ETSI MCX Plugtests™ Webinar 14 May 2020 Q&A

View the webinar recording here

This document sets out the questions and answers given after the webinar.

Q. The sharing of location data between clients and servers is a key user requirement. Is this tested and do you test the Location Management Server / Location Management Client interface?

A. Yes, the location sharing is part of the test specification 103564 and has been tested in previous Plugtests events.

Q. How far have the ETSI Plugtests progressed (with this MCX#5 Plugtests) on developing testing of the MCX interworking and interoperability with TETRA and other LMR systems?

A. We understand the importance of the interworking feature for deployment but have not tested interworking with TETRA as the standards are not yet ready. The standards from 3GPP side were finalised recently and we are now waiting for ETSI TC-TCCE to complete the TETRA interworking function standards and these are expected by the end of this year, so will be considered for Plugtests events in 2021.

Q. Mission Critical Data IP connectivity service (IPcon) is a feature that is eagerly awaited by some users. Do you plan to test IPcon?

A. We will consider this for the future – we need to see if it forms part of 3GPP Release 15 or 16 – if 15 then of course it will be considered for the next event. Our technical experts work directly from the current level of the standards.

Q. Do you test the interface of MCX applications towards Geographic Information Systems (GIS)?

A. No, there is no standardized interface between MCX and GIS.

Q. What specific challenges were observed with the 5% failure rate on test cases executed? What specific mitigation plans are being followed on 3GPP standards as a result?

A. All the failures are discussed internally with all the participants and the liaison statement from the Plugtests was sent to 3GPP working groups – there is a list currently circulating in SA6 and CT1 with some issues to be resolved in the specification, and we are expecting a response as to clarification and/or resolutions.

Q. Could you please elaborate how the railway-oriented scenarios for MCX #5 Plugtests will be defined? Is there a working group for it?

A. There is not a working group but if you are interested please attend the open conference call to find out more about the scenarios. Some have already been defined such as multi talker and functional aliases.

Q. Is Presence Server part of interoperability testing?

A. Yes, we have some initial scenarios for server to server testing.

Q. Will Common API Framework (CAPIF) be a part of the Plugtests?

A. CAPIF is something that SA6 has developed, it will not be part of the Plugtests, we are focusing mostly on the interfaces of the MCX ecosystem.

Q. Do you test the interface between MCX and Dispatching systems? If so, do you use the client-server interface for this test or some other interface?

A. No we not testing the interface between MCX and dispatcher currently – but this may be considered for future events. A TCCA working group is working on the interface between MCX and control room systems so if that were to define anything that is currently missing from the standards then that would feed into 3GPP for future Releases. Or, if the standardisation of the interface towards control room systems is adequately defined according to that working group, then it will feed into the Plugtests to confirm that from a Plugtests point of view. A wireline control room user connects as an Authorised MCPTT client, so the standard covers that aspect of control room connectivity. An Authorised client has more rights than a normal client.

Q. Does ETSI define any standardized APIs that can be used by developers of Client Applications or Server Applications? Does the MCPTT Plugtests use these APIs?

A. This is more for the vendors to respond to this question. ETSI is not defining APIs for the client or server side. What may be of interest is MCOP – Mission Critical Open Platform project – which defined free to use open APIs and SDK for MCPTT applications so that developers could have a quick start to get rapidly to market with MCPTT apps that would be able to be part of the Plugtests.

Q. Since MCX APIs will be vendor specific according to the previous answer, the client app and server app developers will not be portable across MCX platforms – is that correct?

A. This is related to MCOP – so individual vendors will be developing their own MCS APIs, they may choose to use MCOP or develop their own, so the end MCX apps will not necessarily be portable across vendor platforms.

Q. Is the Lawful Intercept interface considered in the Plugtests?

A. No, we have not considered that yet in the testing. This is out of scope for the MCX event.

Q. Will ETSI TC-RT (Rail) working group define railway test scenarios?

A. No it is the participants and observers who are defining the test scope for railways and our technical experts are writing them in detail in the test specifications. We are keeping ETSI TC-RT in the loop for any scenarios that we would like to test.

Q. Are any of the 3GPP Release 16 features going to be included in the ETSI Plugtests?

A. We have discussed Rel-16 features and the conclusion is that it is too early for vendors as the Release was only finalised recently. We will focus on Rel-15 this time, and Rel-16 will appear in MCX Plugtests #6.

Q. Do you know whether the MCPTT server-MCPTT server interface is fully standardised (i.e. all three stages completed). If so, is this an interface that is tested?

A. Yes this is currently standardised, and we have included some of the test cases that test this interface.

Q. What interfaces for wireline consoles are tested (MCPTT, IMS)?

A. At some point in the future there will be clearly defined elements that will be suitable for interface and will be tested. We do not test anything that is not part of the standards, everything that is tested during Plugtests must be standardised.

Q. Are you testing ProSe test cases for interoperability?

A. We want to test ProSe but the unavailability of devices means we cannot. We can write test cases but with no devices there is no point writing new test cases.

Q. Is the charging for MCX services in the planned scope of the testing?

A. Yes this is in the planned scope – this is included in our first MCPTT event and we will add charging related scenarios.

Q. Does the report reveal which vendors succeeded at which tests?

A. No, this is under NDA which is signed for every Plugtests event by the vendors and cannot be disclosed. You would need to contact the vendor directly for the information.

Q. Do the Plugtests covers non-3GPP access such as WiFi or unlicensed spectrum used for interoperability testing?

A. No, we do not consider non-3GPP access yet.

Q. Did you do tests on IOPS?

A. No, IOPS is still under standardisation – this will be part of 3GPP Rel-17.

Q. How does ETSI testing work with PPDR agencies in the U.S. and the rest of the world?

A. PPDR agencies and operators from the U.S. come to the event as observers and provide valuable input and provide input for future events. Government agencies and PPDR operators from other parts of the world, for example Australia, Asia, etc. have participated as observers and will no doubt continue to do so.

Q. In the EU, there is abundant inter-country independence and cooperation, do you think MCPTT system interconnection is needed and how do the ETSI Plugtests incorporate MCPTT to MCPTT system interconnect?

A. This is something which is already considered in different projects and we plan to test some of the interfaces – agree this is something needed in Europe and there are some projects currently working on it.

Q. Does ETSI test MCPTT integration into Smart Public Safety as part of the worldwide evolution to Smart Cities?

A. We have not yet tested this, but this is something we would like to consider for the future.

Q. Is there a charge or registration fee for participating in the ETSI Plugtests, and are they for ETSI members only?

A. There is no charge or registration fee, and participating members do not need to be members of ETSI. Any company implementing the standards can bring their products and test.

Q. What kind of organisations can participate in the observers' programme?

A. Only government organisations, administrations and public safety operators can attend as an observer.

Q. Will there be newer observer scenarios in Plugtests #5?

A. Yes, we are planning to have a conference call with all the observers and maybe we will give them the task of writing some new test scenarios for observer use cases. The main point of observer scenarios was to have face-to-face events where the LTE infrastructure can be used, so these observer scenarios will be tested over the top currently but in the next face-to-face event we would like to see this end-to-end interoperability testing.

Q. Do the Plugtests cover identity and authentication/authentication management testing?

Yes, this is covered in the Plugtests.

Q. 95% success rate is a huge number, is it correct that vendors only perform only a subset of the 141 tests?

A. When we started the Plugtests we had 47 test scenarios and now we have 141, so it is up to the vendors to decide which scenarios they would like to test, and currently not everyone can test. We have more than 30 vendors and 141 test cases and one week of testing, so it is not possible for all the vendors, they need to prioritise what is important for them to test.

Q. Is MCX over Public Mobile Networks addressed by the MCX Plugtests?

A. Yes, this is addressed and tested in the events.

Q. Is there key management system (KMS) interoperability testing across different security domains?

A. We have some dedicated use cases for key management system testing.

Q. Does ETSI identify 'areas of improvement' in the report? If so, do vendors have the right to veto any inclusion that they do not want ETSI to disclose even though the conclusion does not mention names?

A. Yes, the report is compiled by ETSI and is shared with all participants, there is no veto in the report – the report contains the comments from all the participants, nothing is changed, the report is what is seen in the Plugtests.

Q. Migration management server was introduced in Rel-15 – is the migration and interconnection feature planned to be tested?

A. Yes this was planned, but stage-3 is missing in the 3GPP specification.

Q. Can we get the results of the 2019 4th MCX Plugtests?

A. The results are part of the Plugtests report and are anonymised, the report is on the ETSI website here.