



REVIEW OF POWER SYSTEM DATA COMMUNICATIONS STANDARD

FINAL REPORT AND DETERMINATION

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1. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROCESS

As required by the National Electricity Rules (NER), AEMO has consulted with Registered Participants and other interested persons on changes to the Power System Data Communications Standard (Standard). The stages and timing for the completed consultation are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Review timetable

Stage	Date
Draft Report & Notice of second stage consultation published	17 February 2017
Submissions due on Draft Report	15 June 2017
Draft Determination published	27 July 2017
Submissions due on Draft Report	15 October 2017
Final Consultation Report published	1 December 2017
Amended Power System Data Communications Standard (Standard) published	1 December 2017
Changes on Standard Rules and Guidelines become effective	1 December 2017

The publication of this Final Report marks the completion of the consultation.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 NER requirements

AEMO is required to develop the Standard under clause 4.11.2 (c) of the NER. AEMO may amend the Standard in consultation with Network Service Providers.

In accordance with clause 4.11.2(a) of the NER, the Standard sets out the necessary primary communication facilities and, where nominated by AEMO, back-up facilities, for control, operational metering, and indication from the relevant local sites to the appropriate interfacing termination as nominated by AEMO.

Clause 4.11.1 of the NER also refers to standards and protocols to be determined and advised by AEMO relating to the requirements and standards applicable to various categories of network users and service providers under the NER.

2.2 Context for this consultation

The current Standard was published in April 2005 and has not been reviewed since. AEMO has received informal feedback that the Standard is difficult to understand and therefore to implement.

AEMO proposed revisions to the Standard with the objectives of:

- Making it easier to read and understand.
- Removing information that has become obsolete.
- Removing ambiguity.
- Simplifying reliability requirements.
- Publicly consulting on the rewrite and content.

A draft revised Standard was published as part of the first stage of this consultation.

2.3 First stage consultation

AEMO issued a Notice of First Stage Consultation on 17 February 2017.

AEMO received two submissions in this stage, one from Energy Networks Australia (ENA) and the other from Energex. The submissions were published, and the issues raised were discussed in sections 3 and 4 of the Draft Report.

As a result of the first stage consultation, AEMO held a teleconference with ENA on 12 January 2017, to clarify and discuss aspects of ENA’s submission. AEMO committed to continue working with ENA to further develop the Standard prior to finalising this consultation.

2.4 Second stage consultation

AEMO issued a Draft Report (including a Notice of Second Stage Consultation) on 27 October 2016, along with a draft revised Standard.

AEMO received one submission on the Draft Report, from ENA. The submission has been published and the issues raised are addressed in section 3 of this Final Report.

3. MATERIAL ISSUES

AEMO received one submission from Energy Networks Australia (ENA) on the Draft Report. ENA welcomed the collaborative approach taken by AEMO to the review of the Standard, supported the improved clarity provided, and noted that the draft Standard succinctly and accurately addressed ENA’s feedback to AEMO regarding the proposed revised Standard in December 2016. ENA also supported the revised content of the Security section (Section 4), recognising that work is ongoing to address cyber security issues as a separate initiative.

ENA suggested three possible changes to the draft Standard. These are listed, with AEMO’s responses, in the table below.

No.	Issue	AEMO response
1.	Transitional arrangements Energy Networks Australia welcomes the consultative approach taken by AEMO in regards to quantifying any substantive changes to the technical requirements of the Standard, and associated transitional arrangements. Energy Networks Australia notes that AEMO considers the technical requirements of the Standard remain unchanged, however some network service providers (NSPs) have advised they consider some of the cyber security related content, such as ‘Continuous monitoring’ under the ‘Detect’ function, may constitute a material change in requirements depending on interpretation. It is suggested that the language of ‘Continuous monitoring’ is altered to ‘Timely monitoring’.	AEMO does not accept this proposed change. The term ‘continuous monitoring’ is used in the NIST Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cyber Security’ which the Standard is aligned to. AEMO considers that changing ‘Continuous monitoring’ to ‘Timely monitoring’ could cause confusion, potentially implying that the Standard requires a different definition of ‘Detect’ than the NIST Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cyber Security. AEMO is working with industry to review the arrangements for cyber security for the NEM. This includes addressing recommendation 2.10 from the “Independent Review into the Future Security of the National Electricity Market”.
2.	Improved clarity and scope Energy Networks Australia supports the introduction of the term ‘Data Communication Providers’ and its proposed definition. However, the term ‘Data Concentrator’ could be further defined, relative to whether a RTU (remote terminal unit) constitutes a ‘data concentrator’ for the purposes of the Standard.	AEMO agrees with the proposal by ENA to better define the term ‘Data Concentrator’ The words ‘usually a DNSP’ are removed from the definition of ‘Data Concentrator’ to remove confusion.
3.	Attention is also drawn to whether AEMO intended to use the term ‘A DCP’ rather than ‘A DCF’ in its Data Concentrator definition.	The term ‘A DCF’ is correctly applied in the definition of ‘Data Concentrator’



4. FINAL DETERMINATION

Having considered the matters raised by Consulted Persons in consultation on the draft Standard, AEMO's determination is to make the Standard in the form of Attachment 1 in accordance with clause 4.11.2 (c) of the NER.

One change has been made from the draft version, to amend the definition of 'Data Concentrator'.

In making the determination, AEMO is satisfied that the final Standard is consistent with NER requirements.