

Cargo EDI

IATA's Members recognize that Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) is an integral part of the air cargo automation effort to reduce the need to process paper documentation. With the ultimate objective of moving goods from shipper to consignee as quickly as possible airlines, forwarders, brokers, ground handlers, customs and airport authorities can exchange cargo messages directly or over a network of Cargo Community Systems.

Since most of these parties have different computers, systems and procedures the "glue that forms the bond" is the standard message format. IATA's Cargo Services has been very active in the development and maintenance of these standards on behalf of the air cargo industry.

For further information please contact cargoedi@iata.org

Cargo EDI Message Standards

IATA Cargo supports two standards for air cargo messages which are published as:

- IATA/ATA Cargo Interchange Message Procedures Manual (Cargo-IMP) (right click)
- Cargo-FACT Message Manual (order contact: custserv@iata.org)

Book 1 – Air Waybill Data;

Book 2 – Consignment Status;

Cargo - IMP Messages

Member airlines of IATA and the Air Transport Association of America (ATA) developed the IATA/ATA Cargo Interchange Message Procedures (Cargo-IMP) as a standard within the air cargo industry. This standard ensures the uniformity, mutual understanding, accuracy and economy of data exchanges between airlines on one hand and between airlines and other industry members such as forwarders, brokers and customs on the other. It is the lifeline of industry data interchange on which the whole community depends.

Airlines developed the Cargo-IMP message standard, which has been used since the 1970s, making it the "de-facto" standard for air cargo messages. Cargo-IMP messages are available for the following applications, among others:

- booking;
- air waybill and house waybill data;
- flight manifest;
- consignment status;
- Customs;
- Cargo Account Settlement Systems (CASS);
- surface transportation.

Cargo - FACT Messages

This message format assists IATA member airlines and their trading partners in the interchange of information using the techniques of EDIFACT (Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport) as the internationally accepted standard. It is the means by which Cargo-IMP and EDIFACT standards can co-exist on the basis of the UN/EDIFACT D96A Directory. The Cargo-FACT Message Manual contains IATA subsets of UN/EDIFACT messages. The messages are based on the UN/EDIFACT D96A Directory and are equivalents of messages published in the 16th Edition of Cargo-IMP.

Cargo-FACT Message Manual:

Message details are also provided for acknowledgement and error situations that may be encountered when exchanging these messages. Questions or any comments concerning the Cargo-IMP or Cargo-FACT standards may be directed to cargoedi@iata.org

Bar Coding Cargo Consignments

What are some features of the bar coded label standard?

- Specifications included within IATA Cargo Services Conference Resolution 606;
- Minimum label size of 4"x 5" (102 mm x 128 mm), supporting the use of the minimum data to achieve positive, unique shipment identification;
- Standard dimensions and layout for both airline (air waybill) and 'forwarder' (house waybill) versions;
- Clearly defined areas for mandatory shipment information, including:
 - airline name
 - air waybill number
 - destination
 - primary bar code
- Clearly defined areas for optional shipment information, including:
 - airline insignia
 - transfer points
 - piece number
 - weight of the piece
 - total number of pieces
 - total weight of the shipment
 - house waybill number
 - house waybill piece number
 - handling information
 - origin
 - total number of house waybill pieces
 - total weight of house waybill pieces
 - carrier/customer specific information
- Standard Code 128 bar code symbology, providing advantages of:
 - widespread use;
 - ease of configuration;
 - wide choice of reader and printer equipment;
 - compact, relative to other symbologies; and
 - built-in character checks, hence reduced read errors.

In order to apply the generic parameters defined in IATA Resolution 606 and in Code 128 (the standard symbology used in this specification), some basic bar code definitions and concepts must be understood.

These are included in the "Bar Coded label Handbook" (right click) which provides guidelines on the use of the bar coded label. It also contains label application scenarios, bar coded label examples, frequently asked questions and answers as well as Resolution 606 in its entirety, technical specifications and excerpts from the Uniform Symbology Specification code 128.