RETAIL ENERGY CODE

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I0278 WORKING GROUP
MEETING MINUTES

MEETING	**I0278 Working Group Meeting 1**
DATE	**11 May 2026: 14:00 – 15:30**
LOCATION	**On Teams**

Presenter	Representing	Initials	Role
Francine Peyroux-Sissoko	REC Code Manager	FP	Lead Analyst
Glenn Sheern	REC Code Manager	GS	Subject Matter Expert
Dave Wright	REC Code Manager	DW	Chair
Rebecca Griffiths	Retail Energy Code Company	RG	Proposer

Full attendee list available upon request.

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Lead Analyst welcomed attendees to the first I0278 Working Group (WG) meeting.

2 CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

The Lead Analyst invited any additional items of business for consideration during the meeting. No items were raised by attendees.

3 APPROVAL OF DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

WG members agreed to adopt the ToRs. No objections were raised.

4 I0278 BACKGROUND & WORKING GROUP AIMS

DW provided an overview of REC Issue I0278, reminding members that the creation of a standalone REC Party for Safe Isolation Providers (SIPs) had been in discussion for some time, and was now called out in Ofgem's Strategic Direction Statement explicitly calls for the establishment of the SIP as a standalone Party role. With this REC Issue, the accession for SIPs will be streamlined enabling Parties to accede efficiently to the REC without having to contract with Energy Suppliers. This will be done without reducing the safety requirements to conduct this role.

DW summarised the activities to date which included discussions with Industry bodies and an information request opened for six weeks. The Industry has been supportive of this Issue, and agrees that it should help reduce the safety issues that the current framework poses (electrocutions, electric shocks, broken seals, etc.), should help move away from an inequal system and from a low competitive market with net zero being an important driver in that direction. DW thanked members for taking part in these engagements prior to the WG meeting and pointed out the valid concerns that the Industry shared. A feedback summary was shared with members who did not currently have further comments to add.

5 FRAMEWORK DISCUSSION

DW pointed out that one of the aims of this WG was to agree on the type of efficient and safe practices the REC should allow standalone SIPs to do, what would fit their requirements, and what would fall under the responsibility of another Party, whilst keeping the Consumer into consideration. The point of standalone SIPs would also be to streamline the process for Consumers and avoid having multiple Parties going on site to conduct one job.

5.1 RESPONSIBILITY OF STANDALONE SIPS

5.1.1 VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF SIPS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Members were shown a draft diagram taken from the Service Termination Issue Reporting Guidance (STIRG) document that aimed at identifying the SIP's responsibilities, defining the demarcation line where their work starts and ends, and whether they should be going into the meter or not. A member pointed out that without clear notes explaining where the responsibilities of SIPs would be, the current draft could create more confusion. This is because the isolator in the draft diagram is currently highlighted, giving the impression that it is the key item in this model. On the contrary, the majority of SIP work exists because of the absence of an isolator. The current process for SIPs allows work on meter tails and on the cutout, however as SIPs do not own the equipment, they cannot replace it. This could create confusion to non-metering Parties who become standalone SIPs. DW reassured members that this diagram was only a starter for ten which would be refined after the WG. It would then be part of a more comprehensive supporting document that would include other diagrams which would be more precise with information about time switches, contractors, and so forth. More thoughts need to be added for complex cases such as when a building network operator is involved and the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) would not be present on the diagram, or when an Independent Distribution Network Operator (IDNO) would be involved.

A member believed there was some crossover with the Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) that would be worth discussing when going through the training for SIPs. DW added that what is key is to have a clear demarcation line between what sits with metering and what sits with the Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) to ensure there are no confusion nor issues for individuals and organisations.

Members believed that the current draft is reflective of standalone SIPs' responsibilities. However, it would benefit from having more context with some explanatory notes, i.e. the asset boundary being clarified for responsibilities, as well as examples and scenarios supported by further diagrams.

I0278WG_0511_A01: The Code Manager to amend the diagram with some explanatory notes, and to expand the responsibilities of SIPs in different scenarios with some supporting documentation.

5.1.2 DEMARCATION LINE

Members were asked to share whether they agreed with this demarcation line for SIP's responsibilities, i.e. from the top of the cutout and outgoing terminal of the meter, but not the meter itself. They agreed with these demarcation lines and believed that the wording needs to be amended to avoid any confusion. The advice and documentation on permitted activities, safety requirements and what needs to be excluded need to be made explicit with scenarios

providing examples. For instance, adding scenarios where the incoming tails from the DNO are 16 or 10 millimetres whilst as a SIP you have 25 or 35mm for the outgoing tails. Therefore, SIPs should not be allowed to change nor move the meter, nor any of the equipment associated with it. Should tails need to be changed from the cutout to the meter for safety or compliance reasons, no difference should be made between the Meter Operative's responsibility nor the qualified electrician's responsibility under BS 7671. SIPs should be allowed to change the meter tails for safety reasons. A middle ground needs to be found on what currently sits with Meter Operative's responsibility and what currently sits with the qualified electrician's responsibility, where it aligns with the safe practice and where it does not align. A member raised that the documentation in REC Change Proposal R0021 is clear, however DCUSA section 2H is not. D0396 gives notification that work has been completed, however there is no firm clarification of which work has been completed explicitly unless other Market Messages are required for theft or DNO escalation. Members enquired whether wider statistics about electricians' safe isolation works on top of HSE's statistics on injuries, were available. GS mentioned that when working in Revenue Protection (RP), there were a lot of calls to report broken seals, however it is difficult to prove who interfered with the equipment. Meter tampering is also exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis and the cost of fuel going up. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) would not have clear statistics on these as there are considered a civil matter. On the other issues, HSE knows that there are a lot of illegal abstraction cases involving cutouts and meters. HSE is aware of cases where the public interfered with the equipment when safety hazards would have been reported by Meter Operative's or DNOs.

I0278WG_0511_A02: The Code Manager to share with members statistics provided by the HSE.

The WG agreed that changing tails between the cutout and the meter, and between the meter and the isolator is the right approach, and that the meter cannot be moved, nor any of the other equipment associated with the meter in any way, shape or form. This should be added in the supporting documents.

5.1.3 ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

Currently, there is no legal obligation for SIPs to install a safe isolator if there is not one in situ. A member believed that this should be included as it would future-proof further work down the line. DW warned that there are cases where it is cost prohibitive to fit an isolator into the meter, and that there are also cases where it is not physically possible to fit an isolator. The WG believed it would be useful to expand the scope of SIPs here as it is a fair challenge, and to check whether a legal precedent could be added into CoMCoP, or whether it could be encouraged as best practice. If it were added as a legal requirement, it would have to be an auditable requirement which would add complexities for organisations given the commercial implications. DW reminded members to be mindful of their conduct in relation to competition law during WG meetings. Should members have any concerns during these meetings, they should raise them immediately as the purpose of these WGs is to find a solution to the issue at hand. DW also highlighted that whatever would be put into scope and would become out of scope would need to be clearly defined, and processes would need to be put in place to ensure they are auditable, trackable and safe.

5.2 ACTIVITIES SIPS SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO WORK ON

5.2.1 DE-ENERGISE AND RE-ENERGISE

Members were asked whether they were any challenges to the Industry in SIPs being able to de-energise and also re-energise. Most members did not see either of these as an issue, however some concerns were shared.

1. De-energise

Pre-requisite training, SIP specific training and safety training are key to ensure that SIPs can isolate safely, and these are points that would be discussed in later WG sessions, including which safety equipment they need and which rules should be in place. A specific session will also focus on the audit requirements.

One concern that was raised regarded the handling of sealing pliers, distribution, reporting, lost and stolen, and destruction. DW mentioned that sealing pliers is a topic that will also be looked at specifically in another session. One option would be to look at what is being done in the gas Industry and learn from them. They use a plastic funnel with a wire on it which has a number inside. When an operative turns the seal, it locks it in position. This could help identify which sealing plier belongs to which Party.

A member suggested having a guidance document on local generation such as PV, batteries, and also EVs which tend to be forgotten about. A clarification is needed as to whether the individual is isolating for themselves (a qualified electrician working and needing to isolate for their own safety) or isolating as part of the job they've been called to conduct (a SIP). The WG agreed that lines should not be blurred. In effect, it is each Party's responsibility (no matter whether SIP or qualified electrician) to safely isolate any equipment they are working on. This would need to be made clear during the training. A member added that having a standard in place such as an Energy & Utility Skills Register (EUSR) Accreditation to compliment the single, single off multiphase, multiphase and other Accreditations would be useful given the duality in the challenge of electricians either not escalating issues due to working out of scope or the fact that they are not trained on how to identify and escalate safety non-technical issues. Complex metering could be a challenge depending on the level of training that an operative has received and the equipment on site. A clear distinction between SIP-only activities and electrician activities would need to be put in place.

DW asked the WG whether SIP activity should be limited to single phase only or should include three-phase up to 100 amps as well. If it were expanded to three-phase, members were asked whether it would be worth explaining why SIPs could not go up given the equipment and associated dangers would be different. DW added that if there is a clear boundary defining that SIPs can only work up to 100 amps, it should make it explicitly clear where the level of responsibility stops for SIP work. Anyone who would want to go higher than that would need to call specialist individuals. Currently, most of the issues concern individuals going on site to change a single fuse board or to put renewables into properties which should be covered with this proposal. This could be changed later however, if there were a need to do so, such as SIPs needed to conduct work in vast offices or factories. The WG agreed with establishing these ground rules. Members added that the authorisation being with the networks, they should also agree with these ground rules. GS reminded members that the WG's aim is to consider everything that could be within and without scope and make changes accordingly to what is

currently in scope. The WG should therefore be confident in its recommendation to change the current scope. For instance, upgrading fuses is not currently within scope, however the Code Manager has had discussions with the ENA about this topic which could be part of SIP's scope.

I0278WG_0511_D01: The Working Group agreed to keep SIPs' activities to a whole current and ensure it will be explicitly stated.

2. Re-energise

As there are few activities that could prevent re-energisation, members were asked if the process should be made explicitly clear that a SIP can only re-energize something that they have de-energized themselves. For instance, if a Consumer got cut off by their Energy Supplier and asked a SIP to come on site to re-energise, members agreed that SIPs should not be granted permission to do this work as they would be made aware of the reasons for the de-energisation. Such responsibility should remain with the DNO or the Energy Supplier if they were the ones who conducted a de-energisation. A member mentioned that it is currently clear in REC Change Proposal R0021 under the contractual guidance: it should be explained and recorded at the point of booking that the supply is currently energised. However, it is currently unclear what operatives need to do when they attend site, and it has already been de-energised as it states the energisation status cannot be amended and the job should be aborted.

I0278WG_0511_D02: The Working Group agreed that it should be made explicitly clear that SIPs (as individual or organisation) can only re-energise supply they would have de-energise as part of the same job. This should also be made clear in the training and handover process.

It might be difficult to monitor whether this re-energise/de-energise rule is being applied by all SIPs as it will not be possible to audit it. More discussions will be needed to explore whether an escalation process can be put in place to ensure Parties do not circumnavigate this rule, can abort the job and notify that the energisation status is incorrect.

5.2.2 FUSE REPLACEMENT

The following challenges with SIPs being able to replace fuses were highlighted:

- Not being able to determine the correct fuse rating;
- The responsibility for the stock as it currently is with the DNO;
- DNO acceptance;
- Whether access will always be available if it is in a multi-occupancy building; and
- Who bears the costs.

The main question focused on whether it is still the DNO's responsibility to upgrade fuses, and whether this should be within scope of SIPs. Members believed that there should be some flexibility to avoid creating barriers and allow SIPs to be able to upgrade fuses. However, it should not mean that SIPs should be responsible for upgrading fuses as the responsibility remains with the DNOs. The question of fuse upgrades was asked within the information request and responses shown that some DNOs did allow contractors to upgrade fuses whilst others did not. The ENA is currently developing a standard for fuse upgrades in the form of an

Engineering Recommendations (EREC), so DNOs should be in agreement with fuse upgrades. The ENA engaged with the EUSR about training and what the standards should be. Members asked to receive further details to know whether this would cover phenolic or older cutouts for instance. One member mentioned that some issues were seen with older cutout types around governance, minimum testing requirements, and the training around the risks to name a few, which has been challenging when training individuals to get a SIP accreditation. DW shared this concern, as a little knowledge can be dangerous. However, the standards and the level of audit should remain the same irrespective of the background of the individuals being trained to become SIPs.

I0278WG_0511_A03: The Code Manager to share the ENA EREC about fuse upgrades with members when it is made available.

DW suggested coming back to this topic once the EREC would have been made available to the Code Manager so the WG can better feed in these discussions and agree on the scope for SIPs.

6 NEXT STEPS, DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Lead Analyst confirmed that the next meeting will take place on 29 June 2026 from 14:00 to 15:30.

7 AOB

The Lead Analyst invited attendees to provide AOB. None was raised. The Chair invited attendees to share any further thoughts and input they may have after talking to their organisation to the REC Change mailbox: change.management@recmanager.co.uk, before closing the meeting.

ACTIONS LOG

Action ref.	Action	Owner	Status
I0278WG_0511_A01	The Code Manager to amend the diagram with some explanatory notes, and to expand the responsibilities of SIPs in different scenarios with some supporting documentation.	Code Manager	New
I0278WG_0511_A02	The Code Manager to share with members statistics provided by the HSE.	Code Manager	New
I0278WG_0511_A03	The Code Manager to share the ENA EREC about fuse upgrades with members when it is made available.	Code Manager	New

DECISIONS LOG

Decision ref.	Action	Owner	Status

I0278WG_0511_D01	The working group agreed to keep SIPs' activities to a whole current and ensure it will be explicitly stated.	Working Group	New
I0278WG_0511_D02	The Working Group agreed that it should be made explicitly clear that SIPs (as individual or organisation) can only re-energise supply they would have de-energise as part of the same job. This should also be made clear in the training and handover process.	Working Group	New