Vacant Site Guidance Document

Version 1.0

Document Control

Version	Date	Reason for Change

Introduction

This document sets out the criteria whereby a Shipper may include a Supply Point in the Gas vacant process. Only Class 4 Non-Daily Metered (NDM) sites are eligible for a Supply Point vacant status to be applied.

Please note that this process will fall into the remit of the Performance Assurance Committee (PAC) and Shippers may be called upon to justify their position.

This is the criteria in which a Shipper may designate a Supply Point as Vacant

1. Site is Live (and)
2. Site is in the Shippers Ownership (and)
3. Site has a Meter installed (and)
4. Site is not Isolated (and)
5. Site is Product Class 4 (and)
    a. Annually (or) Monthly Read (MRF) (and)
    b. Small Supply Point (SSP) (or) Large Supply Point (LSP) (and)
    c. Independent Gas Transporter (IGT) (or) Gas Transporter (GT) (and)
    d. Standard Meter (DUMB) or Non-active AMR Meter or SMETS Meter with a Non-Active DCC Flag (and)
6. Site is Unoccupied (and)
    a. Property is not currently being used as a dwelling
    b. Property is not currently being used as a place of business
7. No Access to Site
    a. Shipper authorised representative is unable to gain access to the property to read the meter*
    b. Shipper is unable to contact the Customer for meter readings**
    c. Customer has not provided meter readings

*Shippers must be able to demonstrate a Shipper authorised representative has attempted to visit and access the property to obtain meter reading(s). There must be two visits, at least 3 months apart but no more than 9 months apart, with the latest visit being within 3 months of requested entry to the Gas Vacant process.

Noting that there must be no other information received or obtained that suggests anything other than a Vacant Status, otherwise the qualifying visits are void.

(and)

** Shipper must proactively make reasonable attempts to identify the owner of the property to obtain meter readings. The following could be seen as proactive attempts to identify the owner of the property to obtain meter readings:

- Checks to see whether the same problems in obtaining meter readings occur for Electricity (noting that this is only possible where the Supplier supplies both Gas and Electricity to the property); or

- Reasonable attempts have been made to contact such bodies as estate agents, letting agents, councils, the land registry etc to find out who the owner is. Where the owner has been identified, attempts have been made, and recorded, to contact the owner and obtain meter readings without success

The Shipper would need to maintain records of the checks outlined above that have been carried out in their monitoring of Vacant sites.

Rejection of Vacant Status

At the time the Shipper requests the CDSP to enter the site into a Vacant Status the CDSP will validate against criteria 1 to 4 and 5a to 5c; the CDSP will reject the request for vacant status where validation of vacant criteria has not been met. A further validation check will be conducted by the CDSP to retrospectively check for Meter readings from the date of the first qualifying No Access visit, as confirmed in the Shipper request, up to and including the date the vacant site request is received. Where readings have been submitted the CDSP will reject the request for vacant status.

Where the CDSP rejects a request for a vacant status the CDSP will notify the shipper of the rejection and the reason as soon as reasonably practical.

Maintain Vacant Status

For a site to remain Vacant, Shipper must be able to demonstrate the Shipper authorised representative has attempted to visit the property to obtain meter readings every 6 months, from the date the Vacant Status was set. The Shipper must also continue to proactively make reasonable attempts to identify the owner of the property to obtain meter readings.

The Shipper would need to maintain records of the checks outlined above that have been carried out in their monitoring of Vacant sites.

AQ Corrections to 1 – Winter Consumption

Please note that any AQ submitted will be subject to current AQ correction validation rules. Noting that a site with a Rolling AQ above 293k will have a Winter Consumption applied. Submitting a AQ amendment to 1 (where the site has a WAR band applied) will cause a rejection that will require resolving before an AQ can be accepted, as you can't have a Winter Consumption that is greater than a sites AQ for a new AQ of '1' the corrected/requested Winter Consumption will need to be '0'

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: **Why does the modification only cover Product Class 4 sites?**

A: As Modification 0664VVS will class change Product Class 2 and 3 sites to Product Class 4 following a period of poor read performance, and Product Class 1 being considered to be too large in volume for this process, it was agreed that the Vacant process only be applicable to Product Class 4.

Q: **Why do you need to have two visits, at least 3 months apart before being able to apply for a Vacant status?**

A: The timeline for sites to become valid for a vacant status mirror's very closely the already established Electricity P196 vacant process.

Q: **Why does a site have to remain in Vacant status for 12 months before capacity relief can be requested?**

A: A communicating SMART meter returning (at least) monthly non advancing reads will bring the AQ down to 1 over a 12-month period. It was the view of the Workgroup that an AQ

amendment to 1 can only be applied after 12 months for Vacant sites to remain similar to this process.

Q: **Why is a pre-vacant value re-instated?**

A: If the Shipper does not amend the Vacant AQ (AQ of 1) once Exit Criteria has been met the Shipper would continue to receive Capacity relief without a pre-vacant AQ values being reinstated. As this would impact UIG it was the view of the workgroup to reinstate pre-vacant AQs where no action has been taken by the Shipper.

Q: **Why does the CDSP reinstated pre-vacant values have a backstop applied?**

A: If no backstop was applied this would mean that once the Shipper submits a new read for a previously vacant SMP, the rolling AQ would be immediately pulled back down. The AQ would, therefore, be closer to the vacant AQ value than the re-instated pre-vacant value, negating the impact of reinstating the pre-vacant AQ values.