



e-AWB Quick Reference Guide V1.0

Document Status

Versions

Version	Date	IATA StB – Authors	Notes
1.0	03/22/2010	Izzy Anderson	Initial Version

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The model agreements and forms that are found in this handbook are the product of meetings and work by industry experts representing the entire airfreight supply chain. IATA considers these model agreements and forms to be the best manner through which stakeholders can send e-AWB shipments. Although we consider these models to be useful in enabling e-AWB, members and non-members alike are free to employ other agreements they consider to be more efficient and successful in accomplishing e-AWB transactions. We welcome your suggestions and feedback for enhancement.

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Director Cargo Supply Chain Management, IDFS

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How to use this quick reference guide

This quick reference guide provides information on what e-AWB is and how to implement it.

It provides explanations, guidelines, and best practices regarding the business process, standards, technology and implementation of e-AWB.

If you are:

- Any industry stakeholder (airline and freight forwarder) intending to adopt e-AWB at countries where MP4 or MC99 has been signed and local customs has e-Customs modernization program in place
- Any other party with an interest in e-AWB, please refer to the appropriate chapter(s) of the handbook as indicated below:

Chapter 1	Introduction to e-AWB: background, scope, adoption targets, and stakeholders
Chapter 2	How individual stakeholders can adopt e-AWB for their organization
Chapter 3	Business Process and Standard supporting e-AWB

This is not a definitive or binding document - formal texts, defining e-AWB standards and recommended practices are contained in the appropriate Resolutions, Recommended Practices and Standards adopted by the IATA Cargo Services Conference and their references are to be found in the Combined Cargo Conference Manual (CCC) at the following link: www.iata.org/cargo-manual









Any comments, suggestions or proposals for enhancements are welcome and should be directed to: IAT Ae-freight@iata.org

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1	INTRODUCTION TO E-AWB	7
SECTION 1.1	BACKGROUND.....	7
SECTION 1.2	SCOPE.....	7
SECTION 1.3	BENEFITS OF E-AWB.....	7
SECTION 1.4	E-AWB ADOPTION TARGET	7
SECTION 1.5	STAKEHOLDERS	8
CHAPTER 2	HOW TO IMPLEMENT E-AWB	10
SECTION 2.1	IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP	10
SECTION 2.2	IDENTIFY YOUR CRITICAL TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENTS TO SUPPORT E-AWB	10
SECTION 2.3	CREATE YOUR E-AWB STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP).....	11
SECTION 2.4	SIGN AN E-AWB AGREEMENT WITH IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES.....	12
SECTION 2.5	PREPARE FOR E-AWB ROLL-OUT.....	13
SECTION 2.6	START WITH YOUR FIRST E-AWB SHIPMENTS!	13
CHAPTER 3	BUSINESS PROCESS AND STANDARDS (BPS) SUPPORTING E-AWB	14
SECTION 3.1	ELECTRONIC AIR WAYBILL (E-AWB)	14
SECTION 3.2	E-AWB OVERVIEW FOR ELECTRONIC DATA INTERCHANGE.....	17
SECTION 3.3	SHIPPER’S RIGHT OF DISPOSITION	18
APPENDIX 1	GLOSSARY OF TERMS	20

Use of icons

A variety of icons are used in this handbook to make it easy to follow and to highlight key concepts:

	What / Why? This icon is used to define a concept.
	How to? This icon is used to describe how to do something (useful guidelines).
	Inputs This icon is used to indicate the documents, templates that are useful.
	Who? This icon is used to indicate the stakeholders involved and their roles and responsibilities.
	Risks This icon is used to highlight potential risks.
	Key success factors This icon is used to indicate key elements to successful e-AWB implementation.
	Outputs This icon is used to highlight deliverables that need to be produced.
	Communications This icon is used to indicate the communication deliverables that need to be produced.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO E-AWB

Section 1.1 Background

Today, the air cargo industry still exclusively relies on paper air waybill to support movement of freight from origin to destination. Paper air waybill is created, printed, handed from one department to another mostly following the physical movements of the shipment. These paper-based processes are not cost-effective, nor do they serve the key requirements of air cargo: security, accuracy and speed

To address this issue, the Cargo Committee endorsed the move toward 100% e-AWB by end of 2014 and asked IATA to work with airline members to come up with an industry standard and approach to implementation to make this target a reality.

In 2009 IATA released the **Recommended Practice 1670 “Model Agreement for EDI”**, and the **IATA Cargo Shipment Record (e-AWB) Functional Specifications**, which allow the removal of paper air waybill from the shipment handling processes. This standard has been endorsed by FIATA/AFI and adopted by Cargo Services Conference.

Section 1.2 Scope

Locations in scope for e-AWB

- E-AWB should only be implemented on trade lanes where origin and destination countries have ratified the same international treaty, Montreal Protocol 4 (MP4) or Montreal Convention 1999 (MC99);
- Local Customs authority must be willing to accept electronic air waybill or a printout of the electronic air waybill.

Type of shipments in scope for e-AWB

The scope of e-AWB excludes any shipment type that requires paper air waybill to be transported along with the shipment. (e.g. Human Remains)

Section 1.3 Benefits of e-AWB

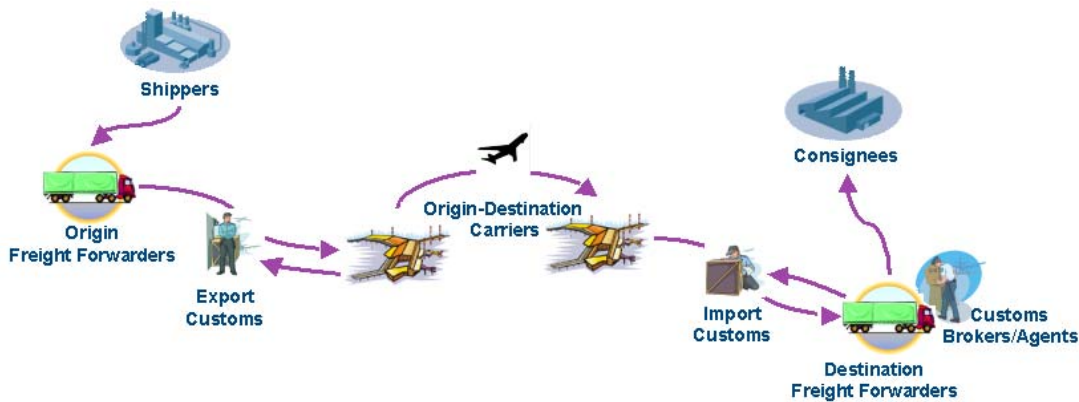
The following are benefits of e-AWB:

- Reduction in processing cost due to the removal of paper air waybill
- Greater accuracy of air waybill data because it is entered once at the point of origin
- Reduction in shipment handling delay due to missing paper air waybill
- Elimination of the requirements to file paper air waybill; it will be filed electronically
- Real-time access to air waybill data for all personnel from all locations

Section 1.4 e-AWB Adoption Target

- **End of 2014:** 100% e-AWB penetration between freight forwarders and airlines on all international feasible trade lanes where they are operating
- Interim targets from 2010 to 2014 are currently being discussed

Section 1.5 Stakeholders



All the key stakeholders of the air supply chain are in scope for the e-AWB project.

1.5.1.1 Shippers

The shipper is the organization whose name appears on the air waybill or in the shipment record as the party with the airline(s) for carriage of goods. .

1.5.1.2 Origin & destination freight forwarders

The freight forwarder is the party that arranges the carriage of goods and the associated formalities on behalf of a shipper. The forwarder often acts as the clearing agent for the customs release of goods for both import and export.

1.5.1.3 Export & Import customs

Export and import customs is the government service that is responsible for the administration of customs law and the collection of duties and taxes and which also has the responsibility for the application of other laws and regulations relating to the importation, exportation, movement or storage of goods.

Customs' business processes and technology allow the electronic exchange of e-AWB or print out of e-AWB in lieu of paper documents.

1.5.1.4 Ground handling agents (GHA)

The GHA is authorized to act for or on behalf of the carrier for accepting, handling, loading/unloading, transit, or dealing with cargo, passenger and baggage.

The GHA is the acceptance agent for both freight and documents in the supply chain.

1.5.1.5 Origin & destination airlines

The origin carrier is the participating airline over whose routes the first section of carriage is undertaken or performed.

The destination carrier is the participating airline over whose routes the last section of carriage is undertaken or performed, or the airline which delivers

the consignment to the consignee whether or not that airline has participated in the carriage (for the purposes of determining the responsibility for collecting charges and disbursement amounts)

The airlines are the key communication facilitator between freight forwarder, shipper, consignee and customs, and transport the documentation.

1.5.1.6 Customs agents/brokers

The customs broker is an agent or representative or a professional customs clearing agent who deals directly with customs on behalf of the importer or exporter.

1.5.1.7 Consignees

The consignee is the organization whose name appears on the air waybill or in the shipment record as the party to whom the cargo is to be delivered by the airline or its agent.

CHAPTER 2 HOW TO IMPLEMENT E-AWB

Section 2.1 Implementation Roadmap

This section is intended for individual stakeholders (airlines and freight forwarders) who want to implement e-AWB in countries that have signed either the Montreal Protocol (MP4) or Montreal Convention 1999 (MC99) and have e-Customs modernization in place.

The following describes the key activities involved in the implementation:

- **Step 1:** Identify your critical technology enhancements to support e-AWB
- **Step 2:** Create your e-AWB Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
- **Step 3:** Sign an e-AWB agreement with implementation partners for specific countries
- **Step 4:** Prepare stakeholders for e-AWB roll-out
- **Step 5:** Start!



The IATA e-AWB section of the IATA public website provides you with:

- e-AWB Quick Reference Guide
- e-AWB Technical Readiness Assessment for Freight Forwarders and Airlines
- Implementation Checklist
- Recommended Practice 1670 "Model Agreement for EDI"
- IATA Shipment Record (e-AWB) Functional Specifications
- e-AWB Who and Where report

To access this information, go to: www.iata.org/e-awb

Section 2.2 Identify your critical technology enhancements to support e-AWB

2.2.1 Technical Readiness Assessment

IATA has prepared technical readiness assessment for airlines and freight forwarders to assess technical readiness and identify any gaps that may exist.

The assessment:

- Is specific to the type of stakeholders (airlines and freight forwarders)
- Encompasses the various ways to implement e-AWB (full EDI, or web portal)
- Includes assessment on your electronic storage capability and also the ability to identify e-AWB shipments for operational purposes
- Includes assessment specific to the ability to produce Cargo Receipt (applicable for airlines only)

The technical readiness assessment can be found on the IATA public website: www.iata.org/e-awb



Technology Requirements

Read the IATA Cargo Shipment Record (e-AWB) Functional Specification document available on the IATA public website: www.iata.org/e-awb

2.2.2 Data Quality

This step is about ensuring that you have put in place the right technical capabilities and also business process to exchange data with the required quality levels with your business partners.

For FWB messages:

If your e-AWB SOP call for the exchange of FWB messages between you and your business partners (this will be the case for most airlines and forwarders), then the IATA Message Improvement Program (MIP) will provide you with critical help to ensure data readiness, that is, your ability to exchange these messages with the proper message penetration and quality.

If you are an airline implementing e-AWB, participation to the IATA MIP program is mandatory. If you are a freight forwarder, then you can ask IATA to receive regular MIP report that will provide you with your current data quality performance on FWB.



The IATA e-freight Message Improvement Program (MIP) is a program by which airlines and freight forwarders monitor the penetration and accuracy of the FWB messages they exchange.



How to participate in MIP

- Read the MIP strategy document available on the IATA public website: www.iata.org/e-freight
- Formally agree to it by sending an email to the IATA MIP contact mip@iata.org
- Appoint an MIP contact in your organization and share their name, position, address, phone, fax and email for publication in the MIP contact list
- Carriers: confirm the date when first MIP files will be submitted (the deadline for submission is the 15th of each month for previous month activity).
- Freight forwarders: provide us with the list of your IATA agent numbers / names in all locations (for report consolidation)
- When personalized MIP reports are distributed monthly (around the 20th of each month) start investigating and addressing frequent issues with partners (carriers, freight forwarders, IT solution providers, internal IT services...)

Section 2.3 Create your e-AWB Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

2.3.1 Create e-AWB SOP

The objective of creating your internal e-AWB SOP is to define the operational procedures needed to handle e-AWB shipments.

The following are points to consider when creating the new procedure for e-AWB:

- **Air waybill handling:** currently, most stakeholders have a process that relies at on paper air waybill throughout the shipment lifecycle. Air waybill is created, printed, and handed from one department to

another mostly following the physical movements of the shipment. It is recommended that these steps are removed from the procedure.

- **Exchange of messages and electronic data:** currently, stakeholders may not (or only partially) rely on electronic AWB data in your system. For e-AWB shipments, the air waybill data reside in your system becomes the primary source of information.
- **Archiving of paper air waybills:** in locations where e-AWB is implemented, it is not necessary to file the paper air waybill
- **Performing ancillary functions:** in current environment, paper air waybill used to facilitate transportation may also be used for other functions. For example, the paper air waybill may be used to generate invoices. If this is the case, stakeholders need to ensure that they can replace it with a process that utilizes electronic data

2.3.2 Test your new e-AWB SOP

Once the new procedure is defined, it is recommended that the new operational procedure be validated through series of tests as further refinement may be necessary based on the outcome of the tests.

Section 2.4 Sign an e-AWB agreement with implementation partners for specific countries

2.4.1 Select implementation partners and trade lanes

To help you select the trade lanes and the business partners, IATA is producing supporting materials such as “**Who and Where**” report that list the live airlines and the live trade lanes.



How to select the international trade lanes on which you will implement e-AWB

The origin and destination locations of the trade lanes must* both have the same treaties in place (i.e. either MC99 or MP4).

- If a location has ratified both MC99 and MP4, then it can implement e-AWB with any other e-AWB location.
- If the location only has MC99, it can only implement e-AWB with other locations that also have ratified MC99.
- If it has only MP4, it can only implement e-AWB with locations that also have ratified MP4.

*exceptions exist, with legal due diligence undertaken by local stakeholders

To identify participating airlines and valid origin and destination countries use the e-AWB “**Who and Where**” report posted on the IATA public website: www.iata.org/e-awb

2.4.2 Sign an e-AWB agreement with implementation partners

Prior to the implementation of the e-AWB the origin carrier and the forwarder business partners will sign a bilateral agreement. Whenever possible this bilateral agreement should be signed at corporate level to limit the administrative burden of signing multiple local agreements

A model agreement for electronic data interchange has been drafted by IATA and can be used by the stakeholders who want to implement the e-

AWB. The IATA model agreement for data interchange can be found at the following URL address: www.iata.org/e-awb

If you are an airline implementing e-AWB, you are required to provide information of signed e-AWB agreement to IATA. This data will be used for scorecards needed to track the e-AWB penetration globally and by stakeholders



For forwarders who will initiate the shipment record online (e.g. through a web portal) the agreement could also be accepted online.

Section 2.5 Prepare for e-AWB roll-out

2.5.1 Train your operational personnel

Implementing e-AWB will mean changing the current operational procedures to be compliant with the new procedures required to support e-AWB and described in your internal e-AWB SOP

As soon as your internal e-AWB SOP is defined and validated through series of tests and the necessary changes in your operational procedures are implemented, it is time to make sure employees are trained and ready to handle e-AWB shipments.

To train your staff, IATA recommends that you:

- Prepare appropriate training materials (using your internal e-AWB SOP as a foundation)
- Organize the training session(s) by selecting the persons who need to be trained
- Run the training session(s)

2.5.2 Prepare your contingency plan

In order to ensure a smooth transition from a paper process to the e-AWB process, it is recommended that you create a contingency plan in case of go-live issues. Your contingency plan should include statement of how should possible failure in the communication be solved and who would be the key points of contact for your business partners.

2.5.3 Make the go-live decision with your trading partners

Once everything is ready (i.e. e-AWB SOP defined, technical gaps closed, and personnel are trained), you need to make the go-live decision and to agree on the go-live date with your partners (airline, forwarder) on selected trade lanes.

Section 2.6 Start with your first e-AWB shipments!

Once you and your implementation partner made the go-live decision and chose your go-live date.

On the agreed date:

- Perform the first e-AWB shipments according to the location e-AWB SOP
- Monitor the first e-AWB shipments to confirm that they are successfully performed.
- Track and discuss together any identified issues to ensure they are addressed for the following shipments.



How IATA tracks and reports e-AWB shipments

In a global initiative such as e-AWB, it is critical to be able to report progress and success of implementation globally and by stakeholder. A key way to assess progress, and ultimately the key measure of success, is to track and report the number of e-AWB shipments that are conducted using the e-AWB business process, and measure the percentage they represent of the total number of air freight shipments done globally (the market penetration of e-AWB).

The IATA Message Improvement Program is the tool that is used for e-AWB reporting. Airlines are able to track the number of e-AWB shipments and consignments done each month and these are part of the MIP report they submit each month to IATA. This allows IATA to report on e-AWB shipment growth and penetration.

CHAPTER 3 BUSINESS PROCESS AND STANDARDS (BPS) SUPPORTING E-AWB

Section 3.1 Electronic Air Waybill (e-AWB)

With limited exceptions, where both the origin and destination countries have ratified MC99 (or both have ratified MP4), then the electronic Air Waybill (also referred as e-AWB or shipment record) can be used in lieu of the paper Air Waybill and parties can assert the limitations and exclusions of liability under the Conventions. Unless otherwise indicated, MP4 and MC99 are collectively referred to as the “Conventions” throughout this Handbook



Important: The e-AWB (or Shipment Record) has the same validity as the paper AWB where both the origin and destination countries have ratified the same convention, MP4 or MC99.

The detailed specifications of the e-AWB can be accessed at the following URL: www.iata.org/e-awb

Note: Additional information is provided on the e-AWB in the business rules section of this handbook to describe recommended practices when a ground-handling agent performs some activities on behalf of the carrier.

3.1.1 Agreement for electronic data interchange

Prior to the implementation of the e-AWB the origin carrier and the shipper (or the origin freight forwarder acting as shipper with respect to the shipment) will sign a bilateral agreement (at corporate level where feasible) for electronic data interchange that describes the business, technical and legal implications of replacing the paper (master) air waybill with electronic data interchange.

A model agreement for electronic data interchange has been drafted by IATA and can be used by the stakeholders who want to implement the e-AWB. This model agreement for data interchange as well as the necessary annexes can be found at the following URL address:

www.iata.org/e-awb

Note:

- Where feasible this bilateral agreement should be signed at a corporate level to limit the administrative burden of signing many agreements at a local level.
- For small and mid-size shippers who will initiate the shipment record on-line (e.g. through a web portal) the agreement could also be accepted on-line as described in the technology chapter of this handbook.

3.1.2 e-AWB (shipment record) initiation

To initiate the shipment record, the shipper will send the completed air waybill data through an electronic message (FWB) as per Cargo-IMP Manual. The message is sent to the carrier prior to the presentation of the consignment at the carrier warehouse.



Shipment record: any record of the cargo contract preserved by carrier, evidenced by means other than an air waybill.

Cargo contract: a contract between the parties, conducted by EDI, for the transportation of and settlement with respect to a specific cargo shipment.

The cargo contract shall be deemed concluded once the carrier has accepted the cargo, sent to the shipper the “ready for carriage” status message by using the Cargo-IMP Status Message FSU/RCS and provided a paper cargo receipt to the shipper.

If the carrier is not able to produce the cargo receipt upon delivery of the shipment by the shipper, the carrier may produce a warehouse receipt to the shipper or countersign a shipper’s delivery not. In such case, the cargo contract nonetheless continues to be subject to the carrier confirming the FWB information and that the shipment is “ready for carriage” by using the Cargo-IMP Status Message FSU/RCS sent to the shipper. When the shipment is ready for carriage, the carrier shall make available to the shipper a paper cargo receipt.

Any modification to the information found in the FWB will be according to shipper and carrier agreed exception management procedures.

Note: In cases where the freight is delivered by a shipper to the carrier but the shipment record has not been initiated in the carrier system or cannot be accessed, the shipment shall be handled as previously agreed between the parties.

3.1.3 Rejection message

The notification to the shipper that the electronic message containing the traditional air waybill information (FWB) has been rejected by the carrier’s system and / or by the IT solution provider due to syntax errors can be performed using the standard electronic error (FNA) message as per Cargo Interchange Message Procedures (Cargo-IMP) Manual.

The FNA message should include the Message Improvement Program (MIP) error code and reason, as per the latest version of the MIP strategy document.

3.1.4 Confirmation message (optional)

The notification to the shipper to confirm that the electronic message containing the traditional air waybill information (FWB) has been received by the carrier's system and/or his IT solution provider without syntax errors and application errors can be performed using the standard electronic Acknowledgment (FMA) message as per the Cargo Interchange Message Procedures (Cargo-IMP) Manual.

Alternatively the Cargo 2000 route map milestone (MUP-FWB) message may be used by Cargo 2000 members.

Important: A confirmation message is not required unless previously agreed by the parties.

3.1.5 Cargo receipt

The cargo receipt evidences the conclusion of the contract, ("including acceptance of all contract terms") and acceptance of the cargo as "Ready for Carriage" (as indicated in the IATA Cargo Agency Conference Resolutions 833¹).



Cargo receipt (or receipt for cargo): a document (in paper or electronic form) which is provided to the shipper by the carrier in paper form unless otherwise agreed between the parties, creating a shipment record as a substitution for the issuance of an air waybill and which permits identification of the shipment that has been accepted and deemed "ready for carriage".

The cargo receipt consists of data from the FWB message information and as confirmed by the FSU/RCS.

The date of the cargo receipt shall be the date that the carrier transmits the FSU/RCS to the shipper.

The layout of the cargo receipt is described in IATA Cargo Services Conference Recommended Practice 1670.

3.1.6 Access to the shipment record by the consignee

The consignee may need to have access to the cargo receipt containing weight, volume and number of pieces.

The carrier can provide a facsimile of the cargo receipt to the consignee upon request by the shipper if so agreed by the parties.

3.1.7 Charges correction advice

In the case of discrepancies the carrier shall send a Cargo Correction Advice (CCA) to the shipper unless otherwise agreed by the parties.

3.1.8 Bar coded label

For cargo acceptance, shipments must be labeled where feasible with machine-readable cargo labels that are in accordance with the specifications of IATA Cargo Services Conference Resolution 606², Bar Coded Label.

¹ Cargo Agency Conference Resolution 833 Ready for Carriage Consignments

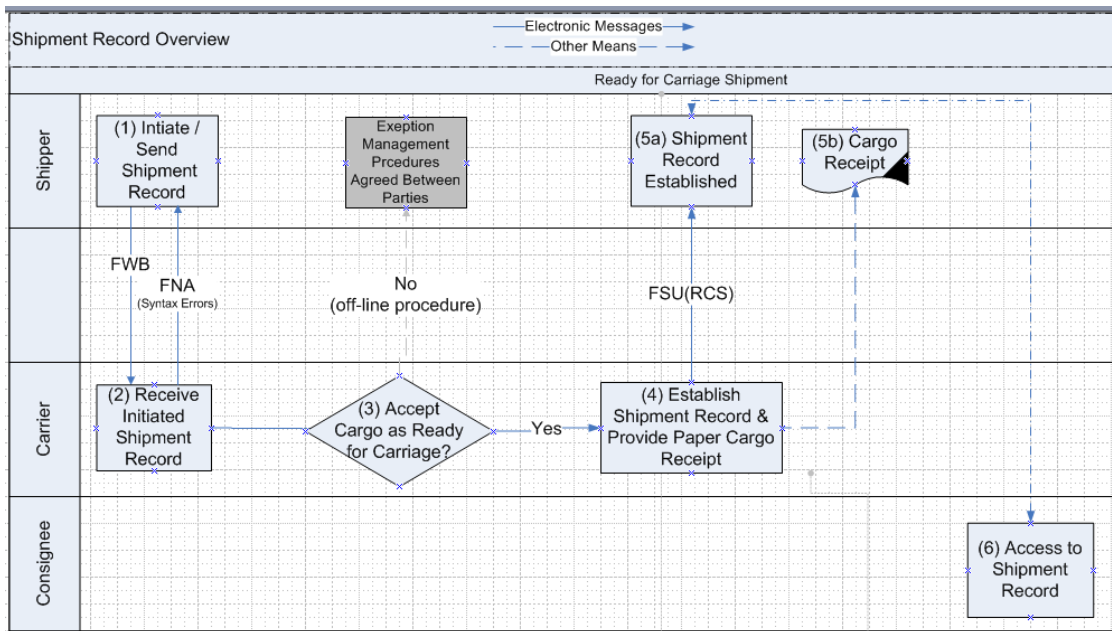
² Cargo Services Conference Resolution 606 Bar Coded Label

Section 3.2 e-AWB overview for electronic data interchange

The two flowcharts below give an overview of the e-AWB (shipment record). It involves the shipper, the carrier and the consignee.

Fast Track

The fast track describes the situation where the carrier accepts the cargo as “ready for carriage” upon delivery of the freight by the shipper at the carrier point of acceptance. In that case the carrier will provide the shipper with a cargo receipt to evidence the conclusion of the contract of carriage and the acceptance of the cargo.

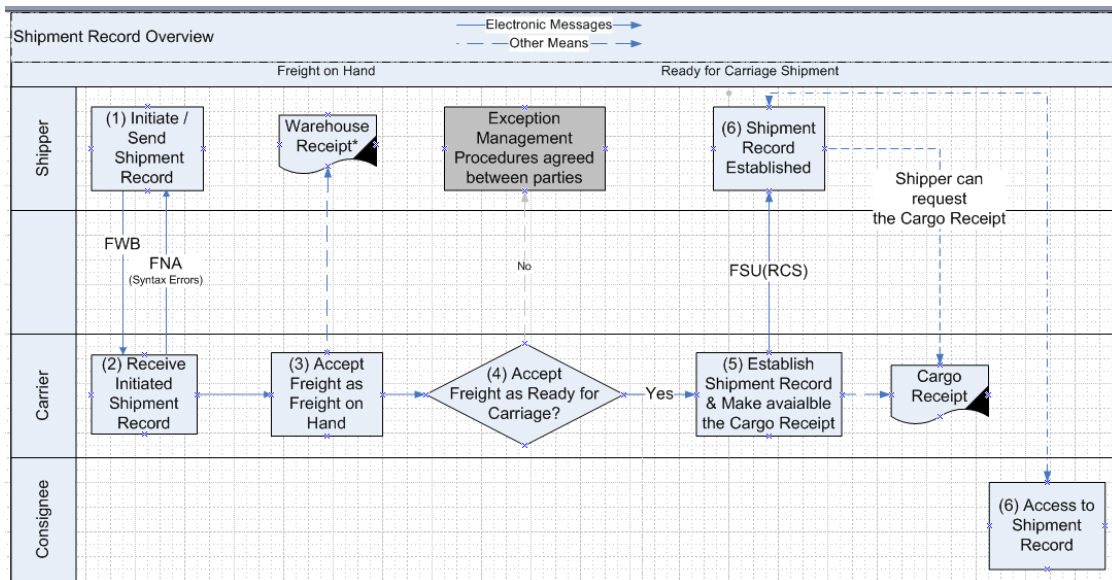


Normal Track

The normal track describes the situation where the carrier can only accept the cargo as “freight on hand” and not as “ready for carriage” upon shipper’s delivery to the carrier due to technical, procedural or other limitations.

In this case the carrier will provide the shipper upon delivery a warehouse receipt (in lieu of a warehouse receipt, the carrier may verify the information on and countersign the shipper's delivery note. Once verified and countersigned by the carrier such delivery note shall serve as a warehouse receipt).

This warehouse receipt shall be deemed an interim “cargo receipt” until the carrier has performed the necessary checks to accept the cargo as “ready for carriage” and only at that point send to the shipper the electronic message FSU/RCS and make available to the shipper the cargo receipt.



Section 3.3 Shipper's Right of Disposition

Pursuant to Article 12 of the Conventions, the Shipper has a specific right of disposition over the cargo up until delivery to and acceptance by the original consignee at destination. According to the Conventions, in carrying out any Shipper counter-instructions involving the disposition of the cargo, the Carrier shall be free from any liability associated therewith, so long as it has requested from the Shipper the production of that part of the air waybill or Cargo Receipt previously delivered to the Shipper. In the paper air waybill world, the Shipper would produce "Original 3" of the standard IATA Master Air Waybill. Under e-AWB, it is the responsibility of the Carriers to provide an "original" Cargo Receipt that would satisfy the requirement of Article 12 of the Conventions; IATA recognizes the challenges inherent with producing "original" documents within the context of electronic transactions, consequently, IATA hereby highlights this matter and makes the following recommendation:

Under the current Cargo Services Conference Recommended Practice 1601, Conditions of Carriage for Cargo, Section 7.1, "The right of disposition over the Cargo may only be exercised if the Shipper or such agent produces the part of the Air Waybill which was delivered to him, or communicates such other form of authority as may be prescribed Carrier's regulations." Additionally, Section 7.3 of these recommended Conditions of Carriage provides an indemnity provision wherein Shipper shall be liable for and shall indemnify Carrier for all loss or damage suffered or incurred by Carrier as a result of the exercise of his right of disposition. IATA recommends that Carriers adopt the IATA Conditions of Carriage and if not then recommends that similar clauses be included in the EDI agreement. Carriers will also have to determine exactly what "other form of authority" they will require from Shippers such that they will feel comfortable in carrying out any potential Shipper counter-instructions involving the disposition over the cargo.

The foregoing reflects a practical solution for the time being while a solution to an "original" cargo receipt or its equivalent can be identified and used as an industry standard. e-AWB participants should make an independent decision as to whether or not they wish to proceed under the current IATA Recommended Practice, or for example impose greater security such as having the Shipper post a bond prior to executing counter instructions or the most conservative option of having the Shipper waive its right of

disposition over the cargo through the appropriate language in the agreement for EDI and in the Cargo Receipt as per Article 15 of the Conventions. **As with all matters involving liability we urge you to consult with your legal counsel prior to taking any decisions in this regard.**

e-AWB:

- The Carrier and Freight Forwarder at Origin both have a complete and valid Shipment Record based on the FWB and FSU (RCS) that they can archive in their systems according to the pertaining regulatory requirements.
- The Carrier at Origin and Freight Forwarder at Origin can subcontract the Shipment Record management to its IT service provider if they so desire.
- The Carrier at Origin, if so requested by the Freight Forwarder at Origin can produce a Cargo Receipt (subject to agreement).

Appendix 1 Glossary of terms

AWB	Air Waybill
EAP	IATA e-freight Consignment with Accompanying Documents
EAW	IATA e-freight Consignment with No Accompanying Documents
e-AWB	Electronic Air Waybill
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange
MAWB	Master Air Waybill
e-AWB SOP	Electronic Air Waybill standard operating procedure
MC99	Montreal Convention 1999 – Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage by Air, done at Montreal on 28 May 1999 (also referred as MC99)
MP4	Montreal Protocol 4 – Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Carriage by Air, signed at Warsaw, 12 October 1929 and amended by Montreal Protocol No. 4
SPH codes	Special Handling codes