November update: replacing GCF core services

Here's the latest update on the work we're doing to replace the GCF core services.

This update includes a request for feedback so we can get a better understanding of our GCF usage. It also includes a timeline, details of the core services components and important information about things you'll need to do (but not yet) to your call-off contract.

Current status

We are working with Crown Commercial Service (CCS) and Vodafone to unbundle the core services provided in your call-off contract into discrete components, which will be individually priced. More information about the proposed components are described later on in this message.

The core services unbundling work is planned to be completed by 31 January 2016 and customer call off contracts amended by March 2016.

Timeline

The following timetable has now been been agreed:

- **Early January 2016:** Customers provided with the commercial detail for each of the core service components
- **Late January 2016:** GCF Forums providing details of the core services unbundling and plans for amending call off contracts
- **February 2016:** Customers issued with amendments to their call-off contract (including detailed information on options and next steps)
- **March 2016:** Core service components available to customers.

Core service components

We are proposing the current single core services charge is unbundled into the following individually charged components:

1. PSN Domain Name Service & Network Time Protocol (PSN DNS & NTP)
This component will enable customers to publish their registered domains to other customers and find other customers' domains. It also provides a safe way to find Internet services.
Example: a customer with a *.gsi.gov.uk domain can enable other customers to find their domain and find other such *.gsi.gov.uk domains.
(Note: this service does not provide a route to those domains or to the Internet).

2. Mail relay
This component will enable customers to send and receive emails across public sector networks, including the PSN protected, PSN assured, health and police domains.
Example: a customer with a *.gsi.gov.uk email domain can send and receive emails to customers on the *.gcsx.gov.uk domain.

3. Anti-Virus and Anti-Spam (AVAS)
This component will provide anti-virus and anti-spam filtering services to mail traffic transitioning to/from the mail relay component.

Example: an infected email sent from the internet to a customer of this service is detected and quarantined by the AVAS component.

4. Peer to Peer and Public Sector Interconnect (P2P)

This component will allow customers to publish services to, and consume services from, PSN protected, PSN assured, health and police domains.

Example: a customer on the *.gsi.gov.uk domain can access a database published by a customer on the *.gcsx.gov.uk domain.

5. Peer to Peer Bolt On: Europe (P2P&E)

This component will allow customers to publish services to, and consume services from, the TESTA European network. This component can only be consumed as a bolt-on to the P2P/PSI component.

6. Directory

This component will allow customers to collaborate more effectively with other customers that also consume the Directory component.

Example: a user in an organisation consuming the Directory component can find the contact details of a particular user in another organisation that also consumes the Directory component.

Consuming core service components

We have identified the following 5 use cases that we believe represent the various ways that customers will consume their core service components. For each use case we have suggested what the mix of components should probably be, and listed them in the below table.

Revised component	Safely find service on one or more of PSN assured, PSN protected and Internet	Safely and securely exchange email across public sector networks & Internet with my PSN-connected mailbox	Safely publish, find and consume services between PSN protected, PSN assured, Health and Police	Safely publish, find and consume services and email between the PSN and TESTA European network	Publish contact details of colleagues in the public sector so those on the PSN can find them
PSN Domain Name Service & Network Time Protocol (PSN DNS & NTP)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mail Relay		✓		✓	
Anti-Virus and Anti-Spam (AV/AS)		✓		✓	
Peer-to-Peer and Public Sector Interconnect (P2P)			✓		
Peer-to-Peer Bolt on: Europe (P2P&E)				✓	
Directory					✓

To support our understanding of your use of GCF, we'd like to know if one or more of these use cases match the way you will consume your core services by completing a short feedback survey. If none of them match your needs, you'll have a chance to tell us which core services you need.

You can provide your feedback using this online form.

Implementing the change

When you have decided on the unbundled core services you need, your existing call-off contract will need to be updated to remove the core services charge and replace it with your individually-charged core service components.

It is expected that Vodafone will provide customers with a pre-completed variation notice, which will enable them to simply 'sign and return' to access your unbundled services.

Terminating core service components

When you've returned your pre-completed variation notice to Vodafone, you'll be able to elect to terminate those core service components that you no longer require, subject to providing the specific notice period for the relevant core component.

For example, on signing and returning the pre-completed variation, a customer will be receiving all of the core service components. However, if you only want to 'Safely and securely exchange email across public sector networks and Internet with my PSN-connected mailbox' (the second use case), you'll be able to issue a notice of termination against those core service components that you no longer require (the P2P, P2P&E and Directory components).

Next steps

We'll continue to work with CCS and Vodafone to progress the implementation of the core services unbundling, which will be subject to final commercial agreement between the parties. We'll keep you up to date as the status develops and provide more details about implementing the contract changes at the GCF Forums in late January.

In the meantime, it would be great if you could help support our understanding of your GCF usage by completing the use cases feedback survey mentioned above.

Further Information

If you need further information on what's happening with the unbundling activity, please email the CCS Network Services team at networkservices@crowncommercial.gov.uk.

We'll keep you up to date with the plans and developments through the PSN website, our blog and through these email messages. If you have any questions in the meantime, please email us at public-services-network@digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk.

Kind regards, David

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