



# Communication Services Availability Statement

## SMETS1 VMO2 Extension

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# 1. Executive Summary

1. DCC is consulting on a proposed update to the Communication Services Availability Statement (CSAS) for the “SMETS1 IOC, MOC and FOC” cohort sub-set comprising Devices uniquely dependent on the VMO2 2G WAN. The CSAS currently records 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026 as the date after which DCC will no longer be able to provide communication services to this cohort.
2. There are approximately 6,000 smart metering systems that remain connected to DCC communication services in this cohort, including around 360 operating in prepayment mode. Vodafone has confirmed an unexpected extension of access to its VMO2 2G Inbound Roaming service until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026 at no additional cost, enabling DCC to continue communication services for this cohort during that period if it elects to do so. This extension should not be taken as an indication that other CSAS communication end dates will be extended.
3. DCC is seeking Parties' views on two options. Option one is to decline the full extension and set a revised communication end date. Option two is to retain services to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026 and amend the CSAS end date to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2027.
4. DCC will consider all consultation responses before formally amending the CSAS and will follow a substantive majority position clearly supported by Supplier Parties. An updated CSAS will be notified to Parties as soon as possible after the consultation closes.
5. This consultation closes at 17:00 on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2026, and responses should be sent to [consultations@smartdcc.co.uk](mailto:consultations@smartdcc.co.uk).

## 2. Introduction

6. The Data Communications Company (DCC) is Britain's digital energy spine, supporting the transformation of the energy system. DCC is licensed by the Government and regulated by the energy regulator Ofgem to connect smart meters in homes and small businesses across Great Britain to a single Secure, digital network. DCC supports the roll-out and operation of second-generation (SMETS2) smart meters, as well as the operation of existing first-generation (SMETS1) meters on our network.

### 2.1. Communication Services Availability Statement

7. Licence Conditions (LC) 17.33A to E of the DCC1 Smart Meter Communication Licence require DCC to produce and publish the Communication Services Availability Statement (CSAS). The obligation was designated in May 2026 by the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (the Department) in recognition of evolving communication technologies where the provision older generation communication is due to end.
8. The CSAS identifies cohorts of SMETS1 and 2/3G smart metering systems to which DCC provides communication services, and for each cohort an end date from which DCC will no longer be able to provide those communication services.
9. Following Industry engagement, submission to the Department and their non-objection, we published version one of the CSAS in May 2026<sup>1</sup>.
10. LC 17.33D obligates DCC to ensure the CSAS remains up to date subject to submission to the Department and receipt of their non-objection. DCC is now aware that the end date of communication for one of the cohorts can be extended.

### 2.2. Proposed VMO2 extension

11. For the cohort "SMETS1 IOC, MOC and FOC" and cohort sub-set "Devices uniquely dependent on VMO2 2G WAN", the end date after which DCC will no longer be able to provide communication services is 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026.
12. There are currently ~6,000 smart metering systems in this cohort, of which ~ 360 operate in prepayment mode.
13. DCC has been provided with an unexpected extension to communication services for these smart installations up to the end of 2026 at no additional cost. In recognition that there are smart metering systems that remain to be exchanged in the impacted cohort DCC continues to provide communication services beyond the CSAS end date.

### 2.3. Consultation Areas

14. We consider that the views of Parties are key before formalising any extension to the CSAS communication end date.
15. This consultation is seeking feedback from Parties to allow a considered approach to amending the end of communication services to be taken.
16. Given the relatively low volume of smart metering systems in the cohort, we consider that the implications and focus are primarily related to the consumer impact of such a change, and as such we are most interested in the views of Supplier Parties and those of consumer groups.

<sup>1</sup> [Smart Meter Communication Licence & Regulation | Smart DCC](#)

17. Any SEC Party is welcome to respond to this consultation, and their views will be considered.

## 2.4. Consultation closure

18. We welcome feedback from Parties on these proposals. This consultation closes at 17:00 27<sup>th</sup> October 2026, and responses should be sent to [consultations@smartdcc.co.uk](mailto:consultations@smartdcc.co.uk).

## 3. Offered extension to SMETS1 VMO2 2G WAN cohort

19. For the cohort “SMETS1 IOC, MOC and FOC” and cohort sub-set “Devices uniquely dependent on VMO2 2G WAN”, the end date after which DCC will no longer be able to provide communication services is 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026.
20. There are currently ~6,000 smart metering systems in this cohort, of which ~ 360 operate in prepayment mode.
21. For this cohort of meters, the DCC Service Provider for communications is Vodafone who has its own agreement with VMO2 for Inbound Roaming services, through which this cohort connects to DCC Services.
22. In late September, as a result of commercial arrangements between Mobile Network Operators that are outside of DCC’s influence, Vodafone has confirmed that it has extended access to its VMO2 2G Inbound Roaming service until 31st December 2026 for all of its IoT customers at no additional cost. Vodafone is therefore able to continue supporting the service during this period should DCC elect to do so.
23. There are no additional costs for this extended communication service.
24. We would also like to stress that this unexpected extension should not be viewed as an indication that other communication end dates will be extended in the future and consider that Parties should continue to plan their own activities based on the communication end dates published in the CSAS.

### 3.1. Implications of extended communication services

25. Extending communication services to this cohort would see those consumers continue to receive smart services, including the ability to remotely top up their prepayment meters, up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026.
26. We are aware that such a late change in the provision of communication services does not provide the notification that Parties might need to make changes to their plans for meter exchanges and communication with consumers.
27. Our understanding of similar changes, and from engagement with Parties related to extension to communications related to Radio Teleswitch Meters and Out of Region Communications Hubs, is that changing end dates can cause confusion amongst consumers and result in their disengagement with communications.
28. In addition, the provision of communication services up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026 would see the loss of smart services during the winter months, which may be particularly felt by those consumers on prepayment arrangements, as highlighted during the development of SEC MP308<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> [Out of Region Communications Hubs - Smart Energy Code](#)

## 3.2. Options for extension

29. DCC has chosen to retain communication services to these Devices until the input of Parties has been formally provided. We consider that there are two options Parties should consider in relation to changes in communication service end date for this cohort.

### 3.2.1. Option one

30. Option one is to decline the extension of communication services up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026 and amend the CSAS to reflect an earlier date, set shortly after this consultation conclusion and the notification of an updated CSAS.
31. The implications of this approach would be:
- a. Consumers losing their smart functionality including the ability to top up remotely earlier than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026
  - b. More closely aligns to published CSAS and consumer engagement
  - c. Does not require Supplier Party replanning of their replacement / upgrade programme
  - d. No additional cost to DCC

#### Question One

Should option one be progressed is there anything that should be considered when removing communication or setting a communication end date? Do you consider that the communication should be removed immediately or should a notice period be applied? What would you deem to be an appropriate period between notification of an amended CSAS and communication ending for this cohort? Please give a rationale for your response.

### 3.2.1. Option two

32. Option two would be the acceptance of the full extension of communication services up to and including 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026 and implement an amended CSAS end of communication service date to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2027.
33. The implications of this approach would be:
- a. Consumers retaining their smart services including the ability to remotely top up their credit up to and including 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026
  - b. Consumers losing their smart functionality and ability to remotely top up during the winter months
  - c. Does not align to published CSAS and consumer engagement and risks consumer disengagement
  - d. May requires Parties to replan their replacement / upgrade programme
  - e. No additional cost to DCC

#### Question Two

Should option two be progressed is there anything that should be considered beyond the points highlighted above? Please give a rationale for your response.

### Question Three

Which option would you prefer DCC to proceed with? Please give a rationale for your response.

#### 3.2.1. Future considerations

34. DCC understands that unexpected or late notification of extension to communication end date can be problematic for Parties as they manage their replacement programmes and customer communications.
35. While we don't expect any future changes, DCC intends to work closely with Service Providers to ensure, as much as possible, that such late notice is not repeated in the future. Such extensions are outside of DCC control should Mobile Network Operators change their plans. DCC will engage Parties as soon as possible where we become aware of possible extensions in the availability of communications.
36. There is no clear answer as to the best approach should future extensions be offered, and decisions may be influenced by the timing of the notification of extension, the end date of the extension offer and the volume of consumers remaining in the meter cohort.

### Question Four

Where an extension to communication services is offered at late notice, should DCC accept that extension as a matter of principle? Or should such extensions be treated on a case-by-case basis? Is there anything else that should be considered if an extension is offered in the future?

## 4. Next Steps

37. DCC will review and consider all responses to this consultation before seeking to formally amend the CSAS. Should DCC receive a substantive majority response from Supplier Parties that clearly support one option we will progress to amend the CSAS to align to that majority position.
38. In the event of a split opinion amongst respondents to this consultation, DCCs default position would be to implement option one.
39. This would ensure the best alignment between service provision and consumer communications, as well as alignment to Supplier exchange programmes. This approach would also protect those vulnerable and prepayment consumers from the loss of their ability to remotely top up their meter during the winter months.
40. We will work to ensure that an updated CSAS is notified to Parties as soon as possible following consultation closure.

### Question Five

Do you have any further comments?

## 5. How to Respond

41. Please provide responses by 1700 on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2026 to DCC at [consultations@smartdcc.co.uk](mailto:consultations@smartdcc.co.uk).
42. Consultation responses may be published on our website [www.smartdcc.co.uk](http://www.smartdcc.co.uk). Please state clearly in writing whether you want all or any part, of your consultation to be treated as confidential. It would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. Please note that responses in their entirety (including any text marked confidential) may be made available to The Department and the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority (the Authority). Information provided to The Department or the Authority, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information legislation (primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). If The Department or the Authority receive a request for disclosure of the information we/they will take full account of your explanation (to the extent provided to them), but we/they cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded by us as a confidentiality request.
43. If you have any questions about the consultation documents, please contact DCC via [consultations@smartdcc.co.uk](mailto:consultations@smartdcc.co.uk).