

**UNC Request Workgroup 0778R Minutes
Gas Vacant Sites Process review**

Wednesday 29 June 2022

via Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Alan Raper (Chair)	(AR)	Joint Office
Karen Visgarda (Secretary)	(KV)	Joint Office
Andy Clasper	(AC)	Cadent
Ben Mulcahy	(BM)	Northern Gas Networks
Clare Manning	(CM)	E.ON Next
Colin Minto	(CMi)	Shell Energy UK
Dave Mitchell	(DM)	SGN
Fiona Cottam	(FC)	Correla on behalf of Xoserve
John Harris	(JH)	Correla on behalf of Xoserve
Kate Lancaster	(KL)	Xoserve
Lee Greenwood	(LG)	British Gas
Michelle Brown	(MB)	Energy Assets
Nicky Kingham	(NK)	Correla on behalf of Xoserve
Oorlagh Chapman	(OC)	Centrica
Paul Senior	(PS)	Utilita Energy

Copies of all papers are available at: <https://www.gasgovernance.co.uk/0778/290622>

The Workgroup Report is due to be presented at the UNC Modification Panel by 18 August 2022 (now expected 21 July 2022).

1. Introduction and Status Review

Alan Raper (AR) welcomed all to the meeting.

1.1. Approval of Minutes (27 May 2022)

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

1.2. Approval of Late Papers

It was agreed by the Workgroup to consider the latest version of the draft business rules / modification.

1.3. Review of Outstanding Actions

There were no outstanding actions for discussion.

2. Consideration of Workgroup Report (Report to July Panel)

AR advised that the Workgroup Report was nearing completion in readiness for the July Panel. He noted and that the Business Rules and safety aspects still needed to be developed, and then encompassed within the Draft Modification.

AR explained his aspiration for the meeting was to finalise the Workgroup Report and gain confirmation that the 0778R Workgroup could be closed. All agreed with this suggestion.

Lee Greenwood (LG) advised that he had been developing the Business Rules within the draft Modification further to the last Workgroup meeting. The draft Modification can be viewed via the link: <https://www.gasgovernance.co.uk/0778/290622>

The key points raised have been captured below:

- Clare Manning (CM) questioned the terminology of ‘meter reader’ and suggested it could be a debt collector. It was agreed the wording should be changed to ‘meter reader or other representative’. LG agreed to make this amendment.
- AR proposed the timeline for site visits should be 6 – 9 months, as this was more realistic, and asked if this would be in addition to the 4-month timeline for Must Reads.
- CM stated that Richard Pomroy (RP) was looking at the Must Read provisions in their entirety, AR proposed that this aspect could also be included in due course.
- A brief general discussion took place in relation to when a site would be placed into a vacant site status during which Andy Clasper (AC) stated it should be removed from the Must Read process. LG was of the view that it needed to remain in the Must Read process, as it was possible that a third party could still gain access.
- Ben Mulcahy (BM) proposed that there would probably be a huge overlap between vacant sites population and sites falling into the Must Read process and asked, in the case of a Must Read obtained under entry warrant, would that site then lose its vacant status. LG confirmed that this was correct. BM noted that it was cyclical process.
- CM noted that with the 4 months and 6-9 months site visits that meant a site would be visited 3 times. LG agreed and stated that if it was not revalidated between 6-9 months then it would be reinstated to a non-vacant status.
- CM queried if an IGT Modification was required and AR confirmed that yes this was correct and that he had already had conversations with Anne Jackson, Gemserv regarding this matter.
- AR requested that LG produced a Process Flow diagram to provide clarity of the vacant site life-cycle.
- AR stated that the safety aspects still needed to be addressed in relation to the inspection meters every two years, (while noting that these provisions had changed over the years), removing meters and, in line with the regulations, external isolation of gas services. AR quoted the Ofgem decision letter from 2011, regarding Modification 0282/0282A (Introduction of a process to manage Vacant sites), where Ofgem did not approve the proposal, largely on safety grounds. AR asked for views as to how to manage the safety aspect and Dave Mitchell (DM) said he would have to re-read the Ofgem decision letter in full, prior to making any comment and other participants concurred with DM.
- LG said from an isolation perspective it was in relation to whether the meter was inside or outside the property from a gaining access aspect. If access was possible then it could be isolated. LG also noted that Modification 0674V (Performance Assurance Techniques and Controls), would also help to keep eyes on the meters. AR said in essence that Modification 0674V was about settlement and not safety, AR did, however, agree it should help with the visibility of number premises classified as vacant.

- AR provided an overview of the content of the Workgroup Report and drew attention to specific areas of interests in relation to amendments. AR proposed the Request Workgroup had now run its course, all agreed that it could now be closed.
- AR confirmed that he would finalise the Workgroup Report and publish and requested any comments/suggestions should be sent to him prior to Friday 08 July 2022, in readiness for the final submission of the Workgroup Report to Panel on 21 July 2022. Send comment marked for Alan Raper, at: enquiries@gasgovernance.co.uk

3. Next Steps

AR reiterated that the Workgroup Report would be published by Friday 01 July 2022 and that any comments should be sent for his attention to the Joint Office before Friday 08 July 2022 via: enquiries@gasgovernance.co.uk

The Workgroup Report would then be submitted to the July Panel.

AR confirmed the Request Workgroup would now be closed

4. Any Other Business

None.

5. Diary Planning

AR confirmed the Request Workgroup was now closed.