

## **PRODUCT CONTROL SHEET**

Title of Product/Paper	<b>Migration of UK Link File Formats</b>		
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Product Owner (Accountable)	Andrew Amato / Andrew Wallace		
Author of Paper (Responsible)	Sarah Jones		
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Circulation	For review by stakeholders prior to submission to REC Steering Board for decision
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## 1 INTRODUCTION

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- 1.1 One of the key elements of the REC Technical Specification is a Data Specification that will include:
- A Data Item Catalogue - containing details of all the data items that are sent and received between Market Participants, Service Providers and Third Parties (such as Price Comparison Websites);
  - A Message Catalogue - containing the list of all messages sent/received between Market Participants / Service Providers. This will include the source and destination of each message, details of the data items contained within the message and the message structure; and
  - E2E Processes and Interaction Sequence Diagrams (ISDs) - the graphical representation of the End to End (E2E) switching process (currently presented in ABACUS) and any other process defined within the REC, together with ISDs which illustrate the source, destination, flow and sequencing of messaging between parties.
- 1.2 As a minimum, it is expected that the Data Specification will include metadata relating to electricity and gas messages currently defined within the electricity Data Transfer Catalogue (DTC), RGMA Data Flow Catalogue (DFC) and gas Supplier DFC, together with new Central Switching Service (CSS) data items and messages.
- 1.3 The case for migrating the electricity DTC and gas DFCs as part of the Retail Code Consolidation Significant Code Review (SCR) was relatively straightforward as these are currently held within the MRA and SPAA respectively; and therefore need to find a new home when those codes are closed.
- 1.4 However, further consideration is required in relation to the inclusion of UK Link file formats (i.e. the metadata relating to data items and messages sent to and from the UK Link System) which are currently defined within the UK Link Manual under UNC governance.
- 1.5 This paper provides an update on current activities being undertaken to review the UK Link file formats and discusses the options for governing this metadata following the implementation of the REC. **It is proposed that UK Link file formats are migrated to the REC as part of the Retail Code Consolidation SCR, with governance remaining in the UNC, subject to formal cross code co-ordination.**
- 1.6 **We welcome view from the Change Management Committee on this proposal. A formal decision will be requested at the November REC Steering Group meeting.**
- 1.7 We are bringing this paper back to RDUG now that the EDTF has published its report and following our further assessment of how best to develop the REC Technical Specification. Our initial view is that there would be a minimal chance of delay associated with incorporating the UK Link file formats information into the REC as part of the Retail Code Consolidation SCR.

## **2 EXISTING UK LINK PROVISIONS**

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- 2.1 Messages and interfaces governed under the UNC are defined within the UK Link Manual covering interfaces to and from the UK Link system (which includes the UK Link Application, UK Link Gemini, the Data Enquiry System (DES), and the Contact Management System (CMS)). These systems are used by the Central Data Service Provider (CDSP) and UK Link Users, i.e. Shippers, Transporters (including IGTs and the Transmission System Operator) and the Daily Metered Service Provider (DMSPs).
- 2.2 Examples of flows include:
- Supply Point Administration – i.e. data flows to maintain the Supply Point Register from Shipper Users;
  - Meter Reading flows – records received from Shipper Users and the Daily Metered Service Provider;
  - Retail Gas Metering Arrangements (RGMA) flows i.e. the JOB and UPD sent from the Shipper to the CDSP to update meter details;
  - Settlement flows – invoices from CDSP to Shipper Users on behalf of Transporters.; and
  - Delta flows to Transporters following updates of the Supply Point Register.
- 2.3 Over the past year, industry has been discussing the potential to consolidate the information held within the UK Link Manual with the SPAA DFCs to create a single gas data catalogue. This would reflect the position in electricity where retail and settlement data and messages are defined in a single place. As a precursor to this work, Xoserve initiated a review of the UK Link file formats to ensure these are fit for purpose to enable harmonisation with SPAA metadata and to facilitate new interface channels with CSS. This review is ongoing and it is not clear that there would be sufficient time for a single gas catalogue to be developed ahead of the implementation of the operational REC in April 2021.
- 2.4 One of the key concerns identified with the development of a single gas catalogue is the associated governance. At present there are no formal cross code governance arrangements between SPAA and UNC and our initial view is that it would not be practical to introduce these ahead of the closure of SPAA. It is therefore proposed that any consolidation exercise should focus on potential inclusion in the REC Data Specification, rather than SPAA.

## **3 AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION**

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- 3.1 There are three main areas to consider as part of any consolidation activity:
- a) Harmonisation of metadata into a consistent format to simplify user interpretation;
  - b) Hosting and publication of the relevant metadata registers; and

- c) Responsibility and control i.e. the role of various parties in the change control process.
- 3.2 For the metadata currently defined in the electricity DTC and SPAA DFCs, the position in relation to a) and b) is straightforward, with metadata migrating into the REC Data Specification in accordance with the agreed metadata standard (which will be the subject of a separate paper). However, these points need more detailed consideration with respect to UK Link file formats, as set out below.

#### **Format of metadata**

- 3.3 As highlighted in section 2, Xoserve is currently carrying out a review of the UK Link file formats, therefore it would seem sensible for the output of this review to be consistent with the REC metadata standard, regardless of whether the metadata itself migrates to the REC. Whilst this would not result in a consolidated gas and electricity data catalogue, it would allow parties to develop a consistent understanding of metadata regardless of the code under which it is governed.
- 3.4 The REC metadata standard is currently being developed for inclusion in the Autumn consultation.

#### **Hosting and publication**

- 3.5 The next level of consolidation would be to transfer responsibility for hosting the underlying metadata and associated publication of UK Link file formats from Xoserve to the REC Code Manager. Under this approach, control of the metadata would remain with UNC Parties, however UK Link file formats would be published as part of the overall REC Data Specification. Where changes to the metadata are agreed under the UNC, a request will be sent to the REC Code Manager to update the relevant catalogues and re-publish the Data Specification.
- 3.6 The added benefit to this approach is that it will enable each party to look in a single place for information relating to gas and electricity retail and settlement data. This would be consistent with the recommendations from the Energy Data Task Force in relation to the development of a single data catalogue to hold all metadata.
- 3.7 It is therefore proposed that further work should be initiated as part of the overall Data Specification development, to fully understand how this option would work in practice i.e. the required changes to the UNC to link to the format and content of files defined in the REC Data Specification, and the inclusion of associated service lines within the REC Code Manager service definition.

#### **Governance**

- 3.8 Under either of the models above e.g. UK Link file formats continuing to be hosted under the UNC or consolidation into the REC, it is important to ensure that the overall governance framework places responsibility and control over the actual metadata on those organisations that create and / or use the relevant data.

- 3.9 At present the gas arrangements include UK Link and RGMA flows that are used together to deliver the end to end flow of information from Meter Asset Managers (MAMs) to the CDSP e.g. the ONJOB data flow is sent from MAM to Supplier following the installation of a meter. A further ONJOB is then sent from Supplier to Shipper under SPAA governance. Information from the ONJOB is then transferred to the CDSP by the Shipper via the JOB data flow governed by the UNC.
- 3.10 Due to the significant level of interaction between UK Link and RGMA flows, the data item definition must be the same within both arrangements. However, updates to the metadata for data items and messages used within both SPAA and UNC are not automatically linked. Therefore, changes to this metadata must be progressed under two separate governance processes in order to ensure these remain consistent.
- 3.11 Historically this has resulted in issues where changes approved under one governance process have been rejected under the other. A key aspect of the proposed REC change process is to mitigate these types of issue by implementing a robust cross code governance framework to manage changes that impact multiple codes. Further information on this cross code governance framework is included in a separate paper and is expected to be delivered regardless of whether the UK Link file formats are hosted within the REC Data Specification.

#### **4 MIGRATION APPROACH AND TIMESCALES**

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- 4.1 The overall data catalogue migration plan proposes that the REC metadata standard will be developed over the summer 2019 and included in the Autumn consultation. This work will be carried out in parallel with the review of UK Link file formats. Subject to the views of RDUG and the October 2019 REC Steering Group, we will discuss with Xoserve the recommendation to apply the REC metadata standard to UK Link file formats.
- 4.2 Once the proposal to migrate metadata from UK Link to the REC Data Catalogue has been tested with RDUG, the REC Steering Board will be asked to determine whether to include the migration of UK Link metadata as part of the Retail Code Consolidation SCR. If the migration of metadata is included in the SCR, work will be undertaken early 2020 to carry out any transformation activities with the proposed REC metadata issued for consultation in April 2020. This will be further developed throughout 2020, based on feedback received via the consultation, and baselined in November 2020, alongside other REC provisions.

#### **5 RECOMMENDATION**

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- 5.1 Change Management Committee is invited to:
- **NOTE** the contents of this paper;
  - **PROVIDE VIEWS** on the proposal to apply the REC metadata standard to UK Link file formats; and

- **PROVIDE VIEWS** on the proposal migrate UK Link file formats as part of the Retail Code Consolidation SCR.