

Smart PPM Change of Supplier (CoS) Principles (Final 1.0)

10/11/17

Energy UK has been working with its members to explore the potential for voluntarily developing a set of Principles and best practice to protect customers with smart¹ meters in pre-payment mode during switching (Change of Supplier).

The smart pre-payment switching principles (the "**SPPM Change of Supplier Principles**") are intended to ensure customers who have smart meters in prepayment mode and choose to switch supplier and maintain smart prepayment functionality do not experience any detriment as result of the switching process. This builds on Energy UK previous work in this area in 2016.

The SPPM Change of Supplier Principles outlined below apply only to domestic customers– it does not apply to non-domestic, commercial or business customers.

SPPM Change of Supplier Principles

Each supplier has independently committed to applying the below principles, as a minimum, where a customer with a smart meter with a prepayment tariff is changing their supplier and maintaining prepayment functionality with their new supplier. Suppliers can achieve this through the provided example actions or alternative actions that maintain the intended customer outcomes of the principles.

	Principle	Example actions
1.	Communicate clearly to customers, using appropriate channels, that any remaining credit on the meter will reset to zero on the day of switching and clearly communicate what will happen to any account credit	Gaining Supplier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify the customer at point of sale that their vending device or top up ID will arrive before supply start date (SSD) Advise the customer that any credit remaining on their meter with the Losing Supplier will be reset to zero on supply start date and that their current

¹ References to “smart” includes SMETS1 and SMETS2 meters.

Energy UK

Charles House
5-11 Regent Street
London SW1Y 4LR

T 020 7930 9390
www.energy-uk.org.uk
t @EnergyUKcomms

	<p>balance, as well as other key messages regarding the switching process (see 'Key messages around the switching process' in appendix 1).</p>	<p>(Losing) supplier will advise them how any credit on their account balance will be refunded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend managing credit closely near to the switching date to ensure there is no excess credit on the meter and they have funds available for first top-up / vend using the new suppliers vending device/top-up ID. • Provide the customer with contact details to use should they run out of credit and not have the means or ability to top up immediately following the switch • Check customers are familiar with all available channels to top up and how to use them <p>Losing Supplier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm customer is leaving and that they will receive a final account statement • Notify the customer that the credit balance on their meter will be reset to zero on supply start date and inform them when they can expect any refund due • Provide the customer with contact details should they have any queries or concerns regarding the credit refund process • Advise the customer if any credit is being transferred to their new (Gaining) supplier and when this will happen <p>Both Suppliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, validate the customer's understanding of the key messages and ensure the customer is clear of the process.
2.	<p>Ensure that the customer has the information and/or vending device/top-up ID to enable top-up / vending on supply start date.</p>	<p>Gaining Supplier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the customer has either their vending device or a top-up ID to enable them to top-up / vend upon supply start date • Where possible, validate the customer's understanding of how they will top-up / vend upon supply start date and ensure the customer is clear on what they should be doing.
3.	<p>Support customers through appropriate actions which ensure they maintain supply throughout their switch, and take appropriate steps to safeguard them from financial detriment resulting from the switch. This may include taking additional steps for vulnerable customers.</p>	<p>Both Suppliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish if the customer is on the Priority Services Register or meets any other definition of vulnerability. Seek, where possible / practicable, to work with the other supplier to ensure such customer is safeguarded from financial detriment. • Use smart data where practicable to speed up account reconciliation <p>Gaining Supplier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take steps to establish whether the customer should be on the Priority Services Register, is vulnerable, or has any special needs • Monitor accounts for vulnerability and use of emergency credit and initial top-up / vend

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact recently gained smart prepayment meter customers where an initial top-up / vend has not been completed • Take reasonable steps to assist customers until initial top-up / vend, using services that take into account the customer's ability to repay any financial support provided <p>Losing Supplier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider provision of fast track final account and refund routes for vulnerable customers • Take responsibility and signpost the customer to the Gaining Supplier if they are unable to top-up / vend after the switch (e.g. by providing the customer with the Gaining Supplier's contact details)
--	--	--

Suppliers recognise the importance of monitoring issues experienced by smart prepayment consumers, including where they are made aware of financial detriment resulting from the switch, during the change of supply process and are committed to working with industry to seek appropriate long-term solutions. Therefore, issues will be monitored by suppliers on an individual basis and at the MRA PPMF group using relevant industry data.

Appendix 1

Suppliers should integrate these key messages into customer communications to ensure consistent messaging about the smart prepayment switching process.

The gaining supplier:

At the point of acquisition, the gaining supplier should:

- *inform the customer of the impact the switching process (including its timescales) may have on any credit on their meter, including notifying them that any account credit owed to them will be refunded by the customer's current supplier following the switch.*

At multiple relevant points through the switching journey (including following the switch):

- *inform the customer about available top up channels and when they will need to make their first top up / vend;*
- *provide the relevant contact number for any queries or concerns the customer may have around the switch, including specific wording to explain what to do in the event of the customer not having the means or ability to top-up / vend following the switch.*

The losing supplier:

At the point they are notified of the switch, the losing supplier should:

- *inform the customer of the impact the switching process may have on any meter credit including the timescales;*
- *outline the process by which the customer will receive a credit refund, should one be owed;*
- *provide contact details should the customer have any queries or concerns in relation to any loss of credit relating to the losing supplier.*

The principles have 12 suppliers as signatories at the time of launch, November 2017: Bristol Energy, British Gas, EDF, Npower, Scottish Power, SSE, Utility Warehouse, Utilita, Toto, Boost, Green Star Energy, Extra Energy