# MultiCore Communication Library User Guide

# 1 Introduction

The Multi-Core Communication, MCC, is a subsystem which enables applications to run on different cores in the multi-core system. For example, MCC enables the communication between applications running on A5 and M4 cores on the Vybrid platform.

#### **Features**

- · Lightweight, fast
- Uses shared RAM and interrupts
- Configurable (at build time): buffer sizes, number of buffers, maximum number of endpoints
- API calls are simple send / receive between endpoints
- Received data can be passed by a pointer or it can be copied
- · Variable timeouts

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# 2 Design Overview

# 2.1 Endpoints

User applications communicate by sending data to each other's endpoints.



#### **Design Overview**

Endpoints are receive buffer queues, implemented in shared RAM, and are addressed by a triplet containing core, node, and port:

- Core Identifies the core within the processor. For the Vybrid processor, the A5 is core 0, and the M4 is core 1.
- **Node** In Linux, any user process participating in MCC is a unique node. Node numbering is arbitrary. MQX has only one node and it can also be an arbitrary number.
- **Port** Both Linux and MQX can have an arbitrary number of ports per node up to a configurable maximum, arbitrarily numbered, with the exception of the port 0 (MCC RESERVED PORT NUMBER), which is reserved.

The [core, node, port] triplets are part of the user's system design and implementation. There is no discovery protocol.

# 2.2 Buffer Management

Data is transferred between cores in fixed size buffers, allocated in shared RAM.

All buffers are allocated at initialization time in the free buffer pool. There is only one free buffer pool that is shared by all cores for data transfers in both directions.

When sending, data is always copied from the user application into the buffer. If no buffer is available at the time of the send call, the user application can wait for a specified amount of time, wait "forever", or have an error condition returned.

When receiving, the API supports receiving with copying to a user supplied buffer, or the application can request a pointer to the buffer and, therefore, eliminating the copy. In the latter case, the user application is responsible for freeing the buffer by the appropriate API call. Similarly to sending data, the user application can choose whether or not to wait for a received message. The user applications communicate by sending data to each other's endpoints.

### 2.3 Shared RAM

This is used as "bookkeeping data" (e.g., endpoint and signal queue head and tail pointers) and fixed size data buffers. For the Vybrid processor, 64 KB of shared SRAM is used for MCC by default.

Each of the following can be configured at build time in *mcc\_config.h* file. The numbers in parenthesis designate default values:

- Maximum number of endpoints (5)
- Number of data buffers (10)
- Size of each data buffer in bytes (1024)

All accesses to shared RAM are protected by hardware semaphores.

# 2.4 Signaling

The MCC running on one core interrupts the other core when:

- A buffer has been queued to an endpoint on the interrupted core.
- A buffer has been freed by the interrupting core.

There is one signal queue per core. A signal queue indicates the type of the interrupt, whether it is a queued or a free interrupt. If the interrupt is queued, a signal queue indicates the endpoint.

Each of the following can be configured at build time in mcc\_config.h file. The numbers in parenthesis are default values:

• Maximum number of outstanding signals (10)

#### 2.5 Version Control

The mcc\_get\_info() API call returns a version string in the form of mmm.nnn where mmm is the major number of the version and nnn is the minor number. The major number of MQX and Linux must match to ensure compatibility. The minor numbers may be different.

## 3 MCC API Reference

MCC library API functions are located in the *mcc\_api.c* file. These functions have the "mcc\_" prefix and are listed in this chapter.

# 3.1 Function Listing Format

This is the general format for listing a function or a data type.

#### function name()

A brief description of what function function\_name() does.

#### **Prototype**

Provides a prototype for the function **function\_name()**.

```
<return_type> function_name(<type_1> parameter_1,<type_2> parameter_2, ... <type_n>
parameter_n)
```

#### **Parameters**

Function parameters are listed in tables. See an example table below.

Туре	Name	Direction	Description
void *	buffer	input	Pointer to the user-app. buffer data will be copied into.

- **Type:** Parameter data type.
- Name: Parameter name.
- Direction:
  - input It means the function uses one or more values in the parameter you give it without storing any changes.
  - output It means the function saves one or more values in the parameter you give it. You can view the saved values to find out useful information about your application.
  - input, output It means the function changes one or more values in the parameter you give it and saves the result. You can view the saved values to find out useful information about your application.
- **Description:** Description for each parameter.

#### Returns

Specifies any value or values returned by a function.

#### See also

Lists other functions or data types related to the function function\_name().

#### **Example**

#### **MCC API Reference**

Provides an example, or a reference to an example, that illustrates the use of function **function\_name()**.

#### Description

Describes the function **function\_name()**. This section also describes any special characteristics or restrictions that might apply:

- The function blocks, or might block under certain conditions.
- The function must be started as a task.
- The function creates a task.
- The function has pre-conditions that might not be obvious.
- The function has restrictions or special behavior.

# 3.2 mcc\_create\_endpoint

This function creates an endpoint.

Source: /mcc/source/mcc api.c

Prototype: int mcc\_create\_endpoint(MCC\_ENDPOINT \*endpoint, MCC\_PORT port);

Table 1. mcc\_create\_endpoint arguments

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
MCC_ENDPOINT *	endpoint	output	Pointer to the endpoint triplet to be created.
MCC_PORT	port	input	Port number.

#### **Returns:**

- MCC SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_NOMEM (maximum number of endpoints exceeded)
- MCC ERR ENDPOINT (invalid value for port or endpoint already registered)
- MCC ERR SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)

#### See also:

- mcc\_destroy\_endpoint
- MCC ENDPOINT

#### **Description:**

The function creates an endpoint on the local node with the specified port number. The core and node provided in the endpoint must match the caller's core and node, and the port argument must match the endpoint port.

# 3.3 mcc\_destroy

This function de-initializes the Multi Core Communication subsystem for a given node.

Source:/mcc/source/mcc\_api.c

Prototype: int mcc destroy(MCC NODE node);

Table 2. mcc\_destroy arguments

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
MCC_NODE	node	input	Node number to be deinitialized.

#### **Returns:**

- MCC\_SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)

#### See also:

• mcc\_initialize

#### **Description:**

The function frees all resources of the node. Deletes all endpoints and frees any buffers that may have been queued there.

# 3.4 mcc\_destroy\_endpoint

This function destroys an endpoint.

Source:/mcc/source/mcc\_api.c

Prototype: int mcc\_destroy\_endpoint(MCC\_ENDPOINT \*endpoint);

#### Table 3. mcc\_destroy\_endpoint arguments

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
MCC_ENDPOINT *	endpoint	input	Pointer to the endpoint triplet to be deleted.

#### **Returns:**

- MCC\_SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_ENDPOINT (the endpoint doesn't exist)
- MCC\_ERR\_SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)

#### See also:

- mcc\_create\_endpoint
- MCC\_ENDPOINT

#### **Description:**

The function destroys an endpoint on the local node and frees any buffers that may be queued.

# 3.5 mcc\_free\_buffer

This function frees a buffer previously returned by mcc\_recv\_nocopy.

Source:/mcc/source/mcc\_api.c

Prototype:int mcc\_free\_buffer(void \*buffer);

### Table 4. mcc\_free\_buffer arguments

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
void *	buffer	input	Pointer to the buffer to be freed.

#### **Returns:**

- MCC\_SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)

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#### See also:

mcc\_recv\_nocopy

#### **Description:**

Once the zero-copy mechanism of receiving data is used, this function has to be called to free a buffer and to make it available for the next data transfer.

# 3.6 mcc\_get\_info

This function returns information about the MCC sub system.

Source:/mcc/source/mcc\_api.c

Prototype: int mcc\_get\_info(MCC\_NODE node, MCC\_INFO\_STRUCT \*info\_data);

Table 5. mcc\_get\_info arguments

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
MCC_NODE	node	input	Node number.
MCC_INFO_STRUCT *	info_data	output	Pointer to the MCC_INFO_STRUCT structure to hold returned data.

#### **Returns:**

- MCC\_SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)

#### See also:

• MCC\_INFO\_STRUCT

#### **Description:**

The function returns implementation-specific information.

# 3.7 mcc initialize

This function initializes the Multi Core Communication subsystem for a given node.

Source: /mcc/source/mcc\_api.c

Prototype: int mcc\_initialize(MCC\_NODE node);

Table 6. mcc\_initialize arguments

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
MCC_NODE	node	input	Node number that will be used in endpoints created by this
			process.

#### **Returns:**

- MCC SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)
- MCC\_ERR\_INT (interrupt registration error)

#### See also:

- mcc\_destroy
- MCC\_BOOKEEPING\_STRUCT

#### **Description:**

This function should only be called once per node (once in MQX, once per process in Linux).

# 3.8 mcc\_msgs\_available

This function returns the number of buffers currently queued at the endpoint.

Source:/mcc/source/mcc\_api.c

Prototype: int mcc\_msgs\_available(MCC\_ENDPOINT \*endpoint, unsigned int \*num\_msgs);

Table 7. mcc\_msgs\_available arguments

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
MCC_ENDPOINT *	endpoint	input	Pointer to the endpoint structure.
unsigned int *	num_msgs		Pointer to an unsigned int that will contain the number of buffers queued.

#### **Returns:**

- MCC\_SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_ENDPOINT (the endpoint does not exist)
- MCC\_ERR\_SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)

#### See also:

- mcc\_recv\_copy
- mcc recv nocopy
- MCC\_ENDPOINT

#### **Description:**

The function checks if messages are available on a receive endpoint. While the call only checks the availability of messages, it does not dequeue them.

# 3.9 mcc\_recv\_copy

This function receives a message from the specified endpoint if one is available. The data will be copied from the receive buffer into the user supplied buffer.

Source:/mcc/source/mcc\_api.c

Prototype: int mcc\_recv\_copy(MCC\_ENDPOINT \*endpoint, void \*buffer, MCC\_MEM\_SIZE buffer\_size,
MCC\_MEM\_SIZE \*recv\_size, unsigned int timeout\_us);

Table 8. mcc\_recv\_copy arguments

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
MCC_ENDPOINT *	endpoint	input	Pointer to the receiving endpoint to receive from.

Table continues on the next page...

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#### **MCC API Reference**

Table 8. mcc\_recv\_copy arguments (continued)

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
void *	buffer	input	Pointer to the user-app. buffer where data will be copied into.
MCC_MEM_SIZE	buffer_size	input	The maximum number of bytes to copy.
MCC_MEM_SIZE *	recv_size	output	Pointer to an MCC_MEM_SIZE that will contain the number of bytes actually copied into the buffer.
unsigned int	timeout_us	input	Timeout, in microseconds, to wait for a free buffer. A value of 0 means don't wait (non-blocking call). A value of 0xffffffff means wait forever (blocking call).

#### **Returns:**

- MCC\_SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_ENDPOINT (the endpoint does not exist)
- MCC\_ERR\_SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)
- MCC\_ERR\_TIMEOUT (timeout exceeded before a new message came)

#### See also:

- mcc\_send
- mcc\_recv\_nocopy
- MCC\_ENDPOINT

#### **Description:**

This is the "receive with copy" version of the MCC receive function. This version is simple to use but it requires copying data from shared memory into the user space buffer. The user has no obligation or burden to manage the shared memory buffers.

# 3.10 mcc\_recv\_nocopy

This function receives a message from the specified endpoint if one is available. The data is NOT copied into the user-app. buffer.

Source:/mcc/source/mcc\_api.c

Prototype: int mcc\_recv\_nocopy(MCC\_ENDPOINT \*endpoint, void \*\*buffer\_p, MCC\_MEM\_SIZE
\*recv\_size, unsigned int timeout\_us);

Table 9. mcc\_recv\_nocopy arguments

Name	Туре	Direction	Description
MCC_ENDPOINT *	endpoint	input	Pointer to the receiving endpoint to receive from.
void **	buffer_p	output	Pointer to the MCC buffer of the shared memory where the received data is stored.
MCC_MEM_SIZE *	recv_size	output	Pointer to an MCC_MEM_SIZE that will contain the number of valid bytes in the buffer.
unsigned int	timeout_us	input	Timeout, in microseconds, to wait for a free buffer. A value of 0 means don't wait (non-blocking call). A value of 0xffffffff means wait forever (blocking call).

#### **Returns:**

- MCC SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_ENDPOINT (the endpoint does not exist)

- MCC\_ERR\_SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)
- MCC\_ERR\_TIMEOUT (timeout exceeded before a new message came)

#### See also:

- mcc send
- mcc\_recv\_copy
- MCC ENDPOINT

#### **Description:**

This is the "zero-copy receive" version of the MCC receive function. No data is copied. Only the pointer to the data is returned. This version is fast, but it requires the user to manage buffer allocation. Specifically, the user must decide when a buffer is no longer in use and make the appropriate API call to free it.

# 3.11 mcc send

This function sends a message to an endpoint.

Source: /mcc/source/mcc api.c

Prototype: int mcc\_send(MCC\_ENDPOINT \*endpoint, void \*msg, MCC\_MEM\_SIZE msg\_size, unsigned int
timeout\_us);

Table 10.	mcc_send	l arguments
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Name	Туре	Direction	Description
MCC_ENDPOINT *	endpoint	input	Pointer to the receiving endpoint to send to.
void *	msg	input	Pointer to the message to be sent.
MCC_MEM_SIZE	msg_size	input	Size of the message to be sent in bytes.
unsigned int	timeout_us	input	Timeout, in microseconds, to wait for a free buffer. A value of 0 means don't wait (non-blocking call). A value of 0xffffffff means wait forever (blocking call).

#### **Returns:**

- MCC SUCCESS
- MCC\_ERR\_ENDPOINT (the endpoint does not exist)
- MCC\_ERR\_SEMAPHORE (semaphore handling error)
- MCC\_ERR\_INVAL (the msg\_size exceeds the size of a data buffer)
- MCC ERR TIMEOUT (timeout exceeded before a buffer became available)
- MCC ERR NOMEM (no free buffer available and timeout us set to 0)
- MCC\_ERR\_SQ\_FULL (signal queue is full)

#### See also:

- mcc\_recv\_copy
- mcc\_recv\_nocopy
- MCC\_ENDPOINT

#### **Description:**

The message is copied into the MCC buffer and the destination core is signaled.

# 4 MCC Data Types

# 4.1 MCC\_BOOKEEPING\_STRUCT

Share Memory data - Bookkeeping data and buffers.

#### **Description:**

This is used for "bookkeeping data" such as endpoint and signal queue head and tail pointers and fixed size data buffers. The whole mcc\_bookeeping\_struct as well as each individual structure members has to be defined and stored in the memory as packed structure. This way, the same structure member offsets will be ensured on all cores/OSes/compilers. Compiler-specific pragmas for data packing have to be applied.

Source: /mcc/source/include/mcc common.h

#### **Declaration:**

```
typedef struct
 char
                        init_string[sizeof(MCC_INIT_STRING)],
 char
                        version_string[sizeof(MCC_VERSION_STRING)],
 MCC RECEIVE LIST
                        free list,
 MCC SIGNAL
                        signals received [MCC NUM CORES] [MCC MAX OUTSTANDING SIGNALS],
                        signal_queue_head[MCC_NUM_CORES],
 unsigned int
 unsigned int
                        signal queue tail[MCC NUM CORES],
 MCC_ENDPOINT_MAP_ITEM endpoint_table[MCC_ATTR_MAX_RECEIVE_ENDPOINTS],
 MCC_RECEIVE_BUFFER
                      r_buffers[MCC_ATTR_NUM_RECEIVE_BUFFERS]
} MCC BOOKEEPING STRUCT;
```

#### See also:

- MCC RECEIVE LIST
- MCC\_SIGNAL
- MCC ENDPOINT MAP ITEM
- MCC RECEIVE BUFFER

Table 11. Structure MCC\_BOOKEEPING\_STRUCT member description

Member	Description
init_string	String that indicates if this structure has been already initialized.
version_string	String that indicates the MCC library version.
free_list	List of free buffers.
signals_received	Each core has it's own queue of received signals.
signal_queue_head	Signal queue head for each core.
signal_queue_tail	Signal queue tail for each core.
endpoint_table	Endpoint map.
r_buffers	Receive buffers, the number is defined in mcc_config.h (MCC_ATTR_NUM_RECEIVE_BUFFERS)

# 4.2 MCC\_ENDPOINT

Endpoint structure.

#### **Description:**

Endpoints are receive buffer queues, implemented in shared RAM, and are addressed by a triplet containing core, node, and port.

Source: /mcc/source/include/mcc\_common.h

#### **Declaration:**

```
typedef struct
{
   MCC_CORE core,
   MCC_NODE node,
   MCC_PORT port
} MCC_ENDPOINT;
```

#### See also:

MCC\_BOOKEEPING\_STRUCT

Table 12. Structure MCC\_ENDPOINT member description

Member	Description
core	Core number - identifies the core within the processor.
	Node number - in Linux any user process participating in MCC is a unique node; MQX has only one node.
II.	Port number - both Linux and MQX can have an arbitrary number of ports per node.

# 4.3 MCC\_ENDPOINT\_MAP\_ITEM

Endpoint registration table.

#### **Description:**

This is used for matching each endpoint structure with it's list of received buffers.

Source: /mcc/source/include/mcc\_common.h

#### **Declaration:**

```
typedef struct
{
   MCC_ENDPOINT endpoint,
   MCC_RECEIVE_LIST list
} MCC_ENDPOINT_MAP_ITEM;
```

#### See also:

- MCC\_ENDPOINT
- MCC\_RECEIVE\_LIST
- MCC\_BOOKEEPING\_STRUCT

Table 13. Structure MCC\_ENDPOINT\_MAP\_ITEM member description

Member	Description	
endpoint	Endpoint tripplet.	
list	List of received buffers.	

# 4.4 MCC\_INFO\_STRUCT

MCC info structure.

#### **Description:**

This is used for additional information about the MCC implementation.

Source: /mcc/source/include/mcc\_common.h

#### **Declaration:**

```
typedef struct
{
   char version_string[sizeof(MCC_VERSION_STRING)]
} MCC_INFO_STRUCT;
```

#### See also:

MCC\_BOOKEEPING\_STRUCT

Table 14. Structure MCC\_INFO\_STRUCT member description

Member	Description
version_string	<major>.<minor> - minor is changed whenever patched, major indicates compatibility</minor></major>

# 4.5 MCC\_RECEIVE\_BUFFER

Receive buffer structure.

#### **Description:**

This is the receive buffer structure used for exchanging data.

Source: /mcc/source/include/mcc\_common.h

#### **Declaration:**

#### See also:

MCC\_BOOKEEPING\_STRUCT

Table 15. Structure MCC\_RECEIVE\_BUFFER member description

Member	Description
next	Pointer to the next receive buffer.
data_len	Length of data stored in this buffer.
data	Space for data storage.

# 4.6 MCC\_RECEIVE\_LIST

List of buffers.

#### **Description:**

Each endpoint keeps the list of received buffers. The list of free buffers is kept in bookkeeping data structure.

Source: /mcc/source/include/mcc\_common.h

#### **Declaration:**

```
typedef struct
{
   MCC_RECEIVE_BUFFER * head,
   MCC_RECEIVE_BUFFER * tail
} MCC_RECEIVE_LIST;
```

#### See also:

- MCC\_RECEIVE\_BUFFER
- MCC\_BOOKEEPING\_STRUCT

Table 16. Structure MCC\_RECEIVE\_LIST member description

Member	Description	
head	Head of a buffers list.	
tail	Tail of a buffers list.	

# 4.7 MCC\_SIGNAL

Signals and signal queues.

#### **Description:**

This is one item of a signal queue.

Source: /mcc/source/include/mcc\_common.h

#### **Declaration:**

```
typedef struct
{
    MCC_SIGNAL_TYPE type,
    MCC_ENDPOINT destination
} MCC_SIGNAL;
```

#### **API Example**

#### See also:

- MCC\_ENDPOINT
- MCC\_BOOKEEPING\_STRUCT

Table 17. Structure MCC\_SIGNAL member description

Member	Description
type	Signal type - BUFFER_QUEUED or BUFFER_FREED.
destination	Destination endpoint.

# 5 API Example

As part of the system design, the designers agreed that MQX would be node 0 and the application would be receiving on port 2. Therefore, Linux will send to [1,0,2]. Similarly, Linux will receive on [0,0,1].

Linux pseudo code:

```
\label{eq:mcc_initialize} \begin{tabular}{ll} mcc\_create\_endpoint([0,0,1], 1) \\ mcc\_send([1,0,2], "hello", 5, 5000) // no more than 5 milliseconds for buffer mcc\_recv\_copy([0,0,1], &buf, sizeof(buf), length, 0xffffffff) //forever \\ \end{tabular}
```

MQX pseudo code:

```
mcc_initialize(0)
mcc_create_endpoint([1,0,2], 2)
mcc_recv_nocopy([1,0,2], &buf_p, length, 0xffffffff) //forever
mcc_send([0,0,1], "hello", 5, 5000) // no more than 5 milliseconds for buffer
```

MCC example applications are located in the following MQX installation directory:

<mqx\_install\_dir>/mcc/examples

Refer to the general MQX documentation (<mqx\_install\_dir>/doc/mqx) and to the tools-specific MQX documentation (<mqx\_install\_dir>/doc/tools) for instructions about how to build and run these applications. See also the readme file attached to each MCC example to get instructions specific to the particular example application.

# **6 Version History**

Table 18. Version history table

Revision	Date	Features
1.0	2.4.2013	Initial version.

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Document Number: MQXMCCUG

Rev. 1.0

