Following PSC adoption of the new SSIM Chapter 8 - Presentation, Application, and Transfer of Minimum Connecting Time (MCT) Data the new standards are now included in SSIM 28th Edition. This Chapter describes the rules for submission and application of MCT for processing. In order to facilitate industry-wide implementation, a range of optional features, such as the use of suppressions, codeshare indicators and other optional MCT data elements, etc. have been included. Cutover to the new MCT standard in Chapter 8 is October 27, 2019.

As a result, the following Minimum Connecting Time (MCT) section formerly residing within Appendix H has been deleted in SSIM. This document will remain available within the SISC website for reference until October 26, 2019.
Minimum Connecting Time

Minimum Connecting Time are governed by the Passenger Services Conference (PSC) RESOLUTION 765: CONNECTING TIME INTERVALS—PASSENGER AND CHECKED BAGGAGE

Definition

For the purpose of Resolution 765, in a passenger context, Minimum Connecting Time (MCT) interval is defined as the shortest time interval required in order to transfer a passenger and his luggage from one flight to a connecting flight, in a specific location.

In a cargo context, the Minimum Connecting time (MCT) can be defined as the shortest time interval required in order to transfer cargo shipment from one flight to a connecting flight. Minimum Connecting Time (MCT) intervals are also referred to as ‘official’ or ‘standard’ MCTs.

Bilateral MCT agreements are known as ‘MCT exceptions’.

Online connecting time intervals established by a carrier that differ from the industry MCTs are also known as MCT exceptions.

The administration of MCTs is governed by IATA PSC Resolution 765 which is as follows:

RESOLUTION 765 CONNECTING TIME INTERVALS—PASSENGER AND CHECKED BAGGAGE

RESOLVED that:
1. Members serving the airport(s) of each city shall establish a Local Minimum Connecting Time Group (LMCTG) for purposes of recommending new or changes to minimum intermodal connecting time intervals at such airport(s). The group shall consist of all scheduled airlines and railways serving the airport. The basic objective of agreed connecting time intervals is to protect both the delivering and receiving Member’s interests and ensure that the passenger and his baggage can rely on making connections between airlines and railways serving the airport.
   For the purposes of this Resolution, MINIMUM CONNECTING TIME (MCT) INTERVAL means the shortest time interval required in order to transfer a passenger and his luggage from one flight to a connecting flight, in a specific location.
   Intermodal connections involving a railway service shall be only considered if such railway service has been assigned an airline flight number.

2. At cities served by IATA Members and by Members of the Airlines for America (A4A) who are not IATA Members, such A4A Members shall be invited to participate as voting Members of the LMCTG.
   At cities served by railways and airlines, where passengers transfer between each mode of transport, and where intermodal agreements exist between railways and airlines, such railway operators shall be invited to participate as voting Members of the LMCTG. The voting rights of railways shall relate only to action concerning connections between airlines and railways serving the airport or providing connections between the airport and the city location (train station).

3. At cities where an Airline Operators Committee (AOC) [IATA Airport Handling Manual Resolution 020] exists and where no LMCTG exists, such AOC can take on the duties assigned to the LMCTG in this resolution, provided the different stakeholders are duly represented at the AOC as they would in the LMCTG.
   While occasionally Airport Authorities can act as facilitators in establishing local MCTs, the tasks described in this resolution are the unique responsibility of the LMCTG.

4. Each LMCTG shall be governed by the following rules:

   4.1 the LMCTG shall elect a chairman;

   4.2 in determining MCT intervals, the Group shall take into consideration the following factors, where applicable:
4.2.1 physical and operating characteristics of the particular airport, e.g. air traffic delays, ramp and baggage sorting area congestion, history of on-time performance, terminals, specific flight origin and/or destination region (such as Schengen countries), customs/immigration ‘pre-clearance’ situations, etc.;

4.2.2 time to unload baggage from delivering carrier's aircraft or designated railway service and transport to its sorting area;

4.2.3 time to sort and transport baggage to receiving carrier;

4.2.4 time for receiving carrier to assemble, sort, transport and load baggage on its aircraft or train;

4.2.5 time for all government/airline/railway imposed security measures (where applicable) to be completed as noted in Resolution 744, Attachment ‘B’;

4.2.6 time for passengers (and their baggage when such arrangements exist) to be processed by the receiving carrier;

4.2.7 the times established in 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 shall be published locally by the LMCTG so that carriers and railways are conscious of time constraints for each individual task, and are therefore aware of the time limits which they are expected to meet;

4.2.8 in establishing MCTs, members shall be guided by Resolution 744;

4.2.9 time for passenger and baggage to clear immigration and customs controls, etc.;

4.2.10 time for passenger to proceed to receiving carrier taking into consideration surface transportation time between terminals and/or airports when applicable;

4.2.11 minimum passenger check-in time for receiving carrier;

4.2.12 time for any other local factor(s).

4.3 after selecting the factors affecting the MCT, using the above as a guide, the Group will allocate a time to each factor and on this basis arrive at the MCT. As far as practicable, MCT intervals should be standardised for all categories of flights with the least possible number of exceptions. MCTs shall be established only in five minute increments, e.g. 30, 35, 40 minutes, etc.

4.4 action of the LMCTG (including election of a Chairman) shall be by simple majority vote of all Group members serving that airport (only one vote permitted per LMCTG member).

4.5 in case of disagreement within the group in respect of the MCTs between different terminals at the same airport, all of the receiving Members serving a particular terminal and present at the meeting, shall determine the required MCTs to their terminal.

5. Immediately after each LMCTG meeting at which new or changes to intermodal MCT intervals are recommended, the LMCTG members will communicate without any delays the revised MCT to their respective MCT coordinators (as listed in SSIM Attachment 3) Within ten (10) days the MCT Coordinators will advise their respective LMCTG member whether they agree or not to the recommended new or changes to the MCTs. The LMCTG Chairman, once he has been informed that the new or changes to intermodal MCTs intervals have been accepted by the different MCT coordinators, will advise the IATA Management (Email: SSIM@iata.org).

6. Nothing in this Resolution shall preclude LMCTG Members from making bilateral agreements with other airlines or railways for shorter or longer intermodal MCT intervals in those cases where particular circumstances of their special arrangements/situations make this possible or necessary. Exceptional bilateral MCT exception filing practices are outlined in the IATA Standard Schedules Information Manual (SSIM). Each MCT coordinator is responsible for communicating and distributing those exceptional MCTs according to recognised industry practices. In case of disagreement between the two parties in respect of any such exceptional MCT values, the receiving Member’s point of view shall govern, and be recognised by the industry as the exceptional MCT value. In those cases where MCT values and/or significant MCT data elements are not being altered, agreement by the receiving Member’s point of view is not needed. Currently, only carrier flight number ranges are considered non-significant MCT data elements.
7. All Members, railways and CRSs shall book and accept connecting reservations based on the established MCTs.

8. The MCTs for each airport shall be reviewed at least once a year by the LMCTG. If the revision leads to new/modified MCT intervals, procedure established in 5 shall be followed.

9. Upon receipt of the final report referred to in Paragraph 5, the IATA Schedules Service Department shall immediately notify, the CRSs, the data aggregators, and other industry stakeholders. The effectiveness date of such changes as specified by the LMCTG concerned shall not be earlier than sixty (60) days after receipt by the IATA Schedules Service Department.

10. All communications concerning MCTs, between Members and IATA shall be made through the Member's designated MCT Coordinator in accordance with the IATA SSIM.

11. This Resolution shall not be applicable at cities served exclusively by A4A Members, even though some of the A4A Members may also be Members of IATA; provided that the necessary co-ordination shall be maintained between A4A and IATA for the publication of MCT intervals established by A4A Members.

General

As required by Resolution 765, MCTs must be observed by all ticketing and reservations outlets all over the world and also are used as input for automated reservations systems. It is therefore of the utmost importance to ensure that they are correctly established, updated and uniformly quoted at all times wherever they are published.

Designation of MCT Coordinator in Each Airline

In order to ensure proper coordination of MCTs, each airline is requested to designate a MCT coordinator. The coordinator's name, mailing address and teletype or cable address must be submitted to the IATA Management, e-mail: SSIM@iata.org. Any change to this information should be sent to IATA promptly. The MCT Coordinator Contacts are listed under Attachment 3 of SSIM.

Changes to MCTs

Establishment of and changes to MCTs are governed by the provisions of IATA Resolution 765. For the purpose of applying Resolution 765, MCT Coordinators will be requested to advise their respective Local Minimum Connecting Time Group (LMTCG) member whether they agree or not to the recommended new or changed MCTs.

For the normal yearly review of MCTs and for any special review, Resolution 765 provides for notification to IATA Management (Email: SSIM@iata.org) not later than sixty (60) days prior to the intended effectiveness date of the agreed or established MCTs.

The Resolution requires that IATA communicates the new or amended MCTs and the effectiveness dates thereof. Such information will be sent to CRSs, data aggregators, and other industry stakeholders. IATA does not publish MCTs, but acts only as a worldwide industry coordinator for all MCTs. MCTs are published by the data aggregators. The data aggregators and CRSs will not accept notification of new or revised MCTs directly from the airlines.
Bilateral MCT Agreements

Resolution 765 indicates that airlines are responsible for their own bilateral agreements with other airlines or railways for shorter or longer intermodal MCT intervals in those cases where particular circumstances of their special arrangements/situations make this possible or necessary.

The following additional rules have been established in order to ensure uniform administration of MCT exceptions. MCT exceptions do not change any standard times set by the industry. A carrier must bring suggestions for changes to MCT standard times at an airport to the attention of the appropriate industry body.

Establishing MCT Exceptions

MCT exceptions can be lower or higher than the standard MCT at an airport. An MCT exception can also ‘suppress’ (block) a connection from being made at the stated connect point for the specified status combination.

Examples of Current Rules that may be applied in an MCT exception database (and that are currently in place with the Data Aggregators):

Include airport code and relevant status:

(a) Airport code where potential connection will occur
   Example: SYD
   Connect point where carrier has an MCT exception

(b) Relevant status for the MCT exception
   DD—Domestic to Domestic
   DI—Domestic to International
   ID—International to Domestic
   II—International to International
   Example: SYD ID
   The ID status exception condition will apply to a flight that arrives SYD internationally (I) and connects to a flight leaving SYD domestically (D).

MCT exceptions can also be established according to factors such as inter-terminal, inter-airport, transborder, Schengen countries, specific flight number (ranges), aircraft types, etc.

MCT Involving Code Share Partners

Bilateral MCT exception applied to code share operations shall be established using the Marketing carrier designator. There is no automated Industry Rule or agreement or automated mechanism in place to transfer an MCT exception made for an operating flight; onto any code share partner marketing the operating flight under their own designator.

One reason an automated process would not be used, is that there would be no guarantee that a change made to one carrier’s flights will work on another.

Code share MCT exception cannot denounce Operating carrier exception. If a code share MCT exception undercuts the Operating carrier MCT exception, then the carrier filing the exception shall be recognised as the delivering carrier.

Note:
• Carriers need to decide ‘does my MCT exception affect my code share partner’
• Communicate to Code Share Partner
• Code Share Partner may need to submit the same exception
Current Practice for Submission of MCT's

The aim of an MCT exception database held by Data Aggregators is to hold Carrier Minimum Connecting Time (MCT) information that is different from the standard times set by industry bodies.

MCT exceptions agreed bilaterally between two airlines (and therefore not of a general nature, because they affect only the connections between those two airlines) should be notified directly by the airlines concerned to the data aggregators. However, the notification by one party requires the concurrence of the receiving carrier. When the carrier sending in the proposed MCT exception is the receiving carrier, the MCT exception can be added to the Data Aggregators database immediately.

When the carrier sending in the proposed MCT exception is not the receiving carrier, the Data Aggregators must have approval from the receiving carrier before the MCT will be added.

The only exception to this rule is when the delivering carrier submits a proposed MCT exception and the only data element to change is the delivering carrier's flight number/range. Concurrence by the receiving carrier will not be required in this specific case.

MCT Hierarchy of Data Elements when submitting MCT exceptions

- Arrival Airport
- Status e.g. DD/DI/ID/II
- Departure Airport
- Departure Flight Number/Carrier designator must be present
- Departure Flight Number Range/Carrier designator must be present
- Departure Carrier
- Next Airport/City code is always shown as well
- Next State/Country code must be present
- Next Country
- Next Region (No other location code can be included when region is present)
- Departure Terminal
- Departure Aircraft Type or Equipment Type (W/N)
- Arrival Flight Number/Carrier designator must be present
- Arrival Flight Number Range/Carrier designator must be present
- Arrival Carrier
- Previous Airport/City code is always shown as well
- Previous State/Country code must be present
- Previous Country
- Previous Region (No other location code can be included when region is present)
- Arrival Terminal
- Arrival Aircraft Type or Equipment Type (W/N)
- Effective from date (DDMMYY or blank)
- Effective until date (DDMMYY or blank)