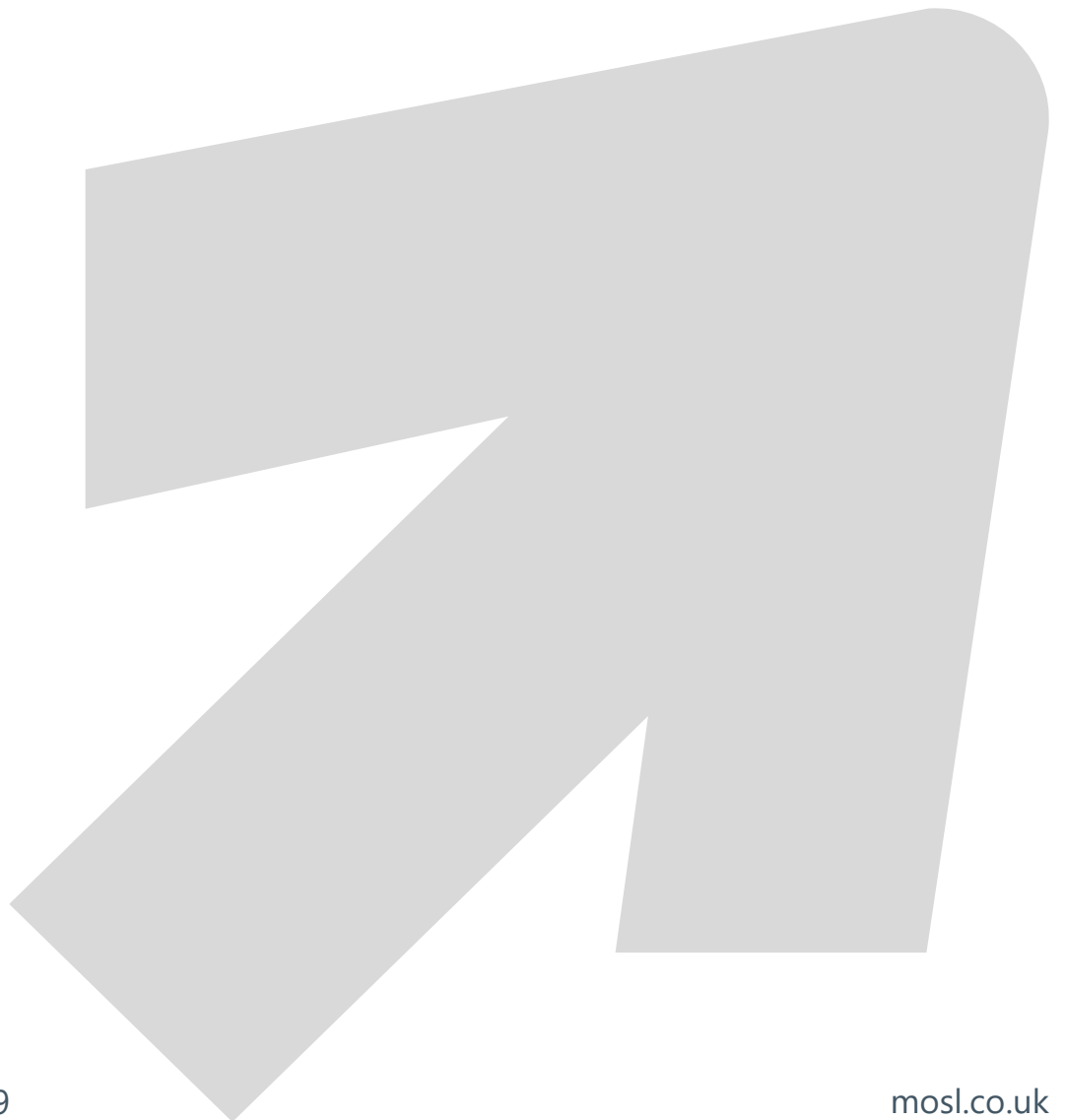


# Operational Advisory Group (OAG)

**Date and time:** 21 May 2024, 1100 - 1230

**Status of minutes:** FINAL



# Meeting Minutes

## OAG members and guests

Name	(Initial)	Organisation	Name	(Initial)	Organisation
Anna Muskett	AM	Wessex	Julie-Ann Anderson	JAA	SES
Bryony Cameron	BC	Thames	Lauren Walsh	LW	Wave
Charlotte Miles	CM	Thames	Lisa Jewkes	LJ	Severn Trent
Chris Williams	CW	Thames	Michael Floyd	MF	UU
Daniel Proctor	DP	Waterplus	Mary Porter-Chorley	MPC	South Staffs
David Buchan	DB	Castle	Nick Butt	NB	ConservAqua
David Moss	DM	Castle	Paul Baker	PB	Business Stream
Deborah Bennet	DBe	Thames	Rosemary English	RE	Southern
Heather Lamb	HL	UU	Sian Forward	SF	Northumbrian
Helen Bennett	HB	Southern	Syndiso Bango-Dube	SBD	Waterscan

## MOSL

Name	(Initial)	Organisation	Name	(Initial)	Organisation
Chris Dawson	CD	Chair	Jac Davidson	JD	Presenter
Monica Falasca	MF	Observer	Lisa-Ann Lott	LAL	Notes
Amy English	AE	Observer			

1.	<b>Welcome</b>
	CD welcomed all members and provided an overview of the agenda.
2.	<b>Phase 14</b>
	<p><b>24139 Occupancy Challenges</b></p> <p>JD provided a history of the changes proposed and an overview of the issues identified, by PWC's audit, with the Vacancy Challenge Application (VCA) process noting it had been voted for inclusion in Phase 14.</p> <p>JD highlighted the current process is solely within CMOS and following review in February 2023 it was considered too costly to change.</p> <p>JD ran through the issues identified by PWC's audit:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Lack of notifications issued by CMOS.</li> <li>•No ability for the retailer to respond via CMOS, breaking the line of communication.</li> <li>•Timeframes for the challenge period being dependent on meter size and up to 65 days.</li> <li>•CMOS not set-up to aid sharing of information/evidence.</li> </ul> <p>JD noted subgroups findings were similar to PWC's along with the addition of retailers being unable to reject challenges easily and only vacancies being able to be challenged not occupied SPIDs.</p> <p>JD highlighted additionally there is no consistent method to provide evidence and this is held in different places as CMOS cannot accommodate it.</p> <p>DB highlighted in relation to notifications these are often only received by the retailers following the grace period during which discussions should have been held with the wholesalers to resolve at which point the wholesaler can change the vacancy status without having to wait and the retailer then has 17BD to challenge it.</p> <p>DB noted nothing received in the first instance to indicate a challenge and to attempt to fix the problem before going through the VCA process and CSD 0105 does not compel the wholesaler to notify in advance.</p> <p>SF noted notifications sent separately from some wholesalers via email as CMOS does not notify.</p> <p><b>MOSL to review process in regard to when notifications issued.</b></p> <p>CD noted two versions of process at present; informal (grace period) and formal (following the grace period) with original suggestion to remove informal process.</p>

JD noted could replace informal process and Hub could support the formal process creating a consistent method of providing evidence.

DB noted would be useful to formalise the informal by introducing to the Hub and will create greater awareness VCA submitted.

DM noted need for this process however enquired costs and timeframe to deliver and enquired if general process can be utilised instead with an update to the codes to indicate how to process.

JD noted need to establish if required as its own process or whether current process F7 can be utilised with changes to the codes.

DM noted not all parties agree on 'sufficient' evidence to provide and suggested update to codes to indicate and may require RWG policy subgroup input to ensure all scenarios accounted for.

JD enquired if evidence provision should be via the Hub regardless of its sufficiency.

DM noted Hub may not provide solutions for bulk work and noted CSD0105 requires updating.

CD noted utilising RWG subgroup would not be a quick solution.

SF noted all using old portals to action VCA process which includes evidence and need secure system/Hub to process and would ideally want to close down old portals.

**Members generally agreed to continue with solution through the Hub. (11 votes for, 2 votes against and 4 abstentions)**

JD enquired how the Hub can support the issues identified and ran through possible solutions.

DM enquired if each VCA should have an individual transaction.

JD noted preference for singular transaction however enquired preference of OAG.

DM noted can receive large volume of transactions in batches and is normally bulk work therefore would need flexibility to accommodate both bulk and singular.

DM noted where bulk request received may require additional business days to complete.

JD noted should a single rejection be required of a bulk transaction would need to understand how to process.

DM suggested being able to indicate how many accepted and how many rejected against any bulk transaction.

JD highlighted unlikely to facilitate CMOS changes to support the process as all updates planned until November 2025.

CD noted within the codes could be added as a separate new process to the Operational Terms or update CSD0105 to indicate use of process F7.

CD expressed concern on adding to process F7 as may be difficult to identify.

JD requested feedback/suggestions from attendees.

SF noted have not used bulk transactions however other wholesalers may utilise and thus must be taken into account.

SF highlighted other working groups had previously reviewed the process and aligning SLAs was a key recommendation.

CD noted this would result in a CMOS change as well as code change.

SF noted needs to remain as simple as possible and preference for singular transactions highlighting informal process working well through spreadsheet held in SharePoint and accessed by the retailer.

CD enquired if preference to switch to a more formal process.

SF noted would be a step backwards to formalise the informal process and the Hub needs the ability share evidence or details as required by the retailer to make the SPID occupied or vacant. Only if not actioned would the formal route be required.

SF further noted the Hub needs ability to share the evidence, informally, in a consistent, single location without overcomplicating the process.

JD clarified wholesalers currently submitting one by one and adding them to a spreadsheet and the recommendation is to submit these via the Hub for consistency across the market for the informal process.

HL agreed need a consistent method and even for single SPID would use the informal process.

HL noted preference not to include the informal process in the Hub but include the formal process for consistent approach to sharing data.

JD noted two differing wholesaler opinions and requested retailer opinions as to which route is used.

CD noted could do both via the code stating wholesaler may raise the process informally but shall raise it when raising the VCA process.

CD highlighted this would enable the informal process to remain outside of the Hub.

JD noted this would not resolve the inconsistency issue identified.

DM expressed concern on the 'opt in' style approach as may still lead to inconsistency.

DM noted need to future proof CSD 0105 as inconsistency not simply an issue for VCA.

NB noted as a smaller retailer dealing with various sizes of wholesalers a consistent method of dealing with these would be ideal and perhaps the Hub is the best option for all aspects however will require a degree of flexibility.

DB noted providing too much choice leads to inconsistency and therefore preference to use the Hub to ensure everyone works the same way and prevents wholesalers treating retailers differently.

DB highlighted a wholesaler who is not utilising the Hub for G2 processes.

**MOSL to review and revert in relation to G2s**

**JD to review feedback on VCA and revert with proposed solution, scale and cost noting general agreement the Hub is the best approach.**

JD noted will require further OAG review and code review once designed.

***NEW4 – Ability for Retailer to raise an 'Information Required' activity flag when actioning party***

JD quoted the original request noting it was voted 18<sup>th</sup> in the phase 14 prioritisation.

JD enquired if this request is still required given the 'add comment' functionality.

DM noted request is to prevent having to escalate a matter when a wholesaler may have forgotten to attach a form or provide a key piece of information and to prevent resubmitting when only a small amount of additional information is required.

DM further noted it enables 'info request' transactions to be moved on.

JD enquired if this would be a handover of the service request and stop the status of the request as additional information required to continue.

DM noted does not matter provided trading parties can filter to the status and look up the info request either reportable or filterable.

JD noted if status changes it prevents continuing with the request when it could be processed despite ideally wanting more information unless the ability to withdraw this request is also added.

BC noted if pre completion does not differ from comment function unless subcategories added to comment function that fit these possibilities.

BC further noted if post completion would be useful if forgotten to add an attachment or typo in the meter details.

RE noted if the request was to remind of an attachment and it prevents transaction being closed would be useful as cannot add attachment to a closed case.

CD noted auto close would action in 15 or 30BD and therefore if flagged would not be closed.

SF noted if comment function enhanced this may not be required.

CD noted comment function cannot be utilised after complete.

SF noted can add comment after complete but not after closed and this would result in retailer resubmitting request if other information required.

JD enquired if the add comment functionality could be used for this purpose.

SF noted not picking up comments as no method to flag them at present.

JD further enquired if enhancement of add comment in addition to enhancement of visibility of having a category for the type of comment would be sufficient.

SF noted if this is useful for retailers and the comments are clear would have no preference on the categorisation.

DM noted should use the comments section and the flags are a good idea to notify where distinct.

DM further noted additional feature required if no status change to prevent closure after 15BD if comment not responded to.

	<p>JD enquired what should happen when the 15BD is in an SLA should a comment pause this.</p> <p>DM noted this presents an issue as should use a deferral and request information however this may be disruptive.</p> <p>DM further noted the intention of adding a comment and extending the case indefinitely is to prevent penalising retailers should wholesalers not respond.</p> <p>JD enquired why resubmit would not be used when waiting for information.</p> <p>DM noted from a retailer perspective it is the difference between questions/comment/concerns or whether a legitimate dispute against a wholesaler e.g. where CMOS not updated correctly would result in resubmit.</p> <p>JD noted softer approach when clarification required as opposed to something wrong or preventing updates.</p> <p>LW provided the example of site visit plans where additional details of customer understanding may be added which would not necessarily be a resubmission.</p> <p>LW noted preference not to have cases open indefinitely and recommended one or two comments then be forced to resubmit or escalate rather than an indefinite SLA which is not good customer service.</p> <p>CD noted if implemented if the retailer comments it prevents closure and when the wholesaler replies back it resets the 15BD.</p> <p>DM noted happy with that functionality as would prefer not to have cases open indefinitely.</p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p>
	<p>JD noted AE joined meeting as reviewing reporting function which was prioritised in Phase 14.</p> <p>JD highlighted 4 June will be changed to later date and be used as a reporting focus and a review of Phase 14 delivery overall.</p> <p>JD detailed feedback received from trading party that no wholesaler action templates had been received since F1-F6 processes added to the Hub and enquired if this is due to level of requirement.</p> <p>CD noted next delivery of code change will call out the relationship between M1 process and those within it e.g. F processes for clarification.</p>

SF noted sending templates daily however have been queried by retailers on receipt and this has been reported back to MOSL.

CD noted MOSL clarifying in code to details processes within M1.

CW noted understanding of process is when there is an action required for the retailer sending separately and will submit wholesaler action template from phase 12 onwards (June).

CD clarified template should be used immediately and phase 12 will be the addition of other processes D & E.

MPC noted submitting F1 and F2 processes on individual SPIDs not necessarily using the template .

CD noted not breaching code by notifying individually.

**MOSL to review code for surety and monitor volumes of templates from June onwards.**

MF enquired how the J1 process works in respect of the advance notification.

Members generally agreed the advance notification is only required for disconnections as reconnections often have to occur immediately and thus notification following reconnection is sufficient.

**MOSL to review and amend code documents where necessary.**

	Actions	Action by	Action date