# New Distribution Capability

Pilot Participation Terms of Reference

1   Introduction and Background

This document provides the general terms of reference for pilot participation.

The NDC Pilot phase commenced in 2013 as one key step on the roadmap towards industry adoption of NDC, depicted in the diagram below. The goal of the overall pilot phase was to validate and enhance the NDC business requirements and the schemas. On the journey towards mass industry adoption, more stakeholders are setting up NDC Pilot and Deployment projects - IATA continues to capture learnings from those willing to share findings and lessons learned.
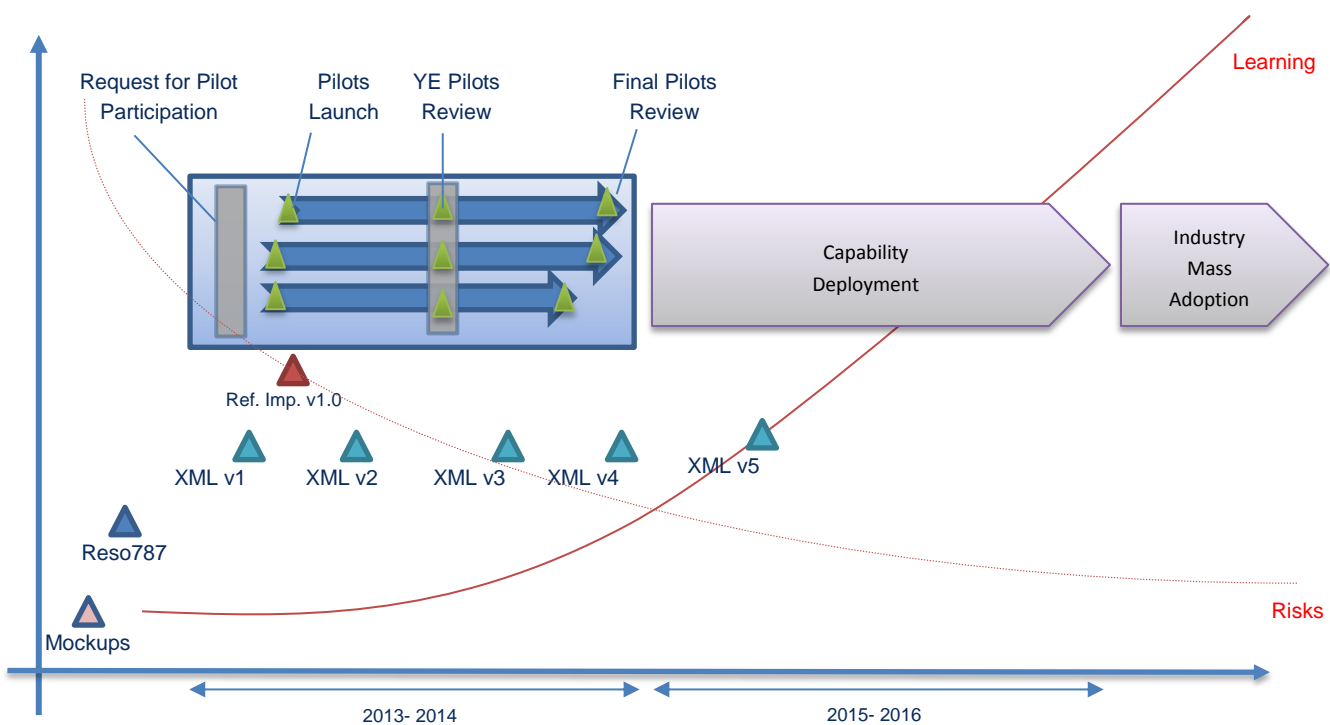
Section 2 of this document highlights four primary objectives of this phase followed by *rules of engagement* that address key items including but not limited to, an overview and scope of pilot participation, various roles and the technical foundation. Section 4 goes into the details of the process and key deliverables of pilot participation. The document concludes by listing resources *for those deploying NDC*.

2014 – 2017 Adoption Roadmap

2014	2015	2016	2017
Development	Implementation		Hand-off
NDC Schemas 1.1	NDC Schemas 1.2	NDC Schemas 1.3	Adoption
Airline Alignment	Airline Alignment	Airline Alignment	
Pilots	Adoption	Adoption	
	Implementation support	Implementation support	Implementation support

2   Objectives

2.1   An NDC Pilot/deployment project allows stakeholders to implement the NDC schemas to validate various dimensions. This may include a small scale test or full scale live implementation A pilot may focus on any of these dimensions depending on what is relevant to them.

2.1.1   **Key dimensions** include and are not limited to:
- Market (Domestic, Regional, International)
- Distribution Model (Direct Connect, Aggregator)
- Stakeholders (Retail travel agencies, Online Travel Agencies (OTAs), Travel Management Companies (TMCs), Airlines etc.)
- Functional Interoperability (PNR, Interlining, Codeshare, Ground Handling, ticketless etc., Ticketing: ET, refunds, exchanges etc.)
- Impacts (on shopping, invoicing, back office processes, passenger servicing etc.)

Implementers may also use this experience as a means to understand topics such as:

- Scalability and performance
- Settlement factors e.g. [*]BSP, ARC compatibility
- Implementation costs
- How to integrate with TAs back office
- Knowing where and who to ask for support
- How to take into account Corporate travel policies

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[*] BSP compatibility is ensured by means of IATA Weblink product, and features a number of pre-requisite capabilities outside the scope of NDC and which are already in place in BSP/ Weblink (e.g. BSP/ Weblink participation, capability of producing a compatible sales reporting file, etc. and as detailed in Weblink Product Guide). It must be noted, that any airline using IATA Weblink product can be fully integrated in the BSP process, and BSP related processing. Detailed information will be provided to the pilot participants.

- Overlaps during transition (including compatibility with existing systems)

2.1.2   The NDC framework brings changes to existing roles in distribution processes. The Business Requirements Documents[†] (BRD) describe roles including but not limited to, a) the airline b) the aggregator and c) the seller. There is also the introduction of the concept of the airline profile. The BRD contains supporting information on these aspects. The pilot gives the opportunity to validate the use of the schemas to support the following:
   - Role of the airline
   - Role of the aggregator
   - Role of the seller
   - Airline Profile Management

2.2   Pilots will have the opportunity to provide input on all or some of these factors which help to identify the factors impacting the industry adoption of NDC:

   - assess and validate the impact of NDC on the entire distribution chain. The experience shared by the pilot participants will further develop and enhance the assessment,

   - identify gaps in the XML Schemas and/or functionality and drivers/obstacles with respect to implementation and adoption,

2.3   Identify non-functional implementation factors, e.g. (scalability issues) that may impact industry adoption. Build NDC **industry awareness and education**

2.4   **Provide assurance of the benefits of NDC** to pilot participants and the industry

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[†] The BRD is available for download on iata.org/ndc.

3   Rules of Engagement

3.1   Pilot participation overview

(Section 4 of this document contains details on pilot participation)

An organization that participates in the pilot/deployment project is referred to as a pilot participant.

Pilot execution includes the following:

Live transactions, using real passengers and real accountable documents where applicable.

In this case, pilot execution requires the participation of an airline and a seller. A seller may include an agent (retail travel agent, OTA, TMC), a corporate booking tool or a meta-search engine. Other aspects of NDC will likely be validated as a part of the process, including but not limited to non-functional aspects such as performance and scalability.

The pilot participant may play one or several business roles (section 2.1.2), (e.g. an agent may play the business role of an aggregator and/or a seller.

3.2   Scope of a specific pilot

Guided by the objectives in section 2, pilot participants will define the exact scope of their pilot/deployment project in accordance with their readiness and business needs/objectives. Each pilot participant will be responsible for managing its costs.

3.3   Prerequisite for participation

3.3.1   A pilot participant will adhere to the terms of reference outlined in this document

3.3.2   An organization will respond to IATA's call for participation issued to the industry as the official means of indicating their decision to participate in the overall pilot phase. This call was sent by IATA to all IATA airlines, DDXWG[‡] participants and IATA Strategic Partners in February 2013. In 2015 and beyond, as NDC implementations continue across the industry, players who wish to sign up or share their NDC deployment findings with IATA are invited to do so[§].

3.3.3   Pilots will ensure the infrastructure used in the pilot is compatible with the technical foundation described in section 3.6.

3.3.4   Pilot participants will setup the required resources to support their timelines.

3.3.5   Each pilot participant agrees to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA).

3.4   The Pilot Timelines

A pilot participant will go through the following general sequence of activities.

Pre-Pilot
-    Advise IATA of their interest in pilot participation (the contact form on www.iata.org/ndc).
-    Conduct preliminary stakeholder engagement to identify other potential participants.

Pilot Inception
-    Setting the scope, pilot project plan, establish success criteria etc.
-    Pilot official launch

[‡] This team is working on evaluating NDC business requirements, pilot findings and all other Industry reviewers' feedback, and enhancing recommended schema to build an even more robust NDC XML standard.

[§] The contact form on www.iata.org/ndc.

- Agree and setup communication and monitoring between pilot participants and IATA
    - *A note for cases of a pilot/deployment project setup without IATA: the pilot leader may share this with IATA and agree on an appropriate means to share pilot/deployment progress and capture implementation learnings.*

Pilot Delivery and Execution
- Pilot development and testing
- Pilot execution
- Delivery of pilot progress reporting
- Risk and issue monitoring

Pilot Close
- Pilot final review and report

3.5   Key stakeholder's involvement in the overall Pilot/Deployment delivery.

3.5.1   Pilot Participants:
- Prepare and agree on terms of pilot project charter, in particular:
    • Agree on the scope of pilot and NDC dimensions to focus on
    • Agree to funding and commercial terms with other pilot participants
- Actively participate in the pilot development, execution and monitoring

3.5.2   DDXWG[**]:
    - Using the following pilot deliverables, assess the impact on business requirements and in turn, on the schemas/standards:
        • Functional / Schema Gaps
        • Lessons Learnt / pilot findings report
    - Make recommendations as appropriate to the relevant governance groups.

3.5.3   IATA:
- Coordinate involvement between stakeholders (including to facilitate pilot matchmaking)
- Provide templates for key deliverables:
    • Pilot project charter
    • Reporting functional / schema gaps
    • Pilot progress reporting
- Setup necessary communication methodology between IATA and pilot participants
- Pilot project monitoring
- Coordinate the capture of findings such as learning points, functional gaps, recommendations

3.6   Technical foundation

Technical developments within a pilot should be guided by the foundation standard Resolution 787 as voted at the Passenger Services Conference (PSC) in October 2012. This forms the basis of the NDC initiative (refer to the resolution text).

[**] This team is working on evaluating NDC business requirements, pilot findings and all other Industry reviewers' feedback, and enhancing recommended schema to build an even more robust NDC XML standard.

The candidate release of NDC schemas was delivered in November 2014 (v1.1.3). IATA encourages implementers to use at least this version in their pilot projects, being the 1st schema package to support the NDC end to end scenario..

3.7   Information Sharing

To support the objectives of the pilot program, it is important that pilot participants share beneficial information that facilitates industry learning:

- IATA is responsible for collecting all information from pilot participants. IATA will keep all information collected in confidence, and will only share such information (subject to confidentiality provisions) in a way beneficial to the industry and in compliance with applicable competition laws.
- A pilot participant will agree to share lessons learnt to IATA including but not limited to, non-functional aspects, system performance, business processes and key issues identified.
- Information sharing during the pilot phase is governed by the IATA antitrust provision.

3.8   Functional gaps that are identified by pilots will be shared with the DDXWG for their assessment and recommendation for schema changes and evolution as necessary.

4   Pilot Participation Details

4.1   The Process

The following steps take place after an organization responds to the call for participation per the instructions provided therein.

4.1.1   There are 2 scenarios that may be considered:
- Scenario 1: Interested parties respond with a full pilot project charter (*see 4.1.4*) with (a number of) organizations willing to participate in the pilot.

- Scenario 2: organizations indicate their desire to participate in an NDC pilot. IATA will act as a match-maker. This will be handled according to the particular situation.

4.1.2   Each pilot will typically go through a full project lifecycle with inception, delivery/testing, execution and review.

4.1.3   IATA will launch each pilot project with a face to face ††kickoff meeting with pilot participants. The main objective of this meeting is to obtain/confirm consensus on scope and work plan by key stakeholders in the project.

4.1.4   The first deliverable of the pilot is a project charter which captures the following information, at a minimum.
- The pilot lead – the primary point of contact for that pilot
- List of participants/stakeholders – organization, participant/stakeholder, roles and responsibilities.
- The scope:. The scenarios to be supported by the pilot Project delivery roadmap.
- Success metrics – Success criteria established.

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†† If possible

4.1.5   The NDC technology solution built as part of each pilot will be deployed to the production environment and integrated with existing business solutions/processes.   This will be according to the agreed deployment timelines.

4.1.6   Progress updates / reviews will be scheduled throughout the project. Reviews could include the following points:

- update on the status of development and implementation of NDC update on risks/issues and identification of gaps/shortfall in NDC functionality/roles and non-functional aspects

- any useful feedback when deployed to production

4.1.7   Each pilot will produce a final report to capture lessons learnt, check the success criteria of each pilot, and make recommendations..

4.2   Along with feedback from all pilots, IATA will produce a consolidated report according to the information sharing guidelines outlined in the previous section.

4.3   Activities and Deliverables

Each project will establish its own timelines from Pilot Inception to Close

Key Deliverables[**]

- Pilot project charter
- Functional / Schema Gaps
- Lessons learned

5   Key Supporting Documentation

5.1   Resolution 787 is available at http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/stb/Documents/resolution-787.pdf.

5.2   Resources available on www.iata.org/ndc include but are not limited to:

- Standard Presentations on NDC
- The Business Requirement Documents available for download
- NDC Implementation Guide available for download
- NDC Schemas available for download

[**] *Pilots will provide input into these documents; IATA will provide the framework and support to populate them.*

Version Control

No	Date	Author	Comments
1	February 15, 2013	IATA	
2	June 26, 2013	IATA	Change minimum participation for pilots, section 3.1.1 following PDG meeting June 19.
3	December 12, 2013	IATA	Section 2.2 – Building blocks Section 3.1.2 - Additional option for pilot to test. Section 4.3 Updates to Deliverable list and URLs.
4	March 3, 2015	IATA	Document updated to reflect the objectives of the current phase of the NDC program. E.g. greater focus on live pilot/deployments projects.