

## Access to Data on the ELEXON Portal

<b>Meeting Name</b>	BSC Panel
<b>Meeting Date</b>	10 May 2012
<b>Purpose of paper</b>	For Information
<b>Summary</b>	The BSC Panel has raised questions about access to information held on the ELEXON Portal. In response to these questions, this paper sets out the arrangements in place for accessing data via the Portal, any related restrictions and limitations and the reason for them.

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The BSC Panel has raised questions about access to information held on the ELEXON Portal (the Portal). Specifically, Panel members have expressed concern about restrictions to access, the policy for approving requests for access and the availability of data held on the portal to non-BSC Parties. In response to these questions, this paper sets out the arrangements in place for accessing data via the Portal, any related restrictions and limitations and the reason for them.
- 1.2 There are 2 main websites containing information relating to the BSC: the ELEXON website ([www.elexon.co.uk](http://www.elexon.co.uk)) and the ELEXON Portal ([www.elexonportal.co.uk](http://www.elexonportal.co.uk)). All general information relating to settlement (e.g. Modifications, CPs, Consultations, services which ELEXON offers etc.) is contained within the ELEXON website, which does not require a login and is accessible to all.
- 1.3 The ELEXON Portal contains 2 sets of data:
- Generic settlement data with public access
  - Party specific data which is restricted to BSC Parties
- 1.4 This paper focuses on access arrangements for data and information held on the ELEXON Portal (rather than the ELEXON website).

### 2. Access to generic settlement data on the ELEXON Portal

- 2.1 The ELEXON Portal contains generic data with public access as well as party specific data (of a commercially sensitive nature) whose access is restricted. The Portal allows customers to register for access to one or both sets of data, with access to generic settlement data being granted through a verification email with additional security checks for the 2nd set.
- 2.2 Access to generic settlement data is granted to anyone instantly and automatically by setting up an account through an online form that requires the following information about the user:

- Email address
- First and last names
- Password
- Contact phone number
- 'Secret Question' and answer (to unlock the account if accidentally locked)

2.3 Once an account has been set up, data is accessed in just 3 mouse clicks.

### **3. Access to Party specific data**

3.1 Once a user has set up an account, they can register Participant IDs against their account and request additional access to data which specifically relates to their Participant IDs, such as:

- Authorised signatories
- Billing data
- Credit data
- CVA operational data (e.g. file loading and sequence numbers)
- Party imbalance history

3.2 In addition, registered users can request to download EAC/AA software, NHHDA software and XSec software.

3.3 Requests are made by ticking the relevant boxes on the 'My Site Permissions' area of the portal.

3.4 Once a request is received, it is passed on to ELEXON for verification. ELEXON checks the validity of the request by cross referencing the user's email address against the Party IDs that they've registered on their portal account, and confirming the users' role by contacting them by telephone. This additional manual intervention is required due to the company-specific nature of the data available.

### **4. Why protect the Portal with a sign in protocol?**

4.1 We recognise that the data which ELEXON produces is not only of use to BSC Parties, but also of general interest to the public and other organisations within our industry, as well as being popular with organisations making commercial gain from its use. We believe that settlement data is one of our most valuable assets, and that we have a responsibility to protect it for the benefit of BSC Parties and the wider industry. Placing this data behind a simple sign on process is an effective way to achieve this, while still giving access for 'genuine' use.

- 4.2 By placing all settlement data behind a login, users need to identify who they are in order to gain access to the data. This enables us to control access to Participant ID-specific data, also allowing open public access to the general data while enabling us to detect and stop improper usage and protect the service we offer to our customers. In this respect, we've learned lessons from the issues experienced in the past with data scraping on BMRS. This type of activity degraded performance and led, on occasion, to the web site being unavailable for Parties or the public to access. ELEXON has a code obligation to make data available to both Parties and non-Parties. It would be inappropriate for ELEXON to fail to take appropriate mitigating action around the known and proven risk of data scraping. The recognised approach to dealing with data scraping is through the implementation of a login process.
- 4.3 Username and password credentials are a 'baseline' security best practice principle. They enable ELEXON to control access to the various types of data, sensitive and non-sensitive, within the Portal. Usernames and passwords are used to create authorisation profiles which allow certain users, certain access, to certain areas. Without this, ELEXON cannot appropriately and securely authorise access to data. This 'baseline' level of user authentication is recommended by recognized security standards such as ISO27001. ELEXON has aligned itself to this security standard, and having usernames and passwords in place for the Portal makes up an essential part of our compliance, as well as reducing the risk profile of unauthorised access to the ELEXON network.
- 4.4 In summary, the login process allows ELEXON to authorise, protect and log access to party specific data whilst ensuring against degraded performance due to scraping activity and protecting the intellectual property of settlement data for the benefit of industry and BSC Parties.

## 5. User benefits of sign in protocol

- 5.1 In addition to the protections described above, there are benefits to Portal users that are achievable through the sign in process. Accessing the Portal as a registered user enables the site and data within it to be personalised to better suit the needs and preferences of the user:

### Quick links to frequently accessed content

- 5.2 As users view content, a list of 'Quick links' will appear on the screen showing the 5 most frequently visited areas of the Portal for that particular user. These will update automatically, or can be managed and altered by the user.

### Easy access to favourite content

- 5.3 Users may find content that they want to visit frequently. If this is the case, the content can be bookmarked using the Portal's 'Add Bookmark' functionality. Bookmarks can be easily reviewed and changed by the user through their profile.

### Notifications

- 5.4 Users can opt to select specific content and be notified by email whenever it changes.

## Scripting

- 5.5 While most content on the ELEXON Portal is intended for interactive use through the user's web browser, there are some files that are added or updated on a regular basis which users may wish to collect automatically. The portal accommodates this user requirement by providing scripted access to selected content. Users can automate and schedule the downloading of this content using any tool which allows HTTPS requests to be automated. This allows users to download data more securely and conveniently.
- 5.6 ELEXON monitors scripting activity to ensure that it is being carried out using valid scripting keys and that the normal login process has not been automated. This is to protect the Portal from scraping. If excessive scripting activity is identified (for example a user was downloading a file every 5 minutes which was only updated daily), ELEXON may disable the user's scripting key. This would only affect the user's ability to perform scripted downloads, and interactive use of the site and data held on it would still be allowed.

## 6. Restrictions to Portal access

- 6.1 The terms of use for the ELEXON Portal includes various references that caused concern to the Panel. Specifically, Panel members referred to ELEXON's right to:
- withdraw the service
  - disable any user identification code or password
  - suspend access to our Website
- 6.2 The Panel also expressed concern about certain limitations placed on users:
- You must not modify the paper or digital copies of any materials you have printed off or downloaded in any way
  - If you print off or download any part of our site in breach of these terms of use, your right to use our Website will cease immediately
- 6.3 These are standard clauses that feature in the terms and conditions of websites that contains large quantities of data. They are in place to protect both ELEXON and users of the Portal, and to allow ELEXON to take action in instances where the website is being used in an inappropriate manner that could impact its availability to the wider community of users. They also protect users against any party maliciously changing the data and purporting it to be genuine.
- 6.4 For clarification, general data that is not specific to a particular Party ID is accessible to all. Access to Party specific data is restricted to the individual Party, under a BSC obligation. To discharge this obligation ELEXON validates and approves all access requests and has implemented a login protocol to ensure that only duly authorised users are allowed to access Party specific data.

- 6.5 The P114 Licence arrangements cater for non-BSC Parties who wish to receive additional data and reports, generally only available to BSC Parties.

## 7. Recommendation

- 7.1 The BSC Panel is invited to:
- a) **NOTE** the contents of this paper.

### **For more information, please contact:**

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Appendix 1: Data available to all Portal users



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**Financial and Credit**

FAA Advice Notes

FAA Forms

FAA Payment Calendars

Funding Shares

Market Financial Information

Market Index Price and Volume

Participant Financial Information

Residual Cashflow Reallocation Cashflow

**Credit / Credit Alerting**

Credit Assessment Load Factors (CALF)

Credit Assessment Price (CAP)

Credit Cover History / Alerting

Party Energy Indebtedness History

**System Prices**

Best View Prices

SSP/SBP/NIV

**LDSO Data**

LDSO Methodology Statements

MSID Site Names

**Losses**

CVA Line Loss Factors

SVA Line Loss Factors

**P246 LLF Exclusions**

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_A

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_B

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_C

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_D

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_E

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_F

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_G

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_H

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_J

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_K

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_L

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_M

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_N

LLF Exclusions for GSP Group \_P

**National Grid Data**

Historic Generation by Fuel Type

**Operational Data**

Advice Note Notification Dates 2011/2012

BMRA Data Archive (formerly Tibco Relay)

CVA File Loading

CVA Sequence Numbers

ETLM Data

GSP Group Correction Factors (GGCFs)

Historic TLM Data

Market Domain Data (MDD)

MDD Publish Data File Request Form



P114 Data

- Profiling and Weather Stations
- Small Scale Third Party Generating Limit
- SVA OSM Contact Information
- SVA OSM Offerings and Reports

**Downloads**

- BMRA Data Archive (formerly TIBCO Relay) User Guide
- Credit Cover Education Tool
- EAC/AA Software
- NHHDA Software
- Participant Communications and Installation Guide
- Participant Test Service User Guide
- TIBCO Rendezvous Software and User Guide
- XSec Software

**Registration Information**

- Authorised Signatories
- Registered BM Units
- Registered Participants
- Registration Details

**Settlement Calendars**

- Settlement Calendar Search
- Settlement Calendars

**Imbalance Information**

- Imbalance Parameters
- Party Imbalance History

**Applications**

- BMRS
- BSC Service Desk
- ECVAA Web Service
- Online Forms