

Workstream Report
Facilitating a Supply Point Enquiry Service for Non-Domestic Supply Points
Modification Reference Number 0296

Version 1.0

This Workstream Report is presented for the UNC Modification Panel's consideration. The Distribution Workstream considers that the Proposal is sufficiently developed and should now proceed to the Consultation Phase. The Workstream also recommends that the Panel requests the preparation of legal text for this Modification Proposal.

1 The Modification Proposal

In January 2010, Ofgem rejected UNC Modification Proposal 0253, "*Facilitating a Supply Point Enquiry Service for Large Supply Points*" citing concerns that the proposal may lead to domestic data being included on any report, and thus presenting potential issues with the Data Protection Act. They also referenced the lack of costs provided for the proposed report, and commented that they believed it was therefore difficult to confirm the proposal met the relevant objectives. Finally, Ofgem commented on the current ambiguity within the UNC about the definition of "contemplated" within section G 1.17.

British Gas have raised this proposal in order to address those concerns whilst still amending the UNC in order to permit access to a Supply Point Enquiry service for all *non-domestic* supply points. In addition, and although British Gas interprets section G 1.17 to mean that we should gain the customer's permission before submitting a Supply Point Enquiry, we also seek to address Ofgem's concern about the potentially ambiguous drafting here.

Presently, the UNC (G1.17) only permits a Supply Point Enquiry where an Enquiring User is "*contemplating submitting a Supply Point Nomination*". This means that, for a User to provide a quotation to a customer, the User must first submit the Supply Point Enquiry to the Transporters Agent and then receive the Supply Point Enquiry data.

The problem is that the process of submitting a Supply Point Enquiry and receipt and secondary processing of this data into a quotation adds time and cost to each User.

If the UNC permitted the provision of Supply Point Enquiry data for all non-domestic supply points, and this data was available to Users as and when they needed it, then Users would be able to improve their internal quotation processes and possibly remove costs from the wider business.

Users may then choose contract with xoserve directly for the provision of this report on a commercial basis.

The Proposal

This proposal will amend the UNC such that the ambiguity around when Users may

submit a Supply Point Enquiry is removed. Specifically we believe that the word “contemplating” in this context should follow a legal definition, which in this context means that the Supply Point Enquiry is “*triggered where there is a change of activities which compels a Party to consider carefully and at length a course of action*”¹. In relation to the UNC, we believe that this should be interpreted that the Shipper must have had dialogue (spoken, written or otherwise) with the customer and have used that dialogue to gain their permission to access the data. For the avoidance of doubt, this part of the proposal would apply to all Supply Point Enquiries regardless of whether they were for domestic or non-domestic sites.

This proposal would also amend the UNC to enable Transporters to release the same data as is available to Users following a Supply Point Enquiry via an online portal to requesting Users, in such a manner so that data access is protected in the same way, In accessing or using the data, Shippers would be warranting that they have the customer’s permission to access this data. For clarity, this part of the proposal applies to non-domestic customers only.

2 User Pays

a) **Classification of the Proposal as User Pays or not and justification for classification**

This proposal is not User Pays as it will not by itself lead to any new costs, but simply enable future services to be created.

b) **Identification of Users, proposed split of the recovery between Gas Transporters and Users for User Pays costs and justification**

Not applicable

c) **Proposed charge(s) for application of Users Pays charges to Shippers**

Not applicable

d) **Proposed charge for inclusion in ACS – to be completed upon receipt of cost estimate from xoserve**

No charges applicable for inclusion in ACS.

¹ Akavan Erityisalojen Keskuslitto AEK ry and others v Fujitsu Siemens Computers Oy C-44/08

3 Extent to which implementation of the proposed modification would better facilitate the relevant objectives

Standard Special Condition A11.1 (a): *the coordinated, efficient and economic operation of the pipe-line system to which this licence relates;*

Implementation would not be expected to better facilitate this relevant objective.

Standard Special Condition A11.1 (b): *so far as is consistent with sub-paragraph (a), the (i) the combined pipe-line system, and/ or (ii) the pipe-line system of one or more other relevant gas transporters;*

Implementation would not be expected to better facilitate this relevant objective.

Standard Special Condition A11.1 (c): *so far as is consistent with sub-paragraphs (a) and (b), the efficient discharge of the licensee's obligations under this licence;*

Implementation would not be expected to better facilitate this relevant objective.

Standard Special Condition A11.1 (d): *so far as is consistent with sub-paragraphs (a) to (c) the securing of effective competition: (i) between relevant shippers; (ii) between relevant suppliers; and/or (iii) between DN operators (who have entered into transportation arrangements with other relevant gas transporters) and relevant shippers;*

The implementation of this proposal would enable Users to obtain data from the Transporters' Agent, which could improve their internal processes and provide quicker responses to customer quotations. This would not only improve the customer experience through the acquisitions process but also secure effective competition between relevant shippers and suppliers, by improving the quality of information available for them to provide quotations on.

Standard Special Condition A11.1 (e): *so far as is consistent with sub-paragraphs (a) to (d), the provision of reasonable economic incentives for relevant suppliers to secure that the domestic customer supply security standards (within the meaning of paragraph 4 of standard condition 32A (Security of Supply – Domestic Customers) of the standard conditions of Gas Suppliers' licences) are satisfied as respects the availability of gas to their domestic customers;*

Implementation would not be expected to better facilitate this relevant objective.

Standard Special Condition A11.1 (f): *so far as is consistent with sub-paragraphs (a) to (e), the promotion of efficiency in the implementation and administration of the network code and/or the uniform network code.*

Implementation would not be expected to better facilitate this relevant objective.

4 The implications of implementing the Modification Proposal on security of supply, operation of the Total System and industry fragmentation

No implications on security of supply, operation of the Total System or industry fragmentation have been identified.

5 The implications for Transporters and each Transporter of implementing the Modification Proposal, including:

a) implications for operation of the System:

No implications for operation of the system have been identified.

b) development and capital cost and operating cost implications:

No development or capital costs would be incurred.

c) extent to which it is appropriate to recover the costs, and proposal for the most appropriate way to recover the costs:

No costs applicable to Transporters.

d) Analysis of the consequences (if any) this proposal would have on price regulation:

No such consequence is anticipated.

6 The consequence of implementing the Modification Proposal on the level of contractual risk of each Transporter under the Code as modified by the Modification Proposal

No such consequence is anticipated.

7 The high level indication of the areas of the UK Link System likely to be affected, together with the development implications and other implications for the UK Link Systems and related computer systems of each Transporter and Users

No changes to systems would be required as a result of implementation of this Proposal.

8 The implications of implementing the Modification Proposal for Users, including administrative and operational costs and level of contractual risk

Administrative and operational implications (including impact upon manual processes and procedures)

Not applicable.

Development and capital cost and operating cost implications

No such costs have been identified.

Consequence for the level of contractual risk of Users

No such consequences.

9 The implications of implementing the Modification Proposal for Terminal Operators, Consumers, Connected System Operators, Suppliers, producers and, any Non Code Party

No such implications.

10 Consequences on the legislative and regulatory obligations and contractual relationships of each Transporter and each User and Non Code Party of implementing the Modification Proposal

No such consequences.

11 Analysis of any advantages or disadvantages of implementation of the Modification Proposal

Advantages

- Enabling the improvement to the accuracy and timeliness of quotations to customers and improving competition.
- Enabling a reduction in transaction costs which currently represent a significant barrier to competition in a low margin industry such as utilities.
- Enabling the improvement of the customer's experience of the quotation process.
- Reducing the level of risk suppliers assume by taking on contracts based on information estimated by the customer.
- Removing the ambiguity around the meaning of the word "contemplating" for the submission of supply point enquiries.

Disadvantages

None identified.

12 Summary of representations received (to the extent that the import of those representations are not reflected elsewhere in the Workstream Report)

No written representations have been received.

13 The extent to which the implementation is required to enable each Transporter to facilitate compliance with safety or other legislation

No such requirement has been identified.

14 The extent to which the implementation is required having regard to any proposed change in the methodology established under paragraph 5 of Condition A4 or the statement furnished by each Transporter under paragraph 1 of Condition 4 of the Transporter's Licence

No such requirement has been identified.

15 Programme for works required as a consequence of implementing the Modification Proposal

No programme for works has been identified.

16 Proposed implementation timetable (including timetable for any necessary information systems changes)

Implementation could be immediate on receipt of a decision.

17 Implications of implementing this Modification Proposal upon existing Code Standards of Service

No implications of implementing this Modification Proposal upon existing Code Standards of Service have been identified.

18 Workstream recommendation regarding implementation of this Modification Proposal

The Distribution Workstream considers that the Proposal is sufficiently developed and should now proceed to the Consultation Phase. The Workstream also recommends that the Panel requests the preparation of legal text for this Modification Proposal.