

Gemserv conducted holistic services for Alt HAN Co., drawing on a breadth of knowledge from consultants across various sectors and utilising our business support services.

THE CHALLENGE

The UK Government set up the Alternative Home Area Network Company (Alt HAN Co.) as a special purpose company. This was established via the Smart Energy Code (SEC) and Supplier Licence obligations to provide and manage technical and operational solutions to support Great Britain's smart metering rollout to multi-dwelling and large premises where the standard equipment could not be used. A legally binding agreement was enacted with all Energy Suppliers to deliver Alt HAN equipment and technology.

Alt HAN Co. needed a partner to help establish various functions to achieve the procurement, financing, and management of smart metering range extenders. Alongside this, to manage relationships across the energy industry, they required a secretariat body representing and in contact with energy suppliers, network operators, meter operators and other parties.

The challenge would involve the intricacies of setting up the various governance mechanisms needed to effectuate smart metering rollout goals.

Alt HAN Co. also had to oversee and evaluate technical partners to deliver digital solutions. This ranged from managing one of the largest databases of residential and non-domestic energy-supplied premises in the country, to supply chains required to develop cutting-edge smart metering technologies.

An understanding of the market and policy environment within the energy industry was essential to identify the correct governance. In addition, knowledge of the technical, security and data protection features of energy systems and smart metering devices and operations was also required.



THE SOLUTION

Gemserv have acted as a partner to Alt HAN Co. since 2016, providing support for: Secretariat & Governance; Health & Safety; HR; Finance; IT and Systems; Procurement & Contract expertise; Smart Meter Device Engineering and Assurance Support; and Cybersecurity & Data Protection.

In the period between 2016 and the milestone achievement of Alt HAN Co's Target Operating Model in 2021, Gemserv organised procurement services for the client's contracting of the major suppliers, such as providing vendor management, contractual and commercial operations. Additionally, Gemserv's expert support included the Solution Financing to set up and deliver the model for the acquisition and repayment of Alt HAN assets.

Given the complex technical and regulatory environment within which Alt HAN Co. operated, it was necessary to manage a variety of broad, evolving relationships across Government, regulation, Energy Supply, software, legal, data and technology providers, alongside a close-collaborative approach with other Alt HAN Co. partner consultancies, to ensure alignment from conception to delivery.

Throughout this process, Gemserv also supported with cyber security, device engineering and data protection.

These expert considerations were critical in providing the necessary assurance for Alt HAN Co, as well as its suppliers and stakeholders, that security and digital risks were adequately identified, mitigated or resolved. Throughout the development of Alt HAN Co as an organisation, our consultants supported with the implementation of a full information security management system (ISMS) to align with ISO 27001 and data protection in line with the UK GDPR. Gemserv assisted the organisation's wider network of service providers by developing the contractual and operational controls needed to allow staff and energy industry operators to access Alt HAN Co. databases and systems in a safe and secure manner. This served to give our client, the energy industry, and ultimately energy consumers, the assurance of the robustness of the devices, systems and data being procured.

With Alt HAN Co firmly established in its Target Operating Model, from 2021, Alt HAN Co and Gemserv's relationship evolved to Gemserv acting as an ongoing expert provider of support for information security, data protection and technical design & testing. Within this, we have acted as an assurance partner, providing independent assessments and audits for Alt HAN Co's information security and data protection controls, to manage risks and support the maintenance of their certifications and standards.



THE IMPACT

Alongside the support of Gemserv's services, Alt HAN Co were able to procure vendors both for the delivery of the 'operational services' involved in the analysis of the suitability of premises for Alt HAN equipment and in the manufacturer of devices for their technology solutions. Moreover, we supported with successfully implementing a framework of agreements with vendors and partners needed to develop and ensure industry access to our client's inventory of premises and ensure the smooth operation of the procurement, rollout and deployment of equipment.

Through the Solution Finance project, Gemserv put into place a finance facility for Alt HAN equipment, which enabled charges for the Alt HAN services and equipment to be spread over a longer period.

We also supported our client with the budget development, consultation and approval process on a yearly basis, which led to the successful approval of Alt HAN Co's budget by the energy industry for the duration of our support. As a result of these activities, during 2021 Alt HAN Co. successfully achieved their Target Operating Model.

They established teams for the management and financing of their technology assets, established Secretariat, contract management teams, and a department for maintaining ongoing risk management and compliance. They also successfully achieved ISO27001 compliance, enabled through Gemserv's support and have gone on to maintain this certification in 2022 & 2023 with our help. Additionally, in January 2023, Alt HAN Co successfully commenced 'Safe Launch' with the roll-out of smart metering technologies to further premises around Great Britain.

More recently, Alt HAN Co has also further expanded its role in GB's smart metering rollout with the award of the Crowded Meter Rooms project, which aims to solve the problem of special constraints and radio interference between electricity meters and Alt HAN Equipment in shared residential buildings. To support their mandate to provide more consumers with access to smart metering, we have also provided device engineering, information security and data protection expertise into Alt HAN Co as it maintains its objective to grow its permanent headcount and excel in its role within the GB smart metering rollout.