SDEP Good Practice Guidance

18 August 2026

v0.1 DRAFT



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CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Status	Issue Date	Author	Comments
0.1	Draft	18 August 2026	Code Manager	Initial Version for PAB Approval

2. Ticket Types

Please use this section to help you determine which ticket type to raise for your query and clarify the associated SLA.

Using the appropriate ticket type ensures that your query can be dealt with in the most efficient manner and additionally, it ensures that the appropriate SLA (and urgency) is assigned.

2.1 Tickets

The list of all Process Types, what they should be used for, and the relevant Code obligation can be found in Appendix 1 of the SDEP User Guide.

Broadly:

Ticket Type	Use Cases
General Query	- Provide additional information to other Parties that cannot be captured in the relevant Market Message - Securely share customer information required to operate that business process - Ask questions to other Parties related to that business process
Escalation	- Escalate to a Party where they have not provided the information required within the Code timeframes for that business process - Escalate to a Party where they have provided incomplete or inaccurate data for that business process
Contract Manager General Query	- Where the General Query Process Type has not been resolved - Where the Escalation Process Type has not been resolved after Final Escalation - Where there is no other specific Process Type that is appropriate, such as where customer data is required to be shared

Please also note that not all processes and query types require an SDEP ticket as there are existing Market Message dedicated to resolving those issues.

For example, in the case of a missing Switch Meter Read, *Schedule 30 - Resolution of Consumer Facing Switching and Billing Issues* outlines that the Party should initially raise a D0300 (Electricity) or a SAR Flow (Gas), and only raise an SDEP Communication where the Party has not responded in line with Code-defined timeframes, or to exchange information that cannot be provided via the DTN.

Please therefore make sure to review the Code obligations for the relevant business process, and only raise SDEP Communications where outlined by the Code, or where the issue was not resolved within the timeframes set out in the Code.

2.2 Resolving Non-Responsiveness

The initial steps that should be taken to resolve Non-Responsiveness are:

1. Use SDEP Ticket Functionality

- Escalation tickets can be moved to Final Escalation after 5WDs if the sending Party has not received a satisfactory response
- Whilst the General Query process type does not have the functionality to move to Final Escalation, the Code Manager recommends that Parties follow the same timetable i.e. send an escalation message within the General Query after 5WDs

2. Contract Manager General Query

- The Contract Manager General Query should only be used as an escalation tool after the sending Party has tried to escalate within the initial ticket. This is because another user may be actively working on your query, so it is important to follow up on the ticket or escalation prior to raising a Contract Manager query to minimise the unnecessary handovers and enable a swifter resolution of your query.

- The Contract Manager may not be aware of your initial Communication; therefore please ensure you include **the unique reference of the query in the subject and/or the initial message** to allow the Contract Manager to quickly check on the status of those queries and any previous Communications.

- The Contract Manager may not have access to specific 'pots' of queries depending on access, data involved and other guardrails. It is therefore very important to include the context for your query; summarise the Communications and steps taken and attach any information that may be relevant. The more detailed and comprehensive the description, the more likely it will be that the Contract Manager of the relevant Party will be able to route and resolve your query.

3. REC Code Manager

- Where another Party has persistently not responded to initial Communications or Contract Manager General Queries, you should raise this with your Operational Account Manager who will be able to facilitate engagement with the other Party

- Where a Party has consistently failed to operate the Escalations process in-line with the Code, the Operational Account Manager may additionally report this to the Performance Assurance team to consider whether further action needs to be taken

3. Data Protection

One of the core purposes of the Secure Data Exchange Portal (SDEP) is to provide Parties with a secure mechanism for exchanging customer-related information where this is required to support REC processes.

Schedule 17 – Secure Data Exchange states that SDEP "enables Parties to securely exchange data in both a structured and unstructured format and **shall be used by Parties when exchanging Personal Data relating to Consumers pursuant to this Code** (unless another secure means, such as the Data Transfer Network, is specified)."

Accordingly, where Parties need to exchange Personal Data relating to Consumers for the purposes of fulfilling REC obligations, they should use SDEP unless the relevant Code provisions specify another secure route. **Personal Data relating to Consumers should not be exchanged between Parties by email**, as email does not provide the same securely controlled, auditable, and process-specific mechanism for secure data exchange.

Parties should ensure that any **Personal Data shared through SDEP is relevant, necessary and proportionate** to the purpose of the Communication. Information should be limited to what is required to progress or resolve the relevant business process, and care should be taken to ensure that data is accurate, appropriately contextualised and sent to the correct recipient Party.

For example, where attachments or supporting evidence are added to an SDEP Communication, Parties should check that the attachment is necessary, relevant to the query, and **does not contain excessive or unrelated Personal Data**. Particular care should be taken when attaching bulk files, screenshots, correspondence, photographs or case notes, as these may contain additional customer information that is not required for the recipient to progress the matter. Before sending, Parties should confirm that the correct file has been attached and that any unnecessary Personal Data has been removed or redacted where appropriate.

Parties should also consider their own internal controls where SDEP Communications, reports, exports or attachments are downloaded, stored locally, or transferred into internal case management tools or trackers. Any locally retained copies should be managed in accordance with the Party's own data protection, information security, and retention policies. Personal Data should not be retained for longer than necessary, and access to locally stored SDEP information should be restricted to those who require it for a legitimate business purpose.

4. Case Management

This section provides guidance on the effective management of SDEP Communications, including the handling of open queries and the use of the archiving functionality.

Effective case management processes can help Parties monitor outstanding Communications, identify where action is required, and support the timely resolution of queries. While Parties may adopt different approaches depending on their internal processes and operating models, maintaining clear oversight of open Communications can help reduce delays, minimise duplicate activity, and improve the overall efficiency of interactions between Parties.

The guidance below outlines good practice considerations for managing and archiving SDEP Communications.

4.1 Managing Open Queries

Effective management of open SDEP Communications can help Parties monitor outstanding actions, identify where intervention may be required, and support the timely resolution of queries. While SDEP provides a Dashboard showing open Communications relevant to their Process Type(s), Parties should consider whether additional internal processes and controls are required to support the effective management of their workload.

At the time of publication, SDEP does not provide reporting functionality that enables Parties to generate management information or performance reporting consolidating all of their Communications. Enhancements in this are expected to be introduced as part of R0122 – SDEP Review Improvements (2): Usability. In the meantime, Parties should consider implementing their own processes to maintain visibility of outstanding Communications and ensure that actions are progressed within relevant Code timescales.

The approach adopted by each Party will depend on the scale and complexity of its operations; however, our engagement with Parties has highlighted several areas of good practice that have proven effective in supporting case management.

Maintaining Ownership and Accountability

Parties should establish a process for assigning ownership of new Communications to an individual or team responsible for progressing the query. This can help ensure that Communications are reviewed promptly, responses are coordinated, and accountability for progressing actions is clearly understood.

Where Communications involve multiple departments or specialist teams, Parties may also find it beneficial to maintain a clear record of ownership and any internal handovers to reduce the risk of delays or duplicated activity.

Monitoring Outstanding Communications

Regular reviews of open Communications can help Parties identify queries that require action and ensure that responses are provided within the relevant timescales. Parties should undertake periodic reviews of outstanding cases, which depending on the volume of Communications received may range between daily reviews to weekly reviews.

Maintaining Internal Tracking Mechanisms

Many Parties operate internal trackers, spreadsheets, workflow tools, or case management systems to supplement the information available within SDEP. Parties typically capture information such as:

- The Process Type reference
- The date the Communication was received or raised
- The Party involved
- The nature of the query
- The individual or team responsible for responding
- The current status of the Communication
- Any relevant Code timescales or response deadlines
- The date on which the next review, update, or follow-up action is expected

Maintaining this information can assist Parties in prioritising workload, monitoring progress, and identifying Communications that may require escalation or further engagement.

Managing Follow-Up Activity

Where a response is outstanding, Parties should maintain visibility of when follow-up activity is expected. This could include recording agreed response dates, planned review points, or the timing of any further action that may be required under the relevant REC process.

Where a Communication remains unresolved, Parties should consider the appropriate escalation action as outlined in Section 2.2 of this document. This can help ensure that issues are progressed through the appropriate channels and reduce unnecessary duplication of activity.

4.2 Archiving Queries

The archive function within SDEP only affects the visibility of a Communication for the Party performing the archive action. Parties associated with the Communication are not notified when a query is archived by the other Party and will continue to see the Communication in accordance with their own SDEP view.

Parties should be aware that responding to an archived Communication will return that Communication to the active worklist of the Party that previously archived it. **Before responding to an archived query, Parties should consider whether further action is required or whether the matter has already been satisfactorily concluded.**

As a matter of good practice, **Parties should consider archiving Communications once the required response has been provided**, the issue has been resolved, or responsibility for progressing the matter has transferred through an escalation route, such as a Contract Manager General Query. This will allow for easier tracking of issues that are currently outstanding. Where a Party does not consider a matter resolved, it is advisable to respond with a clear explanation of the outstanding issue and the further action required to support resolution.

At the time of publication, SDEP automatically archives Communications after 30 days of inactivity and permanently deletes them 30 days after archiving. Parties should note that these arrangements may change in future releases of SDEP. Information on proposed enhancements and changes to archiving functionality can be found in R0122 – SDEP Review Improvements (2): Usability.

As a further good practice measure, Parties should consider checking that the status of a Communication is clearly understood by all involved Parties before archiving, helping to reduce the likelihood of queries being reopened unnecessarily and supporting efficient case management.

5. Effective Communications

Effective Communications can help Parties resolve queries more efficiently, reduce unnecessary follow-up activity, and ensure that information is exchanged in a consistent and secure manner. The following good practice considerations have been identified through engagement with Parties and may assist in improving the quality and effectiveness of SDEP Communications.

5.1 Key Guidance

Selecting the Appropriate Process Type

Selecting the correct Process Type is an important factor in ensuring that Communications are routed appropriately and managed in accordance with the relevant REC process. Where an incorrect Process Type is used, the receiving Party may need to seek clarification, redirect the query, or request that a new Communication is raised, which can delay resolution.

Parties should therefore review Section 2.1 and the SDEP User Guide Appendix 1 to **confirm that the selected Process Type reflects the issue being raised**. Where it is not clear which Process Type should be used, Parties should reach out to the REC Code Manager to clarify.[1]

Additionally, many REC processes contain established market messages, flows and operational procedures designed to resolve issues without requiring an SDEP Communication. Parties should therefore ensure that these mechanisms have been utilised where appropriate before raising a query through SDEP.

Accuracy and Completeness

Parties should ensure that the information provided within a Communication **is complete, accurate and relevant to the issue being raised**. This includes verifying that all relevant fields have been completed, that supporting information is correct, and that any related market processes or data flows have been completed accurately before raising a query.

Where information is incomplete or inaccurate, additional clarification may be required, which can delay resolution and increase the administrative burden on all Parties involved.

Secure Exchange of Information

Where a Communication requires the exchange of sensitive information, including MPANs, MPRNs, or Personal Data relating to Consumers, Parties should ensure that this information is shared using SDEP or another Code-approved secure mechanism where applicable.

Parties should also ensure that only information relevant and necessary to the query is shared, in line with the principles outlined in Section 3.

[1] For example, it is not explicit in the Code what process type a Supplier should use when they have not received a *D0086 Notification of Change of Supplier Readings* after agreeing a SAR via the *D0300 Disputed Readings or Missing Readings on Change of Supplier* (e.g. because the associated Supplier has not shared this with their Data Collector, or their Data Collector has not acted on this information). However, the Code Manager would be able to provide advice that, in a recent survey of Suppliers, the majority of respondents indicated they would expect to receive this via PT0071: Missing Read (Elec) – Escalation, which also aligns with the SDEP User Guide.

Clear and Constructive Communications

Communications should be written in a clear and concise manner. **Providing sufficient context at the outset will help the receiving Party understand the issue**, identify any actions required, and progress the query without unnecessary delay.

Where a Party is responding to a query, depending on the context it may be helpful to explain the source of any information provided, the rationale for decisions taken, and any assumptions that have been made. Where there is disagreement between Parties, providing supporting context and evidence can assist in reaching a timely resolution.

Managing Expectations and Timescales

Where a response is required by a particular date, Parties should clearly highlight this within the Communication, for example within the subject line or opening section of the message. This can help the receiving Party understand the urgency of the request and prioritise activity accordingly.

Where a query is expected to take time to investigate or resolve, **Parties should provide updates on progress, including expected next steps and indicative timescales** where appropriate. Keeping other Parties informed can help reduce unnecessary follow-up activity and avoid premature escalations.

Where a Communication is likely to require involvement from third parties, site visits, or complex investigations, Parties should explain this within the Communication so that expectations can be managed appropriately.

Avoiding Duplication and Supporting Efficient Resolution

To support efficient case management, Parties should **avoid raising multiple Communications relating to the same issue** where a single Communication would be sufficient. Multiple Communications on the same matter can result in duplicated effort, inconsistent responses, and reduced visibility of the overall issue.

Where a query relates to an escalation of an existing SDEP Communication, Parties should reference the original Communication to provide continuity and context.

Where a query relates to multiple MPxNs or a bulk activity, Parties should consolidate the request into a single Communication and provide supporting information through attachments where appropriate. This can help ensure that all relevant information is considered together and reduce the need for multiple parallel interactions.

Where additional information becomes available, Parties should generally add this to an existing Communication rather than raising a new query relating to the same issue, helping to maintain a complete audit trail and reduce duplicate activity.

5.2 Checklist

The following checklist provides a practical summary of the good practice considerations outlined in this section. Parties should consider adopting these checks within their internal operating procedures to support the effective management of SDEP Communications and reduce avoidable delays, duplication and escalation activity.

Prior to Raising SDEP Communications

☐ Have I reviewed the relevant REC obligations and SDEP User Guide guidance for that Process Type?

☐ Have I already utilised any applicable market messages, flows, or operational processes before raising an SDEP Communication?

☐ Have I checked whether an existing SDEP Communication already covers this issue?

When Drafting and Responding to SDEP Communications

☐ Have I selected the correct Process Type for the issue being raised?

☐ Have I completed all mandatory fields?

☐ Have I included all relevant identifiers, reference numbers, MPxNs, supporting information, and evidence required to investigate the issue?

☐ If this relates to a previous Communication or escalation, have I included the relevant SDEP reference number(s)?

☐ If the query relates to multiple MPxNs or a bulk activity, have I consolidated the request into a single Communication where appropriate?

☐ Am I only sharing information that is relevant and necessary to resolve the query?

☐ Have I provided sufficient context for the receiving Party to understand the issue and any action required?

☐ Have I checked that the information provided is accurate, complete, and up to date?

☐ Have I clearly highlighted any relevant deadlines or required response dates where relevant?

☐ If the issue is likely to require third-party involvement, site visits, or a lengthy investigation, have I explained this within the Communication?

6. Worked Examples

The following examples demonstrate what effective use of SDEP Communications may look like in practice, including raising queries, responding to requests, managing escalations and progressing issues to resolution. The examples are illustrative only but demonstrate the level of information, context and communication that can help Parties resolve issues efficiently and maintain a clear audit trail.

6.1 Raising an SDEP Communication

PT0012 Disputed Meter Readings (Elec.) – Escalation – No Response to D0300 Sent 10 August 2026
We are escalating this matter as we have not received a response to the D0300 submitted on 10 August 2026, which is now more than 5 Working Days old.

The customer switched to us on 20 July 2026 after a Change of Tenancy, but did not provide an initial read, resulting in an estimated Switch Meter Read. The customer subsequently provided actual meter readings from 03 August 2026 and 10 August 2026, which indicate that the estimated Switch Meter Read is inaccurate. We have calculated an updated estimated Switch Meter Read and attached supporting rationale.

A D0300 was therefore raised on 10 August 2026 proposing a revised Change of Supplier Meter Reading, however no response has been received. Please review the disputed reading and either accept the proposal or provide supporting rationale for rejecting it.

MPAN: 1234567890123
New Supplier SSD: 20 July 2026
D0300 Sent Date: 10 August 2026
DPI Indicator: Domestic

6.2 Responding to an SDEP Communication (Able to Resolve Issue)

We have reviewed the D0300 submitted on 10 August 2026 and are satisfied that the proposed revised Change of Supplier Meter Reading is supported by the meter reading information provided.

We have now responded to the D0300 and accepted the proposed updated Switch Meter Read. The relevant records will be updated in accordance with the agreed reading and we will inform out Data Service Agent.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. We consider this issue resolved and no further action is required from our side at this time, and we will archive this communication.

6.3 Responding to an SDEP Communication (Not Able to Resolve Issue)

We have reviewed the D0300 submitted on 10 August 2026; however, based on our initial assessment, we are not currently satisfied that the proposed revised Change of Supplier Meter Reading can be accepted.

We are investigating the matter with our Data Services Agent to validate the meter reading history and supporting evidence associated with this site. Once this review has been completed, we will provide a substantive response to the D0300.

We currently expect to conclude our investigation and provide an update by 21 August 2026. If our review is completed sooner, we will respond accordingly.

Thank you for your patience while we complete our investigation.

6.4 Escalating an SDEP Communication within the Existing Ticket

Thank you for your update. You advised that you expected to provide a response by 21 August 2026; however, as of 24 August 2026 we have not received a further update.

The customer has now contacted us twice requesting that this issue is resolved. Please provide an update on the status of your investigation as soon as possible.

We have therefore moved this Communication to a Final Escalation, and we do not receive a response 01 September 2026, we intend to raise a Contract Manager General Query to progress this matter.

6.5 Escalating an SDEP Communication via the Contract Manager General Query

PT0031 Contract Manager Query (Elec.) – Outstanding PT0012 Disputed Meter Readings Escalation – SDEP Ref [Reference Number]
Please find attached a PT0012 Disputed Meter Readings Escalation that remains unresolved. Original SDEP Reference: [Reference Number]; MPAN: 1234567890123

We sent a D0300 on 10 August 2026 that did not receive a response, hence we subsequently escalated through SDEP. Your colleague advised that they were investigating the matter and expected to provide a response by 21 August 2026. As of 01 September 2026, no further update or substantive response has been received. The customer has sent multiple chasers asking for an updated Swich Meter Read, and this relates to a Domestic Change of Occupier.

We would appreciate your assistance in obtaining a response and progressing this matter to resolution.



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