

Data Services Provider

Consultation on the transitional and enduring regulatory changes for DCC Connect

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Respond by: 17:00 on 12 December 2025

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Table of Contents

1. Background and context.....	4
1.1. The DSP Programme.....	4
1.2. Approach to regulatory change.....	5
1.3. Industry engagement to date.....	6
1.4. Scope and structure of this consultation	6
2. Introduction and overview of DCC Connect.....	8
2.1. DCC Connect Service Deployment	8
3. Enduring regulatory changes for DCC Connect	9
3.1. Introduction of Cloud connections.....	9
3.2. Introduction of DCC Gateway Connection Options.....	10
3.3. Requesting, maintaining and removing a DCC Gateway Connection....	12
3.4. Regulatory approach.....	12
4. Transitional arrangements for DCC Connect.....	13
4.1. Migration of existing DCC Gateway Connections	14
4.1.1. Initial site assessments, site surveys and possible options	14
4.1.2. Site surveys.....	15
4.1.3. Site Specific Design	15
4.1.4. Installation of new gateway equipment.....	15
4.1.5. Timescales.....	15
4.1.6. Scheduling cutover	16
4.1.7. Cutover to the new connection	16
4.1.8. Decommissioning old equipment	16
4.1.9. Completion of cutovers	16
4.2. Arrangements for new DCC Gateway Connections	17
5. Charging.....	18
5.1. Transitional Connection Charges	18
5.2. DCC's Charging Statement.....	18
6. Designation of the NETMAD changes.....	19
7. Next steps	20
8. Consultation questions and how to respond	20
9. Attachments	21

Appendix A – Draft direction text for the NETMAD.....22

1. Background and context

1. This consultation sets out and seeks your views on the approach to the delivery of the change of DCC Gateway Connection network provider under the Data Service Provider (DSP) Programme. It sets out the changes needed to Smart Energy Code (SEC) Appendix AU 'Network Evolution Transition and Migration Approach Document' (NETMAD) for the transitional arrangements, including the migration of existing DCC Gateway Connections onto the new network provider. It also sets out the enduring changes to the SEC, which are covered under the Annexes to the NETMAD. The regulatory approach for the delivery of the change of the DCC Gateway Connection network provider is provided later in this document.
2. Included in the consultation documents is the formal Notice letter and draft Charging Statement, initially sent to Ofgem (the Authority), outlining the updates to the Service Charges following the change of the DCC Gateway Connection network provider, as required under Licence Condition 19.9.
3. We are seeking your responses to the questions set out in this consultation by **17:00 on 12 December 2025**.

1.1. The DSP Programme

4. The DSP sits right at the heart of the smart metering infrastructure, providing data services that connect Energy Suppliers to devices at their consumers' premises. The DSP Data System is a central facility that controls the flow of messages to and from smart metering equipment, with Service User (SU) organisations (e.g. Energy Suppliers, Network Operators, and Other Users) communicating via these central DSP facilities.
5. The contract for the current DSP solution (referred to in this document as 'As-Is DSP') is set to expire in 2028 and encompasses several different capabilities including but not limited to:
 - a. Provision of gateway services (i.e. network connectivity) to connect SUs and Service Providers (SPs) to the DSP in both production and test environments. This will be the first stage of the DSP Programme and is the subject of this consultation. This service is currently provided by Gamma. VodafoneThree was selected as the new provider for gateway connections, and the replacement solution is called 'DCC Connect'.
 - b. An update to the DCC User Interface Specification (DUIS) which sets out the structure of the messages that can be exchanged with the DSP.
 - c. The Core DSP which provides message routing, anomaly detection, registration services, inventory management, DCC Key Infrastructure (DCCKI – which refers to the cryptographic certificates used within the Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) framework of the DCC), Certification Authority (CA), security checking, logging and reporting, and a Smart Metering Key Infrastructure (SMKI) repository.
 - d. A DCC Service Management System (DSMS) which supports DCC's service operation.
 - e. A Systems Integrator (SI), which manages key elements such as change and testing to ensure the system functions optimally.
6. DCC recently completed a Full Business Case (FBC) for a new DSP contract to procure a solution for the capabilities within the existing contract. This excludes the DSMS capability which is in the process of being disaggregated with a replacement service being delivered under DCC's Future Service Management (FSM) Programme. FSM is a separate programme to DSP, and the delivery plan for FSM has been consulted on separately. There is no requirement for FSM to be delivered before DCC Connect, as the existing Remedy platform can be used to support service management for DCC Connect until ServiceNow is available on FSM.

7. New contracts were signed with partner organisations in April 2025. A disaggregated approach is being adopted with different partner organisations providing different capabilities. The DSP Programme will encompass the implementation of these new capabilities. This includes both the migration of SUs and SPs to the new solution as well as the migration of devices from the current DSP to the new DSP.
8. On 26 June 2025, DCC was directed to produce an updated delivery plan for the DSP Programme and published its consultation on this on 22 August 2025.¹ This consultation closed at 17:00 on 3 October 2025. DCC will now provide a report to the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ, referred to as 'the Department') by 31 October 2025 containing its consideration of the responses and its conclusions on its proposed updated plan. DCC will publish this conclusions document on the DCC website.

1.2. Approach to regulatory change

9. DCC is required to identify and set out any proposed regulatory changes required to deliver and migrate to the new DCC Gateway Connection network provider. The proposed revised delivery plan for the DSP Programme includes a Milestone from the draft LC13B delivery plan of 12 January 2026 by which DCC will confirm any regulatory changes for the DCC Connect solution. This consultation sets out DCC's view on the regulatory changes required, and our conclusions on this consultation will form the conclusions that would be required by this date.
10. Consistent with the approach taken on other recent major programmes, consultation on the regulatory change required for the DCC Connect solution is being managed via two separate consultation processes.
 - The proposed amendments to the NETMAD are being consulted on by DCC and are the subject of this consultation.
 - The proposed amendments to the main body of the SEC and the enduring changes to SEC Appendix G will be consulted on by the Department and will be the subject of a later consultation.
11. The changes to the NETMAD, which are the subject of this consultation will be delivered following Direction from the Department using powers under Condition 22 of the Smart Meter Communications Licence and SEC Section X5 'Incorporation of Certain Documents into this Code'.
12. Under Licence Condition 19.9, DCC is required to provide formal Notice to the Authority of a proposal to amend Service Charges at least three months in advance of those amendments being confirmed. DCC is also required to provide all SEC Parties with the same Notice. Changes to DCC's Charging Statement are required as part of the cutover to DCC Connect and these will be made in accordance with the Smart Meter Communications Licence. Therefore, DCC has included a draft Charging Statement (with Table 5a added to show the new Service Charges for DCC Connect gateway connections) with this consultation, and is providing the formal Notice letter, that was sent to the Authority, to all SEC Parties as part of the consultation documentation. DCC will then communicate the Notice to all SEC Parties via dedicated correspondence. DCC intends for the Charging Statement to be updated in parallel with the designation of the NETMAD or as soon as possible afterwards. DCC will be separately informing SEC Parties of these changes via the Quarterly Finance Forum (QFF) as has previously been the case for changes to the Charging Statement. More information on the Charging Statement can be found in Section 5 of this document. can be found in Section 5 of this document.
13. The DSP Programme will require several further regulatory consultations to support its delivery. Themes raised in this consultation will be added to in future consultations as the DSP Programme develops. DCC is still assessing the scope of regulatory changes for other programme deliverables

¹ [DSP consultation on the revised delivery plan | Smart DCC](#)

as the design phase progresses. However, we consider further regulatory consultations will be required to support the delivery of key elements of the programme. Further information on the planned consultations is set out in the updated delivery plan consultation outlined above.

1.3. Industry engagement to date

14. Industry engagement has been a key programme activity for DCC to foster collaborative relationships with our stakeholders. Further to the engagement described later in this section that informed the requirements and benefits of the DCC Connect solution, DCC has discussed the principles of DCC Connect that will inform the regulatory changes through appropriate SEC forums, including updates at the Technical Architecture and Business Architecture Sub-Committee (TABASC), the Implementation Managers Forum (IMF) and the Security Sub-Committee (SSC).
15. On 22 July and 29 July 2025, the DCC held dedicated DCC Connect consultation workshops to provide SUs with detail on what DCC Connect is, the benefits it will provide, and the information to support cutover. The objective of the workshops was to ensure SUs were informed on DCC Connect and the subsequent regulatory changes to support cutover, convey key messages around requirements and timelines, and garner feedback in advance of the consultation launch.
16. DCC will continue to engage SUs at the SEC Sub-Committees, through workshops, and on a bilateral basis as required to support with the delivery of new gateway connections.

1.4. Scope and structure of this consultation

17. During the period of cutover to DCC Connect, there are three possible scenarios for Parties. DCC has set out in this consultation the arrangements that cover each of these three scenarios. The table below sets out how the NETMAD Provisions documented in this consultation will be applied to manage this process.

Scenario/ Context	Applied SEC Provisions
Parties with Gamma Parties with existing Gamma Gateway Connections prior to cutover to DCC Connect.	The existing SEC provisions in Section H and Appendix G will continue to apply, with slight modifications set out in Section 13 of the NETMAD (which essentially mean that new Gamma connections can no longer be sought).
Parties during cutover Parties cutting over from existing Gamma DCC Gateway Connections to new DCC Connect Gateway Connections.	DCC is proposing to use Section 15 of the NETMAD to set out the supplementary temporary arrangements that apply to the DCC and Parties in order to manage the replacement of existing Gamma Connections with new DCC Connect connections up to the point at which the new DCC Connect connection becomes live.
Parties with DCC Connect Parties seeking new DCC Connect Gateway Connections (from the point of NETMAD designation) and Parties that have had their Gamma connections replaced with new DCC Connect connections and those connections have gone live.	The provisions applying to these Parties are set out Section 14 of the NETMAD which refers to modified versions of SEC Sections A, E, H and K and a modified version of Appendix G which are set out in annexes to the NETMAD. The drafting in these annexes will ultimately form the basis of the enduring SEC provisions which the Department will be consulting upon next year.

18. This consultation seeks your views on the proposed changes to the NETMAD to support the delivery of the DCC Connect Service:
- Section 2 of this consultation provides an introduction of the DCC Connect solution, including the benefits of the proposed service. An overview of how the cutover process will work has also been provided.
 - Section 3 of this consultation document sets out our proposed variations to the SEC to deliver the enduring DCC Connect arrangements. These changes will initially be implemented via transitional changes to the NETMAD and will form the basis of the enduring changes to the SEC that will subsequently be consulted upon and made by the Department. The enduring redlined changes are available in Annexes 1-5 of Attachment 1 of this document, and the application of these Annexes is set out in Clause 14 of the NETMAD.
 - Section 4 of this consultation document sets out our proposed changes to Section 15 of the NETMAD, covering the transitional arrangements during the delivery and cutover of parties with existing DCC Gateway Connections to the DCC Connect solution. The redlined changes to the NETMAD are available in Attachment 1 of this document.
 - Section 5 of this consultation sets out our proposed changes to the DCC Charging Statement to incorporate new Explicit Charges to support DCC Connect. The proposed updates are available in Attachment 3 of this document.
19. This consultation also seeks your views on the proposed date for re-designation of the NETMAD to introduce these changes. This is covered in Section 6 of this consultation document. Section 7 sets out the next steps and Section 8 of this consultation document lists the questions that we seek your views on and how you can respond to this consultation.
20. This consultation is expected to impact all Testing Participants (TPs), SUs and Registration Data Providers (RDPs) that currently have or are planning to receive a DCC Gateway Connection.
21. This consultation will close at **17:00 on 12 December 2025**. Following this, DCC will provide a report to the Department by 12 January 2026 containing its consideration of the responses and

its conclusion on the regulatory changes required for the DCC Connect solution. We will publish this conclusions document on the DCC website.

2. Introduction and overview of DCC Connect

22. The first stage of the DSP Programme is the provision of the new gateway service to connect SUs and SPs into the DSP. This service is currently provided by Gamma. VodafoneThree was selected as the new provider for gateway connections, and the replacement solution is called 'DCC Connect'.
23. DCC engaged with SUs to understand pain points with current gateway connections and associated processes (e.g. onboarding) and used this engagement to inform the requirements of the DCC Connect solution. DCC Connect has therefore been designed to deliver the following benefits for SUs:
 - **Improved onboarding, through integration with ServiceNow and support from dedicated specialist personnel.** ServiceNow (delivered by the new FSM solution) integration will automate repetitive tasks and provide reporting on order status and onboarding progress for the onboarding party.
 - **Dedicated Project Coordinator and Order Managers.** These specialist resources will support the ordering process ahead of the integration with FSM/ServiceNow to ensure orders are submitted accurately and the ordering process progresses smoothly.
 - **Site-Specific Design.** DCC will work with each SU to create a Site-Specific Design (SSD) that will ensure the connection provided is technically appropriate for their needs.
 - **Network Segmentation.** DCC will be delivering a revised network segmentation strategy to align with DCC's environment and release strategy. This will benefit SUs by providing a more stable network environment with fewer change related outages.
 - **Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD WAN) optimised for Cloud integration.** A Cloud Gateway service will allow SUs with Cloud hosted infrastructure to connect to the DCC gateway network. The service will allow SUs to select the bandwidth and resilience options appropriate to their needs.
 - **Scalable network solution.** High Volume (HV) connections will be provided on 1 Gigabyte per second (Gbps) access with minimum 100 Megabytes per second (Mbps) service bandwidth. Bandwidth uplifts will become simple changes as physical circuit upgrades will no longer be required, significantly reducing implementation times.
 - **Direct relationship with DCC to improve efficiency.** DCC will have a direct relationship with the network service provider. This arrangement reduces the number of organisations in the supply of the network compared with the existing solution, which will streamline the delivery and operation of the service.

2.1. DCC Connect Service Deployment

24. The deployment of DCC Connect will be done in the following stages, with more detail provided later in the document on each step where required:
 - a) **NETMAD Consultation and Designation** – DCC is planning for SUs to cutover to the new solution in line with the rules that will be set out in the NETMAD. Following this consultation, DCC will submit the proposed changes for the new DCC Connect service to DESNZ by 12 January 2026. DCC will begin the customer engagement process with SUs at this stage to start collecting data required for orders.
 - b) **DCC Connect Order Confirmation Begins** – DCC currently has over 100 SU and SP connections in place with Gamma. To complete the transition of all these connections to the new DCC

Connect service, DCC will be open for orders from SUs of DCC Connect connections on the first working day after the designation of the NETMAD (expected to be 26 January 2026 or earlier). On this day, the orders can start to be placed by both existing SUs and new SUs. This date for order confirmation, in advance of the Go-Live date, allows time for activities with longer lead times, such as the physical site surveys and equipment order and installation, to be completed. This will mean that new connections can be commissioned at the earliest date possible following the DCC 'Acceptance Into Service' (AIS). More detail on AIS is provided in the next step.

- c) **DCC Connect Acceptance Into Service** – AIS is a DCC operational governance process that ensures that deployment and performance of new services meet operational acceptance standards. This will be an 'internal' decision made following the tests and checks identified below for DCC to satisfy itself that the interconnectivity between the existing Gamma network and the new DCC Connect (VodafoneThree service) has been established successfully, and without adverse effect on the current operational service. To make this decision, DCC will conduct a series of tests with both the As-Is DSP and elements of the current SPs. This includes: Business Acceptance Testing, to assure end-to-end operational processes are working and service can be properly supported; Service Acceptance checks to ensure that DCC is ready to Go-Live and support the new service; and agreement on the approach for ongoing surveillance of the change post implementation. DCC is planning on the basis that the AIS process will be completed by 24 March 2026. The AIS process includes the cutover of selected SPs, including the As-Is DSP, to further ensure no impact to operational service prior to an AIS decision.
- d) **DCC Connect Go-Live and Service User Cutover Window Begins** – The opening of the cutover window will mark the 'external' Go-Live date i.e. the date by which SUs can begin cutover to DCC Connect once DCC has confirmed there is no risk to existing operational service and has signed off the AIS governance. Cutover refers to the process whereby, following appropriate planning such as agreeing a date and time, DCC will work with SUs to 'cutover' live network traffic and supporting connections from Gamma to DCC Connect. More detail on the steps to support cutover are outlined below. The cutover window and external 'Go-Live' will begin on 25 March 2026 and run for approximately 12 months until 30 March 2027, during which time DCC will support SUs with the cutover from Gamma to DCC Connect.

3. Enduring regulatory changes for DCC Connect

25. This section sets out the areas of the DCC Connect solution where we consider SEC changes will be needed to deliver the enduring solution. The proposed changes set out the process that will need to be followed for new parties seeking a gateway connection and sets out the rules that will apply once a DCC Gateway connection has been provided and has gone live, such rules being applicable to both new parties and existing parties that have moved over to a DCC Connect connection.

3.1. Introduction of Cloud connections

26. When receiving a DCC Gateway Connection, SUs can currently only choose to receive a physical connection, which can be either a 'low volume' (LV) or a HV connection:
 - An LV Connection is provided via a broadband-based connection, with bandwidth dependent on location and wider infrastructure. For this reason, the bandwidth that a SU would receive is not guaranteed.
 - An HV Connection is provided via an Ethernet circuit and a physical SD WAN appliance. The SU can specify the bandwidth it will require as a multiple of 10Mbps, up to a maximum of 100Mbps. The bandwidth it has requested would be guaranteed.

27. SEC Modification Proposal MP248 'Requirements for DCC Gateway Connection',² implemented in November 2024, introduced the capability for RDPs to receive a 'virtual' DCC Gateway Connection over the current Gamma service. To date, no such connections have been installed. MP277 'Virtual Gateway Connection'³ subsequently proposed to extend this provision to all SUs but was rejected in February 2025 on the basis it would be more efficient to introduce this functionality alongside the new DCC Connect service under the DSP Programme.
28. As part of the new DCC Connect service, DCC will be providing a Cloud Gateway service which will allow SUs with Cloud hosted infrastructure to connect to the DCC Gateway Network. The service will allow SUs to select the bandwidth and resilience options appropriate to their needs. Reference architectures for the Cloud providers (Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Azure) have been developed and a Deployment Handbook with step-by-step instructions to support installation of new Cloud connections will be provided to SUs who choose this option from DCC.
29. Consequently, there will be three types of DCC Gateway Connection available through the DCC Connect service. The requested bandwidth for HV Physical and Cloud connection types will be guaranteed while LV connections have the potential to vary.
- A LV Connection which is an available option under the Gamma solution today.
 - A HV Physical Connection which is an available option under the Gamma solution today, except that the SUs will now be able to specify both the resilience and the bandwidth required, as a multiple of 100Mbps, up to a maximum of 1,000Mbps.
 - A HV Cloud Gateway Connection which will be provided via the DCC Connect Cloud Gateway service and SU's own Cloud network infrastructure. SUs will be able to specify the bandwidth they require, as per any of the options available for ordering from DCC, up to a maximum limit of 2,000Mbps.
30. To recognise this change, a new term, '**DCC Gateway Connection Type**', is proposed to be added to the SEC, which will cover the three types of connection noted above.

3.2. Introduction of DCC Gateway Connection Options

31. Currently, when selecting a single HV Connection, the maximum physical bandwidth that a SU can receive is 100Mbps. Under the DCC Connect service, when selecting a single HV Physical Connection, the maximum available bandwidth will increase to either 400Mbps or 1,000Mbps, depending on the service that the SU requires.
32. Furthermore, for a HV Physical Connection, a SU will be able to select whether to have a 'single' or a 'dual' connection. A dual connection will result in two circuits being provided to the SU, with each having a maximum available bandwidth of either 200Mbps or 1,000Mbps, depending on the service that the SU requires, providing a total bandwidth of either 400Mbps or 2,000Mbps respectively. In the event that one circuit fails, the SU will still retain the use of the other circuit, providing some resilience in the event of a partial failure.
33. When selecting a HV Cloud Gateway Connection, SUs will also be able to choose the maximum bandwidth possible (up to 2,000Mbps). Standard bandwidth options apply and are provided by the Cloud providers (Azure and AWS).
34. Consequently, SUs will now be required to choose one of the following options when requesting a new DCC Gateway Connection:

² MP248 'Requirements for DCC Gateway Connection' - Smart Energy Code

³ MP277 'Virtual Gateway Connection' - Smart Energy Code

DCC Gateway Connection Type	DCC Gateway Connection Option	Minimum bandwidth	Maximum bandwidth	Resilient bandwidth	Minimum availability
LV Connection	Single LV	N/A	N/A	N/A	93.00%
HV Physical Connection	Single HV 400	100Mbps	400Mbps	N/A	99.00%
	Single HV 1,000	100Mbps	1,000Mbps	N/A	99.00%
	Dual HV 200	100Mbps	400Mbps	200Mbps	99.50%
	Dual HV 1,000	100Mbps	2,000Mbps	1,000Mbps	99.50%
HV Cloud Gateway Connection	Cloud HV	10Mbps	2000Mbps	Equivalent to the selected bandwidth	99.99%

35. To recognise this change, a new term, '**DCC Gateway Connection Option**', is proposed to be added to SEC, which will cover the different connection options noted above.
36. The options listed in the table above will be added as a new table to SEC Appendix G and will form the DCC Gateway Connection Options available to SUs. The new table in SEC Appendix G will include the minimum availability requirements listed above. The previous availability requirements applying to Gamma connections stated that each DCC Gateway Connection must be available at all times (subject to Planned Maintenance). It was not possible for DCC and the existing gateway connection Service Provider to adhere to this requirement. This requirement has now been updated to reflect the service availability levels agreed with the DCC Connect Service Provider and give SUs an accurate reflection of minimum availability across connection options, with each DCC Gateway Connection Option having a specific minimum availability requirement. Additionally, moving the DCC Gateway Connection availability requirements from SEC Section H to Appendix G results in a change to the legal hierarchy of the gateway availability requirement. This change will ensure the technical requirements for each DCC Gateway Connection Option are listed in one place.
37. As is currently the case with existing connection options, SUs that select a HV Physical Connection or a HV Cloud Gateway Connection will still be able to select a lower bandwidth than the maximum available for that specific connection option. For example, if a SU selects a HV Physical Connection for 400Mbps, they can choose to only utilise 200Mbps for their connection.
- For an HV Physical Connection, the SU may select a bandwidth that is a multiple of 100Mbps between the minimum and maximum stated bandwidth for its chosen option.
 - For an HV Cloud Gateway Connection, the SU may select a bandwidth of up to 2,000Mbps subject to the bandings offered by the cloud service provider (10, 50, 200, 500, 1000, or 2000Mbps).
38. SUs will also continue to be able to change their selected bandwidth at a later date, as long as the revised bandwidth is between the minimum and maximum bandwidth for the chosen option. If the SU wants a higher or lower bandwidth than the option supports, it will need to request a new DCC Gateway Connection.

3.3. Requesting, maintaining and removing a DCC Gateway Connection

39. The current process for requesting and maintaining a DCC Gateway Connection will not change under the DCC Connect service, other than the need to specify which DCC Gateway Connection Option SUs are selecting and the option to request a Site-Specific Risk Assessment, more detail of which can be found in Section 4.
40. Under the existing arrangements, SUs can make increases to their bandwidth for HV Physical Connections during their connection period, and this will be extended to include HV Cloud Connections as well. The time the SU has to accept the offer for bandwidth changes has been reduced from 30 to 25 calendar days. This also applies to offers made by DCC where a SU wants to request a new DCC Gateway Connections. This change has been made to ensure the revised Service Level Agreement (SLA) aligns with DCC's internal processes to create orders for SUs.
41. Following the end of a Gateway service, as is the case with Gamma connections, DCC will look to remove equipment within 30 calendar days of the cessation being agreed with a SU, or a date as agreed with the SU. However, the option for SUs to remove and dispose of redundant equipment will no longer be available and DCC will remain responsible for removal and disposal. This is so that DCC can ensure the secure removal and destruction, as required, of equipment that it has installed. Furthermore, a process to support or track the secure removal of DCC equipment by SUs is not in operation. Removal of DCC gateway equipment will therefore be DCC's obligation as part of the SEC and DCC is required to securely dispose of the equipment.
42. SUs can make changes to their connection during its operation should they wish to, and a new service catalogue will be available on the ServiceNow portal. DCC considers that this does not result in any changes to the SSI (Self Service Interface) Baseline Requirements Document in relation to the service catalogue. DCC will engage industry at relevant SEC Sub-Committees to discuss the changes to service catalogues, when it will be launched and ensure the views of SUs are incorporated into this process.

3.4. Regulatory approach

43. The enduring arrangements for the DCC Connect service will require changes to the following documents:
 - SEC Section A
 - SEC Section E
 - SEC Section H
 - SEC Section K
 - SEC Appendix G
44. DESNZ will consult on these changes separately to this consultation, and the changes (except for Appendix G) will need to be laid before Parliament in accordance with the requirements of Section 89 of the 2008 Energy Act. This will result in the changes being made after the NETMAD changes included in this consultation are designated.
45. Therefore, the NETMAD will need to include transitional provisions that reflect these enduring changes for the period between the designation of the NETMAD changes and the introduction into the SEC of DESNZ's enduring changes. To enact this, the changes to the documents above will be included as Annexes 1 – 5 to the NETMAD. Section 14 of the NETMAD includes transitional clauses stating that these Annexes should be referred to in the following scenarios:
 - New DCC Connect Gateway Connections that are not replacing a Gamma Gateway Connection; and

- DCC Connect Gateway Connections that have replaced a Gamma Gateway Connection when the cutover is complete.

46. Additionally, the NETMAD currently stipulates that it will no longer apply from 30 June 2026. DCC propose to extend this to 31 December 2028 to provide for any further provisions needed for the wider DSP Programme in the future.

Q1

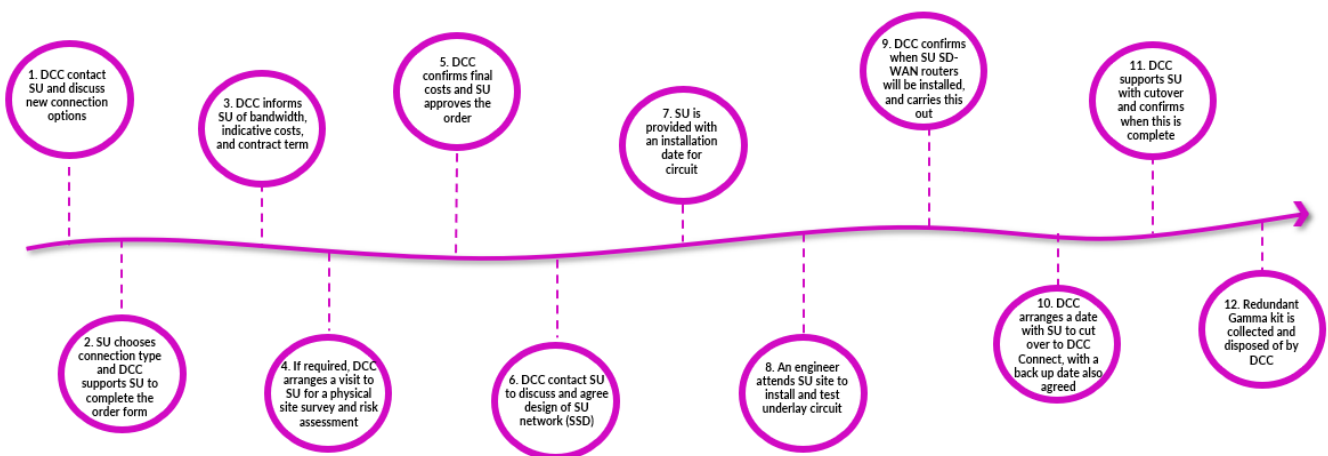
Do you agree with DCC's proposed amendments to Section 14 of NETMAD and Annexes 1 - 5 of the NETMAD to deliver the enduring solution for DCC Connect?

Please provide any comments you may have on the proposed changes and your rationale for your views

4. Transitional arrangements for DCC Connect

47. Delivering the DCC Connect solution will require a transition from existing connections to DCC Connect connections to be undertaken by DCC, TPs and by SUs (including RDPs). The provisions proposed for these transitional arrangements are set out in Section 15 of the revised NETMAD. This section summarises the transitional activities required.
48. The process diagram below shows the SU journey from ordering to cutover and decommissioning for a physical connection. This journey applies to SUs who are migrating existing DCC Gateway Connections and for new connections (excluding the cutover and decommissioning steps numbered 10, 11 and 12).

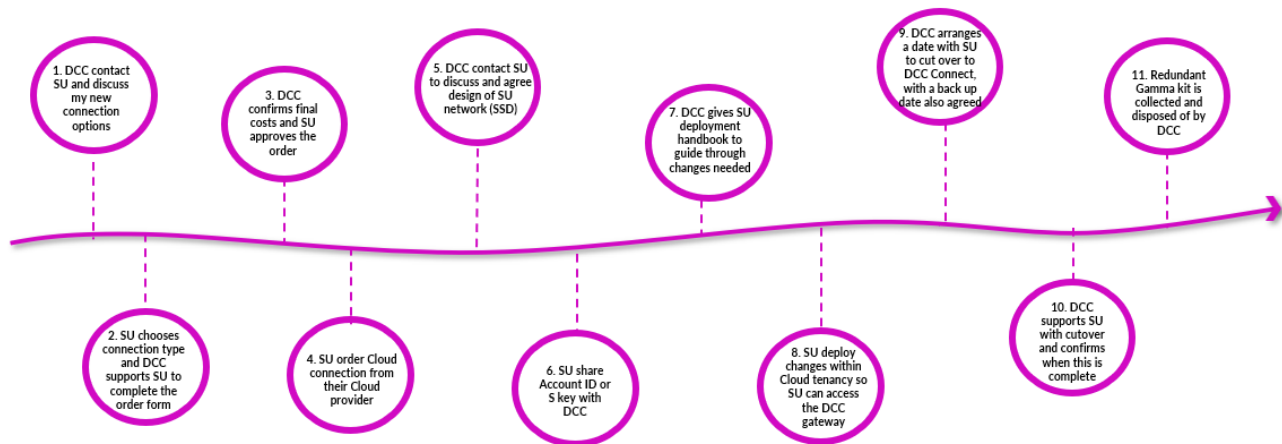
DCC Connect - Physical connection order journey for Service Users



49. The process flow diagram below shows the SU journey from ordering to cutover and decommissioning for a Cloud connection. The key differences for a Cloud connection are that:
- Once a SU chooses a Cloud option, DCC can provide a final offer immediately, with no requirement for site-surveys and associated risk assessments.
 - SUs communicate with their Cloud provider (AWS or Azure) once their order with DCC is confirmed to request an additional express route for their new DCC Connect connection.
 - There is no requirement for a physical installation for a Cloud connection.
 - SUs share their Cloud account ID and S key with DCC to facilitate their Cloud connection.
 - DCC provides SUs with a configuration file and deployment handbook to guide them through the changes needed for a Cloud connection.

50. This journey applies to SUs who are migrating existing DCC Gateway Connections and for new connections (excluding the cutover and decommissioning steps numbered 10 and 11).

DCC Connect - Cloud order journey for Service Users



4.1. Migration of existing DCC Gateway Connections

51. All existing DCC Gateway Connections will need to be migrated over to the DCC Connect service. The process for this migration is summarised in this section and will be set out in the NETMAD.

4.1.1. Initial site assessments, site surveys and possible options

52. DCC will work with SUs on a bilateral basis to identify the suitable DCC Connect replacement connection option. SUs will be required to submit an order form confirming their desired connection option and whether they want DCC to undertake an optional Site-Specific Risk Assessment (SSRA). A SSRA is an optional risk assessment to identify and control risks and facilitate planning in order to minimise disruptions to the installation of DCC Gateway Equipment. SSRAs are available to all SUs requesting a physical gateway connection. A generic risk assessment will be completed as standard as part of the site surveys detailed below. However, SSRAs are additional assessments which may be mandatory as part of a SU's Health, Safety & Environment (HSE) policy. The outcome of SSRAs does not impact the connection and annual charges included in any offers for DCC Connect gateway connections provided by DCC, as they are standalone charges. No approval of a SSRA by either DCC or the SU is required once it has been completed. A new charge for the SSRA has been added to the NETMAD and is described in Section 5 of this document.
53. Once the SU has confirmed its preferred connection option, DCC will carry out a remote desk-based site assessment of the location of the given gateway connection. The results of this desk-based site assessment will confirm whether a physical site survey is required. More information on the site survey is provided below. If no such site survey is required, DCC will provide a firm connection offer (including pricing) to the SU who will be required to confirm acceptance of this offer or if it wants to reconsider the gateway options available. The process of initial desk-based site assessments, and discussing and preparing offers can begin in advance of the date from which orders can be confirmed, on approximately 26 January 2026 or when the NETMAD is designated; site surveys cannot begin until this date, however. Site surveys are not required for any Cloud Gateway connections.
54. If DCC identify that a site survey is required, DCC will provide an estimated connection offer and an estimate of pricing, which will be subject to confirmation once the site survey has concluded, and once the order confirmation date of 26 January 2026 has passed. DCC will then contact the

SU to arrange access for the site survey, for the engineer to confirm the details needed and to complete the SSD. More detail on the SSD is provided below.

55. Following the site survey, DCC will provide a firm connection offer (including pricing) to the SU based upon the agreed technical solution. The SU will then need to confirm acceptance of the offer or if they want to reconsider the gateway options available to them.

4.1.2. Site surveys

56. If a site survey is required, DCC will contact the SU to agree the arrangements for the visit, including, for example, date, time, ID requirements and customer on-site contact details. The aim of this is to ensure a site visit can be successful first-time.
57. A new charge has been added for site visits. This is a charge to pay the costs that DCC has incurred where DCC attends a SU's premises to undertake a site survey, or to install, maintain or remove equipment, and that site visit fails, where the liability for the failure can be attributed directly to the SU. This charge also includes circumstances where a site visit has taken place, but the SU has subsequently declines a connection offer from DCC. Where an SU does accept a connection offer following a site visit, the charge is subsumed into the cost of the offer. More details on this charge are provided in the Charging Section.

4.1.3. Site Specific Design

58. A SSD will be completed for all new connections. The SSD will confirm the technical solution, configuration details and is further informed by the site survey for physical connections.
59. The SSD must be approved by the SU. If the SU wishes to make any changes to their requirements, DCC will take all reasonable steps to accommodate these. For physical connections where a site survey has been required however, these changes cannot impact the agreed offer made after the site survey. For instances where site surveys haven't been required, these changes cannot impact the offer made once it has been agreed, following the initial site survey. Where DCC have taken all reasonable steps to accommodate those requirements but have not been able to do so, DCC will inform the SU of the rationale, and the SSD shall be deemed final and approved.

4.1.4. Installation of new gateway equipment

60. The installation of gateway equipment will occur before the cutover from the Gamma to DCC Connect service. The SU will need to ensure that any enabling works have been completed before the installation activities can take place. This will include the provision of rack space, power and the Local Area Network (LAN).
61. DCC will contact the SU to agree the arrangements for the installation, including date, time, ID requirements and the on-site contact details. The charge relating to site visits outlined above applies here also.
62. The installation of the Underlay (circuit) and Overlay (SD WAN) may need separate site visits. However, where possible these will be combined into a single site visit. This is dependent on the complexity of the site estate and will be confirmed via the site survey.

4.1.5. Timescales

63. For cloud gateway connections, once the SU has accepted a final offer from DCC, the DCC shall provide the cloud connection within 30 working days.
64. For physical gateway connections, once the SU has accepted a final offer from DCC, the DCC shall complete installation of the Overlay (SD-WAN) equipment within 120 working days.
65. These timescales are subject to any extra time to account for any of the following:
 - Wayleaves being required for the location of the DCC Connect Gateway Connection;

- Excess construction works required, requiring planning permission or road permits; or
- Where a Site Survey has been carried out, any changes following the Site Survey affecting the planned installation date at the location of the DCC Connect Gateway Connection.

66. Where wayleaves or excess construction works are required, DCC shall seek to gain the relevant consents and/or undertake the works as soon as reasonably practicable. Where the changes have occurred following a Site Survey which impacts the planned installation of equipment, DCC shall confirm if its offer is still valid, or if it isn't, carry out a further Site Survey and provide a subsequent new offer.

4.1.6. Scheduling cutover

67. The DCC will propose a date for cutover after the installation is complete. The SU will be asked to confirm their response to this proposed date as soon as reasonably practical. Where the SU does not accept the proposed date, the SU must provide a rationale, and then the DCC and the SU are required to agree a revised cutover date as soon as reasonably practical. Both the DCC and the SU will then agree the time on the agreed date for the cutover.

68. The cutover date referred to above will also have a back-up date to be used in the event of the primary date being unachievable. This will be agreed at the same point that the primary cutover date is agreed. The period between the primary date and the back-up date will be no less than three weeks and no more than four weeks. If a back-up cutover date is required to be used, this date shall become recognised as the primary date and the DCC and the SU shall take all reasonable steps to meet this date and agree a new back-up date.

4.1.7. Cutover to the new connection

69. DCC and the SU will have agreed a cutover time and date. Prior to the cutover, DCC will ensure SUs are ready to execute at the agreed time.

70. In the event of an unsuccessful cutover, the SU will be required to roll back the connection to Gamma, with guidance and support from the DCC. DCC will also complete an analysis of the root cause of the failure to prevent further failures for the same underlying cause. A new physical installation will not be required should the cutover be unsuccessful and service is rolled back to the old connection, as the new physical connection is checked prior to cutover.

71. The migration to DCC Connect will be deemed to be complete when all SUs have completed the cutover process. The planned date for this event is set out in the DSP updated delivery plan as it is a required pre-requisite for later phases of the DSP Programme. This Milestone is 30 March 2027.

4.1.8. Decommissioning old equipment

72. Once the SU is successfully cutover to the new DCC Connect service, DCC will initiate the decommissioning of the Gamma connection. This will be removed from the SU's site within 30 days, or a later date that is agreed with the SU, in accordance with Clause 1.14(a) of Annex 4 (SEC Appendix G) of the NETMAD.

73. DCC proposes that in respect of the charging for the decommissioning of Gamma equipment, that these costs will be socialised across industry and no equivalent Explicit Charge will be added to the Charging Statement to refer to this.

4.1.9. Completion of cutovers

74. To enable the DCC to plan, co-ordinate and undertake the cutover of SUs, we will require certain information from SUs on request and within a reasonable time period. Therefore, a clause has been added to the NETMAD to this effect.

75. DCC is planning on the basis that all cutovers to DCC Connect will have been completed by 30 March 2027 (or by the date of the 'DCC Connect – Service User Cutover Window Closes')

milestone in the Joint Industry Plan, whichever is later). DCC expects SUs to take all reasonably practical steps to meet this deadline, also referred to as the 'Backstop Date', and will work with SUs to do so. A clause has been added to the NETMAD to this effect, requiring each SU's Gamma connection to have cut over to DCC Connect by the 'Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date'. This Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date is specific to each SU's Gamma connection and is originally set as the Backstop Date. The completion of the migration to DCC Connect is not dependent on Gamma equipment being decommissioned.

76. Where the DCC or SUs believe they are unable or unlikely to be able to cutover to DCC Connect by the Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date, then they should notify the other party immediately.
77. Where a Gamma gateway connection has not yet been cutover and is not subject to an ongoing notification in the previous paragraph, the DCC and each respective SU shall consider within 120 – 90 days prior to the Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date, whether the Gamma connection will not or is unlikely to be cutover by the Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date. Where this is the case, the DCC or the SU shall notify the other party.
78. This notice should contain rationale for why the Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date will not or is unlikely to be met and whether the DCC or SU believes communications via the Gamma connection should continue beyond the Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date. No later than 10 working days following this notification, the DCC shall inform the SU whether it considers that communications via the Gamma connection should cease by the Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date or propose a new date for cutover to DCC Connect, including the DCC's rationale for coming to this decision. No later than 10 working days following the DCC having sent its decision to the SU, where the SU disagrees with the DCC's decision, it may then refer the matter to the Secretary of State for determination. This referral should include rationale from the SU for why it disagrees with the DCC, and the rationale provided by the DCC for coming to its decision.
79. The Secretary of State may choose to either agree with the DCC's decision (i.e. with the later date given by the DCC or with the decision made by the DCC that no such date should be given) or request the DCC to provide an alternative date to the SU. Once this determination has been made or is in the process of being made by the Secretary of State, or while the DCC is in the process of considering whether to provide an alternative date, the Gamma connection shall continue to be provided to the SU until a date has been established with the above process, even when the Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date has passed. Should a later date be determined, this later date shall become the new Legacy Gateway Connection Backstop Date for that particular SU's Gamma connection, or where the process determines that the original Backstop Date should be preserved, that shall remain the date beyond which communications will no longer be supported.

4.2. Arrangements for new DCC Gateway Connections

80. Once the NETMAD is designated on 26 January 2026, DCC will no longer take orders for new DCC Gateway Connections on the existing Gamma-based service. Instead, all new connections will be provided on the DCC Connect service. This provision will apply to any requests for a new DCC Gateway Connection that are in progress but not yet live at the time the NETMAD is updated. For these requests, DCC will work with SUs on a case-by-case basis and the SU will have the ability to determine whether they change their in-progress order to DCC Connect or continue with a new Gamma gateway connection.
81. For new gateway connection requests during the period between the NETMAD designation in January 2026 and the DCC Connect Go-Live in March 2026, DCC will advise SUs that the earliest date that their new connection can Go-Live is when the new DCC Connect service goes live on 25 March 2026. During this time, the order and installation process can begin however and DCC will work with SUs to complete as many of these steps as possible in advance of the new service going live.

Q2

Do you agree with DCC's proposed amendments to Section 15 of the NETMAD to deliver the transitional arrangements for DCC Connect?

Please provide any comments you may have on the proposed changes and your rationale for your views

Q3

Do you agree with the proposed approach for cutover, including the steps that SUs must take to support cutover?

Please provide your rationale for your views

5. Charging

5.1. Transitional Connection Charges

82. SUs can choose whether to pay for connection charges for physical connections either via a three-year amortised period or over a one-year period. This is to meet the conditions of SEC Appendix G which requires DCC to offer these options. For DCC Gateway HV Cloud Connections, only annual charges are payable, and there are no connection charges.
83. For a DCC Connect connection that is replacing a Gamma connection, where the annual charge included in the final offer is equal to or less than the current Gamma annual charge, it will be deemed to be accepted, unless the SU rejects the offer within 14 calendar days. This measure has been taken to progress the order process in a timely manner and to mitigate the risk of offers becoming invalid due to delay.
84. Where a DCC Gateway Party's Gamma connection has been replaced with a DCC Connect gateway connection before the expiry of the Gamma connection period, no annual charges will be levied on the DCC Gateway Party in respect of its DCC Connect Gateway Connection until the first Working Day after the last day of the connection period for the relevant Gamma connection. For example, when a SU has two months remaining of their Gamma connection period when they cutover to DCC Connect, DCC will cover the cost of the new DCC Connect annual charge for those first two months and SUs will pay the remaining annual charge of the connection period i.e. this will be pro-rated.
85. Following acceptance of an offer for a DCC Connect Gateway Connection, should the SU cancel the order of its connection at any time, the SU will be liable for the full connection charges (for physical connections only) and annual charges (for physical and cloud connections) set out in the offer provided by the DCC. DCC is currently in discussions with the DCC Connect Service Provider to include provision of early termination options for when a SU cancels an order after it has been accepted, which would remove some or all of the liability for SUs for connection and annual charges. DCC will update SUs on the outcome of this discussion and amend the provisions accordingly once this process has concluded.

5.2. DCC's Charging Statement

86. DCC will incorporate new Explicit Charges into the Charging Statement and SEC Section K (SEC Charging Methodology) for the DCC Connect service. These are listed as follows:
 - **DCC Connect Gateway charge:** A charge for the SU's chosen DCC Gateway Connection Option (and where applicable speed) will be added, consisting of a connection charge (for physical connections only, not cloud connections) and an annual charge. Connection charges and annual charges for Gamma already exist, whereas this new charge relates to DCC Connect.
 - **Site visits:** A charge to pay the costs that DCC has incurred where DCC attends a SU's premises to carry out a site survey, or to install, maintain or remove equipment and that site visit fails, where the cause of the failure can be attributed directly to the SU. This would be where a date

has been agreed between DCC and the SU but then access is not provided on the agreed date. Where DCC is responsible for the failed site visit, no charge will be incurred by the SU. This charge would also be payable in circumstance where a site visit has occurred, and the SU has elected not to accept DCC's offer for the connection.

- **Changes in bandwidth:** A charge for any changes to the connection bandwidth (within the chosen connection option bandwidth).
- **DCC Gateway Equipment change:** A charge for the relocation of DCC Gateway Equipment, or the removal of DCC Connect gateway equipment where the connection has been cancelled or the connection contract has not been renewed.
- **DCC Gateway configuration change:** A charge for a change in the configuration of the DCC Gateway Connection. This is a change to the DCC Gateway Party's systems or networks associated with the operation of its DCC Gateway Connection and the DCC shall publish and maintain a list of such changes that could be requested on the Self-Service Interface.
- **DCC gateway SSRA:** A charge where an SU requests that a SSRA be carried out for the installation of DCC Gateway Equipment. A SSRA is an optional risk assessment to identify and control risks, and facilitate planning in order to minimise disruptions to the installation of DCC Gateway Equipment, and is separate to the generic risk assessment carried out under a site survey.

87. These charges will be required to be in place by the point that the NETMAD is designated in January 2026, by which point DCC will begin the ordering process for the new DCC Connect service. Therefore, whilst the Department will eventually consult on the SEC Section K changes to incorporate these Explicit Charges on an enduring basis, DCC is consulting on incorporating them into the NETMAD in the interim, so they are in place by the time it is designated.
88. These charges will also need to be reflected in DCC's Charging Statement in accordance with the Smart Meter Communications Licence. As such, DCC has included a draft Charging Statement with this consultation, and we intend for it to be updated in parallel with the designation of the NETMAD or as soon as possible afterwards. Table 5a has been added to the draft Charging Statement to show the new Service Charges for DCC Connect gateway connections DCC note that it must provide the Authority and all SEC Parties with three-months' notice before the date on which it intends to update the Charging Statement. DCC intends for this three-month notice period for all SEC Parties to commence from the publication of this consultation and will be providing Notice to the Authority separately.
89. The Notice letter to the Authority and draft Charging Statement can be found in Attachment 2 and Attachment 3 respectively, of this document.

Q4

Do you agree with the proposed charging arrangements for DCC Connect?

Please provide your rationale for your views

6. Designation of the NETMAD changes

90. Once the NETMAD is designated in January 2026, new gateway connections will only be fulfilled over the DCC Connect network but the earliest point that DCC Connect connections can be used to communicate over is planned to be the Go Live date of 25 March 2026. Over the following 12 months, all existing DCC Gateway Connections provided over the Gamma service will continue to be provided over this service until they have been cutover to the new service.
91. This means that for the period following the DCC Connect service Go Live up until the final cutover has been completed, there will be a mixture of DCC Gateway Connections provided under the existing arrangements and DCC Gateway Connections provided under the revised arrangements. The SEC will need to cater for both sets of arrangements during this time.

92. DCC are proposing that, subject to the timely receipt of DCC's conclusions report on this consultation, the Department will designate the changes to SEC Appendix AU on 26 January 2026 or as soon as reasonably practicable within one month thereafter as a contingency measure if required. This will retain the existing arrangements for Gamma-based connections in the main-body SEC (as modified by Section 13 of NETMAD), while the revised arrangements for DCC Connect-based connections will be provided based on the arrangements in the NETMAD. A draft direction for the designation of the NETMAD can be found in Appendix A of this consultation document.

7. Next steps

93. Following the closure of this consultation, DCC will assess respondents' views and amend the draft SEC changes as required. DCC will then submit an amended version of these documents to the Department that it considers suitable for designation by the Secretary of State.
94. DCC is aiming to provide a report to the Department by no later than 12 January 2026. This report will contain DCC's consideration of the responses to this consultation as well as the proposed updated version of the SEC changes and the proposed date for the designation of these. DCC will publish its conclusions document on its website.

8. Consultation questions and how to respond

95. We are seeking your views on the following questions:

Q1

Do you agree with DCC's proposed amendments in Section 14 of the NETMAD and Annexes 1 – 5 of the NETMAD to deliver the enduring solution for DCC Connect?

Please provide any comments you may have on the proposed changes and your rationale for your views

Q2

Do you agree with DCC's proposed amendments to Section 15 of the NETMAD to deliver the transitional arrangements for DCC Connect?

Please provide any comments you may have on the proposed changes and your rationale for your views

Q3

Do you agree with the proposed approach for cutover, including the steps that SUs must take to support cutover?

Please provide your rationale for your views

Q4

Do you agree with the proposed charging arrangements for DCC Connect?

Please provide your rationale for your views

96. Please provide responses using the attached response form by **17:00 on 12 December 2025** to DCC at consultations@smartdcc.co.uk.
97. Consultation responses may be published on our website (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.

98. If you have any questions about this consultation, please contact us at consultations@smartdcc.co.uk.

9. Attachments

99. This consultation includes three attachments:
- **Attachment 1:** Proposed changes to SEC Appendix AU for DCC Connect including Annexes 1 – 5.
 - **Attachment 2:** DSP DCC Connect Charges Notice Letter to Ofgem 16.10.2025.
 - **Attachment 3:** Draft updated DCC Charging Statement for DCC Connect. Table 5a has been added to show the new Service Charges for DCC Connect gateway connections.
 - **Attachment 4:** Consultation response template

Appendix A – Draft direction text for the NETMAD

This appendix contains the text that the Department plans to use for the approval of the NETMAD changes for the DCC Connect solution.

This direction is made for the purposes of the smart meter communications licences granted under the Electricity Act 1989 and the Gas Act 1986 (such licences being the “DCC Licence”) and the Smart Energy Code designated by the Secretary of State pursuant to the DCC Licence (such code being the “SEC”).

Words and expressions used in this direction shall be interpreted in accordance with Section A (Definitions and Interpretation) of the SEC.

Pursuant to Condition 22 of the DCC Licence and Section X5 (Incorporation of Certain Documents into this Code) of the SEC, the Secretary of State directs that, with effect from 26 January 2026, the Network Evolution Transition and Migration Approach Document previously designated and incorporated into the SEC as Appendix AU is hereby re-designated and incorporated in the form set out in the proceeding document to this direction.

For the avoidance of doubt such re-designation of these documents shall be without prejudice to anything done under the DCC Licence or the SEC on or after this document being re-designated, or the continuing effectiveness of anything done in this document prior to its re-designation (which shall have effect as if done under the re-designated document).

This direction is also being notified to the SEC Administrator.