RETAIL ENERGY CODE

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REC ISSUE SUBMISSION FORM (COPY)

1 PERSONAL DETAILS

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2 ISSUE SUMMARY

ISSUE TITLE *(Mandatory)*	Establishing the Safe Isolation Provider (SIP) as a Standalone REC Metering Party
WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU ARE SEEKING TO SOLVE? *(Mandatory)*	This proposal recommends the formal recognition of the Safe Isolation Provider (SIP) as a standalone Metering Party under the Retail Energy Code (REC). This aligns with the direction set out in Ofgem's recently published Strategic Direction Statement (SDS), which explicitly calls for the establishment of SIPs as a standalone Party role. The aim is to address the growing scale of unregulated SIP activity, mitigate associated consumer safety risks, and ensure the metering industry is equipped to support the UK's Net Zero ambitions. By enabling easier access to certified SIPs, this change will enhance consumer protection, accelerate low-carbon technology deployment, and improve operational efficiency across the energy sector. Industry feedback highlights a significant volume of isolation work occurring outside formal governance. Many individuals performing these tasks possess the necessary technical qualifications but lack the operational structure to become accredited SIPs. Key indicators of the scale of unregulated activity include: • Bottlenecks in LZCT deployment due to limited SIP availability. • Evidence of non-acceded installers conducting isolation work, particularly in the EV and heat pump sectors. • Delays in fuse upgrades and isolation tasks when independent installers cannot access SIP status.

	Efforts to quantify this issue are ongoing, including engagement with other Industry bodies to access central data. The demand for Safe Isolation Providers (SIPs) is expected to grow substantially over the next decade, driven by the UK's Net Zero targets and the rapid expansion of low-carbon technologies such as heat pumps and EV ChargePoint's. This growth will place increasing pressure on the availability of qualified SIPs to support safe and timely installations. Key indicators of future demand include: • Heat Pump Deployment: The Heat Pump Association projects over 600,000 installations annually by 2028, rising to 1 million per year by 2035. Each installation typically requires safe isolation work. • Retrofit Complexity: A significant proportion of installations will occur in existing housing stock, where electrical upgrades and isolations are more complex and frequent. • Workforce Gap: Current SIP capacity is insufficient to meet projected demand. Based on modelling from 7th Carbon and industry feedback, SIP demand could increase fivefold by 2030. • Policy Drivers: The Future Homes and Buildings Standard (2025) and other decarbonisation policies will accelerate the rollout of LZCTs, further increasing the need for regulated SIPs. • Installer Access: Independent installers and SMEs will require direct access to SIP status to meet consumer demand and avoid delays caused by reliance on supplier-led models. Without reform, the current SIP framework risks becoming a bottleneck in the UK's energy transition. Establishing SIPs as a standalone REC Metering Party will help ensure the industry is equipped to meet this growing demand safely and efficiently.
WHAT IMPACT IS THIS HAVING? *(Mandatory)*	The current SIP framework poses several risks: • Consumer, MEM & unaccredited practitioners safety: Unaccredited and unregulated isolation work increases the risk of unsafe installations and potential harm to consumers. We have been made aware by NAPIT that in 2023, 17 unregulated practitioners died due to unsafe Isolation. 13 unregulated practitioners died in 2024. • Inequity: Independent installers face longer wait times compared to supplier-led installations, creating a two-tier system. • Decarbonisation Delays: The inability to scale SIP capacity undermines the timely deployment of LZCTs, threatening Net Zero targets. We propose the creation of a standalone SIP Party category within the REC, with the following features: • Direct Accession Pathway: Allow qualified individuals or organisations to accede to the REC as SIPs without requiring MEM status. • Streamlined Accreditation: Introduce a simplified, centralised qualification process (potentially via an umbrella accreditation model) to reduce barriers to entry. • Clear Governance and Oversight: Establish robust compliance and assurance mechanisms to ensure safety and performance standards are upheld.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE AN EFFECTIVE SOLUTION? *(Mandatory)*	We propose the creation of a standalone SIP Party category within the REC, with the following features: • Direct Accession Pathway: Allow qualified individuals or organisations to accede to the REC as SIPs without requiring MEM status. • Streamlined Accreditation: Introduce a simplified, centralised qualification process (potentially via an umbrella accreditation model) to reduce barriers to entry. • Clear Governance and Oversight: Establish robust compliance and assurance mechanisms to ensure safety and performance standards are upheld.
IS THERE ANY BACKGROUND INFORMATION OR CONTEXT TO THE ISSUE THAT WOULD BE USEFUL? *(Optional)*	The SIP role was introduced into the REC in June 2023 via Change Proposals R0021 and R0101. It was designed to: • Streamline the de-energisation and re-energisation of supply points. • Allow REC-accredited Metering Equipment Managers (MEMs) to perform these tasks independently of Suppliers. • Support the rollout of Low and Zero Carbon Technologies (LZCTs) such as heat pumps and EV chargers by reducing delays and coordination issues. Currently, SIP is an additional role layered onto existing MEM (Meter Operator Agent [MOA] or Electricity Metering Operative [EMO]) accreditations. However, this structure has proven insufficient to meet market demand and ensure consistent safety standards.
DOES THIS ISSUE RELATE TO AN EXISTING ISSUE RAISED OR AN EXISTING CHANGE PROPOSAL? IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE ISSUE OR CHANGE PROPOSAL.	No

3 CONSUMER IMPACTS

WHICH CONSUMER TYPES WILL BE IMPACTED BY THIS ISSUE? *(Mandatory)*	☐ All ☒ Electricity ☐ Gas ☒ Domestic Prepayment ☒ Domestic Credit ☒ Microbusiness ☒ Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) ☒ Industrial and Commercial (I&C) ☐ Other (please specify in the Additional information box below)

WHAT IMPACT WILL THIS ISSUE HAVE FOR THESE CONSUMERS? *(Mandatory)*	☐ Switching experience ☐ Billing accuracy ☒ Trust and confidence ☒ Safety ☐ Security of supply ☐ Ability to pay ☒ On site experience ☒ Other (please provide details in the Additional information box below)
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	• Faster Access: Consumers will benefit from quicker installation timelines for LZCTs due to increased SIP availability. • Improved Safety: A regulated SIP framework ensures that only qualified and accredited professionals perform isolation tasks. • Greater Choice: Consumers can choose from a broader pool of certified SIPs, including independent installers, enhancing competition and service quality.

DOES THIS ISSUE CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF NET ZERO? *(Mandatory)*	Yes
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	The proposal to establish Safe Isolation Providers (SIPs) as a standalone REC Metering Party offers several direct and strategic benefits to the UK's Net Zero objectives: • **Accelerates Low-Carbon Technology Deployment**: By enabling faster and more flexible access to certified SIPs, the proposal removes a key bottleneck in the installation of heat pumps, EV ChargePoint's, and other low and zero carbon technologies (LZCTs), which are central to decarbonising domestic and small business energy use. • **Supports Retrofit Readiness**: Many Net Zero-aligned upgrades will occur in existing housing stock, where safe isolation is often a prerequisite for electrical work. A scalable SIP framework ensures these upgrades can proceed safely and without delay. • **Reduces Emissions Through Efficiency**: Streamlining the SIP process reduces installation lead times and avoids unnecessary repeat visits or delays, which can increase emissions and costs across the supply chain. • **Enables Market Participation by SMEs**: By allowing independent installers to become accredited SIPs directly, the proposal supports a more diverse and competitive market, which is essential for scaling Net Zero delivery at pace.

	• **Delivers on Strategic Direction**: Ofgem's Strategic Direction Statement (SDS) explicitly identifies the formalisation of SIPs as a standalone Party as a priority action to support decarbonisation, consumer safety, and market efficiency—making this proposal a direct enabler of regulatory Net Zero commitments.

4 CODE IMPACTS

Does this Issue relate to or impact:

THE REC OR REC SCHEDULES? *(Optional)*	☒ Main Body ☒ Schedule 1 - Interpretations and Definitions Schedule ☒ Schedule 3 - Accession Agreement ☐ Schedule 4 - Company Governance ☐ Schedule 5 - Change Management ☒ Schedule 6 - Performance Assurance ☐ Schedule 7 - Energy Theft Reduction ☐ Schedule 8 - Unbilled Energy Code of Practice ☒ Schedule 9 - Qualification and Maintenance ☐ Schedule 10 - Charging Methodology ☐ Schedule 11 - Prepayment Arrangements ☐ Schedule 12 - Data Access ☐ Schedule 13 - Transfer of Consumer Data ☒Schedule 14 - Metering Operations ☒ Schedule 15 - Metering Accreditation ☐ Schedule 17 - Secure Data Exchange ☐ Schedule 18 - Green Deal Arrangements ☐ Schedule 19 - Market Exit and Supplier of Last Resort ☐ Schedule 22 - Market Stabilisation Charge ☐ Schedule 23 - Registration Services ☐ Schedule 24 - Switching Data Management ☐ Schedule 25 - Central Switching Service ☐ Schedule 26 - Switching Service Management ☐ Schedule 27 - RMP Lifecycle Schedule ☐ Schedule 28 - Related Metering Points ☐ Schedule 29 - Address Management

	☐ Schedule 30 - Resolution of Consumer Facing Switching and Billing Issues ☐ Schedule 31 – Prepayment Method Levelisation Reconciliation ☐ Schedule 32 - Electricity Supply to Hydrogen Electrolysers ☐ Schedule 33 - Non Domestic Change of Occupier
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	This proposal directly supports the REC's mission to: • Facilitate an efficient and effective retail energy market. • Promote innovation, competition, and positive consumer outcomes. • Drive continuous improvement in central systems and processes. It also delivers on the expectations set out in Ofgem's Strategic Direction Statement (SDS), which identifies the formalisation of SIPs as a standalone Party as a priority action to support decarbonisation, consumer safety, and market efficiency. • Facilitate an efficient and effective retail energy market. • Promote innovation, competition, and positive consumer outcomes. • Drive continuous improvement in central systems and processes.

OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS *(Optional)*	☒ Consolidated Metering Code of Practice (CoMCoP) ☐ Cross Code Steering Group Terms of Reference ☐ Performance Assurance Board Terms of Reference ☐ Performance Assurance Report Catalogue ☐ REC Change Panel Terms of Reference ☐ Smart Meter Installer Domestic Customer Survey ☐ Smart Meter Installer Microbusiness Customer Survey
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	In the current version of the Consolidated Metering Code of Practice (CoMCoP), Safe Isolation Providers (SIPs) are listed in the **Information** column of the audit matrix. This means they are acknowledged in the context of certain obligations but are not directly audited in their own right. SIPs are currently assessed only when operating under the umbrella of an Electricity Metering Operative (EMO) or Meter Operator Agent (MOA) during those parties' audits. While this provides some oversight, it does not reflect the growing operational independence and critical safety role SIPs play in the market. This proposal recommends moving SIPs into the **Auditable Party** column of CoMCoP, thereby recognising them as directly accountable for compliance with relevant standards. **Benefits of this revision:** • **For Metering Parties**: Clarifies the delineation of responsibilities when SIPs are subcontracted or partnered, reducing ambiguity and improving audit readiness.

	• **For Prospective SIPs**: Establishes a clear and transparent compliance framework, supporting new entrants in understanding and meeting expectations from the outset. • **For Auditors**: Enables consistent, direct assessment of SIPs, improving audit efficiency and ensuring that safety-critical practices are being followed and evidenced. This change would bring SIPs into alignment with other Metering Parties under CoMCoP, reinforcing safety, accountability, and consumer protection—particularly as SIP activity scales to meet Net Zero delivery targets.

SERVICE SPECIFICATION *(Optional)*	☐ Central Data Service Provider Further Services Service Definition ☐ Central Switching Service Definition ☐ CSS Certificate Authority Service Definition ☐ Electricity Enquiry Service - Service Definition ☐ Electricity Retail Data Service Definition ☐ Gas Enquiry Service Definition ☐ Gas Retail Data Service Definition ☐ Green Deal Database Service Definition ☐ Secure Data Exchange Service Definition ☐ Switching Operator Service Definition
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	

API TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION *(Optional)*	☐ EES API Technical Specification ☐ GES Meter Asset Enquiry API Technical Specification ☐ GES Supply Point Switching API Technical Specification ☐ GES Supply Point Enquiry API Technical Specification
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	

THE DATA SPECIFICATION *(Optional)*	☐ Data Access Matrix ☐ Data Item Catalogue ☐ Market Message Catalogue ☐ Standards Definition ☐ Supply Number Format

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	

CENTRAL SYSTEMS OR REC SERVICES? *(Optional)*	☐ Central Data Service Provider Further Services ☐ Central Switching Service (CSS) ☐ CSS Certificate Authority ☐ Electricity Enquiry Service ☐ Electricity Retail Data Service ☐ Electricity Theft Tip Off Service ☐ Gas Enquiry Service ☐ Gas Retail Data Service ☐ Green Deal Central Charging Database ☐ Secure Data Exchange Service ☐ Switching Operator
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	

REC PARTIES AND/OR MARKET PARTICIPANTS? *(Optional)*	☐ AMR Service Providers ☐ Data Aggregators ☐ Data Collectors ☐ Data Services ☐ Smart Meter Data Retrievers ☐ DCC ☒ Distribution Network Operators ☐ Energy Suppliers ☐ EES Users ☐ Gas Transporters ☐ GDCC Users ☐ GES Users ☐ Green Deal Finance Parties ☐ Green Deal Providers ☐ Meter Asset Providers ☒ Metering Equipment Managers ☐ Shippers ☐ Third Party Intermediaries ☐ Virtual Lead Party ☐ Other (please provide details in the Additional Information box)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	

OTHER INDUSTRY CODES? *(Optional)*	☐ Balancing & Settlement Code (BSC) ☒ Distibution Code Use of System Agreement (DCUSA) ☐ Smart Energy Code (SEC) ☐ Uniform Network Code (UNC) ☐ Independent Gas Transporter Uniform Network Code (IGT UNC) ☐ Data Integration Platform (DIP) Rules
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	The DCUSA code will not be impacted, but a number of guidance documents and articles on the DCUSA website may need updating to reflect the REC change.

DOES THIS ISSUE IMPACT A SIGNIFICANT CODE REVIEW? *(Optional)*	No
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(Optional)*	

5 ISSUE PROGRESSION

DO YOU BELIEVE THIS ISSUE PROPOSAL MEETS THE CRITERIA FOR 'URGENCY' AND SHOULD BE PROGRESSED UNDER AN URGENT TIMETABLE? **IF SO, PLEASE PROVIDE JUSTIFICATION?** *(Optional)*	No
ARE THERE ANY REQUIRED TIMESCALES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS ISSUE? *(Option)*	Although we don't identify this change as needing to progress on an 'urgent' pathway, we are mindful of the safety implications of those practitioners operating without the necessary accreditation.

ARE THERE ANY REQUIRED TIMESCALES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ISSUE? *(Option)*	
ARE YOU AWARE OF ANY DEPENDENCIES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS ISSUE WHICH MAY IMPACT ITS PRIORITY OR PROGRESSION TIMETABLE? *(Optional)*	No

6 ATTACHMENTS

ATTACH/PROVIDE ANY SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FORM	