

**UNC Workgroup 0864S Minutes  
Update of UNC Code Communication Methods  
Monday 05 February 2024  
Via Microsoft Teams**

<b>Attendees</b>		
Kate Elleman (Chair)	(KE)	Joint Office
Harmandeep Kaur (Secretary)	(HK)	Joint Office
Charlotte Gilbert	(CG)	BU-UK
David Mitchell	(DM)	Scotia Gas Networks
Gavin Williams	(GW)	National Gas Transmission
Josie Lewis	(JL)	Xoserve
Marina Papathoma	(MP)	Wales & West Utilities
Mark Jones	(MJ)	SSE
Matthew Brown	(MB)	Ofgem
Oorlagh Chapman	(OC)	Centrica
Sally Hardman	(SHa)	SGN
Steve Mulinganie	(SM)	SEFE
Susan Ann Helder	(SH)	Northern Gas Networks
Tracey Saunders	(TS)	Northern Gas Networks

*This Workgroup meeting will be considered quorate provided at least two Transporter and two Shipper User representatives are present.*

*The Workgroup Report is due to be presented at the UNC Modification Panel by 16 May 2024.*

*Please note these minutes do not replicate/include detailed content provided within the presentation slides, therefore it is recommended that the published presentation material is reviewed in conjunction with these minutes. Copies of all papers are available at: <https://www.gasgovernance.co.uk/0864/050224>.*

**1.0 Introduction and Status Review**

Kate Elleman (KE) welcomed all parties to the meeting.

**1.1 Approval of Minutes (08 January 2024)**

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

**1.2 Approval of late papers**

None.

**1.3 Review of Outstanding Actions**

**0101:** Following a review of the examples, CDSP (ER) to check whether there are any other more appropriate alternatives to fax and consider which industry Workgroup is the most appropriate to discuss the technical aspects.

**Update:** Deferred to the next Workgroup meeting. **Carried Forward.**

**2.0 Review of Fax References**

Gavin Williams (GW) presented the Fax Text Analysis to the Workgroup. He noted that the purpose of this analysis was to provide more of a structure to the Modification and to get an idea of where to begin.

GW explained that the table provides locations where the references to fax and facsimile are within the UNC along with the text extracted from the Code. GW noted that the RAG Analysis provides the average of the feedback received from the DNs and Xoserve Comments are the CDSP's notes.

For a detailed review, please refer to the published document at [0864 Fax Text Analysis- JO v2 \(1\).pdf \(gasgovernance.co.uk\)](https://www.gasgovernance.co.uk/0864-Fax-Text-Analysis-JO-v2-1.pdf).

Tracey Saunders (TS) noted that in the Apendices, only 'facsimile' is highlighted as the term that needs to be removed, when 'number' (from 'facsimile number') will also need to be removed and should be highlighted accordingly. GW agreed that the text needs to be clearer.

GW noted that references to faxes are usually accompanied by something else such as references to telephone, therefore, most of CDSP's comments ask the question of whether dropping fax while leaving the other communication option in will fulfil the obligation. Josie Lewis (JL) agreed with GW's explanation.

Steve Mulinganie (SM) highlighted the initial proposal was not to remove but replace references to fax with another method of communication and the question was whether email would be the most suitable alternative. SM noted that removing fax and only leaving one option of telephone may not be sufficient.

JL clarified that they are not proposing only leaving one option in, their comments are their initial thoughts to prompt further conversations and discussions.

TS raised that if the obligation in the Code is to provide a telephone number and facsimile, providing two telephone numbers as an alternative option could serve the purpose. TS stated that it is unrealistic for emails to be monitored 24/7.

The Chair noted that if the Workgroup believes that email is not suitable for all situations, this may prompt version 2 of the Modification.

TS suggested calling out the exceptions per the methodology followed for *Modification 0708 - Re-ordering of the UNC in advance of Faster Switching* when creating the second version of the Modification.

The Workgroup discussed providing two telephone numbers as per TS's suggestion. SM highlighted that a telephone call cannot be shown in records and proven as legal evidence, unlike a fax or an email. SM noted that it would be helpful to see the utilisation to understand interruptible sites. Scotia Gas Networks and Cadent confirmed that they have no interruptible sites.

The Chair noted that it may be an option for the telephone call to be the main point of contact which can be followed up by an email to keep a record. The Chair also noted that this change will be more than a Find and Replace exercise as they have determined that email is not the most appropriate alternative to fax in all cases. The Chair proposed joining references to fax regarding interruptible sites together so that the same thought process can be used for all such references. SM agreed with this.

The Workgroup discussed the poll that showed that the industry no longer uses fax and considered the currently used alternatives. David Mitchell (DM) confirmed that they completed an emergency exercise and used email as their method of communication. SM queried the extent of Shipper involvement in this exercise, DM confirmed that there would have been limited Shipper involvement as it was mainly a Transporter / Distribution Network led exercise. SM noted that emails may be considered as a replacement, however, the spamming issues that come with emails would need to be considered.

GW highlighted clause 5.1.122, where email is already used along with facsimile. The Workgroup reviewed this clause and agreed that in this case, email can be left as the only option for communication as it can only be communicated via email. GW asked whether parties would be happy to put their email in the public domain. SM noted that a general operations email should not present a risk but stated that the emails do not need to be made public.

The Workgroup next reviewed 5.2 and discussed that with Notices, it may be appropriate to remove references to facsimile as this still leaves the option of post, email, and telephone. JL noted that they will need to cross-check these references with the UK Link Manual to capture any changes made to the type of communication.

SM suggested the option of using Text Message as an alternative method and noted that this would need mobile numbers. GW asked whether there are any other alternative methods already available and suggested that CDSP investigate this. GW noted that if alternative options are already being used instead of fax, they would be reluctant to add more options of communication. JW stated that they may need to communicate with those using email as an alternative to gather a better understanding of what happens in practice.

The Chair asked whether there is another Workgroup with people from operational departments to discuss this with. GW suggested the Operation Forum and agreed to ask the participants to support this discussion.

The Chair noted it needs to be determined whether the operations teams have found another form of communication to replace fax.

**New Action 0201:** The Workgroup to consider whether the replacement of fax with another form of communication could work. The Workgroup is to consider any alternative means of communication that may already be in operational use.

GW asked whether other Code Managers are considering this change. JL confirmed that REC has raised change R0157 to tackle this.

**New Action 0202:** The Workgroup to review the REC change, R0157, raised in relation to the replacement of fax and facsimile and discuss in the Workgroup meeting.

The Chair noted that there are 10 references that already have other forms of communication that could be removed. JL noted that some of the clauses that refer to fax, include the post as an option and these are non-emergency cases, therefore, these could be removed too.

GW queried the instances where email is included as the main form of communication with fax used as a follow-up method. The Chair suggested GW hold communications with other Networks to understand how they are communicating with Transporters. GW confirmed that some Users have responded to previous communications and confirmed that fax is not being used.

**New Action 0203:** GW (NGT) to group the instances in the Code where fax is used as a follow-up method to email and test this with control rooms to ensure fax is not being used and consider any alternatives being used instead.

The Chair highlighted the importance of this Modification as it addresses the switching off of the PTSN Network due to take place in 2025. The Chair commended NGT for taking on the task of making this change and noted that doing this early gives the Workgroup time to think and consider all options, rather than react post switch off.

### 3.0 Development of Workgroup Report

Deferred to next meeting.

**4.0 Next Steps**

Please refer to the Actions in Item 2.

**5.0 Any Other Business**

None.

**6.0 Diary Planning**

0864S meetings are listed at: <https://www.gasgovernance.co.uk/0864>

All other Joint Office events are available via: [www.gasgovernance.co.uk/events-calendar/month](http://www.gasgovernance.co.uk/events-calendar/month)

Time/Date	Meeting Paper Deadline	Venue	Programme
10:00 Monday 14 March 2024	5pm Friday 06 March 2024	Microsoft Teams	Standard Agenda
10:00 Monday 11 April 2024	5pm Friday 03 April 2024	Microsoft Teams	Standard Agenda

0841 Action Table						
Action Ref	Meeting Date	Min Ref	Action	Reporting Month	Owner	Status Update
0101	08/01/24	2.0	Following a review of the examples, CDSP (ER) to check whether there are any other more appropriate alternatives to fax and consider which industry Workgroup is the most appropriate to discuss the technical aspects.	January 2024 March 2024	CDSP (ER)	Carried Forward
0201	05/02/24	2.0	The Workgroup to consider whether the replacement of fax with another form of communication could work. The Workgroup is to consider any alternative means of communication that may already be in operational use.	February 2024	All	Pending
0202	05/02/24	2.0	The Workgroup to review the REC change, R0157, raised in relation to the replacement of fax and facsimile and discuss in the Workgroup meeting.	February 2024	All	Pending
0203	05/02/24	2.0	GW (NGT) to group the instances in the Code where fax is used as a follow-up method to email and test this with control rooms to ensure fax is not being used and consider any alternatives being used instead.	February 2024	GW (NGT)	Pending