

**UNC Workgroup 0593 Minutes**  
**Provision of access to data for Price Comparison Websites and**  
**Third Party Intermediaries**  
**Thursday 22 September 2016**  
**Consort House, 6 Homer Road, Solihull B91 3QQ**

**Attendees**

Chris Shanley (Chair)	(CS)	Joint Office
Lorna Dupont (Secretary)	(LD)	Joint Office
Andrew Margan	(AM)	British Gas
Andy Clasper	(AC)	National Grid Distribution
Bob Fletcher	(BF)	Joint Office
Carl Whitehouse	(CW)	First Utility
Colette Baldwin*	(CB)	E.ON Energy
Dave Addison	(DA)	Xoserve
Hilary Chapman	(HC)	Scotia Gas Networks
Huw Comerford	(HCo)	Utilita
James Rigby	(JR)	RWE npower
John Welch	(JW)	RWE npower
Jon Dixon*	(JD)	Ofgem
Lorna Lewin	(LL)	DONG Energy
Maria Hesketh*	(MH)	ScottishPower
Mark Jones	(MJ)	SSE
Michele Downes	(MD)	Xoserve
Peter Thompson	(PT)	Utilities Intermediaries Association (UIA)
Rachel Hinsley	(RH)	Xoserve
Rob Cameron-Higgs	(RCH)	Flow Energy
Sean Hayward	(SH)	Ofgem
Shanna Key	(SK)	Northern Gas Networks
Simon Moore*	(SM)	Citizens Advice
Steve Britton*	(SB)	Cornwall Energy

\* *via teleconference*

Copies of all papers are available at: <http://www.gasgovernance.co.uk/0593/220916>

The Workgroup Report is due to be presented at the UNC Modification Panel on 20 October 2016.

**1.0 Introduction and Status Review**

**1.1. Review of Minutes (25 August 2016)**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

**2.0 Consideration of Amended Modification**

SK confirmed that amendments had been made to make it a clearer match to the CMA order.

Noting this was for domestic switching only, SM asked if there was an expectation that a subsequent modification will be brought forward to cover micro business consumers. SK responded that this was being looked at and that information was being gathered, but there was no plan to raise a modification at present.

PT observed that the UIA would welcome an expansion of the modification to cover non-domestic, believing it to be a missed opportunity if this was not included. Whilst noting that this modification had been constructed specifically to address the CMA report, from a more holistic standpoint PT suggested the wider industry needed access to data on a supply point by supply point basis to aid with transfer failures. This supply point data is already made available in the domestic market, but not in the non-domestic market, even though SCOGES covers all Supply Points. PT believed it would not be a big extension of the modification and commented that the CMA may not always be aware of the impact that certain policy statements may have. To assume that the CMA meant purely domestic might be a wrong assumption, and to broaden the basis of the modification might be more prudent.

A discussion ensued. This was a Permissions modification allowing data to be released. There seemed to be a relatively clear instruction from the CMA relating to the release of domestic market data to Price Comparison Websites (PCWs) and there were concerns that if the focus of the modification was altered then it could suffer delays.

The CMA's understanding of definitions, in particular Third Party Intermediaries (TPIs), and the various distinctions, appeared to be quite vague, and it was remarked that PCWs currently had a stronger role than TPIs in representing domestic customers.

SM drew attention to the Solution and the statement currently set in square brackets, i.e. *[PCWs/TPIs are recommended to be part of the Ofgem confidence code for faster processing of organisational validations.]* and suggested it was a sensible to see this included in the proposal. SK believed that this point might need to be clarified further when the service is being built and would seek further clarification as part of planned Modification amendments.

The facility to access data as a requirement is across both the PCW and TPI spectrum.

It was noted that the service would not be available until post Nexus.

### **3.0 Consideration of Definitions**

See 6.0, below.

### **4.0 Review of Relevant Objectives**

Not discussed.

### **5.0 Consideration of Wider Industry Impacts**

Not discussed.

### **6.0 Consideration of Legal Text**

The September UNC Modification Panel had requested that text be provided.

SK confirmed that text was under preparation, explaining that what had been provided for today's review (an initial draft) was a rough structure of what the legal text was expected to look like once complete. It will include definitions of terms, the text of which will be added to TPD Section V5, and a list of the data to be provided to PCW/TPIs once reasonable terms are met.

PT reiterated the point that TPIs tend to work on behalf of I&C customers and not the domestic sector, and explained the relationships and working practices between TPIs and customers. The text may therefore require further clarification. PT had responded to the CMA's report regarding the misinterpretation of these definitions, and a clear definition was required to establish what was meant. SM added that the pattern of the market may change in the future and flexibility is required to try to take account of this. A definition of what TPIs do in each market would be helpful to include at this point. SK pointed out that she was currently using the CMA definition, and would consider what additional clarity could be achieved. PT suggested that perhaps the easiest solution would be to broaden the modification to encompass all.

HC was of the view that the TPI definition did not work as currently drafted, and the problem seemed to lie with the definition rather than the modification itself. HC then suggested the purpose of the modification could be amended to just address PCWs and TPIs be excluded entirely. It was recognised that the modification was predicated on the CMA definitions, but this seemed to create more problems. SM advised that work on this was being done with the CMA and an improved definition may result in the future.

PT observed that some parties would like to have access to data for every site and 'cherry pick'; when allowing data to be accessed PCWs' expectations would need to be managed.

It was also noted that the assumption must be made that PCWs will use accessed data responsibly, but there was the risk that this may not be so in all cases, and improper use of data may indirectly affect customers - domestic consumers may receive unwanted information about change of suppliers, and how will this be managed?

At the conclusion of the discussion, SK confirmed that the square brackets would be removed; clarity regarding access to data would be added; at TPD V5.18 the reference to TPI would either be removed or clarified; the definitions would be left 'as is'.

## **7.0 Completion of Workgroup Report**

CB asked if a number of issues remained outstanding and CS highlighted although there had been some useful debate that the approach was in line with the amended Modification; scope was limited to provision of access to Domestic Consumer data and the CMA definitions would continue to be used. PT encouraged the raising of a further modification to include the I&C sector. There was a brief discussion, wherein SK reiterated the aspiration to have approval by 01 December 2016 (to be effective after Project Nexus). However, to receive a decision from the Authority by 01 December 2016 was acknowledged to be unlikely.

It was agreed that rather than delay any further progress the Workgroup should review and conclude its report.

There was no consensus amongst participants on whether or not this modification should follow self-governance procedures and the modification continues to be not self-governance.

The report was updated to recommend that the modification should proceed to consultation.

## 8.0 Review of Outstanding Actions

**0801:** Ofgem (SH) to look to provide clarification around potential definitions applicable to the modification and to confirm whether or not Ofgem would be happy for the modification to reference domestic sites only.

**Update:** SH confirmed that it applied to domestic sites only. **Closed**

**0802:** Northern Gas Networks (SK) to consider providing suitable (non confidential/bi-lateral) supporting documentation, along with confirmation that these can be published on the Joint Office web site, for consideration at the next meeting.

**Update:** SK confirmed that this information, i.e. the standard framework of the service contract between the GTs and parties (PCWs) requiring the data, still had to be provided. Noting this was the last meeting of this Workgroup 0593, it was agreed that sight of this was still required, and it was agreed to transfer this action to the responsibility of the Distribution Workgroup. **Closed and transferred to the October Distribution Workgroup.**

## 9.0 Next Steps

Taking account of the comments received an amended modification will be provided, along with the legal text and commentary.

The Workgroup Report will then be updated and submitted to the October UNC Modification Panel.

## 10.0 Any Other Business

None raised.

## 11.0 Diary Planning

No further Workgroup meetings were required.

**Action Table (22 September 2016)**

Action Ref	Meeting Date	Minute Ref	Action	Owner	Status Update
<b>0801</b>	25/08/16	1.0	To look to provide clarification around potential definitions applicable to the modification and to confirm whether or not Ofgem would be happy for the modification to reference domestic sites only.	Ofgem (SH)	<b>Closed</b>
<b>0802</b>	25/08/16	1.0	To consider providing suitable (non confidential / bi-lateral) supporting documentation, along with confirmation that these can	NGN (SK)	<b>Closed</b> <i>Transferred to the responsibility</i>

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**Action Table (22 September 2016)**

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			be published on the Joint Office web site, for consideration at the next meeting.		<i>of the October Distribution Workgroup.</i>