

NEWS LETTER

To : All Travel Partners

Date : 30 May 2019

PASSENGER CONTACT NUMBER AND EMAIL INPUT

We wish to remind you that effective **01 June 2019**, IATA will implement major change that impacts IATA Accredited Agents. The changes in Resolution 830d, Reservation Procedures for Accredited Agents which will take effect 01 Jun 2019 relates to how Travel Agents must collect customer contact information and ensure this is made available to airlines for the purpose of airlines contact during irregular operation.

What is Resolution 830d and what was the issue that called for change?

Resolution 830d – Reservations Procedures for Accredited Agents outlines reservations procedures that IATA Accredited Agents must follow.

In many bookings made by travel agents, passenger contact details are not being sent to participating airlines following the industry standard. IATA has led awareness activity about the collection of customer contact information over the last three years, but this remains a significant issue impacting passengers. Airlines are often unable to contact passengers in the operational window, and passengers are not being informed about changes to their flights.

What is changing in Resolution 830d from 1 June 2019?

An amendment to paragraph 4 of the Resolution will require agents to

1. Actively ask each passenger “whether they wish to have their contact details (mobile number and/or email) provided to airlines participating in the itinerary for the purposes of contact in an operational disruption”.
2. Where the passenger wishes to provide this information to airlines, the agent must enter there “in the PNR in compliance with the Resolutions governing reservations procedures.” This means the SSRs designed for this purpose as published in AIRIMP under the authority of Resolution 766.
3. Where the passenger does not wish to do so, the Agent must “actively advise the passenger that they may not receive information from the airline relating to flight cancellation or schedule changes (including delay in departure).”

The standardized “SSRCTC” format created by IATA is provided for entering customer contact information.

SSR CTCE (E for email address)

SSR CTCM (M for mobile telephone number)

SSR CTCR (R for Restricted if a passenger does not wish to receive any notifications)

This regulation also applies to group booking, in which case the contact details of the group leader, the hotel or the hotline of the tour operator must be entered. It is important that the contact can be reached 24/7 and that they are responsible for the group concerned.

The Mobile telephone number should start with the Country Code, followed by the Telephone Number. For example, +852XXXXXXXX.

What actions do travel agents need to take?

It is very important that travel agents build this new process into their procedures, and make frontline staff fully aware, for travel agents operating online platforms or self-booking tools, these requirements will need to be included in booking flows.

Why is it important that participating airlines have customer contact information?

This new standard ensures that the customer has access to relevant and useful information in an operational disruption. This information may come from the airline outside of hours, or during a weekend, when a travel agent is not able to contact the passenger directly. This information will also often relate to information that an airline is best placed to communicate directly to a passenger, or actions that an airline needs to take to provide the best experience possible to the passenger.

Can't the airline just collect this information at the time of check-in?

In many cases, this will be too late – the airline may need to contact the customer outside of hours before they've made their way to the airport.

When can the airline use this contact information?

Only in a genuine irregular operation, this is specified in the Resolution.

Does this impact who owns the booking, or who has the relationship with the customer?

No. This standard does not in any way impact the travel agency's ownership of the booking, and relationship with the customer. This standard does not impact the travel agency's ability to continue to provide servicing or the customers booking or ticket for subsequent changes after their regular operation.

What about group bookings?

The standard does not distinguish between group bookings and individual bookings, it requires customer contact information to be captured from all passengers. It is reasonable to expect however that some groups may be happy having one contact entered for all passengers or having contact information entered for only one passenger. This is up to each customer to determine how they wish to be contacted.

Is it reasonable that a travel agent enters contact information for every passenger in a booking?

As part of Reservation 830d, this is now an important part of the reservation process. This is no different to ensuring that every passenger's name is correctly entered and that other information such as frequent flier details or passport information is entered at a passenger level.

Can airlines enforce this standard?

Yes. Airlines can ensure their agents are following correct reservation procedures. They can do this individually with agents and may also wish to manage compliance through commercial agreements with travel agents. Individual airlines can monitor compliance by assessing PNR level data, just as they would monitor compliance for other aspects of the reservation process such as ticketing time limits. This is entirely up to each airline.

Airlines have been informed that they should communicate directly to travel agents to ensure they are aware of this change and discuss the joint benefits this change brings about for your mutual customers. Airlines may also begin to make reference to their requirements in ticketing policies, agency procedures and agreements. There may not be a single approach by all Airlines, as some Airlines may need to perform system developments to ensure their internal systems are configured to use this information to contact passengers.

We would appreciate it if you could treat this matter seriously. In the event there are cost associated due to the omission of contact details of the passengers, we may claim the said cost from your agency via the ADM process.