communications to DCC Systems for the duration of the outage. DCC will allow all communications sent prior to the start of the outage to pass through DCC Systems before suspending DCC Services. If the Communications Hub loses its connection with DCC Systems, Alerts will be queued within the Communications Hub and will be sent once DCC Services are restored.
- Once DCC services are restored, communications will be processed on a 'first received first processed' basis with no priority being given to any particular type of request.
- If a window and contingency time does not provide sufficient time for work to be completed and DCC extends the duration of the window in order to complete the work, the extension will be treated as Unplanned Maintenance and Parties, RDPs and the TABASC will be informed in accordance with the provisions under H8.6 and H8.7 of the SEC. Such extensions will only be used when DCC decides (and can justify) that completing the work is less disruptive to Users and RDPs than any alternative course of action.