Consultation Paper

Gas Information Exchange Protocols

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Gas Industry Co.

Contents

1. PURPOSE **3**

1.1 Introduction **3**

2. BACKGROUND **4**

2.1 Advanced gas meters (AGM) **4**

2.2 Gas consumer care guidelines **4**

2.3 Use of system agreements **5**

2.4 Alignment with electricity information exchange protocols **5**

3. GAS INFORMATION EXCHANGE PROTOCOLS **6**

3.1 Proposed protocols - Overview **6**

3.2 Review of proposed protocols **7**

3.2.1 GIEP4 – Customer information 7

3.2.2 GIEP4A – Medically Dependent Consumer Information 8

3.2.3 GIEP5A – Planned Service Interruptions 9

3.2.4 GIEP5B – Unplanned service interruptions 10

3.2.5 GIEP12 – Price change notifications 11

3.2.6 GIEP13A – Detailed consumption information 13

3.2.7 GIEP13B – Summary consumption information 14

3.2.8 GIEP13C – Electronic request format for GIEP 13A or 13B 15

3.2.9 Procedures for requests for consumer consumption information 16

3.3 Review of existing protocols **17**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to seek input from the industry on the potential introduction of additional Gas Information Exchange Protocols (GIEPs).

We are inviting feedback on whether it is appropriate to include additional voluntary GIEPs, which specific protocols should be added, and any other comments participants may have to help shape the initial drafting of new protocols.

We're also asking for feedback on voluntary GIEPs that are already being used, so we can find ways to improve these existing protocols if there is strong support from the industry.

Once this initial consultation is complete, we will issue draft GIEPs for industry participants to review.

1.1 Introduction

GIEPs specify and standardise the format for information which is routinely exchanged between gas industry participants for a variety of reasons. Files are also sent to, and received from, central IT systems such as the Gas Registry and can be manually uploaded to the Allocation Agent website.

By following these guidelines, stakeholders can streamline their information exchange processes, ensuring consistency and compatibility with industry agreed standards while maintaining flexibility for future updates by being unregulated.

There are currently four GIEPs in place:

1. GIEP1 – Network detail consumption information
2. GIEP2 – Network summary consumption information
3. GIEP7 – General installation status change
4. GIEP8 – Network price category and tariff change

These GIEPs are published on Gas Industry Co's website and are voluntary arrangements. They were developed and approved by the Information Exchange File Formats Working Group in consultation with the industry in 2010 and 2011. They echo the equivalent protocols in the electricity industry for information exchange between retailers and network owners.

2. Background

Since the introduction of the existing Gas Information Exchange Protocols, Gas Industry Co now considers it appropriate to consult with industry to add further GIEPs

Some of these additional GIEPs relate to gas industry developments, while others relate to areas where additional EIEPs have been developed over time and the addition of an equivalent GIEP for the gas industry participants may enhance efficiency of gas industry processes. For ease of reference, we have divided the additional GIEPs according to the rationale for their addition to the current set of GIEPs:

1. Advanced gas meters
2. Gas Consumer Care Guidelines
3. Use of system agreements (UoSAs) between distributors and retailers
4. Further alignment with Electricity Information Exchange Protocols

2.1 Advanced gas meters (AGM)

AGMs are digital meters being deployed in the New Zealand gas industry. These meters provide gas consumption data that is more granular (i.e. every 30 minutes) and provide for more accurate data for billing and consumption.

The GIEPs that we currently have in place for consumption data relate to Time-of-Use (TOU) and non-TOU data exchange between retailers and distributors relating to invoicing of fixed and variable line charges. More granular data provided by AGMs is not captured by these protocols, and furthermore, these do not account for the data requirements of the consumer which is one of the benefits of having AGM.

In addition to the development of any GIEPs for AGM data, our Advanced Gas Metering Consultation Paper released in August 2023 recommended that Gas Industry Co facilitate the development of a guideline, like that which is currently in place for the electricity industry[1]. This would help set standards in relation to how AGM GIEPs are used in practice.

2.2 Gas consumer care guidelines

The Gas Consumer Care Guidelines[2] were developed in response to the Electricity Price Review's recommendations for the electricity industry. The Guidelines contain a set of minimum standards that apply to a retailer's interactions with residential consumers.

The Consumer Care Guidelines provide for retailers to share information regarding medically dependent consumers with distributors and for distributors to coordinate with retailers regarding planned and unplanned service interruptions. This recognises that the actions of distributors may have an impact on medically dependent consumers, but distributors may not have visibility of medically dependent consumers on their network and the day-to-day relationship is between the retailer and the consumer. In

[1] Guidelines on Advanced Metering Infrastructure Version 3.1

[2] https://www.gasindustry.co.nz/assets/CoverDocument/Gas-Consumer-Care-Guidelines.pdf

response to its self-assessment of alignment with the gas Consumer Care Guidelines, a retailer suggested that Gas Industry Co develop GIEPs that provides for the exchange of information regarding medically dependent consumers between retailers and distributors and for distributors to provide information to retailers regarding planned and unplanned service interruptions. The GIEPs that we currently have in place do not provide a means to standardize data exchange between retailers and distributors in relation to medically dependent consumers or planned or unplanned network shutdowns. Our initial view is that there is benefit in developing an industry agreed approach to which data, and how this data, may be routinely exchanged under these circumstances.

2.3 Use of system agreements

Use of system agreements (UoSA) are contracts held between distributors and retailers. These agreements set the terms and conditions to which the Retailer and Distributor agree to provide services to each other.

UoSA's generally have provisions in place for service interruptions, and price change notifications. However, there are no industry agreed guidelines that standardise what information to share, and how best to share it, between distributors and retailers.

Voluntary protocols are intended to be used in conjunction with UoSA's to provide participants with flexibility over which protocols are relevant for their own businesses.

2.4 Alignment with electricity information exchange protocols

Electricity information exchange protocols (EIEPs) facilitate the exchange of electricity information between traders and distributors, and between retailers and third-party providers. There are 14 EIEPs which are either regulated or non-regulated.

Since the current GIEPs were developed in 2010, Electricity Information Exchange Protocols (EIEPs) have been amended and added to reflect changing market conditions. Considering that most gas customers are also electricity customers, our initial view is for industry to consider the value of additional GIEPs to further align with those currently in place for electricity.

3. Gas Information Exchange Protocols

We would like your feedback regarding proposed new GIEPs and we also welcome feedback to help improve the operation of GIEPs already in place.

3.1 Proposed protocols - Overview

Electricity Protocol	Gas Equivalent	Gas Protocol	Gas Data flow	Rationale[3]
EIEP1 – Detailed ICP billing and volume information	In place	GIEP1 - Network detail consumption information	Retailer ➔ Distributor Distributor ➔ Retailer	
EIEP2 – Aggregated billing and volume information	In place	GIEP2 - Network summary consumption information	Retailer ➔ Distributor Distributor ➔ Retailer	
EIEP4 – Customer information	Proposed	GIEP4	Retailer ➔ Distributor	CCGs/UoSA
EIEP4A – Medically Dependent Customer Information	Proposed	GIEP4A	Retailer ➔ Distributor	CCGs/UoSA
EIEP5A – Planned Service Interruptions	Proposed	GIEP5A	Retailer ➔ Distributor	CCGs/UoSA
EIEP5B – Unplanned Service Interruptions	Proposed	GIEP5B	Retailer ➔ Distributor	CCGs/UoSA
EIEP7 – General installation status change	In place	GIEP7 – General installation status change	Retailer ➔ Distributor	
EIEP8 – Network price category and tariff change	In place	GIEP8 – Network price category and tariff change	Retailer ➔ Distributor	
EIEP12 – Delivery price change notification	Proposed	GIEP12	Distributor ➔ Retailer	UoSA
EIEP13A – Electricity conveyed information for consumers (half hour and non-half hour detailed)	Proposed	GIEP13A	Retailer ➔ Consumer (or their agent)	AGMs
EIEP13B – Summary consumption information	Proposed	GIEP13B	Retailer ➔ Consumer (or their agent)	AGMs
EIEP13C – Request file for EIEP13 and EIEP13B	Proposed	GIEP13C	Consumer (or their agent) ➔ Retailer	AGMs
Procedures for requests for consumer consumption information	Proposed	Procedure document for GIEP13A, GIEP13B, GIEP13C	Consumer and retailer process	AGMs

*Red text are the proposed new voluntary gas protocols

[3] Rationale:

CCG = Protocol would align data exchange with Consumer Care Guidelines for Gas.

UoSA = Protocol would align data exchange with use of system agreements which already capture, but don't standardise, this data;

AGM = Protocol would standardise the exchange of customer usage data captured by smart meters

3.2 Review of proposed protocols

3.2.1 GIEP4 – Customer information

Proposal

Extend EIEP4 – Customer Information to gas with modifications.

In electricity, EIEP4 is a voluntary protocol for traders to provide detailed customer information to distributors. In gas, GIEP4 would be a voluntary protocol used to provide detailed customer information from retailers to distributors.

Key data field descriptions in EIEP4[4]

Header record type	File type
Version of EIEP	Sender
Sent on behalf of participant identifier	Recipient participant identifier
Report run date	Report run time
Unique file identifier	Number of detail records
Report period start date	Report period end date
Utility type	File status
Detail record type	ICP identifier
Customer name	Phone number home
Phone number work	Phone number mobile
Fax number	Email address
Postal free form	Postal address unit
Postal address num	Postal address street
Postal Box/RD	Postal address suburb
Postal address town	Postal address postcode
Postal address country	Event date
Disconnection restriction	Medical restriction type
Customer no.	Consumer no
Customer Title	Surname
First name	Finialled date

Rationale

The rational to introduce an equivalent arrangement for gas would be to align more closely with electricity. However, it is not clear to us when electricity industry participants rely on EIEP4 and what gas industry processes an equivalent GIEP4 could support. During the Electricity Authority's consultation on the introduction of EIEP4A, some stakeholders considered that an appropriate outcome could be achieved through an amendment to EIEP4 (i.e. a single EIEP rather than two separate EIEPs).

We would like to better understand any further rationale for introducing an equivalent GIEP4.

[4] Red text are those fields which are carried into the propose EIEP4A

Questions

Do you support the introduction of a gas equivalent EIEP4 protocol? (Yes/No)
Why do you support/not support?
Are there any fields from EIEP4 that should be excluded? Please be specific.
Further comments?

3.2.2 GIEP4A – Medically Dependent Consumer Information

Proposal

Extend EIEP4A – Medically Dependent Consumer Information to gas with modifications.

In electricity, EIEP4A is a mandatory protocol used to provide information about medically dependent consumers from traders to distributors at an ICP level. In gas, GIEP4A would be a voluntary protocol to provide medically dependent consumer information from retailers to distributors.

Key data field descriptions in EIEP4A[5]

Header record type	File type
Version of EIEP	Sender
Sent on behalf of participant identifier	Recipient participant identifier
Report run date	Report run time
Unique file identifier	Number of detail records
File status	Detail record type
ICP identifier	Disconnection restriction
Medical restriction	Finalled date

Rationale

This protocol would ensure distributors have visibility of medically dependent consumers so they could use this information when planning and undertaking work on their networks. In doing so, this provides further alignment with the Gas Consumer Care Guidelines and Gas Use of System Agreements already in place between retailers and distributors.

For example, the Gas Consumer Care Guidelines have requirements (like those for the Electricity Consumer Care Obligations) for retailers and distributors to have processes in place to identify and communicate with

[5] All black text is field already in place under EIEP4. The red text are the only additional fields to EIEP4.

medically dependent consumers on networks. Meanwhile, Gas Use of Systems Agreements also have requirements in place for contact details and medical status of customers.

This protocol would demonstrate that there is an industry agreed process in place to align with these with the Gas Consumer Care Guidelines and would also standardise the data exchanged in relation to Gas Use of System Agreements.

Our first thought is that the goals of this protocol might be met with just one voluntary protocol for gas (similar to EIEP4), instead of having two separate protocols like in electricity (EIEP4 and EIEP4A). However, for now, we plan to follow the electricity approach and create a gas version of EIEP4A as well. We would appreciate your feedback to help us understand if there is a good reason to have a separate gas EIEP4A.

Questions

Do you support the introduction of a gas equivalent EIEP4A protocol? (Y/N)
Why do you support/not support?
Are there any fields from EIEP4A that should be excluded? Please be specific.
Any further comments?

3.2.3 GIEP5A – Planned Service Interruptions

Proposal

Extend EIEP5A – Planned Service Interruptions to gas with modifications.

In electricity, EIEP5A is a mandatory protocol used to communicate planned service interruptions from distributors to traders. In gas, GIEP5A would be a voluntary protocol used by distributors to provide planned service interruption information to retailers.

Key data fields descriptions in EIEP5A

Header record type	File type
Version of EIEP	Sender (i.e. participant)
Sent on behalf of participant identifier	Recipient participant identifier
Report run date	Report run time
Unique file identifier	Number of detail records
Communication type code	Distributor event number
Spare	Utility type (gas or electricity)
Detail record type	ICP identifier
Interruption reason	Number of interruptions notified

Distributor event number	Interruption 1 start date
Interruption 1 restore date	Interruption 1 start time
Interruption 1 expected or actual restore time	Interruption 1 alternative date
[interruption 2-5 repeats above]	Revision reason
URL for additional information	

Rationale

This protocol would standardise processes already in place within Use of System Agreements for communicating planned network outages. It would also align with the Gas Consumer Care Guidelines because retailers would be able to communicate outage details to medically dependent customers.

Standardising the exchange of planned outage information also improves efficiencies because use of system agreements are specific to each distributor. For example, if a retailer wants to start serving customers on a new network, the process is simpler because the exchange of basic customer information is already standardised.

In the electricity sector, a similar guideline is already in place (EIEP5A). Introducing this protocol for gas would also bring it more in line with the practices already used in electricity.

Questions

Do you support the introduction of a gas equivalent protocol? (Y/N)
Why do you support/not support?
Are there any fields from EIEP5A that should be excluded? Please be specific.
Any further comments?

3.2.4 GIEP5B – Unplanned service interruptions

Proposal

Extend EIEP5B - Unplanned service interruptions to gas with modifications.

In electricity, EIEP5B is a voluntary protocol used to share details of unplanned service interruptions from distributors to traders. In gas, GIEP5B would be a voluntary protocol used to provide information from distributors to retailers for unplanned service interruptions.

Key data fields descriptions in EIEP5B

Header record type	File type

Version of EIEP	Sender
Sent on behalf of	Recipient identifier
Report run date	Report run time
Unique File identifier	Number of detail records
Communication type	Report period start date
Report period end date	Utility type (gas or electricity)
Detail record type	ICP identifier
Feeder	Street/area affected
Log jobs	Interruption reason
Distributor event number	Interruption start date
Interruption restore date	Interruption start time
Interruption expected or actual restore time	

Rationale

This protocol would standardise processes already in place within Use of System Agreements for communicating unplanned network outages. It would also align with the Gas Consumer Care Guidelines because retailers would be able to communicate outage details to medically dependent customers.

Standardising the exchange of unplanned outage information also improves efficiencies because use of system agreements are specific to each distributor. For example, if a retailer wants to start serving customers on a new network, the process is simpler because the exchange of basic customer information is already standardised.

In the electricity sector, a similar guideline is already in place (EIEP5B). Introducing this protocol for gas would also bring it more in line with the practices already used in electricity.

Questions

Do you support the introduction of a gas equivalent protocol? (Y/N)
Why do you support/not support?
Are there any fields from EIEP5B that should be excluded? Please be specific.
Any further comments?

3.2.5 GIEP12 – Price change notifications

Proposal

Extend EIEP12 – Price change notifications to gas with modifications.

In electricity, EIEP12 is a mandatory protocol used by a distributor to notify a trader of changes to delivery prices. In gas, GIEP12 would be a voluntary protocol for distributors to notify retailers of delivery price changes.

Key data fields descriptions in EIEP12

Header record type	File type
Version of EIEP	Sender
Sent of behalf of party identifier	Report run date
Report run time	Unique file identifier
Number of detail records	Detail record type
Distributor participant identifier	Start date
End date	Price category code
Fixed/Variable	Energy flow direction
Register content code	Period of availability
Network price component code	Unit of measure
Deliver price	Pricing methodology

Rationale

Use of system agreements between retailers and distributors are unique, each with its own way of dealing with price change notifications on networks. Considering many retailers work with several different networks. Having one standard way to handle data requirements pertaining to price changes would enhance efficiency.

In the electricity sector, a similar guideline (called EIEP12) is already in use. Introducing a similar protocol for the gas industry would also align its practices more closely with those of the electricity sector.

However, we do have reservations whether this protocol is applicable to gas due to the infrequency of changes to network charges compared with electricity. We would like to hear from industry to better understand whether this protocol would be useful.

Questions

Do you support the introduction of a gas equivalent protocol? (Y/N)
Why do you support/not support?
Are there any fields from EIEP12 that should be excluded? Please be specific.
Any further comments?

3.2.6 GIEP13A – Detailed consumption information

Proposal

Extend EIEP13A – Detailed consumption information to gas with modifications.

In electricity, EIEP13A is a mandatory protocol used to provide detailed electricity consumption from retailers to consumers or their authorised agents. In gas, GIEP13A would be a voluntary protocol used by retailers to provide detailed consumption data from advanced gas meters to a consumer or a consumer's authorised agent.

Key data fields descriptions in EIEP13A

Header record type	File type
Version of EIEP	Sender
Sent on behalf of	Recipient participant identifier
Report run date	Unique request identifier
Number of detail records	Report period start date
Report period end date	Detail record type
Consumer authorisation code	ICP identifier
Response code	NZDT adjustment
Metering component serial number	Energy flow direction
Register content code	Period of availability
Read period start date and time	Read period end date and time
Read status	Unit quantity active energy volume
Unit quantity reactive energy volume	

Rationale

Gas smart meters are replacing standard meters. A protocol for detailed consumption information would provide an efficient means for consumers to access detailed consumption information.

Questions

Do you support the introduction of a gas equivalent protocol? (Y/N)
Why do you support/not support?
What data fields from EIEP13A should be excluded? Please be specific.
Any further comments?

3.2.7 GIEP13B – Summary consumption information

Proposal

Extend EIEP13B – Summary consumption information to gas with modifications.

In electricity, EIEP13B is a mandatory protocol for a consumer or consumer's agent to request summary consumption information from their retailer. In gas, GIEP13B would be a voluntary protocol which would also apply when consumer or consumers agent requests summary consumption information from their retailer.

Key data fields descriptions in EIEP13B

Header record type	File type
Sender	Recipient Participant identifier
Report run date	Unique request identifier
Response code	Number of detail records
Report period start date	Report period end date
NZDT adjustment	Title column 1
Title column 2	Title column 3
Title column 4	Title column 5
Title column 6	Title column 7
Title column 8	Title column 9
Title column 10	Title column 11
Title column 12	Detail record type
ICP identifier	Metering component serial number
Energy flow direction	Register content code
Period of availability	Read period start date and time
Read period end date and time	Read status
Tariff name	Unit quantity active energy volume
Unit quantity reactive energy volume	

Rationale

Gas smart meters are replacing standard meters. A protocol for detailed consumption information would provide an efficient means for consumers to access summary consumption information.

Questions

Do you support the introduction of a gas equivalent protocol? (Y/N)
Why do you support/not support?
What data fields from EIEP13B should be excluded? Please be specific.

Any further comments?

3.2.8 GIEP13C – Electronic request format for GIEP 13A or 13B

Proposal

Extend EIEP13C - Electronic request format for EIEP13A or 13B to gas with modifications.

In electricity, EIEP13C is a mandatory protocol used by a consumer or a consumer's authorised agent to request consumption information from a retailer. In gas, GIEP13C would be a voluntary protocol used by a consumer or consumer's agent to request consumption information from a retailer. The response sent by the retailer would be formatted in accordance with EIEP13A or EIEP13B.

Key data fields descriptions in EIEP13C

Header record type	File type
Sender	Recipient Participant identifier
Report run date	Unique request identifier
Number of detail records	Detail record type
EIEP format requested	Consumer authorisation code
Authority expiry date	Statement of written authority
Consumer no	Customer name
ICP identifier	Install address unit
Install address number	Install address street
Install address suburb	Install address PO Box/RD
Install address town	Install address postcode
Install address country	

Rationale

This provides a means for consumers or their agents to formally request advanced gas meter data from their retailer.

Questions

Do you support the introduction of a gas equivalent protocol? (Y/N)
Why do you support/not support?
What data fields from EIEP13C should be excluded? Please be specific.

Any further comments?

3.2.9 Procedures for requests for consumer consumption information

Proposal

In electricity, this document sets out procedures that apply to retailers when they respond to requests for consumer information about their own consumption of electricity. This document also contains information to assist consumers, and their agents make requests for this consumption information.

In gas, this document would set out procedures that apply to retailers when they respond to requests for consumer information about their own consumption of gas. This document would also contain information to assist consumers, and their agents make requests for this consumption information.

Key topics in electricity equivalent procedure document

1. Introduction
2. What information must retailers provide?
3. What if a consumer switches retailers?
4. When must a retailer provide consumption information to a consumer?
5. How can a consumer request its consumption information?
6. Can a retailer charge a fee for providing consumption information?
7. When must a retailer advise its consumers of the availability of consumption information?
8. What must retailer's doe to keep information secure?
9. What if the request comes from a consumer's agent?
10. What are the timeframes for responding to a request?
11. What format and transfer method must the retailer use to provide information?
    a. EIEP13A: Detailed electricity consumption information for consumers (non-half hour, half hour or sub half hour)
    b. EIEP13B: Summary consumption information
    c. EIEP13C: Electronic request format for EIEP13A or EIEP13B
12. Example timeline showing typical events in sequence

Questions

Do you support the introduction of a gas equivalent procedure document? (Y/N)
Why do you support/not support?
What topics from the electricity procedure document should be excluded? Please be specific.
Any further comments?

3.3 Review of existing protocols

Proposal

Amend existing protocols if there is widespread agreement among participants.

Gas protocols that are already in place and used by industry will otherwise remain in place to avoid unnecessary cost burden to those who have already designed their systems and processes around these.

Rational

Our initial view is that it is appropriate to consider opportunities to improve protocols already in place while we have the book open for proposed new protocols.

Questions

Which of the existing voluntary gas protocols do you use?
Do you have any feedback on these? For example, challenges using in practice, amendments to consider (please be specific)?

About Gas Industry Co

Gas Industry Co is the gas industry body and co-regulator under the Gas Act. Its role is to:

- develop arrangements, including regulations where appropriate, which improve:
    - the operation of gas markets
    - access to infrastructure and
    - consumer outcomes
- develop these arrangements with the principal objective to ensure that gas is delivered to existing and new customers in a safe, efficient, reliable, fair and environmentally sustainable manner; and
- oversee compliance with, and review such arrangements.

Gas Industry Co is required to have regard to the Government's policy objectives for the gas sector, and to report on the achievement of those objectives and on the state of the New Zealand gas industry.

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