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Translation

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Electronic seat/berth reservation and electronic production of travel documents - General regulations

*Réservation électronique des places et établissement électronique des documents de transport -
Dispositions générales
Elektronische Platzreservierung und elektronische Ausfertigung der Beförderungsdokumente -
Allgemeine Bestimmungen*



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This leaflet, as well as UIC leaflets 918-1 and 918-2, was obtained by dividing the former 918 leaflet (1st edition February 1977 and its 19 amendments). Reason for the division: to facilitate consulting and updating information. At this point to conform to manual M1 retyped in FrameMaker.

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Adaptation to 4-position company code.

Replacement of Railway Undertaking (RU) by Reservation System (RS)

The person responsible for this leaflet is named in the UIC Code

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Summary

UIC Leaflet 918-0 contains the general regulations for the electronic reservation of seats/berths and the electronic production of travel documents. It is supplemented by the following two leaflets:

- *UIC Leaflet 918-1* which deals with the procedures for exchanging reservation messages,
- *UIC Leaflet 918-2* which describes the RCT2 standard applicable to all the transport documents produced electronically (only the correspondents whose names are on the list held by the UIC Passenger Department are authorised to have access to this leaflet).

The regulations contained in these leaflets enable a railway undertaking (RU) to reserve seats/berths in an inventory which is managed by another RU and to issue travel documents (in particular reservation tickets and combined tickets) produced electronically from data transmitted by the electronic system of another RU.

1 - General

1.1 - General comments on the leaflet

The UIC regulations regarding seat/berth reservation and the electronic production of travel documents consist of the following parts:

- *UIC Leaflet 918 - 0*, General regulations,
- *UIC Leaflet 918 - 1*, Exchange of messages,
- *UIC Leaflet 918 - 2*, Travel documents (RCT2 standard).

The continuous revision of each leaflet is the responsibility of the Passenger Commission and its Distribution and Systems Group.

The regulations contained in these leaflets enable a railway undertaking (RU) to reserve seats/berths in an inventory that is managed by another RU and to issue travel documents (in particular reservation tickets and combined tickets) produced electronically from data transmitted by the electronic system of another RU.

In view of the need for interoperability, these regulations must be observed by all RUs that want to connect their electronic system with that of other RUs to deal in international passenger services.

It is up to each RU to decide which services are offered in the national area.

In the international area the services offered are divided into "mandatory" and "optional" services:

- the services that are specified as mandatory must be offered on the sales terminals/terminals of all reservation systems (RS) as specified in the regulations of this leaflet, and even by members, who do not hold these services in their system;
- the services that are specified as optional are those for which the offer remains optional on the sales terminals/terminals. RSs which decide to offer the "optional" services must, however, carry them out in accordance with the requirements of this leaflet.

Moreover each RS must guarantee the transit of the messages from the other RSs which correspond to the mandatory and optional services, in accordance with the provisions specified in this leaflet.

The table below lists the current mandatory and the optional services (for seat/berth reservations).

Services that can be reserved			M/O ^a
Seats	All categories of train	Individual passengers Small groups	M M
Couchettes		Individual passengers Small groups	M M
Sleeper berths			M
Meals	At seat In dining car		O O
Accompanied car trains	Night accompanied car trains (with couchette or sleeping cars)		M
	Day accompanied car trains - Unaccompanied car service		M
Ferries	Passengers - Vehicles		M
	Vehicles		M
Further services(918 ^E) ^b			
Information on the available services			O
Price information			O
Travel documents			O

a. M = mandatory; O = optional.

b. The term 918 "E" (E= enhanced) refers to the new functions introduced in the leaflet in July 1996 (coinciding with amendment 18) following work carried out by the Passenger Commission ISIS project group.

1.2 - Definition of the use

1.2.1 - Definition of international traffic as far as seat/berth reservation is concerned

All reservations which are dealt with by more than one RS or which involve a journey or a settlement which affects more than one RS are considered to belong to international traffic.

1.2.2 - Travel documents

Travel documents for the domestic services of an RU (sectional coupons), tickets for the TCV (see List of abbreviations - page 47) traffic and combined tickets plus reservation involve the exchange of messages between the RSs.

2 - Reservations in trains

2.1 - Principles

2.1.1 - Trains

2.1.1.1 - Management of the seats/berths on offer

Each RS manages the full inventory of seats/berths in the trains and through coaches which begin on its territory.

If a train carries coaches which begin in the territory of different RSs, then several RSs have access to the seats/berths available in this train.

Unlike the general rule, the same RS manages the seats/berths available in accompanied car trains in both directions.

RUs can deviate from these rules by bilateral agreement, e.g. for trains which begin at frontier stations.

The description of the seats/berths available is contained in the "reservation lists" of the service-providing companies, the compilation of which is governed by *UIC Leaflet 171* (see [Bibliography - page 48](#)). The lists describe the services on offer for a given period and indicate in particular:

- the time when electronic reservation in trains is open expressed in calendar months,
- the time when the electronic reservation system closes.

2.1.1.2 - Train categories

The different categories of train are:

- EC/IC trains,
- other quality trains,
- ordinary trains,
- accompanied car trains:
 - day accompanied car trains, (TAJ),
 - night accompanied car trains,
- unaccompanied car service (SAE).

NB : accompanied car trains are those trains that carry cars.

Reservation in trains can be available, recommended or mandatory.

Each RU shall determine the trains included in the reservation procedure. All sales offices of the RUs may sell these seats/berths.

A certain number of seats/berths are not released for reservation by the sales offices if they are required for:

- service purposes,
- disabled passengers,
- VIPs,
- passengers without seat/berth reservations.

2.1.2 - Services

The electronically reservable services in trains are:

- seats,
- seats with meals at seat,
- couchettes,
- sleeper berths,
- places for vehicles,
- meals in the dining car.

2.1.3 - Number of seats/berths

2.1.3.1 - Maximum number of seats/berths

The maximum number of seats/berths per reservation request is:

- 36 seats,
- 36 seats with meals at seat,
- 16 1st class couchettes,
- 36 2nd class couchettes,
- 18 single sleeper berths,
- 18 special sleeper berths,
- 36 double sleeper berths,
- 36 T2 sleeper berths,
- 39 T3 sleeper berths,
- 40 T4 sleeper berths,

- 1 single sleeper berth and 2 double sleeper berths,
- 1 single sleeper berth and 3 T3 sleeper berths,
- 2 double sleeper berths and 3 T3 sleeper berths,
- 1 special sleeper berth and 2 T2 sleeper berths,
- 1 vehicle place with or without trailer,
- 24 meals in the dining car.

A distinction is made in the reservation procedure between individual passengers and small groups.

2.1.3.2 - Individual passengers

If a group of people travel together and their number does not exceed the capacity of a compartment, they are considered to be individual passengers:

- 1st class seats: 6,
- 2nd class seats: 6 or 8 depending on the RS,
- 1st class seats with meals at seat: 6,
- 2nd class seats with meals at seat: 6 or 8 depending on the RS,
- 1st class couchettes: 4,
- 2nd class couchettes: 6 ,
- sleeper berths: 1 single, 1 special, 2 double, 2 T2, 3 T3, 4 T4.

2.1.3.3 - Small groups

If a group of people travel together and their number exceeds the figures given above but is under the figures given in point [2.1.3.1 - page 5](#), they are considered to be a small group.

A distinction is made between those small groups of passengers to which regulations in *Chapter B of Appendix 1 of the TCV* (special tariff groups) apply and the others (not special tariff groups).

2.1.4 - Customer wishes

Besides the details that are essential for a reservation, which are the mandatory elements of the request message given in *UIC Leaflet 918-1*, individual passengers can make specific requests with respect to:

- smoking/non-smoking,
- position of seat/berth in compartment (window/centre/aisle, upper/middle/lower),
- compartment position (upper/lower),

- time of the meal.

"Passengers in small groups" can express particular wishes regarding:

- connecting doors between sleeping car compartments.

The special requirements for each service are given under the optional elements in the request messages of *UIC Leaflet 918-1*.

Individual passengers can also request a certain seat or seats adjacent to a reference seat (in the same compartment) as well as individual reservation tickets.

Individual passengers and those travelling in small groups can, in addition, state in their request that they are willing to accept an allocation in a different train to the train requested.

2.1.5 - Allocation rules

The seat/berth allocation must take into account the requests of the passengers.

Some of these requests are mandatory. If they cannot be fulfilled, the requests concerned lead to negative answers or alternative proposals.

Mandatory requests are:

- the train (number and date at the boarding station) except when an allocation in another train is accepted in advance,
- the route,
- the service,
- the number of seats,
- the class,
- the type and number of berths,
- the type and number of meals,
- the characteristics of the compartment (males/females),
- the request for certain/neighbouring seats (coach number, seat number).

It is at the discretion of the RS whether a smoking/non-smoking request is considered as a mandatory request or merely a preference.

In the case of other requests, a different allocation is made if they cannot be fulfilled.

Of the requests reflecting a preference:

- the seat/berth position in the compartment (for berths, mandatorily "lower") and
- the type of compartment

shall be treated as mandatory requests, if the passenger so requests.

If passengers are prepared to accept an allocation in another train than that requested when they made their request and no allocation in the requested train is available, then an allocation can be made in the train whose departure time from the boarding station lies closest to that of the train requested.

The allocation can also deviate with respect to the boarding and alighting station providing that the other station lies in the same town.

The allocation of seats/berths must be possible from and to all the stations served by the reservable trains or through coaches.

In order to best use the seats/berths available in the trains, it should be possible to allocate the same seats/berths to several passengers one after another.

The seat allocation itself is generally done according to the rules of the individual RS. All RSs must accommodate the passengers in the smallest possible number of compartments of the same coach.

In the case of partial cancellation, the remaining seats must be part of the seats originally reserved.

2.1.6 - Alternative proposals

If an RS which cannot fulfil a request because it has no corresponding seats/berths or because it does not have sufficient seats/berths available knows of seats/berths on offer from one or more other RSs, it must send a message proposing an alternative to the requesting RS ([see Glossary - page 46](#)) by stating to which other RS the requesting RS should re-address its request.

An RS, which cannot meet a request for a "mandatory" train because there is insufficient accommodation, must send an alternative proposal back to the requesting RS, indicating other accommodation available in the train.

An RS, which cannot fulfil a request because it does not have sufficient accommodation in the "preferred" train, must, if it does not automatically allocate accommodation in another train, send an alternative proposal to the requesting RS indicating a train, if necessary with all available accommodation, to enable the requesting RS to advise its customers.

The diagram below summarises the rules on alternative proposals, when an RS has no corresponding accommodation or insufficient accommodation to meet the request.

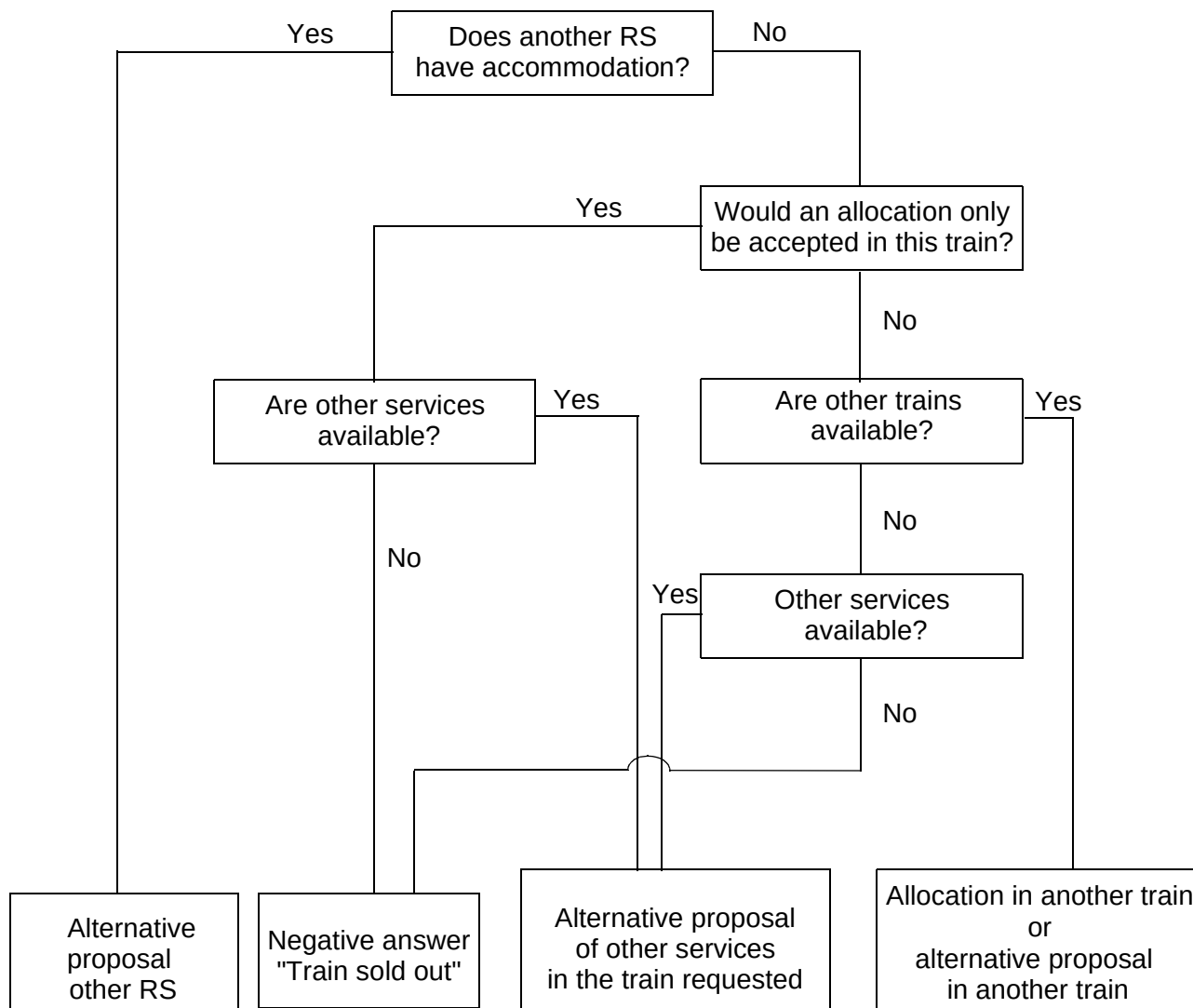


Fig. 1 - Rules on alternative proposals

If several RUs have stored their offer of seats/berths in the same RS, the above mentioned rules are only used if the demand cannot be met from any of those inventories.

2.1.7 - Timeframes

2.1.7.1 - Seat/berth allocation

Regardless of the ordering timeframe that applies in-house at individual RSs, the allocation of seats/berths shall be carried out by all RSs within the timeframe which is laid down in the "Seat/Berth Reservation" Appendix to the TCV.

Certain RSs allocate seats/berths in response to requests which have been received in writing or by telex etc., at their central reservation office, some days before the beginning of this timeframe. These RSs deal (by means of bilateral agreements) in the same way with the orders received electronically from central reservation offices of other RSs.

2.1.7.2 - End of the reservation period

The RS which manages the seat/berth allocation shall lay down the end of the reservation period for each train or set of through coaches.

2.1.7.3 - Deadlines for cancelling and exchanging seats/berths

Applications for cancellation and exchange shall be accepted until the end of the reservation period.

2.1.8 - Price calculation

Prices are calculated using the international (TCV) or national regulations.

The allocating RS (see Glossary - page 46) shall do the price calculation.

If, exceptionally, the allocating RS cannot calculate the price, it shall send a negative reply.

Contrary to this basic rule, the price calculation for special tariff small groups for seats in trains not subject to supplements shall be done by the requesting RS after receipt of the confirmation from the allocating RS.

2.1.9 - Travel documents

Travel documents comprise:

- the papers issued to passengers (see *UIC Leaflet 918-2*),
- the service documents (see *UIC Leaflet 918-1*) provided for the staff of the RS and the service companies.

If individual travel documents are asked for in a request, as many travel documents shall be issued as reserved seats/berths. Each of the travel documents shall then have a different reference number.

If the space on a travel document is not sufficient to give all the information - especially the seats/berths allocated - an additional travel document shall be issued. This travel document shall bear the same reference number as the main travel document.

A request can cause the issue of different types of travel document. The various possible combinations are given in the following table:

Type of reservation ticket	Combinations									
Reservation ticket for seat	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Couchette	-	-	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	-
Sleeper berth	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X	-
Meal at seat	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	X
Accompanied car train	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X

A maximum of 8 travel documents can be issued for a request.

2.1.10 - Negative answers

Negative answers, which can be caused by:

- errors in formulating the request,
- IT errors, which are only recognised when the requests are further processed,
- the impossibility of meeting the request (insufficient seats/berths available, reservation system defective, etc.),

must be meaningful in order to allow further processing of the running transaction.

If, at the same time, several services are requested, there may not be a confirmation for one and a negative answer for the others. The service that is available therefore results in a special negative answer.

2.2 - Functions to be guaranteed

2.2.1 - Reservation

2.2.1.1 - General

The "Reservation" function covers the following sub-functions:

- checks,
- determination of the RS which allocates the seats/berths,
- seat/berth allocation,
- price calculation,
- issue of reservation tickets,

which help to deal with both simple and combined requests as well as the corresponding answers.

A simple request may involve several services (maximum three) in one and the same train. The different combination possibilities are given in the table below:

Service	Combinations										
Seat	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Couchette	-	-	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-
Sleeper berth	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X	-	-
Vehicle space	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X
Seat with meal at seat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Meal in train dining car	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	-

2.2.1.2 - Checks

The issuing RS shall check the syntax and the compatibility of the information before sending the message.

Upon receiving a request, the receiving RS shall check whether the service is offered, the acceptance conditions, and the stored seats/berths available.

2.2.1.3 - Determination of the system that manages the seat/berth inventory

When a request is received at one of its terminals, the RS must determine which RS is responsible for the train requested.

If it is not the managing RS itself, the RS concerned shall be determined on the basis of the boarding station. If this is in another country, then the RS in whose area this station is located shall be considered to be the managing RS.

If the boarding station is not abroad, the managing RS shall be determined on the basis of stored information.

As a result of this, each RS must know all the reservable trains that run in its area (starting trains, transit trains, terminating trains). The following should be stored:

- in the case of a train the seats/berths of which are completely or partly managed by the RS:
 - all station stops,
 - the complete train number sequence,
 - the days when the managed coaches run,
 - if applicable, the other RSs which manage the seat/berth inventory;
- in the case of a train the seats/berths of which are managed by another RS:
 - for transit trains and similar which terminate in its area (with coaches coming from various RSs and being run onwards in one and the same train), the RS with the seat/berth inventory lying "upstream" (in the sense of the direction of travel),
 - for trains which begin in its area, the RS with the seat/berth inventory lying "downstream" (in the sense of the direction of travel).

RUs which do not have their own electronic RS can let other RSs manage their trains. These special situations must be known to all RSs so that they do not direct the requests to the RS in whose area the boarding station is located, but to that which manages the seat/berth inventory of the train concerned.

An RS which receives a reservation request from another RS must inform this RS of the RS with a seat/berth inventory in this train if it has no accommodation on offer itself or its own inventory has been sold out. In order to avoid an endless circuit, in this case the issuing RS must make sure that the request is not transferred to an RS which it has already asked.