EASEE-gas

European Association for the Streamlining of Energy Exchange - gas

Explanatory Notes CBP 2017-001/01

Subject: Explanatory notes accompanying CBP 2017-001/01 "Message Transmission Protocol for Document Exchange".

Summary

About EASEE-gas

The European Association for the Streamlining of Energy Exchange-gas or EASEE-gas was created by six founding members in Paris on March 14th, 2002. EASEE-gas' aim is to support the creation of an efficient and effective European gas market through the development and promotion of common business practices (CBPs) that intend to simplify and streamline business processes between the stakeholders.

The formation of EASEE-gas was prompted by the success of the Gas Industry Standards Board in the United States and has been modelled on it. The GISB has now evolved into the North American Energy Standards Board. The creation of EASEE-gas is a project that is fully supported by the European Commission and by the European Regulators through the so-called Madrid Forum. It was achieved through the work of a dedicated Task Force supported by EFET, Eurogas, Eurelectric, GEODE, GTE, OGP and the Edigas group.

The association is fundamentally based on company membership and voluntary contribution towards the development of common business practices.

Full membership in EASEE-gas is open to all companies, European or other, that are involved in the European gas business, from producers to end users, and to companies that are their service providers. Companies can subscribe to full membership in one or more of the eight gas industry segments.

Associate membership in EASEE-gas is open to government agencies, e.g., regulators, through to organisations such as gas business trade associations and to individuals that may contribute to the benefit of EASEE-gas. Associate members do not pay annual fees, nor do they have voting rights.

The development of common business practices within EASEE-gas is organised through working groups under the supervision of an executive committee that is representative of the various gas industry segments. Participation in the working groups is limited to members only.

1. INTRODUCTION

The CBP on "Message Transmission Protocol for Document Exchange" which implies the replacement of AS2 by AS4 was initiated for the following reasons:

1. ENTSOG chose a new standard for exchanging documents based on the EC Network Code;
2. The security of the AS2 protocol is not on par with the latest security advisories.

This document will explain the process of the CBP and also gives some implementation guidelines. In general it follows the ENTSOG recommendations.

2. ORGANISATION

The CBP was developed by the EASEE-gas TSWG (Technology Standards Working Group). The following segments were involved: TSOs, Shippers, Producers and Service providers. The nationalities represented were: B, D, F, I, N, NL and GB.

3. GENERATION PROCESS

The CBP is created because most parties in the gas market will have document exchanges with TSOs. Since TSOs are obliged to follow the Network Code it is practical to harmonize this exchange based on the chosen standard published by ENTSOG.

Alternatives

No practical, standard, alternatives are available. Keeping AS2 was considered, but since this protocol is not future proof for security reasons this was not an option.

Pros and Cons

Implementing a new protocol has a high impact on the market. We have to realise that the existing AS2 protocol was used for 10 years, which is a long time in ICT. Therefore the move to a new, safe, protocol is a natural process. The AS4 protocol also has some new features which makes configuration and certificate changes easier.

Final approach

The approach is driven by the fact that the German NRA decided on an end date of January 2018 for AS2, in the Netherlands this is May 2018. This will force a lot of companies active in those markets to AS4. It seems feasible to set an end date of December 2018 on AS2 for the EASEE-gas members.

4. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

EASEE-gas also manages security certificates, these certificates can be used both for AS2 and AS4.

EASEE-gas encourages the possibility of supporting multiple agreementrefs each referencing a different set of certificates, to support ease of change of certificates.

Also the use of exchange of configuration parameters through AS4 messages is recommended in order to support ease of setting up a partner.

ENTSOG released a document for setting up an AS4 system, which is advised to be consulted before implementing an AS4 solution:
http://www.entsog.eu/public/uploads/files/publications/INT%20Network%20Code/2016/INT0697-161115%20Setting%20up%20an%20AS4%20System_Rev_2.pdf

****