Future Service Management

DCC conclusions on the revised delivery plan

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1.   Background and context

1.   The purpose of this document is to conclude on the Data Communication Company's (DCC's) recent consultation on the revised plan for the delivery of the Future Service Management (FSM) Programme and a revised designation date for the enduring regulatory changes required to deliver the FSM solution.[1]

2.   DCC was directed by the Secretary of State under Condition 13B of the Smart Meter Communication Licence (LC13B) on 18 December 2024 to produce a new plan for the delivery of the FSM arrangements.[2] This plan needed to include delivery milestones for any DCC activities that may impact on or require input from Smart Energy Code (SEC) Parties or the industry. DCC is required to submit its revised plan to the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) (the Department) following appropriate consultation with SEC Parties and the SEC Panel. This document forms our submission of this revised plan.

3.   DCC has also previously consulted on the transitional and enduring regulatory changes required to support the delivery of the FSM solution.[3] As part of this, DCC consulted on its proposed designation date for the enduring changes, which was aligned with the original planned Go-Live date. The enduring SEC changes need to be designated on the Go-Live date, and so the designation date for these need to be aligned to the revised Go-Live date. This document forms our conclusions on a revised designation date.

1.1.   The FSM Programme

4.   The DCC Service Management System (DSMS) is a critical part of DCC's infrastructure, used to track and resolve issues across the smart metering network. Customers use DSMS to request DCC services, raise incidents, and access reporting and diagnostics information. This system handles a high volume of activity, with around 25,000 separate requests or incidents raised through it each month. The current DSMS service is supported under the existing Data Service Provider (DSP) contract.[4] However, the tool on which the DSMS is currently built is now coming to the end of its life and a new solution is required to mitigate service and security risks to the smart meter network.

5.   The FSM Programme was initiated in June 2023 to competitively procure and implement a replacement tool ahead of the new DSP service commencing in 2028. The scope of this programme is to:

- Replace the existing scope of DSMS including the Self Service Interface (SSI) and the Self Service Management Interface (SSMI);

- Replace the underlying Service Management tool which is used by the DCC Service Desk; and

- Incorporate Order Management System (OMS) capabilities, including the ordering of 4G Communications Hubs (CHs) and the returns of all Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications 2+ (SMETS2+) CHs.

6.   The current DSMS service is built upon a BMC Remedy platform, which is an IT Service Management tool. The support contract for Remedy is due to expire in October 2025 and DCC has procured and is implementing a new platform as a replacement for the existing DSMS. After it was recommended by all bidders during the procurement exercise, DCC has selected ServiceNow

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[1] FSM consultation on the revised delivery plan | Smart DCC
[2] The FSM arrangements are defined as (a) a new service management and incident management system, (b) a new 4G CHs forecasting and ordering management system and (c) a system to support the returns process for all CHs.
[3] FSM consultation on the transitional and enduring regulatory changes | Smart DCC
[4] The DSP and other services delivered under the data services contract sit right at the heart of the smart metering infrastructure.by providing data services that connect DCC Users (such as Energy Suppliers, Network Operators and Other Users) to Devices at their consumers' premises.

as the platform to be used for FSM. ServiceNow is a flexible cloud-based 'software as a service' tool offering several Service Management aspects either 'out-of-the-box' or via configuration or customisation.

7.   Following engagement with its customers, DCC decided to include the OMS functionality for 4G CHs within scope of the FSM Programme, leveraging the same ServiceNow solution as for Service Management. The 4G OMS will therefore be delivered through the replacement tool at the same time, replacing the existing solution. Any future technologies could also be incorporated into the ServiceNow solution in the same way. DCC has also decided to include the functionality to return all SMETS2+ CHs within the scope of the programme. Please note that the existing OMS solutions for ordering 2G/3G and long-range radio (LRR) CHs will not be replaced within this programme. Each will instead be retired independently in the future as they reach their final dates for ordering the respective products.

8.   In addition to replacing the tool, DCC is intending to retire the use of User Interface (UI) DCC Key Infrastructure (DCCKI) personnel certificates to access the DSMS and replace them with multi-factor authentication (MFA). MFA is a widely used and trusted approach to authenticating the person logging in to a site by requiring them to provide two or more pieces of evidence (for example entering a password, using a security token or authenticator device, or using biometrics). Customers indicated that the DCCKI certificates were not user friendly, and that MFA would both be more secure, and easier for users.

9.   Finally, DCC is developing a simplified process to allow a user to attach an Anomaly Detection Threshold (ADT) file directly within a service request and utilise a workflow to process it. This would remove the current manual process using SharePoint. This process also relates to Quarantine Command Action files and could also be extended to other file upload requests. This will reduce or remove some manual steps and result in an improved user experience.

1.2.   Consultation responses and next steps

10.   The consultation, which ran from 29 April 2025 to 30 May 2025, sought views on:

- The revised plan for the delivery of the FSM Programme, including updates to the existing Milestones, the inclusion of new Milestones relating to testing and to the Live Services Criteria (LSC) decision, and DCC's customer engagement plan; and

- The proposed revised designation date for incorporating the enduring regulatory changes required for the FSM solution into the SEC.

11.   A summary of the comments received and DCC's responses to these are set out in Section 2 of this document. DCC has not made any changes to the plan that it consulted upon, and its conclusions on this are set out in Section 3 of this document.

12.   DCC will submit its conclusions and its revised plan to the Secretary of State on 4 July 2025. Subject to the Department's approval of the plan, DCC will initiate a request with the Department's Implementation Manager's Forum (IMF) to add or amend the relevant Milestones on the Joint Industry Plan (JIP). Additionally, subject to the Department's approval, the enduring regulatory changes are due to be incorporated into the SEC on 21 March 2026 (or within one month thereafter). These changes will be delivered following Direction from the Department using powers under Condition 22 of the Smart Meter Communication Licence and SEC Section X5 'Incorporation of Certain Documents into this Code'.

2. Analysis of responses

13. DCC received three responses to this consultation: one from a Large Supplier, one from a Network Party and one from the SEC Panel.

14. DCC has analysed the feedback provided. This section sets out an overview of the responses received to this consultation and DCC's response.

2.1. Question 1

15. DCC sought views on the proposed revised date for the 'Go-Live' Milestone.

Q1	Do you agree with the proposed revised date for the 'Go-Live' Milestone of 21 March 2026?

Respondent views

16. Two respondents agreed with the proposed revised Go-Live date, although one respondent expressed their disappointment that the original Go-Live date could not be maintained.

17. One of these respondents noted that FSM is an essential programme that underpins the evolution of DCC's systems and provides critical service management capabilities. They considered that any further delay would risk undermining confidence in the timeline and planning assumptions across the wider industry. They therefore urged the DCC to set out how the risks to the revised timeline will be monitored and mitigated, particularly in relation to the build and test phases. They believed that the transparent tracking of risks and interdependencies will be essential to assure Parties that the revised Go-Live date remains achievable.

18. The third respondent stated a preference for the FSM Go-Live date to be in January 2026. They expressed concern over the six-month delay, believing this did not reflect the risk of SSI system stability or the cost of the Remedy extension, and requested to be informed of the additional cost of the extension and the level of service that would be received during this time. They also noted concern over the dependency of the Virtual Wide Area Network (VWAN) Programme to access the Smart Metering Inventory via the SSI, and that any manual process could slow down, or halt, the VWAN soft launch. They also did not agree with the need to avoid deployment over the winter period, feeling this was unlikely to impact the level of service DCC would provide, and requested further rationale for DCC's view.

DCC response

19. DCC recognises the importance of FSM to the industry and the critical service management capabilities that this solution will provide. We are committed to monitoring and mitigating the risks to the revised timeline. To manage this, the FSM Programme has set up an integration board with DCC personnel and the key service providers to ensure timely risk management and early escalation of any issues. This is in addition to a dedicated programme board that tracks progress against the delivery plan, ensures timely resolution of issues, and actively manages interdependencies across delivery phases. The FSM Programme's alignment with the broader DCC portfolio is maintained through a portfolio board, which oversees inter-programme dependencies, capacity management, and strategic risk mitigation, allowing cross-cutting risks or changes to be managed holistically. Through this three-tiered governance structure, DCC aims to provide the transparency, control, and responsiveness necessary to assure Parties that the revised Go-Live date is both achievable and actively managed.

20. Additionally, DCC engages with the Department on a weekly basis to monitor progress and key risks. Where DCC considers there are key risks where the effect would affect the industry, then DCC will engage with the industry via the IMF, the SEC Panel and relevant Sub-Committees. As

noted in the consultation, DCC has a comprehensive engagement plan to ensure customers are aware of its progress against the delivery milestones, and any challenges or risks in meeting the Go-Live date will be raised early.

21.   DCC notes the interest regarding its intention to extend the support contract for the existing Remedy service until the end of April 2026. DCC is committed to sharing more information with the SEC Panel in due course once the costs are known.

22.   DCC notes the concern regarding a dependency of the VWAN Programme to access the Smart Metering Inventory (SMI) via the SSI. DCC has conducted a full impact assessment of the FSM Programme against other inflight programmes, including the VWAN Programme. DCC can confirm that the SMI will be available to VWAN participants via the current DSMS SSI at the time of VWAN soft launch. Following FSM Go-Live, this functionality will move over to the ServiceNow portal as part of the data migration activity.

23.   DCC notes the request to explain its rationale for avoiding deploying the FSM solution over the winter months. DCC has adopted a general policy to avoid deploying major User-impacting change during the winter period. A key reason for this is to minimise any risk to Users' ability to carry out a pre-pay vend during this period. DCC is still exploring the exact path to Go-Live, and whether this will require a High Impact Maintenance Window while we carry out the data migration. There are also additional drivers which led to the identification of 21 March 2026 as the Go Live date, including the extended test window required over the Christmas break, as noted below. DCC is actively looking for opportunities to bring the delivery forward, with the dates in the programme plan indicating 'no later than' dates.

24.   DCC has therefore concluded to continue to put forward a revised Go-Live date for the FSM Programme of 21 March 2026 in its updated LC13B plan.

2.2. Question 2

25.   DCC sought views on the proposed revised date for the 'Confirmation of Regulatory Change' Milestone.

Q2	Do you agree with the proposed revised date for the 'Confirmation of Regulatory Change' Milestone of 2 May 2025?

Respondent views

26.   Two respondents noted their support for the proposed revised date, noting this would align with the JIP. The third respondent provided no comment.

DCC response

27.   DCC notes the support for the proposed revised date of 2 May 2025 for concluding on the regulatory changes and will continue to put this date forward in its updated LC13B plan. DCC also notes that its conclusions on the regulatory changes for the FSM Programme were issued on 25 April 2025.[5]

2.3. Question 3

28.   DCC sought views on the proposed dates for entering and exiting each of the Systems Integration Testing (SIT)-B, User Integration Testing (UIT)-B and UIT-A test windows.

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[5] FSM conclusions on the transitional and enduring regulatory changes | Smart DCC

Q3	Do you agree with the proposed start and end dates for each of the SIT-B, UIT-B and UIT-A test windows for the FSM Programme?

Respondent views

29. Two respondents noted their support for the proposed dates. One respondent noted the Testing Advisory Group (TAG) had raised no objections, and that it would be important that DCC continues to engage the TAG and relevant SEC Sub-Committees as testing progresses.

30. The third respondent did not disagree with the proposed dates but believed that the proposed window for UIT would be a higher risk than at other times of the year due to high annual leave and consultants being furloughed during change freeze periods.

DCC response

31. DCC notes the concern raised regarding the proposed dates for the UIT window. The FSM Programme has carefully considered the schedule for all stages of the programme, encompassing the build activity, testing activity (including PIT and SIT stages), the positioning of the Go-Live date, and the governance leading up to this.

32. Scheduling the UIT window to commence in December 2025 has been necessary to fit this within the overall programme plan. DCC has chosen to extend the standard six-week UIT window to eight weeks, to allow an additional two weeks for the holiday period and the anticipated level of leave across organisations in this time. DCC Testing Services support will also be available for the full duration of the eight-week window.

33. DCC also notes the support from the TAG for the proposed start and end dates for the UIT-B and UIT-A test windows. DCC confirms it will continue to engage the TAG and other relevant Sub-Committees as necessary as testing continues.

34. DCC will therefore continue to put forward the start date of 4 August 2025 and end date of 17 October 2025 for the SIT-B test window and the start date of 1 December 2025 and end-date of 23 January 2026 for the UIT-B and UIT-A test windows in its updated LC13B plan.

2.4. Question 4

35. DCC sought views on the proposed dates for the submission and decision on the LSC.

Q4	Do you agree with the proposed dates for DCC's submission of evidence and the Department's decision on the LSC for the FSM Programme?

Respondent views

36. All three respondents noted their support for the proposed dates, believing the six-week period to consider the evidence and reach a decision was reasonable. One respondent welcomed DCC's continued engagement with the SEC Panel and Sub-Committees to support its submissions to the Department.

DCC response

37. DCC notes the support for the proposed dates of 9 February 2026 for DCC's submission of evidence and 20 March 2026 for the Department's decision and will continue to put these dates forward in its updated LC13B plan.

2.5. Question 5

38. DCC sought views on whether there are any further Milestones that are missing from its revised plan.

Q5	Do you consider there to be any additional Milestones needed that are missing from this revised plan?

Respondent views

39. One respondent considered that User training and User acceptance testing for the major consolidated parts of SSI, such as raising incidents, ADTs and OMS, appeared to be missing from the plan. They believed these milestones needed to be included so they could plan which colleagues would attend.

40. The other two respondents did not consider there to be any missing Milestones. They were content that the proposed set of Milestones was appropriate and covers the necessary elements. One respondent encouraged DCC to maintain flexibility and ensure early notification of any proposed changes.

DCC response

41. DCC notes the suggestion for an additional milestone for User acceptance testing. The plan currently provides a User Integration Testing window in both the UIT-A and UIT-B environments. DCC considers that this provides Users with a window to both complete mandated tests and test the FSM solution. It does not consider that any further User testing milestones are necessary in the plan. DCC will notify Testing Participants in due course to confirm the components that will be available for testing within UIT.

42. DCC also notes the suggestion for an additional milestone for User training. DCC will be providing training to Users for both UIT and Go-Live training. SEC Appendix AU 'Network Evolution Transition and Migration Approach Document' (NETMAD) clause 11.1 already requires DCC to notify Users of dates and times on which it will hold training on the functionality of the FSM platform, which it must do no later than six weeks prior to UIT-B commencing. This training will be centred around connectivity testing and the areas of functionality of the new ServiceNow platform that will be represented by the mandated tests in UIT.

43. Closer to Go-Live DCC will provide training on the broader FSM solution to nominated delegates. This will be supported by the provision of materials and supplemented by webinars and drop-in sessions. DCC will separately contact Users to register their interest in this Go-Live training, and DCC will provide appropriate communications to enable Users to plan their attendance. Users will be responsible for delivering further training within their organisations as they feel is necessary ahead of FSM Go-Live.

44. As DCC will be communicating training dates to Users for both UIT training and Go Live training, and considering that each User may adopt its own approach to training within its organisation beyond the initial training that DCC will provide, DCC does not consider it appropriate to define a further milestone for User training in its plan.

45. DCC notes the response from one respondent confirming that the proposed set of milestones is appropriate and covers the necessary elements. As noted above, DCC will continue to look for opportunities to bring dates forward. DCC is committed to providing SEC Panel and Sub-Committees with early notification if any further change to the plan is anticipated. It also holds a comprehensive engagement plan to continually inform industry of the FSM schedule. Finally, DCC also maintains an established reporting pattern into the IMF, which it will continue to engage with on progress with the FSM delivery plan.

2.6. Question 6

46.　DCC sought views on its proposed customer engagement plan for the FSM Programme.

Q6	Do you agree with the proposed customer engagement plan for the FSM Programme?

Respondent views

47.　All three respondents considered the customer engagement plan to be reasonable, comprehensive, and aligned to the SEC governance structure.

48.　One respondent asked that DCC ensures this engagement is sustained throughout delivery, particularly with the Panel and its Sub-Committees. Another respondent considered it would be the quality of the materials shared and the experts who attended the meetings that would indicate if this activity was successful or not. They asked DCC to ensure that the programme experts that attend were able to answer most questions raised by stakeholders, given the short turnaround between engagement activities.

DCC response

49.　DCC notes the support for the proposed customer engagement plan. DCC also confirms that it intends to sustain meaningful engagement throughout the delivery. Quality materials delivered by the appropriate subject matter experts is central to DCC's customer engagement strategy.

2.7. Question 7

50.　DCC sought views on the proposed revised redesignation date for the enduring SEC changes, to align with the revised Go-Live date.

Q7	Do you agree with the proposed revised redesignation date for the enduring changes of 21 March 2026 (or as soon as reasonably practicable within one month thereafter)?

Respondent views

51.　Two respondents agreed with the proposed revised redesignation date, noting this is a logical consequence of the revised Go-Live date.

52.　The third respondent believed it should be sooner as they did not have full transparency for the choice of the proposed date in March 2026, as set out in their response to question 1 above. They reiterated their concerns about the value for money DCC's customers would receive from Remedy during the six-month extension, specifically the SSI system performance and additional costs that customers would be expected to pay. They also highlighted the dependency on the VWAN Programme using the SMI during soft launch from January 2026.

DCC response

53.　DCC notes the views of the respondent believing the SEC changes should be designated earlier, in January 2026. DCC's responses to the points raised by the respondent are covered in our response to question 1 above. As noted in the consultation document, the enduring FSM solution will be delivered on the Go-Live date, when the existing DSMS will be deactivated and the ServiceNow platform subsequently activated. The enduring changes to the SEC have all been drafted on the basis they will be implemented on the Go-Live date to reflect this replacement taking effect. As such, the designation date for the SEC changes needs to align with the Go-Live date for the FSM solution.

54. Following DCC's conclusion to not revise the proposed Go-Live date, our intention remains that the revised designation date for the enduring SEC changes should be 21 March 2026 (or as soon as reasonably practicable within one month thereafter).

3. Summary of changes to the plan

55. After reviewing the responses received, DCC does not consider that any changes are needed to the revised delivery plan for the FSM Programme that it consulted on.

56. The plan that DCC is submitting to the Department for approval can be found in Appendix A of this document.

4. Next steps

57. DCC is of the view that it has had appropriate engagement and consultation with industry on the revised delivery plan for the FSM Programme. As the responses to the consultation and engagement in industry were broadly supportive of the proposed plan, DCC will submit this to the Department for approval.

58. DCC has, where necessary, addressed the comments that have been received from industry. DCC does not believe that the views expressed result in fundamental amendments to the proposed plan and, as such, further consultation is neither necessary nor appropriate.

59. Following the Department's decision on this plan, DCC will initiate a request with the IMF to add or amend the relevant Milestones on the JIP.

Appendix A – FSM delivery plan Milestones

This table sets out the proposed Milestones for the FSM Programme that are being submitted to the Department for approval. The existing Milestones are shown in the pink rows with their revised dates; all other Milestones are new.

FSM Milestone	Description	Date
Confirmation on Regulatory Change *(existing Milestone)*	Latest point DCC will issue a conclusions document on the transitional and enduring regulatory drafting changes needed for the FSM Programme along with conclusions on plans for implementation of those regulatory change	02 May 25
SIT-B Commences	Latest possible date at which SIT starts for all Service Providers	04 Aug 25
SIT-B Exit	Latest possible date for SIT completion decision for all Service Providers by the designated governance body as advised by DESNZ	17 Oct 25
UIT-B Commences	Latest point at which User testing starts in the UIT-B environment	01 Dec 25
UIT-A Commences	Latest point at which User testing starts in the UIT-A environment	01 Dec 25
UIT-B Exit	Latest possible date for the User testing window in the UIT-B environment to close	23 Jan 26
UIT-A Exit	Latest possible date for the User testing window in the UIT-A environment to close	23 Jan 26
LSC Go-Live Submission	Latest date by which DCC will issue its LSC submission to DESNZ and SEC Panel	09 Feb 26
LSC Go-Live Decision	Response from DESNZ for approval prior to deploying changes to Live systems, following SEC Panel recommendation	20 Mar 26
Go-Live *(existing Milestone)*	All capabilities live and the migration of all SSI User data and 4G CH orders to the new platform completed	21 Mar 26