

Minutes of the Metering Committee Meeting Seven

12 October 2021 | 10:00 – 12:30 | Via MS Teams

Status of Minutes: **FINAL**

Present

Members	Abbreviation	Role
Steve Formoy	SF	Chair – MOSL
Claire Yeates	CY	Retailer Committee Member
Ben Kershaw	BK	Retailer Committee Member
Mitchell Yeoman-Boldry	MYB	Wholesaler Committee Member
Emma Birch	EB	Wholesaler Committee Member
Paul Heron	PH	Retailer Committee Member
Mark Cooper	MC	Alternate - Wholesaler Committee Member
Angela Brown	AB	Wholesaler Committee Member
Mark Doherty	MD	Retailer Committee Member
Michelle Thompson	MT	Wholesaler Committee Member
Claire Stanness	CS	Retailer Committee Member

Other Attendees		
Shaun Kent	SK	Ofwat
John Davies	JD	MOSL
Martin Hall	MH	MOSL
Angie Bennett	AB	MOSL (Secretariat)
Florentina Monea	FM	MOSL
Simon Bennett	SPB	MOSL
Huw Comerford	HC	MOSL
Adrian Smith	AS	MOSL
Stuart Boyle	SB	MOSL

Apologies		
Christina Blackwell	CB	Customer Representative (CCW) Committee Member
Kat Grimley	KG	Wholesaler Committee Member

1. Introduction, Apologies and New Member Appointment

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the Metering Committee (“Committee”) meeting. He noted that apologies for absence had been received from CB and KG, and that MC was standing in as KG’s alternate. It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

2. Minutes and Actions from Previous Meetings

- 2.1. The Committee approved the minutes of the Metering Committee meeting held on 14 September as an accurate record of Committee Meeting 6.
- 2.2. It was agreed that the following actions could be closed: A06_01; A06_02; and A06_03.

3. Strategic Themes

Enhancing Metering Technology

- 3.1. CY gave update on tendering process and on the kick-off meeting held with Artesia on 11 October (see slides). CY noted that, overall, it was a positive meeting, and the consultants feel they have what they need. CY invited any Committee members who would like further information on the meeting with Artesia to contact her directly. Additionally, it was noted that a workshop would be held with the Committee and Artesia on 3 November 2021.
- 3.2. MH provided an overview of the discussion with WRC and the reasons they were not appointed.
- 3.3. A Committee member suggested that the group or Artesia could prepare a standard format for requesting and submitting the information. This was supported by another Committee member who further noted the potential synergies between the data required by Artesia and that required for Quick Start Project 1 with the possibility for data to be shared and used across both projects. MH advised that MOSL would be able to prepare a spreadsheet to gather information in a standard format.

ACTION MC07_01

- 3.4. CY advised the Committee on the next steps for the Enhancing Metering Technology Strategic theme, noting that further clarity on the forward agenda and milestones would be provided by Artesia.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.5. MH updated the Committee that it had been agreed to delay the Roles and Responsibilities work and to retender later in the year. MH noted that there is a Roles and Responsibilities Sub-Group meeting 19 October 2021 to discuss and plan next steps and that an update will be provided to the Committee in November.

4. Updates on Quick Start Projects

QSP Test Criteria

- 4.1. SPB provided the Committee with an overview of a set of Quick Start Project test criteria which had been compiled with the help of Ofwat and CCW. While the Committee was supportive of the criteria it was agreed that it would be beneficial to include the Code within the criteria to ensure alignment.

ACTION MC07_02

Sharing Consumption data

- 4.2. MYB provided an update on progress on the data sharing agreement, communication plan and work being undertaken by the Leeds Institute of Data Analytics (“LIDA”) on Quick Start Project 1 – Sharing Consumption Data (“QSP1”). MYB advised the Committee that the end goal of QSP1 was to produce a tool which uses consumption data and a more granular classification scheme to allow trading parties to compare usage and described how such a tool would benefit the market.

Read Rejections

- 4.3. BK provided an update on the progress of Quick Start Project 3 – Read Rejections (“QSP3”), noting that QSP3’s current focus was on read rejections caused by CMOS’s current volume validation

rules. BK provided background on the problem currently facing the Trading Parties, how QSP matched against the Market Objectives and the potential advantages and disadvantages of addressing the problem.

- 4.4. BK described the change being proposed by QSP3, which were to increase the upper limit of the read rejection threshold from 200% to 300% and to reduce the lower volume read rejection threshold from 20% to 1%. BK noted that based on the sample data collected by MOSL and CGI: moving the upper threshold would result in 458,000 more reads entering CMOS first time and equate to £137,000 of savings (based on an assumed cost of 30p per manually re-submitted read); and reducing the lower threshold to 1% would result in 364,000 reads entering the market first time generating a saving of £110,000 (based on an assumed cost of 30p per manually re-submitted read). It was noted that this anticipated benefit was significantly above the estimated cost to implement the change of less than £10,000. BK set out a draft list of proposed consultation questions.
- 4.5. Some Committee members challenged some of the assumptions on the extent to which the problems identified by QSP3 with regards to volume validation met the Market Objectives criteria. An observer commented that, in their opinion, there was a minor risk that any change would increase the chance of a change in the volume read rejection tolerance resulting in more invalid reads being submitted into the market. However, there was consensus that this risk was outweighed by the benefits. A potential additional disadvantage of an increase in the volume read rejection thresholds was identified by an observer who noted that this could result in a potential increase in the number of missed leaks.
- 4.6. A Committee member noted, in their experience, that Retailer Trading Parties don't rely on CMOS volume read rejections to engage with their customers on their water usage. The Committee member reiterated their position that the purpose for QSP was to reduce inefficiency whilst ensuring that obviously bad data was caught.
- 4.7. Overall, there was significant support from Committee members that QSP was proposing a positive change as the existing status quo clearly was not working given the number of volume validation read rejections that appear to be being automatically resubmitted. One Committee member noted that although they agreed with the premise of the volume validation read rejection changes was correct, they would like to see the proposed changes go further.
- 4.8. One Committee member suggested introducing an absolute daily volume change threshold into the read rejection criteria (citing an example of a 0.5m³ per day change) noting that internal analysis at their organisation indicated that this would be a more effective way of reducing volume validation read rejections. The Committee member also expressed the view that the proposed change would benefit from including a mechanism to allow premises which are moving from vacant to occupied (or vice versa) greater leeway in terms of volume validation read rejections.
- 4.9. Following discussion, the Committee recommended that further information on the benefits of the proposed changes be included in the proposal, including the distribution graph showing the benefit of the change in the upper limit from 200% to 300%, with the flattening of the curve evidencing why it was felt that a 300% limit was the correct upper threshold to set.
- 4.10. JD described some possible suggested additional changes. These additional proposed changes were: removing automated rejections for vacant premises reporting zero consumption; and

increasing the number of historic read comparators in order to smooth out the effects of seasonal fluctuation in consumption levels.

- 4.11. There was general support for the move to longer periods of comparison, although it was also noted that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and any future similar large-scale events might skew average consumption over time.
- 4.12. A Committee member suggested that the consultation should incorporate the idea that the Committee will continue to consider read rejections and that further action might follow on from the volume validation read rejection changes.
- 4.13. Following further discussion and robust debate, the Committee:
- **AGREED** (unanimous) to support the principle of widening the upper and lower volume thresholds (10 in favour).
 - **AGREED** (majority) for the purposes of the consultation to indicate that those thresholds should be set at 300% and 1% respectively (9 in favour 1 against).
 - **AGREED** (unanimous) to support the proposal to remove read rejections where zero consumption is recorded at vacant premises (10 in favour).
- 4.14. During the vote it was agreed that consultation questions on the upper threshold should be openly worded in order to reflect the Committee’s position that there could be benefit to setting the upper threshold at a different level.

Skip Codes

- 4.15. SPB presented a brief update on Quick Start Project 5 – Standardised Skip Codes (“QSP5”).

Hard to Read

- 4.16. SPB presented a brief update on Quick Start Project 6 – Hard to Read Meters (“QSP6”), noting that the Project team intended to create and agree a definition of a hard-to-read meter and to create a good practice flow chart process.

Transfer Reads

- 4.17. SPB presented a brief update on Quick Start Project 8 – Transfer Reads (“QSP8”), detailing two proposed Code changes. Following discussion, it was agreed that further time would be given to QSP8 at a future meeting where approval would be sought on how to proceed with this project given the desired timeline of taking the QSP8 change proposals to Panel early in 2022.

ACTION MC07_03

- 4.18. BK mentioned another MOSL change that should reflect the skip code list. This is the change to estimated final reads for wholesalers. SPB to liaise with MOSL team looking after that change proposal to discuss further.

ACTION MC07_04

5. AOB, including reflections from the meeting

- 5.1. The Committee reflected on the meeting.

5.2. There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting.