

IGT Standards of Service  
Query Management

Operational Guidelines

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Version 2.3

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This document sets out the high level principles of operation for the management of queries. The successful application of its approach is dependant on a series of defined responsibilities.

It also sets out the principles of operation of a Standards of Service (SOS) regime for queries, the scope of queries included in such a regime, together with details of the reporting and calculation of performance.

## 2 SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

The SOS requires certain Planned Performance Levels (PPLs) to be achieved for 2 categories. These categories are split into GT (The IGT in its capacity as a Gas Transporter) and Meter Asset (The IGT in its capacity as a Meter Operator).

### 2.1 Query Definitions

A substantiated challenge is a query which contains all mandatory information, and where appropriate, additional optional and desirable information. It will detail what action the user has taken to conclude that the query should be raised and what action the user expects the IGT to take.

The Query Type and Query Code within the query template will determine whether the data items are mandatory or optional. *[Query Templates to be updated]*

#### 2.1.1 GT Queries

An **Operational Query** is a reasoned and substantiated challenge by a User as to the validity of the following:

- Those Portfolio related data items in the Supply Point Register that have been originated by the IGT;

And/or

- Those data items provided or confirmed by the User where they can demonstrate that these have been misrepresented by the IGT

And which is intended to require action from the IGT to correct invalid and/or missing data and if necessary correct any related information which is derived from that data.

An **Invoice Query** is any question or dispute as to the proper calculation of any amount shown as payable by a Pipeline User or the Pipeline Operator under an Invoice Document or as to whether any such amount is or was properly payable and references to the amount of an Invoice Query are to the amount by which the Pipeline User submitting the Invoice Query considers the Invoice Amount to be incorrect. This will include:

- Those relevant related data items that have been originated by the IGT.

And/or

- Those data items provided or confirmed by the User where they can demonstrate these may have been misrepresented by the IGT

And/or

- Any amounts, including adjustments, where the User can demonstrate that such charges have not been properly calculated in accordance with the Transportation Statement or Metering Charges Statement.

And/or

- Those invoice documents, supporting data, remittance advices or payments where the user can demonstrate have not been received by the specified due date.

And which is intended to require action from the IGT to correct invalid and or missing data and if necessary correct any related information, which is derived from that data.

### **2.1.2 Meter Asset Queries**

A Meter Asset query is “reasoned opposition to the validity of the *meter asset* data held or issued by an IGT which is related to a specific User ” and which is “... intended to require action from an IGT to correct invalid or missing data and if necessary, correct any related information which is derived from that data”.

### **2.1.3 Non SOS Queries (Written Communications)**

A Non SOS Queries is a query which does not fall into the above query types, such as requests for supply start dates, previous supplier details. Although the IGT will not be measured on their performance while undertaking these queries, however the IGT will report on the volume of such queries. The IGT will report on the data items requested , whether those data items are available via other mechanisms, and if so which mechanisms. By reporting on these requests it will highlight to the User the number of queries that are received of which could have been resolved by looking at the data that is available to the User via various mediums. It will also highlight the volumes and trends of data requests which should be considered for inclusion within the SOS Queries.

### **2.1.4 Non SOS Queries (Verbal Communications)**

These Queries will be the same as 2.1.3 but would have been received via the IGT’s Call centre.

### **2.2 Query Categories Excluded**

Not applicable at the current time

### **2.3 Query Categories for Inclusion**

Only those queries which are submitted in accordance with section 3 shall be counted within the SOS regime for queries.

The split of query codes shall be used as the basis for calculation of performance for GT and Meter Asset queries. If there are different query codes relating to the same MPRN, they will be counted separately. However the IGT may report on performance by the User in relation to queries received that are in categories 2.1.3 and 2.1.4.

### 3 PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

For the SOS to operate for Query Management, there is a requirement for both the IGT's and Users to adhere to a set of principles and supporting business rules. This section states the principles and rules which will apply to the SOS regime.

#### 3.1 General – Query Submission & Receipt

IGT's can best resolve queries when they are clearly specified and contain the necessary information for allocation to the service provider best suited to resolve them.

To help the IGT's provide an effective and efficient service, the following principles have been identified that will apply to the SOS regime.

- a) For the purposes of the SOS, queries will be “counted” at supply point or meter point level for Operational and Meter Asset queries, and at invoice item level for Invoice queries . Queries will be counted by each query type. If there are different query types which relate to the same MPRN, they will be counted separately.
- b) In good faith users should aim not to submit "double" queries and IGT's will seek to identify instances of such submissions (a “double” query is one which is duplicated or replicated)
- c) Users shall provide the appropriate mandatory information which the IGT's require to properly resolve the query within the Query Initiation QTI file. In order for the query to be accepted for measurement (within the SOS), Users will be required to provide a minimum set of mandatory data items in use at that time. Where possible, Users should also provide further optional and desirable information i.e customer contact telephone number, to assist the resolution of the query and specifically the Users view of what constitutes resolution.
- d) An IGT will respond using the Query Response QTR file either accepting or rejecting the query. The rejection reason will be contained within the QTR file. However at the discretion of an IGT, they may telephone a User to resolve a particular issue rather rejecting it.
- e) Measurement within the SOS will only apply to those queries issued to an IGT using the agreed query template. This template will be submitted electronically via email . As a contingency fax may be used.
- f) Users shall submit their queries in a balanced and a regular manner on a reasonable endeavours basis, so as not to disrupt the Query Management process and in order to assist the IGT to efficiently resolve queries. However, it should be noted that invoice queries may occur in larger numbers during periods when invoices are received. Large and balanced volumes will be based on a User's market share with a particular IGT and their average monthly query submissions.

- g) IGT's will process unavoidable excessive influxes of queries from Users and will respond to them on a reasonable endeavours basis. Users shall endeavour to give prior notification to an IGT of any unavoidable excessive influxes of queries, which may be considered for definition as a Project. (See Section 4).
- h) IGT's will provide an appropriate and up-to-date contact point for query submissions (according to query type if required), including telephone/fax numbers and e-mail addresses, for each type of query included in the SOS regime. Appendix 7.3 provides an example of the information required. The contact information will be stored centrally and can be located on the [?????] website. It is the IGT's responsibility to ensure the latest and most contact accurate information is provided and stored. It is the User's responsibility to periodically monitor this contact list.
- i) For queries requiring additional information in excess of that set out in 3.1(c), IGT's will request the information, and will reflect the appropriate start / stop time accordingly (see 3.1j).
- j) The start / stop time will be the working day on which the query was received with a cut off time of 4.00pm unless this is a non business day, in which case, it will be the immediate following business day.
- k) An IGT shall provide adequate information to enable efficient query identification by the User. As a minimum (where originally provided by the User) this shall include:
- Users Query Reference Number (supplied by User. The format may vary for each User)
  - Meter Point Reference
  - Stakeholder Personal Name
  - Supply Start date
  - Shipper Name
  - Invoice Number (for invoice queries only as in the template)
- l) An invoice query may be raised before or after payment has been made.
- m) An invoice query may not be raised after expiry of 18 months from the invoice due date.
- n) Once an invoice query has been submitted (between the receipt date and payment date – ) payment of the affected charge items may be withheld until the point when the query is resolved. If any query remains outstanding 18 months after submission, the relevant charge item will not be paid.

### 3.2 Query Investigation and Resolution

Successful achievement of the planned performance levels will depend on an IGT's ability to investigate and resolve queries. There is a recognition that in many cases there is a need for a joint and collaborative approach to the operational resolution of queries. The following provide further details of the regime which will support the previously stated principles.

- a) The IGT's will endeavour to provide a reasonable resolution to all accepted queries and a query may be deemed resolved if investigation demonstrates that no corrective action is required.
- b) The parties will make reasonable endeavours to resolve a query.
- c) Upon acceptance of a query, the IGT will have a further assessment period of 2 working days in which to determine whether any additional information in excess of that set out in 3.1(c) is required. Where further information is required, IGT's will request the information and will respond to the User using the Query Stop QTS file reflecting the appropriate start / stop time accordingly (see 3.1j).
- d) IGTs shall endeavour to respond to the User electronically with a resolution to the query within 15 working days from the latest date of either the QTR or the QTS file was sent to the user (those sent after 16:00 hours will be classed as the next working day).
- e) In some circumstances, there may be a need for the relevant User(s) to complete corrective actions or provide information in a reasonable time period, before the query can be resolved. In such cases the relevant User(s) will take this action and respond using the QTR file. The clock will be stopped until the IGT has had a response from the user. The following details instances when an IGT will measure this corrective action.
  - Users shall endeavour to respond to the IGT, electronically, within 10 working days from the date the e-mail was received (those received after 16:00 hours will be classed as next working day). If no response has been received by this time the IGT will communicate its intention to close the query, and, in the absence of a response, the query will be closed on the 25<sup>th</sup> working day.
  - Measurement against an IGT will recommence on the working day after it receives the appropriate information or action from the User.
- f) Should the Query time out without being resolved, the User should endeavour to re-raise the query.
- g) In some circumstances, there may be a need for the relevant IGT to request further information or corrective action from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party before the query can be resolved. In such cases the relevant IGT will take this action. It is acknowledged that this may lengthen the time taken for query resolution and in such instances the iGT will notify the user that the query has been passed onto a 3<sup>rd</sup> party in order to manage their customers expectations

- h) In the case of meter asset queries where the 3<sup>rd</sup> party role is performed by the iGT in their role as Meter Operator required to carry out a site visit, the iGT will:
- Within 10 working days of the original query being received, contact any affected customers to make arrangements to have access to the relevant areas.
  - Notify any associated suppliers for associated customers/supply points involved in the query of the issue and the proposed course of action
  - Advise all relevant suppliers of the access arrangements proposed to affected customers' sites
  - In the event of an abortive site visit or a failure to attend the site by the iGT, advise the relevant suppliers within 24 hours and agree proposed course of action so that the supplier can respond to any customer contact
- i) The resolution of queries will be communicated to the User by the IGT via the Query Final QTF file. For the avoidance of doubt the date of the communication will be the stop time. Where there is an associated supplier, they will also receive this information
- j) It is recognised that Users may raise queries in good faith that, after investigation, do not necessitate an amendment to an IGT's data. Queries falling into this category will be classified as invalid queries. These will not be counted as part of the SOS although these will be reported to the User and Monitored. For the avoidance of doubt any "double" queries will be classed as invalid queries.
- k) Where queries raised do require amendment to IGT data, the IGT will update the information on their systems within 2 working days of the resolution QTF file being sent to the user.

## **4 PROJECTS**

Projects agreed between Users and the IGT's will be for a specific query exercise, generally covering a single query category, and will typically relate to high volume events. Queries which are dealt with within a project framework will not be included within the SOS regime.

## **5 BULK QUERIES**

These are for queries where it is not suitable to use the query template. This will be on a bilateral arrangement between individual Users and IGT's.

## **6 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

It is recognised that it is of most benefit to both IGT's and to Users to establish the performance standards achieved on a regular basis and promptly. This is best achieved by reporting performance against a set timeframe and also to adopt an output based calculation and reporting mechanism.

### **6.1 Performance Standard**

Performance standards are measured on the total number of queries submitted, less invalid queries, less excessive queries.

Excessive queries are calculated as the number of valid queries submitted that month which is greater than the monthly average of the valid queries submitted in the preceding 3 months + 20%.

The IGT's will endeavour to meet:

35% of queries resolved within 4 working days  
90% of queries resolved within 10 working days

The IGT's will meet:

95% of queries resolved within 15 working days

The IGT's will endeavour to meet

100% of queries resolved within 40 days

Where the number of invalid queries exceeds 25% of the total queries submitted by the user for 3 consecutive months, discussions will take place between the IGT and the User in an attempt to resolve the matter. Until such time as resolution has been reached by both parties, the IGT may only process high profile queries marked clearly as such

## 6.2 Reporting Structure

It will be up to individual parties to monitor, to ensure the standards are being met. Where they are not being met, the impacted parties will try to resolve any disputes.

The IGTs will issue monthly reports to individual users containing the following:-

- Number of queries raised
- Number of queries raised that were accepted / rejected (invalid)
- The percentage of accepted queries which were resolved / closed in the 4, 10, 15, and 40 day performance measures
- The percentage of queries resolved / closed greater than the 40 day performance measure
- Number of queries raised that were accepted / rejected (invalid) per Query Type and Query Code
- Number of rejections per rejection code for Query Type and Query Code
- Number and category of data requests made that were available from other mechanisms.

The reports will contain a rolling 6 month period of data in order to view trends and performance.

## 7 APPENDIX

### 7.1 Query Codes Operational Query Codes

REASON CODES	DESCRIPTION	EXPLANATION
GSB	<b>Guaranteed Standard Broken</b>	A claim for compensation following a failure to meet a guaranteed standard
OWN	<b>Ownership/Portfolio Dispute</b>	A query challenging the ownership of the MPRN for a specific period
CDQ	<b>Consumption Dispute</b>	Any contact challenging the consumption of a site where the reads are confirmed to be correct
MNC	Meter Point Reference Number Creation	A request to create a MPRN for a supply point that is live but has no current MPRN

#### Meter Asset Query Codes

REASON CODES	DESCRIPTION	EXPLANATION
ADQ	<b>Asset Details Query</b>	A query challenging the attributes of any part of the supply meter installation details held on the IGT system
CAA	<b>Consumer/Address Amendment</b>	A query challenging the meter point address or consumer details held against a meter
CRO	<b>Crossed Meter</b>	A query identifying a potential crossed meter scenario
FEQ	<b>Faulty Equipment Query</b>	A query reporting a possible faulty piece of equipment on the supply meter installation (meter/converter/bypass etc)
FOU	<b>Found Meter Query</b>	A query notifying the IGT of the existence of a meter not currently held in their system.
MFR	<b>Meter Fit Report Query</b>	A query notifying missing meter fit notifications.
REP	<b>Replicate MPRN</b>	A query relating to multiple MPRNs set up on an IGT system for one property.
SMS	<b>Supply Meter Installation Status Query</b>	A query challenging the status of the supply meter installation

#### Invoice Query Codes

REASON CODES	DESCRIPTION	EXPLANATION
ADJ	<b>Adjustment Query</b>	A query challenging the accuracy of an adjustment.
CAL	<b>Invoice Calculation Query</b>	A query challenging the way in which an Invoice charge has been calculated
DAQ	<b>Data Query</b>	A query challenging the data on which an invoice is produced
CSP	<b>CSEP Query</b>	A query challenging the data an IGT sends to Transco, on which a CSEP invoice is produced
ITR	<b>ITR</b>	A query relating to the timing of the invoice document, supporting data, remittance advices or payment due dates.

## 7.2 Query template

As currently detailed in the IGT CoP. *[Query Template requires to be updated]*

Query Template -  
Draft v3.xls

## 7.3 IGT Query Template Contact Details

An example of the contact information details which will be provided per IGT for Query Code. The contact information will be stored centrally and can be located on the [?????] website.

IGT	Query Code	E-mail address	Telephone Number	Fax Number
East Surrey Pipelines,	All	Lisaw@espipelines.com	01372 227560	01372 377996
Global Utility Connections	All	stuart@guconnections.com	01355 245 510	01355 578 738
GTC Pipelines, Gas Transportation Company, Utility Grid Installations	ADQ, CAA, CRO, FEQ, FOU, REP, SMS,	metering@gastrans.co.uk	01359 243373	01359 241902
GTC Pipelines, Gas Transportation Company, Utility Grid Installations	GSB, CDQ,	Paul.reynolds@gastrans.co.uk	01359 243308	01359 241902
GTC Pipelines, Gas Transportation Company, Utility Grid Installations	OWN	spa@gastrans.co.uk	01359 243311	01359 241902
GTC Pipelines, Gas Transportation Company, Utility Grid Installations	ADJ, CAL, DAQ, CSEP	Sabrina.crowe@gastrans.co.uk	01359 243348	01359 243355
Scottish and Southern Pipelines	All	Brian.Burgess@scottish-southern.co.uk	01753 695631	01753 695695