



Electronic Ticketing and Other Documents in BSPs on/after 1 June 2008

Dear IATA Agent,

The 2007 IATA Annual General Meeting reconfirmed the goal of eliminating paper tickets from the BSPs. At the same time, the AGM recognised that some airlines are experiencing difficulty in meeting the deadline of 31 December 2007. In recognition of this fact, and to assist airlines to complete their work to eliminate paper tickets, the deadline was extended to 31 May 2008. This is the final deadline and no further extension will be made.

What does this mean for you as an Agent and BSP user? Very simply that after 1 June 2008, you will not be able to issue a BSP supplied neutral paper ticket. We will be issuing separate instructions with respect to the destruction and/or recovery of our paper ticket stock next month.

We are working closely with the Global Distribution System providers (GDSs) to ensure a smooth transition to ET and you can expect to receive instructions directly from individual airlines on their own plans beyond 1 June 2008.

We are conscious of the fact that the BSPs also handle 3rd Party users such as railways and we are working on solutions to handle this business.

We are receiving many questions on the transition to ET and have therefore developed the attached summary sheet of key issues that you may find useful. It covers topics such as:

- **Specific actions required**
- **Use of the Virtual Miscellaneous Document (V-MPD) and Electronic Miscellaneous Document (EMD)**
- **Consequences if a neutral paper ticket is issued on/after 1 June 2008**
- **Impact of the elimination of neutral paper tickets on 3rd parties in the BSP**
- **ET eligible itineraries on/after 1 June 2008**

Should you have any questions or comments please forward these by email to: eticket@iata.org.

Yours Sincerely,

Tom Murphy, IATA Senior Vice President, IDFS

Summary Sheet of Key Issues for Travel Agents Electronic Ticketing and Other Documents in BSP on/after 1 June 2008

1. Specific actions required

Each BSP participating airline should be communicating to you their procedures for itineraries that are not eligible for ticketing on an electronic ticket. These options include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Issuance of another document (e.g. Virtual MPD (V-MPD)) that could be used as a Prepaid Ticket Advice (PTA). Airlines will advise you if they will accept the use of the V-MPD as a PTA for this purpose.
2. Airlines may wish to enter into local arrangements with you whereby you may request the ticket to be issued by the airline on its own paper ticket stock. Agents should inform themselves of specific airline policy on this procedure.
3. Subject to agreement with you, a BSP participating airline may place its own paper ticket stock in an agency location and ticketing may be done on that stock. It should be noted however that in this instance the entire transaction is subject to the bilateral agreement between you and the airline since these transactions will be outside the IATA Agency Programme and the BSP administrative rules including default procedures and reporting and remittance schedules.
4. You should ensure that during the remaining time until 1 June 2008 that you become informed of each individual airline's policy for the issuance of tickets that you are unable to issue directly as electronic tickets on/after 1 June 2008 because individual carrier policy may vary.

2. Use of the V-MPD and EMD.

IATA's Member airlines have already adopted standards for an Electronic Miscellaneous Document (EMD) that will replace all other non-ticket documents and which works in a similar manner to an electronic ticket. However, it is not anticipated that this will be fully available for use until 2009 at the earliest. In those BSPs where the automated coupon-by-coupon MCO (known as the MD50) is in use it should be noted that on/after 1 June 2008 the value coupon will no longer be available for the issuance of MCOs. IATA will monitor and evaluate the use of all other paper documents in those remaining BSPs where paper "other documents" including the manual paper carbonised MPD, the automated neutral carbonised MPD and the neutral carbonised excess baggage ticket are still distributed. As soon as is practicable, IATA will migrate these remaining BSPs to the already well established BSP "best practice" of removing all other paper documents. During the interim period all other documents can be issued by means of a virtual version of the MPD known as the V-MPD.

You should therefore ensure that all of your offices are familiar with the V-MPD process and the actions they will need to follow for issuance.

Overview of the V-MPD

The V-MPD is: -

- A virtual representation of the paper MPD/auto MCO;
- An instrument of exchange;
- A record of a transaction of payment for a service or collection of a fee;
- Issued in *BSPlink*;
- Drop down menu boxes look like a manual document;
- Email message upon completion to the airline service point;
- Airlines see their copy and act in accordance with their standard internal procedures for processing Prepaid Ticket Advices (PTAs).

It should be noted that IATA is continuing to examine additional functionality that meets your needs in order to minimise disruptions to your operations and welcomes feedback and comment.

The V-MPD is a viable alternative to paper MPDs and is available globally for BSP participating airlines to deploy market by market.

IATA has prepared presentation material, user guides and a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that are available for download in the “Download Centre” of the *BSPlink* Portal at <https://www.bsplink.iata.org> (refer to “*BSPlink* Customer Manuals”)

Effect on Travel Agents – Ticket Issuance

It is expected that PTAs and tickets on departure will continue to decrease rapidly and airlines will continue to expand their electronic ticketing capabilities. However, there may be some tickets that you will be unable to issue as electronic tickets and, on/after 1 June 2008, you will no longer have the fallback of issuing a paper ticket. Some of the reasons for this could be identified as follows (depending on individual airline policy):

- Interline journeys where the particular mix of Marketing/Operating Carriers does not allow one carrier to be selected as the Validating Carrier because no one carrier has IET with all other carriers;
- Passive bookings;
- Groups;
- Journeys over 16 segments;
- Infants;
- Open segments;
- Ineligible sectors because the ground-handling infrastructure at some airports is not capable of processing electronic tickets.

Should an airline choose to maintain its own paper tickets they can still be issued for these journeys at their own offices. Each airline should advise you whether they allow this and what their procedures are.

Effect on Travel Agents – Other Documents

IATA anticipates that the main reasons for agents to issue other documents will relate to the receipt for amendment fees and for issuance of non-air services (e.g. tours, hotel, car hire) where an interline electronic ticket agreement is not in place.

The EMD will be the ideal solution to support the issuance of other documents. However there will be an interim period during which no EMD solution will be available and as such it will be necessary to maintain alternative methods of issuing other documents. IATA has deployed the V-MPD but, acknowledging that there will not be a value coupon produced, this will add an additional burden to industry resources where a value coupon is required. It should be noted that the V-MPD should only be seen as an interim measure until such time as the EMD is fully deployed.

IATA is aware that some travel agents receive data supplied by their GDS from these transactions to manage back office functions. In addition some GDSs, but not all, have a certain level of interactivity into the Passenger Name Record (PNR). The problem however is that, looking at the V-MPD, there is a deficiency since a value or exchange coupon is not produced and there are no automatic updates into the PNR.

It is therefore important that you liaise closely with your airlines because procedures for advising the airline of the issuance of another document may vary. For example an airline may request you to ensure that the information pertaining to the issuance of the other document is entered through a Special Service Request (SSR) or Other Services Information (OSI) placed into the PNR and 'queued' to the airline for servicing following the standard procedures that applied for paper documents.

Any interim solutions developed by the GDSs (e.g. suppressing the printing of a value coupon on OPATB2 markets) would be based on the fact that the GDSs have been approached by their airline/travel agency customers directly.

Until such time as the remaining paper "other documents" in some BSPs have been withdrawn, airlines may allow you to continue to issue them beyond 31 May 2008 where it is practical. In those markets where these documents (manual MPD and MCO) are presently in place, and where the local market has agreed to continue the issuance of these documents, IATA will continue to provide stock and processing.

Effect on Travel Agents – remote ticketing facilities

With the withdrawal of paper ticket stocks, travel agent use of Satellite Ticket Printers (STPs) will no longer be supported. As a consequence of the electronic ticketing deadline, all related standards and resolutions providing for Satellite Ticket Delivery Offices (STDOs), Special Event Locations (SELs), European Union Satellite Ticket Printers (EUSTPs) and STPs will no longer be applicable on/after 1 June 2008.

If you are operating an approved STP, EUSTP, SEL or STDO and in possession of a valid IATA numeric code for such operation, you will be entitled to retain such IATA code for 2008. At the end of 2008 IATA will not process any renewal application for any of these ticketing facilities as an STP, EUSTP, STDO or SEL. Should you wish to convert any of these locations to another category of IATA sales location this can be done at any time. Any conversion will be assessed in accordance with applicable IATA resolution requirements and against the fees paid.

3. Consequences if you issue a neutral paper ticket on/after 1 June 2008

Inevitably some of you may hold residual paper ticket stock on/after 1 June 2008 if not yet destroyed. It is possible that a GDS may not yet have inhibited the use of that stock to produce a paper ticket after that date. If a neutral paper ticket is erroneously issued on/after 1 June it will not be accepted for normal sales reporting and travel. It is therefore vital that at the close of business on 31 May 2008 all remaining paper tickets be removed from the ticket imprinter machines.

The following should also be noted: -

1. The IATA systems will be adjusted to reject a BSP reported sales where a paper ticket has been erroneously issued on/after 1 June 2008. This will result in the transaction not being reported to the issuing airline in the standard reporting process and will be classified in the BSP as an "unreported sale".
2. As this erroneous sale will be unreported in the BSP, the ticket will not be shown on the BSP Billing Statement and as a result, the airline will not be paid for the ticket through the BSP.
3. A passenger holding such a ticket may be stopped at check-in by an airline agent noting the issuance date of the ticket. The airline may request the passenger to purchase a new ticket and seek a refund from the agent, which issued the neutral paper ticket.
4. Should an airline transport the passenger on the paper BSP ticket in error, the airline will not be able to account for this document in its revenue accounting system and this will result in an ADM being issue to you for the unreported sale. Should you continue to issue paper tickets on/after 1 June 2008 this may lead to bilateral action by the BSP participating airline regarding your appointment.

4. Impact of the elimination of neutral paper tickets on 3rd parties in the BSP:

1. In some BSPs, non-airline companies are participating as a "BSP Participant". In these instances the companies are using the IATA neutral Standard Traffic Document in OPATB2 or OPTAT format.
2. The elimination of neutral paper tickets will impact on these operations as no physical neutral paper tickets will be available for issuance by agents for these 3rd party services.
3. In some instances, these 3rd party participants have adapted their business models to address this, for example, a rail company has effectively ceased participation in the BSP and is now operating a Web based "low cost" ticketless model.
4. Should you sell transportation on these 3rd party BSP participants you should ensure that they have communicated to you their plans.

5. ET eligible itineraries on/after 1 June 2008

Travel agents should enquire with their system provider(s) to determine if at time of pricing and any subsequent modification(s) to the reservation when re-pricing may be required, there is a feature to alert you when the itinerary cannot be issued on a single electronic ticket. This is in recognition of the fact that whilst each flight segment individually may be ET eligible, the particular mix of marketing/operating carriers in the itinerary would not allow you to issue the electronic ticket on any of those carriers with whom you have been granted the ticketing authority because interline ET does not exist with all participants in the itinerary.