

Market Change Request 1222			SPAYG – CTF Algorithm Suitability for SPAYG Service Provision		
Status	Approved	Priority	High	Status Date	13/04/2022

Date	Version	Reason for Change	Version Status
02/03/2022	1.0	Initial Draft Separating from Original DR1219	Final
04/04/2022	1.1	Updated following feedback from Market Participants	Final

Part 1 DETAIL OF DISCUSSION REQUEST / MARKET CHANGE REQUEST	
Requesting Organisation(s)	RMDS
Request Originator Name	Lindsay Sharpe
Date Raised	02/03/2022

Classification of Request	
Change Type	Non-Schema Impacting

Detail of Request
Reason for Request

Background

CTF (Communications Technically Feasible) is a check that ESB Networks perform daily on each Smart meter installation to establish the reliability of communications from the smart meter to the head end system across the 2G telecommunications network.

In CRU's Information Paper "Smart Meter Upgrade Phase 2 Scope" (CRU/21/074) it states that Smart PAYG functionality is planned to be available for customers who have had smart meters installed from the end of Phase 2.

CTF is an eligibility criterium for Smart PAYG service offering. The design in DR1216 V1.0 (Smart Metering Remote Operations) mandates CTF 4 for remote disconnection for Smart PAYG. This means that the service is only fully and consistently available to consumers with a CTF of 4.

DR1219 Smart PAYG – System & Process Changes V1.0 outlined a need to look at the current CTF algorithm and its suitability for Smart PAYG service provision. A consensus outcome was agreed at the TWG (Technical Working Group) (09/02/22), whereby the CTF algorithm be moved to a new DR with its own timelines and approval path. This DR derives from DR1219 and the pre-existing DR1216 document. It specifically deals with the CTF Algorithm suitability for Smart PAYG service provision.

DR1216 Outlines the reliance for Smart PAYG on CTF as follows:

- De-Energise PAYG
For sites with a CTF level of 4, these will be carried out remotely and a rejection will be issued where intermittent coms prevent the operation of the remote switch.

A Smart PAYG service must be reliable and consistent if it is to meet basic consumer expectations. Although estimate data can continue to be sent in 343MM for those on CTF 3 or below, remote disconnection cannot take place. In order to consistently manage the product offering, Suppliers are more than likely going to have to move a consumer from a Smart PAYG service offering if the CTF degrades below 4. This will mean a new contract and terms and conditions which will adversely impact the customer experience.

In September 2021, the downloadable meter point files were assessed and revealed that +/- 72,000 customers who had been on CTF 4, were temporarily degraded to CTF 3. ESBN has explained that the reason for the degradation was due to a remote meter reading issue encountered for a week in August 2021. The CTF is defined in the CTF briefing document as measuring the “reliability of communications from the smart meter to the head end system”. It also states that “ESB Networks expects coverage to fluctuate for a small number of meter locations due to a variety of reasons including but not limited to: local propagation issues, atmospheric conditions, tree coverage, radio access network failure, changes in network topology, communications interference sources, customer actions etc”.

It is important to note from the above, that ESBN expects only a small number of fluctuations in CTF. In September 2021, 16% of all smart meters with a proven CTF degraded from 4 to 3. This value is usually around 0.1%-0.2% of the smart meter population with proven CTF. ESBN advised that the CTF reverted to CTF 4 in the month of October 2021.

The requirement is to request ESBN to ensure that ad hoc anomalies in systems do not temporarily impact the CTF value and for the algorithm to be amended in such a way as to exclude certain anomaly events to prevent unnecessary degradation from 4 – 3 and then back to 4. Transient volatility in CTF may have a significant downstream impact both for Supplier’ operations and Customer experience.

Proposed Solution

It is understood that degradation in a CTF value is warranted when the underlying impact to communications is deemed to be long lasting. However, CTF degradation from 4 to 3 must be minimised wherever possible to prevent poor customer experience through moving a customer from a Smart PAYG to a credit product. Intermittent read or technical issues should not impact the integrity of the CTF value.

A review of the CTF algorithm calculation is to be carried out with the following outcomes requested:

- The CTF briefing document will be updated to outline the business process ESB Networks have identified that is intended to prohibit such incidents as the one that occurred in September 2021 from negatively impacting the CTF value at sites in the future.
- More transparency on the CTF algorithm and how it is applied under different circumstances to be shared with Market Participants.
- A reasonable (Indicative Success Rate) threshold to be established under which CTF degradation should not fall.
- A clear SLA in relation to CTF put in place both at a macro (estate percentage) and a micro level (individual MPRN degradation, improvement etc).

This new CTF Algorithm DR is deemed to be essential for V14.00.00 delivery. Despite the requirement being split from the original DR1219, this new DR dealing with the CTF Algorithm, is to be delivered as part of or in advance of the V14.00.00 go-live.

The progress of this DR will be monitored and reported on at the Technical Working Group and the CTF Briefing Document will be updated with the agreed outputs of this DR.

Scope of Change

Design Documentation	Business Process	DSO Backend System Change	MP Backend System Change	Tibco	Supplier EIMMA	Schema	Webforms	Webservice	Extranet Market Website
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Market Messages

Message No.	Message Name	ROI
No Impact	No Impact	No Impact

Data Definitions

<i>No Impact</i>

Data Codes

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Market Message Implementation Guides

Message Guide	Yes/No
No Impact	No Impact

Market Process Diagrams – MPDs

Market Process Number	Market Procedure	Affected
No Impact		Yes

Guidance Documentation

Document	Version	Affected
No impact		No Impact

Briefing Document		
Briefing Document		Affected
CTF Briefing Document		Yes

User and Technical Documents			
Reference	Name	Version	Affected
No impact			No Impact

Comments

Part 2 - Performance and Data Changes	
Market Messages volume, processing etc.	
Data	
Details of Data changes e.g. cleansing	

Approved by	CRU