

UMSUG paper – Changes to the operation of dimming devices

1. Purpose

This document is seeking to update the Operational Information Document to remove the restriction on Customers having the ability to make changes to the operation of a dimming device.

2. Rationale

2.1. Existing restriction

The restriction can be found at para. 7.3 of the Operational Information Document which states;

“Where a dimming device can be configured remotely or locally the manufacturer (or its representative) will provide an undertaking to BSCCo that the Customer will not be provided with the ability to change the operation of the device. Furthermore, any changes undertaken on behalf of the Customer will be reported to both BSCCo and the host UMSO. The Customer must provide a new inventory immediately declaring the new Switch Regimes for a Variable Power Switch Regime as defined in the Variable Power Switch Regime Spreadsheet on the BSC Website: Variable Power Switch Regime Spreadsheet”

This paragraph was included with the introduction of Variable Power Switch Regimes (formerly MLSD) and reflected some UMSUG members’ concerns about Customers’ ability to maintain the inventory to reflect changes made by them, in view of the perceived complexity of the VPSR arrangements.

2.2. Current practice

VPSR has now been in place for over seven years and is well established. As a Meter Administrator we can see from the summary inventories we receive that there are more than half a million streetlights being dimmed in line with a VPSR. This demonstrates customer competence in maintaining and updating inventories where dimming is in place.

Two recent applications for Control Charge Codes have been for CMS controls that as well as being capable of switching and dimming lights via WAN communication, can also be operated locally through Bluetooth connection. Although the applicants were only seeking CMS Control Charge Codes, there is the potential for use as a standalone control in the future.

In addition, we are aware from a third Manufacturer’s published case histories, that locally adjustable dimming devices are already installed in some parts of the country. The following is a quote from that case history;

“From the ground, users can switch the luminaire on or off; adapt the dimming curve in real-time and read diagnostic data on how the network is performing while of course setting up pre-programmed dimming schedules.”

With CMS being impractical/expensive for remote rural areas it would seem that the ability of a Customer to be able to tailor the dimming on a local basis to both achieve energy savings and respond to flexibility requirements of the local lighting is an approach that should be formally permitted within the wording of the OID.

It is likely that other manufacturers will be coming forward with similar devices and seeking approval for those devices. Removal of the restriction from the OID is proposed for that reason.

3. Proposal

The proposal is to remove the restriction from the OID by amending 7.3 as follows:-

~~“Where a dimming device can be configured remotely or locally the manufacturer (or its representative) will provide an undertaking to BSCCo that the Customer will not be provided with the ability to change the operation of the device. Furthermore, any changes undertaken on behalf of the Customer will be reported to both BSCCo and the host UMSO. The~~ Customer must provide a new inventory immediately declaring the new Switch Regimes for a Variable Power Switch Regime as defined in the Variable Power Switch Regime Spreadsheet on the BSC Website: Variable Power Switch Regime Spreadsheet”

4. Recommendation

The UMSUG is invited to:

- Review the suggested change to the wording of the OID,
- Recommend inclusion in the next update of the OID.

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19th August 2019