MRA Executive Committee Annual Performance Report
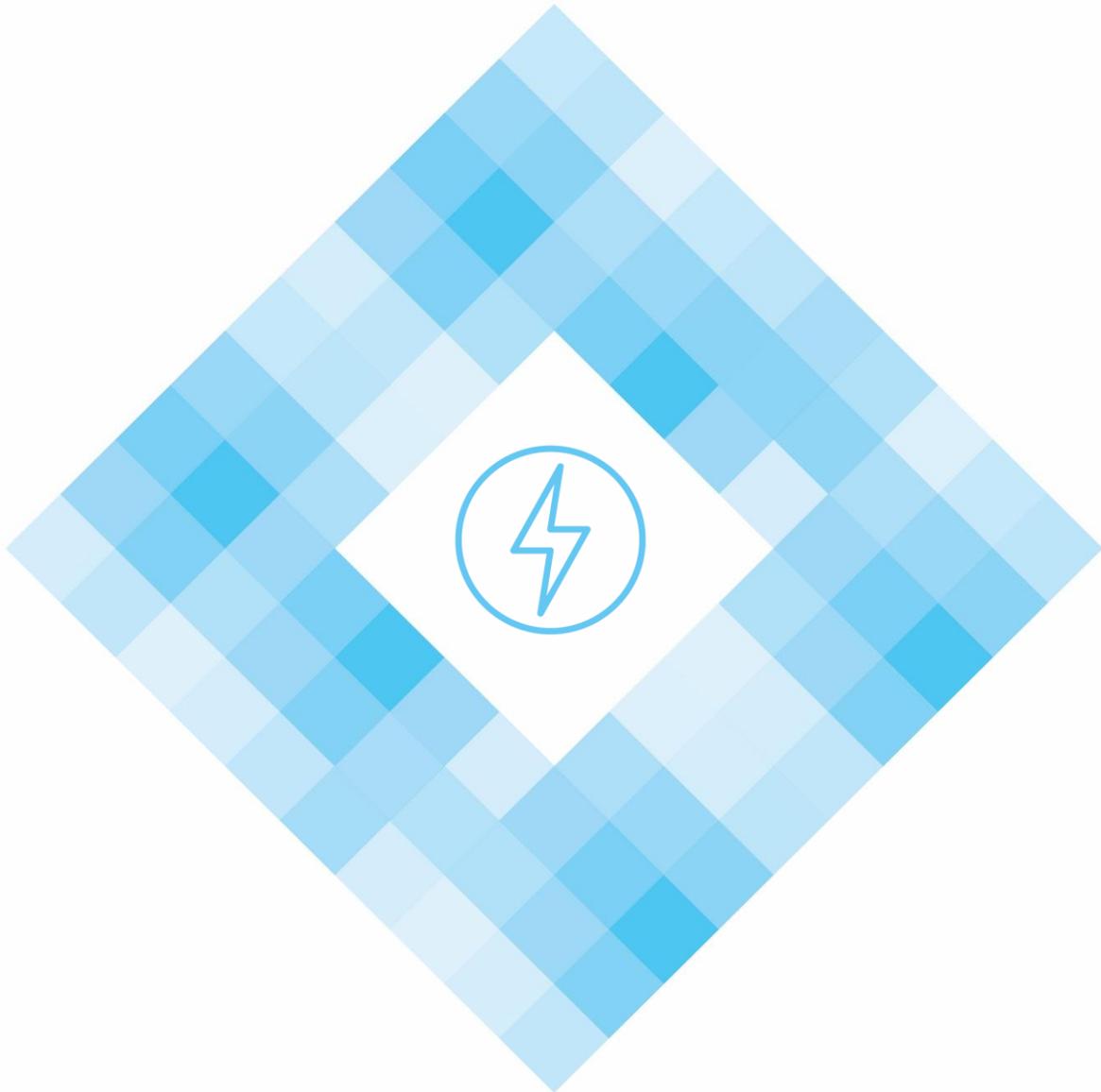
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April 2018

Gemserv

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Executive Summary

This report provides statistics and analysis of the activities that took place under the Master Registration Agreement (MRA) from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018. The primary purpose of this report is to provide a single source of information about activities that took place under different areas of the MRA, and to provide a useful point of reference for identifying trends and developments.

The past twelve months has witnessed fundamental and far-reaching changes to the electricity supply and distribution market arrangements, with the MRA at the heart of a period of innovation and challenge. Activity under the umbrella of the MRA has accelerated throughout the course of the year, as MRA parties and the MRA Service Company (MRASCo) alike prepare for opportunities and transformative events, including the outputs of Ofgem's Faster, More Reliable Switching Programme, the establishment of a dual fuel Market Intelligence Service, and the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) on 25th May 2018.

The MRA Executive Committee (MEC) and MRASCo Board of Directors is tasked with the ongoing successful management and operation of products and services under its authority, to effectively and efficiently deliver against the MRA Objectives whilst encouraging innovation and growth, to assure that market participants are competent and qualified to operate in the market whilst not placing undue barriers to entry, and to ensure that all its operations are conducted with full compliance within a growing legislative landscape. The following activities stand out following a busy year.

- Despite having met the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) Order 2016 to provide Price Comparison Websites with access to the Electricity Central Online Enquiry Service (ECOES) in 2016/17, MEC and the MRASCo Board committed to extending its provision by developing and implementing a dual fuel API, offering Price Comparison Websites a machine-to-machine interface to electricity and gas supply data. The API service was developed alongside Xoserve and C&C Group, and was successfully launched before the end of the period. It is intended that access to the API will be extended to Suppliers and other parties during 2018/19.
- The MRA has provided essential support to Ofgem's Faster, More Reliable Switching Programme, and has been embedded within several of the design workstreams, as industry seeks to establish a faster, more reliable, and cost-effective switching process to improve customer experiences of switching Suppliers. MRA representatives have supported the Programme throughout its Detailed Level Specification stage, and during the transaction into its Enactment phase. Key elements of the work have included supporting the design of a cross-code Retail Energy Code, and the design of a Central

Switching Service. Supplementing this, MEC hosted a successful and well attended stakeholder awareness day in October 2017 to inform parties with respect to the impacts of anticipated changes.

- MEC has supported Ofgem in its exercises to be prepared for the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, through engagement in cross-code workgroups, and conducting a trawl of the MRA and its associated Products to understand the potential scale of impacts to its code. Whilst the expected impact on the MRA is limited, MEC has fully engaged with Ofgem and other industry Code Administrators to ensure that any industry change necessitated before 29th March 2019 is coordinated and cohesive, with burden on industry parties minimised.

- MEC has committed to investment in its system development over the period, striving to ensure that design and functionality of its systems meets the evolving requirements of code parties and wider industry stakeholders. This has included the development and implementation of a new interface and software for ECOES – colloquially known as ECOES2; most ECOES users have successfully migrated to the new system, with support being provided to the remaining parties to assist transition. MEC has established workgroups to design and develop a new Market Intelligence Service, an innovative dual fuel tool targeted at introducing far greater functionality and reporting to facilitate management and improved quality of industry data. Finally, MEC commissioned a project to revitalise and renovate the MRASCo website. The project focused on security of information, ease of use, and improving the Industry Contacts Database and Change Tracker tools. Following testing in conjunction with MRA parties, the new website was launched on time and under budget in March 2018.

- Underpinning all systems development – and all other existing process and systems under the MRASCo umbrella – has been a focus on ensuring that compliance with the imminent GDPR is assured. The MRASCo Board has engaged with data protection experts at Gemserv to carry out risk assessments, gap analyses, and Privacy Impact Assessments throughout the year, including regular monitoring against the Information Commissioners Office's "12 steps to take" guidance on readiness. The MRASCo Security Committee (MSC) has met regularly to review procedures, processes, access agreement and terms of use, ensuring that the MRA has taken all steps to confirm its compliant status with the new Regulation.

Although these projects have been numerous, significant, and resource intensive, the day-to-day activities overseen by MEC have also continued at a great pace. The number of Change Proposals progressed through the MRA Development Board (MDB), MRA Issue Forms (MIF) considered at the Issue Resolution Expert Group (IREG) and meetings held across all workstreams have all increased against the previous period. Details relating to all volumetrics can be found in the section that follow.

MEC has ensured that it is fully engaged within the Code Administration Code of Practice (CACoP), and has regularly demonstrated the principles of cross-code coordination through delivery of workstreams with the Supply Point Administration Agreement (SPAA), Uniform Network Code (UNC), and Green Deal Arrangements

Agreement (GDAA), and regular attendance at panels and workgroups throughout the industry to inform and be informed where changes may impact on a number of codes.

MEC has engaged with Ofgem and its Innovation Link programme, aimed at supporting organisations entering the market where existing code obligations and entry criteria may pose a disproportionate barrier to entry. MEC will continue to work with Ofgem to ensure that innovation and progress is not unduly stifled, whilst protecting existing code parties from market disruption or changes that would expose the integrity, accessibility or availability of industry data.

In summary, the twelve months past have been critical to assuring the future arrangements for delivery of the MRA, and the wider code space. The level of activity delivered through MEC has been unprecedented, on both a project and day-to-day level. The next twelve months will deliver similar challenges, and numerous milestones will be encountered, including the implementation of GDPR, Brexit, and greater certainty with respect to the position of the MRA within future market arrangements.

MRASCo Services Summary

PROVISION OF MEETINGS

Under the Services Agreement, Gemserv is required to provide support for MRASCo meetings throughout each year. Figure 1 (below) shows the number of meetings supported on a month-by-month basis, identified by meeting category.
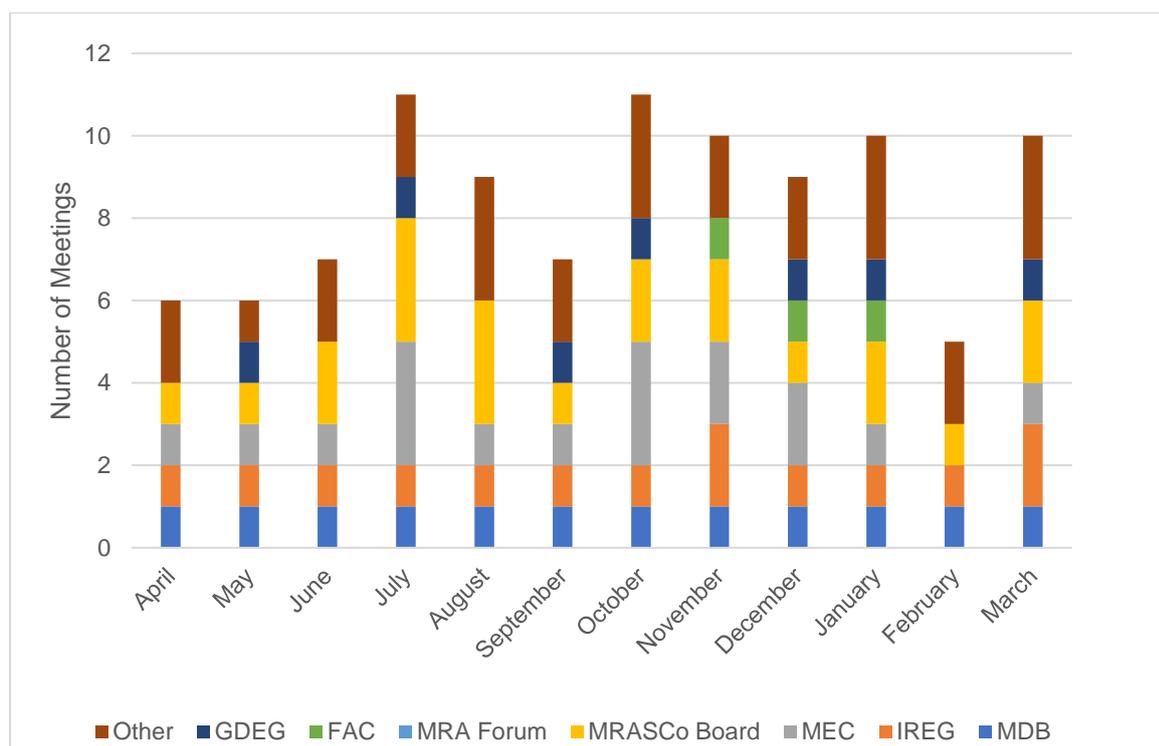

FIGURE 1 – MRASCO MEETING VOLUMES (2017-18)

Figure 2 (overleaf) shows the change in the volumes of MRASCo meetings from year to year. 2017-18 shows a reversal in a trend which saw the number of meetings fall within the previous four years, following a peak in 2012-13 due to the activity to establish the Green Deal MRA processes. The increase over this period can be attributed to the establishment of workgroups including the Erroneous Transfers Working Group (ETWG) and the Joint MIS Development Group (JMDG), and a significant increase in activity in IREG requiring several 'special' IREG meetings. It is expected that this trend will continue into the coming twelve months, as issues arising from Ofgem's Faster, More Reliable Switching Programme are passed to the MRA for resolution, and outputs from the ETWG, possibly including the establishment of a performance assurance board, are implemented.
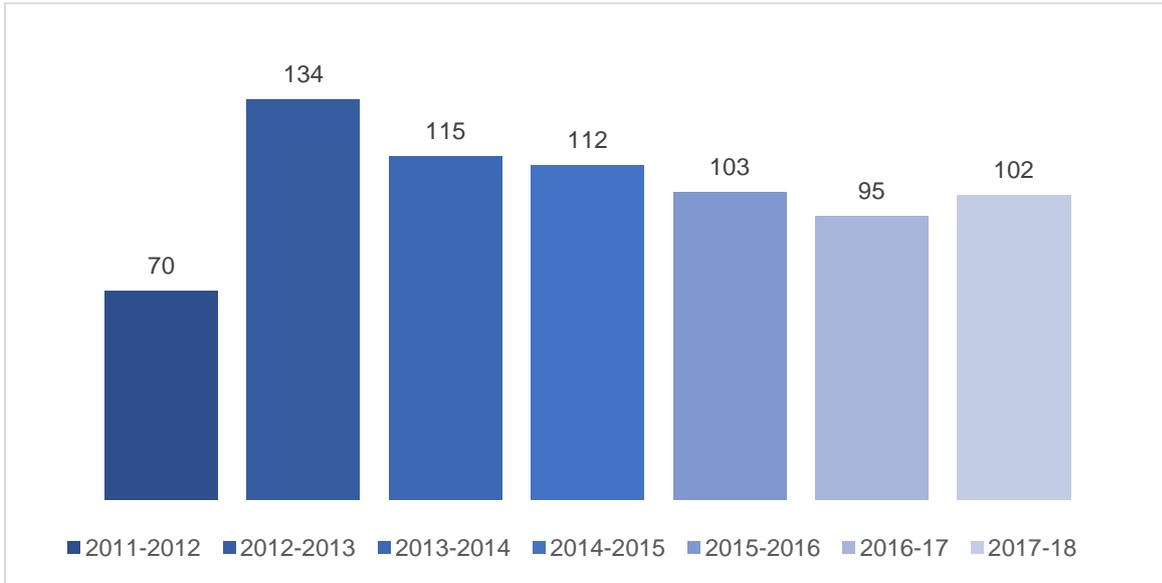
FIGURE 2 – MRASCO MEETING VOLUMES (YEAR-ON-YEAR)

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

MEC delegates most of its authority for managing MRA and MRA Product changes to the MRA Development Board (MDB). Figure 3 (below) shows the volume of Change Proposals considered at meetings of MDB on a month-by-month basis throughout the period. Change Proposals are categorised by the Product that they seek to change: the MRA, MRA Agreed Procedures® (MAPs), Data Transfer Catalogue® (DTC), or Working Practice Product Set® (WPPS).
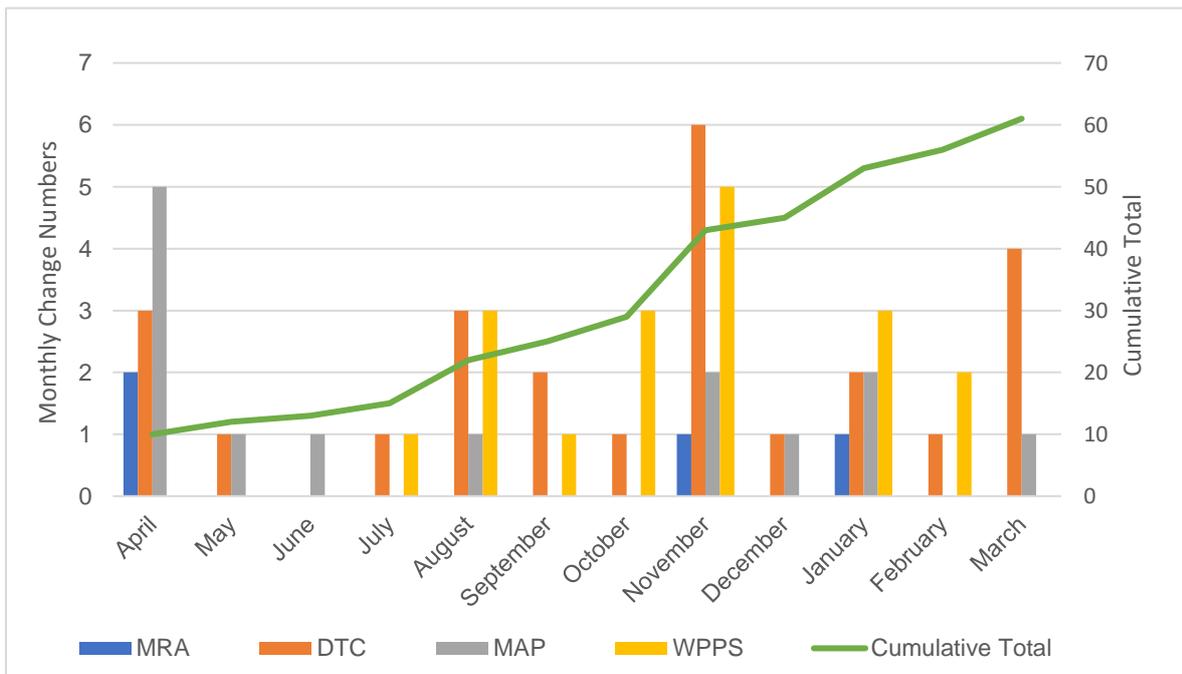

FIGURE 3 – CHANGE PROPOSALS CONSIDERED AT MDB MEETINGS (2017-18)

In line with the CACoP, Gemserv has submitted consolidated metrics to Ofgem each quarter, where the metrics include the number of Change Proposals raised during the quarter, the number of Change Proposals that were material (i.e. requiring Authority Consent), the number of parties that engaged during impact assessment, and the average time period between a decision to implement and the implementation date.

Figure 4 (below), provides a breakdown of recommendations and decisions made by MDB throughout 2017-18. Of those Change Proposals that proceeded to a vote (as opposed to being deferred for further development), MDB only recommended to reject three Change Proposals. These Change Proposals formed a suite of changes with respect to one issue; the Change Proposals required Authority Consent, and the Authority agreed with the MDB recommendation to reject the Change Proposals. MDB accepted 25 Change Proposals outright, and accepted 11 Change Proposals following an immaterial amendment to the legal text.
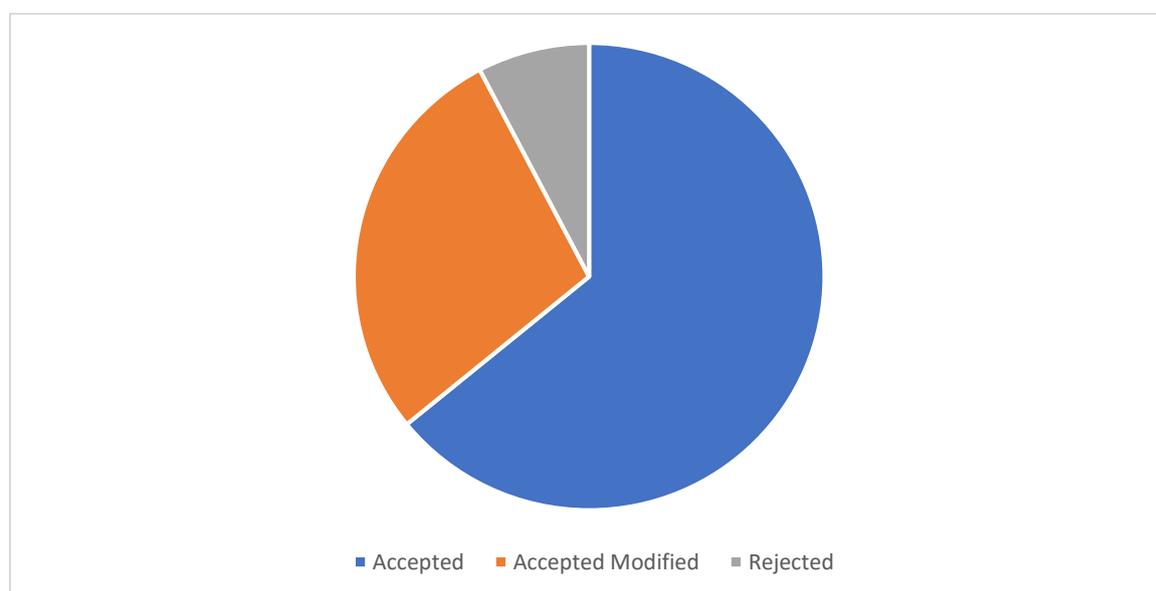

FIGURE 4 – MDB DECISION MAKING ON CHANGE PROPOSALS PRESENTED (2017-18)

ISSUE RESOLUTION

During 2017-18, 40 MRA Issue Forms (MIFs) were raised for discussion and resolution at IREG and GDEG; a very significant 90% increase on the previous period (2016-17: 21 MIFs). Of those raised during the period, nine MIFs remain open whilst 31 have been satisfactorily closed.

Notwithstanding the volume of MIFs raised, a number of MIFs have been particularly complex, or have required many meetings to resolve, or a combination of both. For example, MIF219 – Full Review of Working Practice Product Set, was raised in February 2017, and has required full project management and to progress at almost every IREG meeting during the period. MIF248 – Plot Addresses has required specialist resource and expertise, which has in turn required standalone meetings to progress. These factors have put pressure on

IREG capacity to deliver solutions, however the group continues to output via Change Proposals or other appropriate means at a tremendous pace.

CROSS CODE SUPPORT

MRASCo continues to liaise with all related code administrator bodies across the sector, to ensure coordinated change management, and reduce duplication and efficiencies in all code administration function. To this end, MRASCo representatives attend a number of code meetings, provide and receive updates on key activities across codes, and engage through CACoP to ensure principles of cross code administration are adhered to.

The Balancing and Settlement Code (BSC) is represented at MDB, IREG and on MEC, and a monthly update of the Distribution Code and Use of System Agreement (DCUSA), BSC and matters relating to the Smart Energy Code (SEC) is provided at each MDB meeting. MRASCo representatives regularly attend industry meetings, including those highlighted in Table 2 (below)

Code	Meetings regularly attended during 2017-18
DCUSA	DCUSA Panel
BSC	Supplier Volume Allocation Group
GDAA	GDAA Panel / PTSC
Other	DTSA, CACoP, UNC Distribution Workstream

TABLE 2 – INDUSTRY MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MRASCO

The MRA Secretariat regularly attends monthly meetings of the BSC Supplier Volume Allocation Group (SVG) where it liaises with the BSC Secretariat about Change Proposals. with potential consequential impact on the MRA.

MRASCo continues to champion the cross-code Code Administrator workshops, which look to promote communication between different codes to identify consequential changes which may be required, including those that resulted from Ofgem's Code Governance Review Programme.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Gemserv hosted three 'Introduction to the MRA' seminars throughout the period, in June, October and March. The sessions are provided free of charge to MRA parties, and are aimed at increasing engagement with the MRA, and MRA parties' knowledge of processes and procedures underpinning the MRA.

All three seminars hosted this year were very well attended, and feedback was excellent. 26 individual organisations attended the seminars this year. Attendees are asked to leave feedback, to help assist with making future sessions even more successful. Some comments have been captured below.

Clear, insightful and not laboured for the sake of it

Very useful and accommodated a variety of groups

Very informative and very clear

Answered questions well, provided greater clarity on the change process for me

First-rate – more detail on how Distributors are affected by the MRA would be helpful, too Supplier focused

Seminar dates for 2018-19 have been fixed and publicised via the MRASCo Website, with the next session due to take place on 22nd June 2018.

Gemserv also facilitated an engagement session in October 2017, aimed at providing industry with an update into the positioning of the Faster, More Reliable Switching Programme, its anticipated impacts on the MRA, and the development of the MIS, including how it would support the Programme. The session was extremely well attended and interactive, and benefited from the support of Ofgem, who contributed a speaker on the day.

MRASCO COMMUNICATIONS

Gemserv publishes news bulletins on the MRASCo Website after every key MRASCo meeting and event, to provide MRA parties and other interested parties with up-to-date news about the MRA. 38 articles were posted onto the Bulletin during 2017-18. The majority of articles related to IREG, MDB and MEC meeting updates, with other updates including the Green Deal Expert Group (GDEG), and Alt HAN.
The means and content of future communications are currently under review, as the MRASCo Board considers a forward-looking communications strategy. This may employ Huddle and the advanced functionality on the new MRASCo website to a greater extent, and will involve more frequent, more relevant, and more engaging outward communications with respect to projects being undertaken within the MRA.

PROVISION OF THE MRASCO WEBSITE

Over the course of 2017-18, MEC has overseen a project to review the MRASCo Website, setting out to achieve four key objectives:

- **Usability** – to improve the website user experience
- **Compliance** – to ensure compliance with GDPR following a Privacy Impact Assessment
- **Content** – to ensure that information held on the website is accurate
- **Technology** – to utilise newer technology and ensure the website is future-proof

The design, development, test and implementation of the website followed sound project management procedures, and in March 2018, following testing with MRA parties, the new website was implemented on time and under budget. Feedback on the new website is being gathered, and a lessons learned activity to be undertaken with outcomes presented to MEC.

Gemserv monitors website activity and reports statistical information to MEC on a monthly basis. Figure 5 (below) provides information on website page views over time.
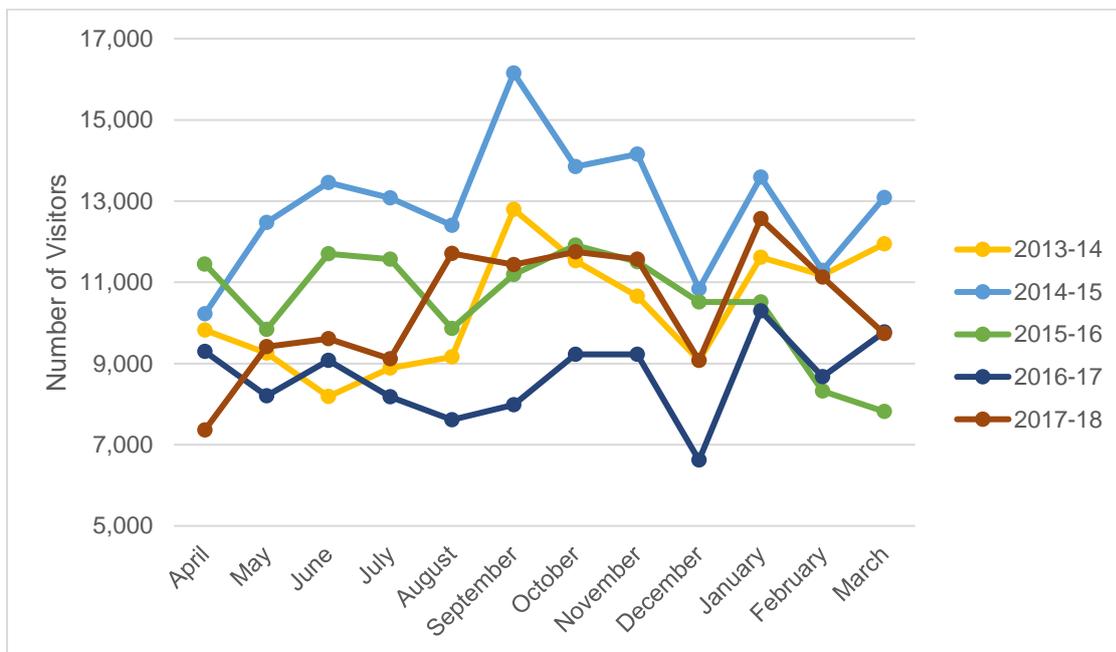

FIGURE 5 – MRASCO WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS OVER TIME

Visits to the MRASCo website have increased when compared to the previous period, but are still considerably lower compared to earlier years. The decrease in website visitors over time may well be attributed to the implementation of Huddle for documentation management, which directs traffic away from the MRASCo website for the download and viewing of meeting and change documentation. Figure 6 (overleaf) shows how the number of page views and unique visitors has risen compared to the previous period.
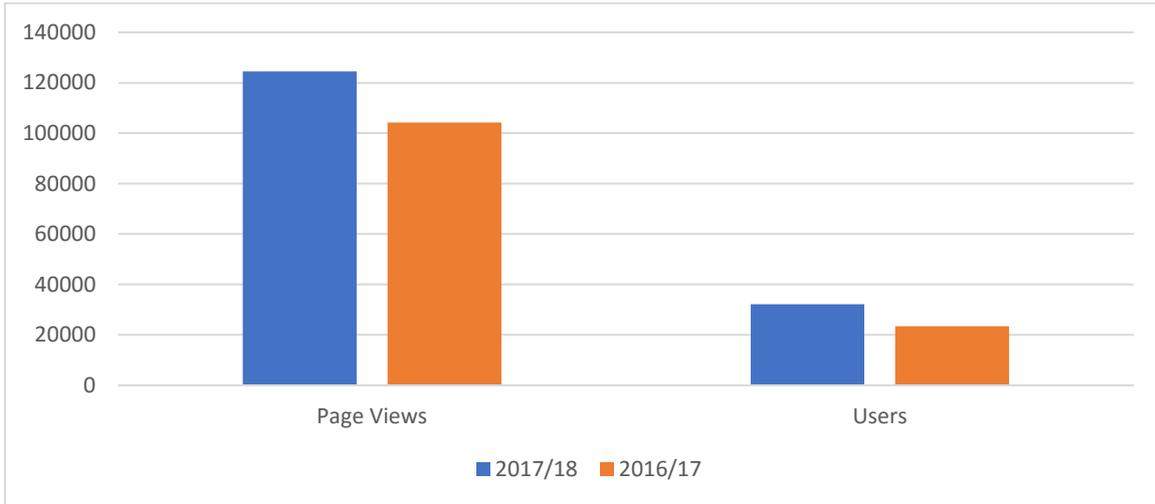
FIGURE 6 – MRASCO WEBSITE METRICS (YEAR-ON-YEAR)

HELPDESK SUPPORT SERVICES

Gemserv provides three distinct telephone helpdesks under the MRASCo umbrella, to help triage queries relating to specific areas of the MRA services:

- ECOES Central Administration Services
- GDCC Central Administration Services
- MRASCo Helpdesk (general queries)

Figure 7 (below) details the number of telephone helpdesk queries received each month, over the past twelve months. Call volumes have remained generally consistent throughout the period with peaks in August 2017, September 2017, December 2017 and March 2018. ECOES CAS calls have consistently been the highest in frequency. The telephone helpdesks are also supplemented by a number of email helpdesk mailboxes, where queries that are sent by email are managed and tracked.
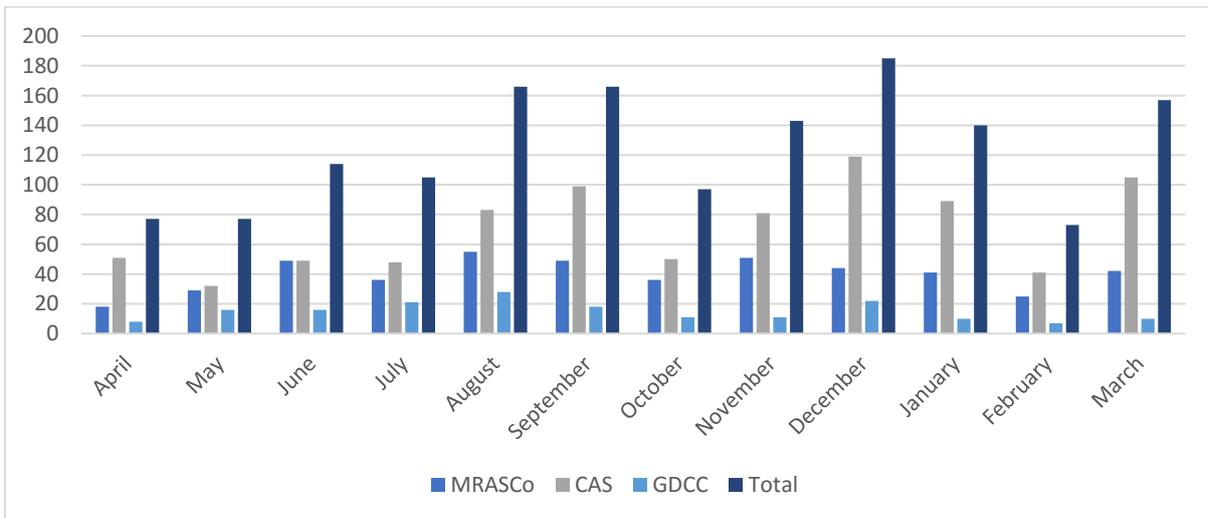

FIGURE 7 – CALLS RECEIVED BY MRASCO HELPDESKS (2017-18)

ECOES Management

ECOES USAGE

Figure 8 (below) details the number of enquiries on ECOES month-on-month from April 2012. The number of enquiries have increased year on year, with 2017-18 accounting for a quarter of all enquiries since 2012. However, from December 2017 to March 2018 total traffic has reduced to 2014-15 levels; this recent decrease has meant the overall enquiries for 2017-18 decreased by 15% from the previous year.
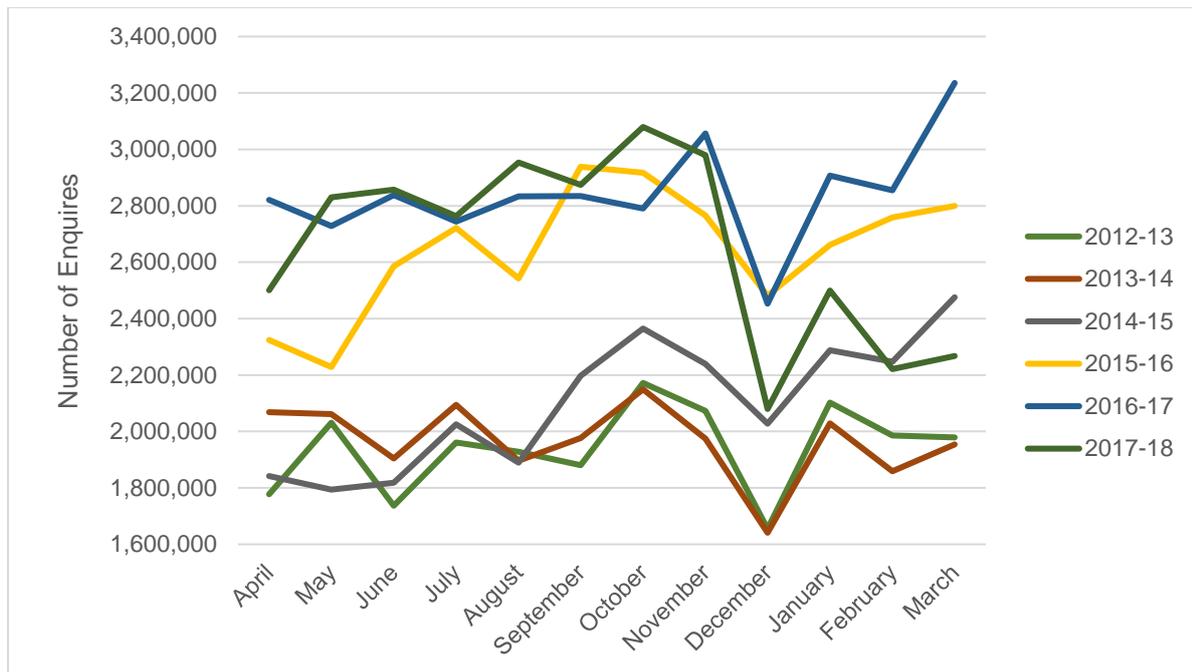

FIGURE 8 – VOLUME OF ECOES ENQUIRIES OVER TIME

ECOES AVAILABILITY

During the period, there was one period of outage on ECOES. During May 2017, two incidents led to a major outage and hardware failure that was reported to MEC in the Monthly Performance Report (May 2017). During March 2018, due to the significant change in file structure of Market Domain Data (MDD) version 266, the ECOES Technical Service Provider (TSP) had to manually load the MDD data into the database on 26th March 2018. Gemserv has provided the TSP with a new MDD specification and baseline file which will be used to amend the MDD data loading job. Gemserv has set out a new process to eliminate this issue for future MDD uploads to the ECOES database.

All service levels were met during 2017-18.

ECOES USERS

As part of its role, MEC grants access to ECOES to users upon request. The below Figure 9 shows the type of Users that had access to ECOES at the end of 2016-17, with a comparison Figure 10 displaying the user types at the same point in 2017-18.

The migration of users to ECOES2 has provided a greater level of accuracy in defining user types, therefore the user types are not directly comparable from the period. Suppliers proportionate users have increased by 37% and continues to have the greatest proportion of users accessing ECOES. Third parties include public services and Price Comparison Websites (PCWs); this category has increased by 46% since the previous year.
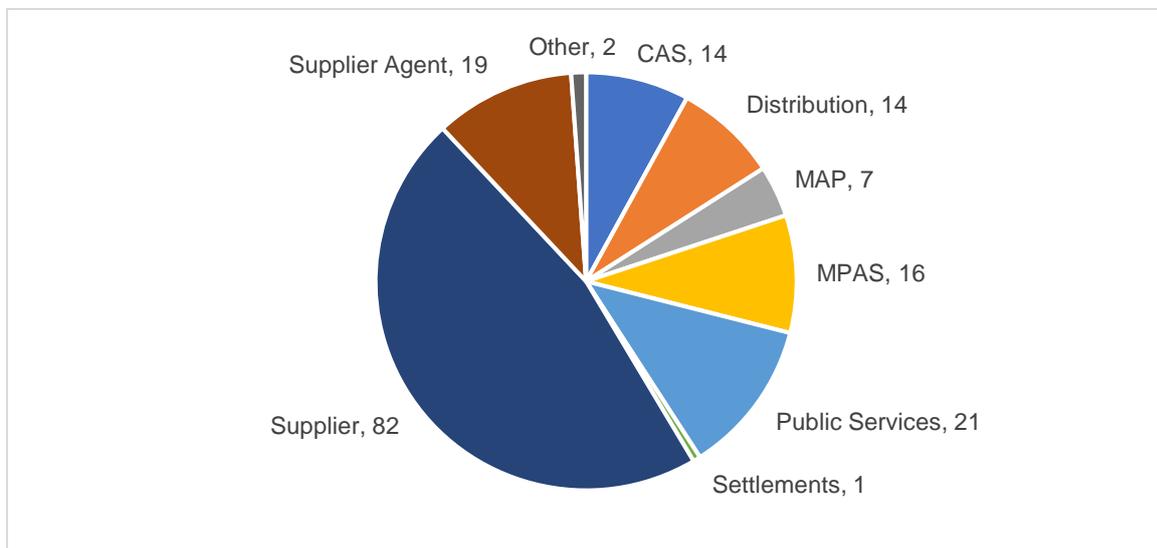

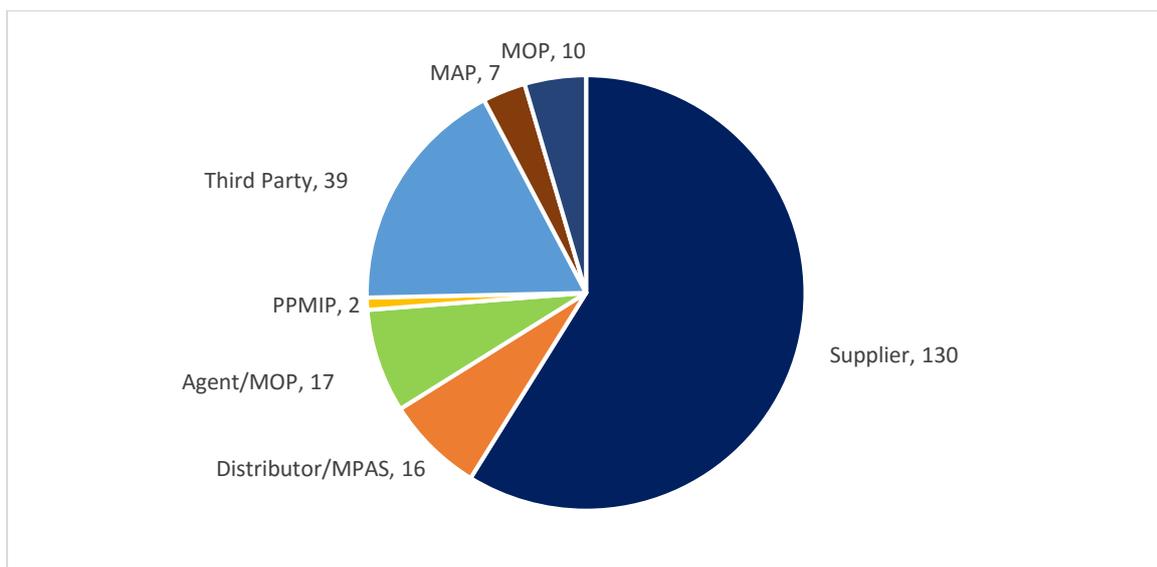**FIGURE 9 – ECOES USER INFORMATION AT 31ST MARCH 2017**

FIGURE 10 – ECOES USER INFORMATION AT 31ST MARCH 2018

GDCC Management

SERVICE AVAILABILITY

There were no service outages during 2017-18, and the Green Deal Central Charge® (GDCC) TSP met all its service levels. On 21st March 2018 the website appeared to be offline to all users. This was identified by the TSP active monitoring service. After investigation and confirmation that the database and all hosted servers were operating as expected, it transpired that the domain had expired. Gemserv renewed the subscription for the domain which ensured a normal service was resumed by the early afternoon. Gemserv have changed their processes to limit this problem from reoccurring in the future.

All service levels were met during 2017-18.

GDCC USAGE

The number of Green Deal Data Flows processed via the GDCC and the number of user web searches are detailed in Figure 11 below. During the 2017-18 reporting period the data flows being processed have had small fluctuations during the year with the highest web searches being at the start (April 2017) and end (March 2018) of the year.
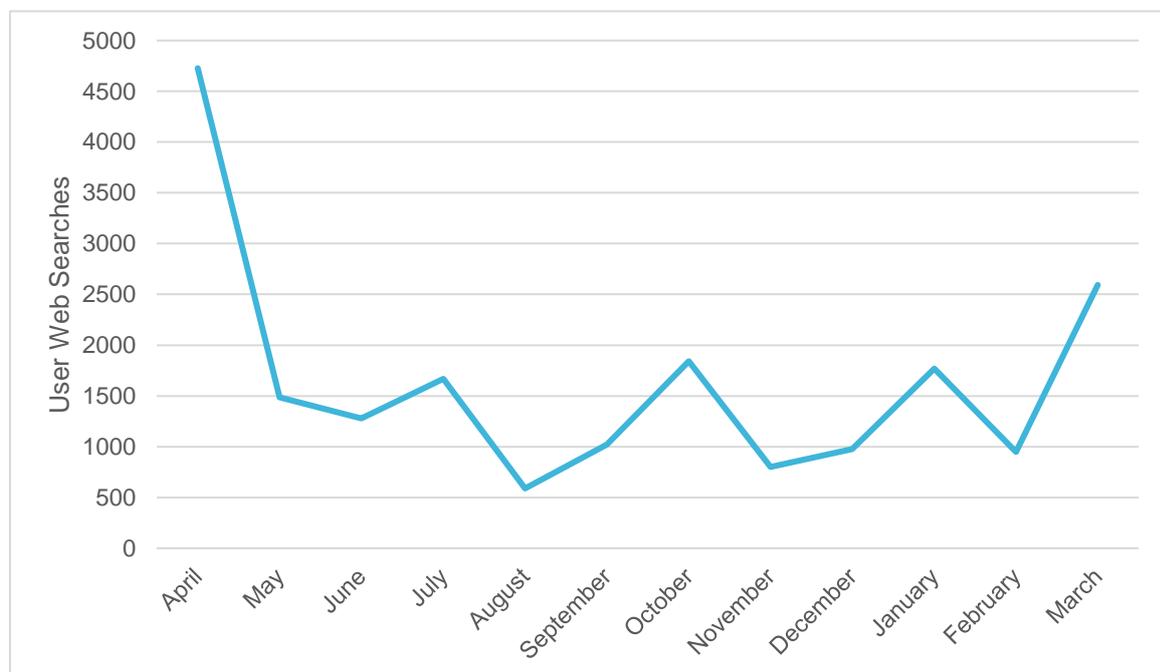

FIGURE 11 – DATA FLOW VOLUMES PROCESSED BY THE GDCC (2017-18)

GDCC USERS

On behalf of MEC, Gemserv as the MRA Secretariat, process GDCC applications from qualifying GDCC Users. Figure 12 shows the type of users that have access to the GDCC over 2017-18.
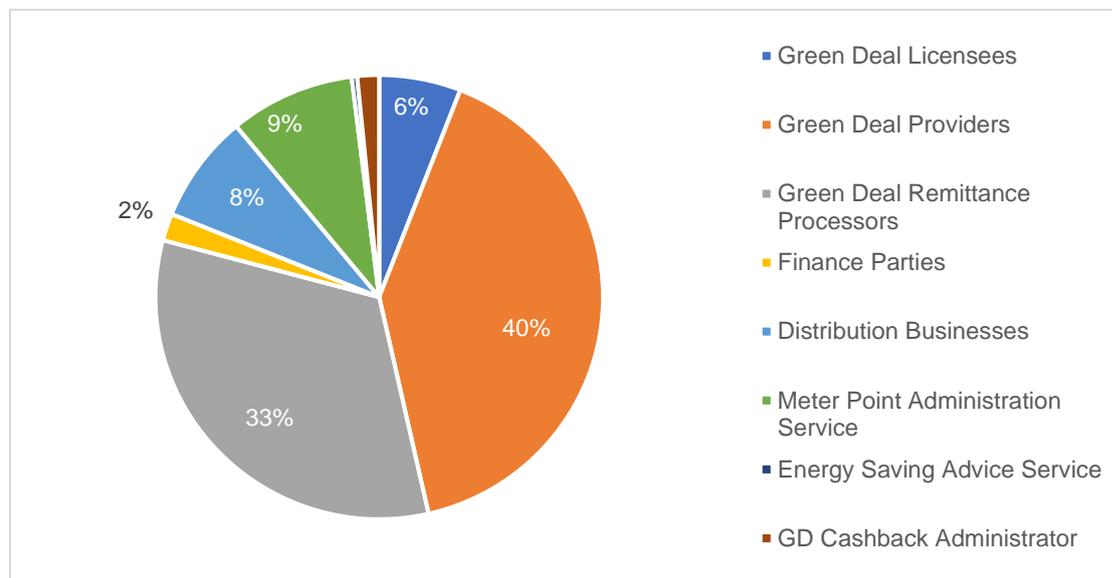

FIGURE 12 – GDCC USER CATEGORIES AT 31ST MARCH 2018