

e-Air Waybill: Frequently Asked Questions

Generic information on e-AWB

What is an electronic Air Waybill? How does it relate to a paper AWB?

The Air Waybill (AWB) is the contract of carriage between the 'shipper' (e.g. forwarder) and the 'carrier' (airline). It is also called the paper AWB.

The electronic AWB (e-AWB) is an electronic contract of carriage that is an alternative to the paper AWB contract. The electronic contract of carriage is achieved through the interchange of electronic data (EDI) messages. The terms and conditions for interchanging EDI messages between shipper and carrier are specifically set forth in IATA's Model Agreement for EDI, a copy of which can be found in Attachment "A" of the Cargo Services Conference (CSC) Recommended Practice 1670 (also referred to as the "e-AWB Agreement").

What are the major benefits of the e-AWB?

There are many benefits of implementing the e-AWB for both shippers (typically a freight forwarder) and airlines. The following are just some of the key benefits of the e-AWB that have been identified by industry stakeholders:

- Reduced costs: Elimination of purchase costs for pre-printed paper AWB, reduced AWB printing costs, reduced archiving costs
- Higher productivity: Elimination of repeated data keying, real time access to AWB information, reduction in cargo handling delays due to missing or illegible paper AWB, detection of errors prior to submitting the physical freight, no waiting time for processing paper AWB at airline desk
- Better reliability: No risk of losing documents and reduced number of errors
- Regulatory compliance: Authorized by international treaties regulating air cargo transport; contribution to the advanced reporting requirements
- Paving the way towards e-freight: A first step toward a paper free air cargo, involving less stakeholders

What is the link between the e-AWB and e-freight?

The e-freight project aims to take many paper documents out of air cargo and replace them with the exchange of electronic data and messages. Initiated by IATA, the project became an industry-wide initiative involving carriers, freight forwarders, ground handlers, shippers, customs brokers and Regulators including customs authorities.

The AWB is the most important transportation document in Air Cargo. The e-AWB initiative is more and more considered as the first step to realize the e-freight vision. The e-AWB project replaces the paper AWB contract with an electronic contract of carriage between the Shipper (which is very often the Freight Forwarder) and the Carrier.

When the e-freight project started, there was no standard for e-AWB. Therefore up to end of 2012, it is possible for e-freight shipments to "move" with a paper AWB. However from January 2013, e-freight mandates e-AWB, which means that the use of e-AWB becomes a necessary condition for a shipment to be considered e-freight.

e-AWB can be implemented on a broader scale than e-freight: In particular, a traffic route does not have to be an e-freight trade route to be eligible for e-AWB. We refer to the answer to the question “Where can the e-AWB be implemented?” for detailed explanations about the traffic routes where the e-AWB can be implemented. Also some stakeholders do not wish for the time being to remove other paper documents than the paper AWB so they can do e-AWB now and decide to do e-freight later on.

Who has defined the e-AWB?

Airline and freight forwarder representatives worked together as part of the e-AWB Advisory Group to define the e-AWB in 2008 and 2009. Their work resulted in the publication of the Recommended Practice 1670 in March 2009.

The e-AWB Agreement has been endorsed by FIATA (the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Association), was adopted by the Cargo Service Conference and approved by several governments around the world including the US Department of Transportation.

What are the future adoption targets for the e-AWB?

The airline industry target is 15% e-AWB penetration on feasible lanes by the end of 2012.

From 1st January 2013, e-freight will mandate e-AWB. This means that the use of e-AWB will become a necessary condition for a shipment to be considered e-freight.

The vision is to achieve 100% e-AWB on feasible lanes by the end of 2014.

As of beginning of 2012, several airlines in Asia and Middle East have already achieved a penetration of 100% of e-AWB on their local market.

The industry initiative to move away from the paper AWB to e-AWB is endorsed by FIATA (the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Association) who encourages its members to adopt the e-AWB. Also many local freight forwarder associations have clearly and formally expressed their support e.g. Canada, Israel. The communications from these organizations are available under www.iata.org/e-awb.

Will IATA communicate project results to everyone?

As this is an industry wide program, the involvement of all stakeholders and parties is crucial to IATA. Therefore information will be made available for the entire industry. Update on the progress of the e-AWB are distributed by the IATA Cargo team and posted on our website: www.iata.org/e-AWB.

How can I find out more information about the e-AWB?

Further information about the IATA e-AWB can be found at: www.iata.org/e-awb

Contact IATA Cargo team at: cargo@iata.org

e-AWB and international conventions

Where can the e-AWB be implemented?

International conventions provide the regulatory framework under which international cargo shipment take place. Amongst other things, they specify the maximum liability limit supported by a carrier when performing a carriage.

Three conventions impact the use of AWB:

- The Warsaw Convention (entered into force in 1929);
- The Montreal Protocol 4 (MP4; entered into force in 1998);
- The Montreal Convention 99 (MC99, entered into force in 2003).

Each country decides if it wants to sign the convention and from when it will apply on its territory.

The Warsaw Convention requires the use of paper AWB. The paper Air Waybill must accompany the shipment from origin to destination.

MP4 and MC99 allow the use of an e-AWB in lieu of the paper AWB. No paper AWB is required to accompany the shipment.

In case both origin and destination country have signed the same convention (for instance MC99) then this convention is applicable to the shipment. In 2011, 80% of the international cargo volume was performed on MP4 or MC99 trade routes. On top of adequate international conventions, the local laws applicable to the shipment must be favorable to e-AWB, in particular they must accept electronic contracts.

Some countries have not signed any international convention. In this case, the local legislation specifies how the contract of carriage should be structured, in particular the use of electronic vs. paper contract.

IATA is monitoring the e-AWB penetration on international shipment on which either MP4 or MC99 are applicable, considering that these treaties provide a favorable and secure legal foundation for e-AWB and e-freight. Carrier and forwarder may however agree to use e-AWB on a broader scope.

NOTE: Shippers and carriers are reminded that IATA e-AWB is a discretionary program, and it is up to shippers and carriers alike, based on their internal legal analysis, to determine how they should ship and document cargo. IATA provides recommended tools for accomplishing e-AWB transactions such as Cargo-IMP messaging and the e-AWB Agreement. However, such tools do not affect in any way the pre-existing legal regime with regard to liability or the particular requirements that cargo insurance carriers may have when cargo is transported. The determination of how liability and insurance issues should be resolved continues to be the responsibility of the carriers and shippers.

Parties are cautioned that the use of electronic means in lieu of a paper air waybill may increase their liability exposure on traffic routes where electronic means are not recognized under international convention and local law.

What is the difference between Montreal Protocol 4 and Montreal Convention 1999?

Montreal Protocol 4 (MP4) serves to amend the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to the International Carriage by Air signed at Warsaw on 12 October 1929 as Amended by the Protocol done at The Hague on 28 September 1955 (the "Warsaw Convention"). Thereafter, a need to modernize and consolidate the Warsaw Convention and related instruments was recognized. This culminated in a new convention, the Montreal Convention of 1999 for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage by Air (MC99). The significance of these treaties, as mentioned, is that they provide a favorable and secure legal foundation for IATA e-freight and the e-AWB. There is in fact only one significant technical difference between the two treaties: MP4 requires the consent of the shipper prior to using the e-AWB; this "consent" is provided for in the e-AWB Agreement.

Importantly, carriers and shippers should bear in mind that both origin and destination countries must have ratified the same treaty. That is, both countries must have both ratified MP4 or the both must have ratified MC99. Conversely, if one country has ratified only MP4 the other country has ratified only MC99, it is conceivable that neither treaty would apply and the parties jeopardize their ability to assert the liability limitations afforded by the international conventions.

Which countries have ratified MP4 and/or MC99?

Montreal Protocol No. 4 was entered into force, generally, on 14 June 1998. Montreal Convention 1999 was entered into force, generally, on 4 November 2003.

The country of origin and country of destination must have ratified the same treaty for the limits to apply. For information regarding the status of ratification for each country, please refer to the Treaty Collection web page of ICAO:

<http://www.icao.int/Secretariat/Legal/Pages/TreatyCollection.aspx>

For a traffic route to be considered as under MC99 convention, is it sufficient that both origin and destination countries have signed MC99, even if there is a stop in a non MC99 country?

If origin and destination have signed MC99, it is an MC99 route even if a stop-over country has not signed MC99.

However the local authorities of the stop location may request access to a paper AWB.

Can the e-AWB be used on MP4/ MC99 trade lanes in case local authorities at origin and/or destination request access to AWB data?

Even if the convention MP4 or MC99 is applicable to a shipment, it may happen that some local authorities (e.g. customs) requests access to AWB information at origin, destination and or transit. This access may be requested in diverse form, for instance electronically or on paper. Even when a paper print out of the AWB is requested by a local authority, an e-AWB can be used on MP4 or MC99 trade lanes, as soon as the carrier and the shipper have agreed to the use of electronic contracts and the local laws applicable to the shipment allow the use of electronic contracts like e-AWB.

[The industry is maintaining an excel file which documents the requirements of each country regarding the need to access to AWB data and how they request to access to such data.](#)

Legal aspects of e-AWB

Is there a model agreement for the e-AWB?

Yes, the model agreement for e-AWB was developed by airline and shipper/forwarder representatives and published in 2010 as Recommended Practice (RP) 1670. This agreement should be signed once by carrier and shipper prior to the exchange of e-AWB EDI messages.

This agreement specifies:

- the electronic messages that will be used to create the electronic contract
- the conditions for the contract of carriage
- the layout of the Cargo Receipt, which evidences the conclusion of the electronic contract of carriage. The cargo receipt shall be produced by the Carrier upon Shipper's request.

RP1670 provides a standard bilateral agreement between carrier and shipper (forwarder). It is recommended that the parties amend the contract as little as possible to minimize the duration of the legal discussions. When possible, it is recommended the bilateral agreement to be signed between headquarters of carriers and forwarders, but this is not always possible (it depends on the legal structure of the contractual parties).

Note that the first version of the model agreement for e-AWB was revised in 2012, to incorporate the lessons learned from the first e-AWB implementations. The main amendments relate to the addition of:

- The so-called Warsaw concept: An airline can print, on behalf of the forwarder, the paper AWB based on data received in the AWB electronic message for Warsaw routes. This optional feature is documented in Annex D of the revised RP1670. This approach simplifies the interface between the shipper and the carrier: The shipper never needs to bring a paper AWB together with the shipment, whatever is the destination for the shipment.
- The Direct Shipment: Forwarders can generate electronic AWB data messages on behalf of their customer-shippers

The Recommended Practice 1670 (both the original and the revised version) can be found at: www.iata.org/e-AWB.

How many versions of the Standard e-AWB agreement are there, and what are the differences between them?

There is only one current version of the standard e-AWB agreement, which is the one documented in the IATA Cargo Services Conference Manual. It is published on the IATA e-AWB website (www.iata.org/e-awb).

Working collaboratively, IATA and FIATA developed a “model agreement for electronic data interchange (EDI)” as a substitute for the traditional paper air waybill which was adopted by the Cargo Service Conference in October 2009 as Recommended Practice 1670 (RP1670)

The bilateral e-AWB agreements signed by the industry during the following year were analyzed to identify amendments that would be beneficial to both airlines and freight forwarders.

The changes were discussed and endorsed by the key industry working groups (including the e-AWB Advisory Group) and also by FIATA through the IATA/FIATA Consultative Council (IFCC).

Recommended Practice 1670 (RP1670) was amended to cover these changes and adopted by the Cargo Services Conference in June 2012 which is now the one published in the IATA Cargo Services Conference Manual and published on the IATA e-AWB website.

The main changes included in the revised RP 1670 are the following:

1. Replace the term “shipper” with “freight forwarder” in the EDI Agreement.

While parties are free to leave the term “shipper” as the contracting party, the Conference felt that it would be more accurate to include the term “freight forwarder” in the Recommended Practice as the contracting party since in most cases, the entity capable of sending and receiving “EDI” messages will be a freight forwarder.

2. Single EDI process for freight forwarder irrespective of the route.

The original version of the EDI Agreement was designed strictly for non-Warsaw routes (except Warsaw as amended by Montreal Protocol 4). Under trade routes governed by the Warsaw Convention (where the origin and destination countries have signed the Warsaw Convention) the airline must issue a paper air waybill, and the paper air waybill must accompany the cargo. This limitation obligated the freight forwarders to undertake the cumbersome process of first determining which international convention governed the particular route on which the cargo would travel and then sending either an EDI message or completing a paper air waybill.

The enhanced RP1670 allows the freight forwarder to rely on just one process (sending an EDI Message) transferring the decision of determining which Convention governs the route to the airline. If the cargo will fly on a Warsaw route, then the airline will receive the EDI message, and with the information on the EDI Message generate a paper air waybill and sign such paper air waybill on behalf of the shipper. The new feature is optional and stakeholders can decide whether they want to include it or not in the signed agreement.

3. Enable freight forwarder to conclude cargo contracts on behalf of its shipper clients.

Instead of having the freight forwarders shipper client signing an EDI agreement directly with the carrier, the revised RP1670 includes the provision to enable the freight forwarder to send EDI messages on behalf of its client.

Through the new EDI agreement, the freight forwarder will be able to:

- Confirm that it has the authority to enter into a contract for the shipment of cargo on behalf of its client
- Agree to the carrier's conditions of contract on behalf of its client

Provide consent to use electronic means in lieu of a paper air waybill on behalf of its client

Are IATA and FIATA working on a multilateral e-AWB agreement?

Airline and forwarder representatives are working on the development of a multilateral agreement in 2012. The vision is that a party entering this multilateral agreement will access to a community of business partners (e.g. a forwarder signing the multilateral agreement will be able to perform e-AWB with all carriers that have signed the multilateral agreement).

What are the e-AWB legal requirements to implement e-AWB?

- Download the RP1670 and review it
- Negotiate e-AWB agreement with relevant business partners
- Airlines may have to update their contracts with their GHAs so that they foresee the use of electronic documents.

Business processes aspects of e-AWB

Under what conditions can a shipment be processed as e-AWB?

Only shipments fulfilling the following conditions are eligible to be processed as e-AWB shipment:

- a. The carrier and the forwarder have signed an e-AWB agreement; and
- b. The route of the shipment is eligible for e-AWB as specified in the e-AWB agreement; and
- c. The forwarder and the airline exchange air waybill and ready for carriage status data.

When all the above conditions are fulfilled, the carrier can process the shipment as e-AWB.

How does the e-AWB work?

There are two main practices (not exclusive) that are being implemented in the Industry to incorporate the e-AWB process into the day-to-day freight operations:

- **'Immediate Cargo Receipt Delivery' option**
 - **Step 1:** Both parties (Carrier and Shipper) must sign an e-AWB Agreement prior to implementing the e-AWB. This should be done only once, preferably at Corporate Level to ease the administrative burden of having multiple e-AWB Agreements locally).
 - **Step 2:** Shipper sends the electronic AWB message to carrier prior to tendering the shipment. Typically a FWB message shall be used (Cargo-IMP) or the corresponding Cargo-XML message.
 - **Step 3:** Shipper tenders the shipment to carrier prior to flight departure.
 - **Step 4:** Carrier accepts shipment in their system as "Ready for Carriage".
 - **Step 5:** Carrier immediately sends a status update electronic message to shipper, concluding the Cargo Contract. Typically a FSU-RCS message can be used (Cargo-IMP) or the corresponding Cargo-XML message.
 - **Step 6:** If required by the shipper, the carrier provides the shipper with the Cargo Receipt as proof of contract.

➤ **'Interim Cargo Receipt Delivery' option**

- **Step 1:** Both parties (carrier and shipper) must sign an e-AWB Agreement prior to implementing the e-AWB. This should be done only once, if possible, at corporate headquarters level to ease the administrative burden of having multiple e-AWB Agreements locally).
- **Step 2:** Shipper sends the electronic AWB message to carrier prior to tendering the shipment. Typically a FWB message shall be used (Cargo-IMP) or the corresponding Cargo-XML message.
- **Step 3:** Shipper tenders the shipment to carrier prior to flight departure.
- **Step 4:** Carrier receives the shipment as **"Freight on Hand"**.
- **Step 5:** Carrier provides shipper with a **"Warehouse Receipt"** or counter sign a Shipper's Delivery Note. For purposes of this option, the Warehouse Receipt will be deemed an interim cargo receipt to be used by the parties until the Carrier can produce the EDI based "Cargo Receipt" described in Step 8. This Warehouse Receipt can take the form of a paper document and / or of an electronic message (Typically a FSU-FOH message can be used (Cargo-IMP) or the corresponding Cargo-XML message).
- **Step 6:** Carrier accepts shipment in their system as "Ready for Carriage".
- **Step 7:** Carrier immediately sends a status update electronic message to shipper, concluding the Cargo Contract. Typically a FSU-RCS message can be used (Cargo-IMP) or the corresponding Cargo-XML message.
- **Step 8:** If required by the shipper, the carrier provides the shipper with the Cargo Receipt as proof of contract.

It is recommended to use the Special Handling Code ECC (electronic cargo contract) to identify shipments using an e-AWB.

What are the e-AWB operational requirements for an airline when implementing e-AWB?

- Define a step-by-step operational procedure of how to handle the e-AWB shipment
- We refer to the answer to the question "How does the e-AWB work?" for more detailed instructions
- Train the operational staff

When should the Special Handling code ECC be used?

The Special Handling Code ECC (electronic cargo contract) is used to identify shipments using an e-AWB.

The code should be assigned by the carrier, as the carrier is in the best position to decide if a specific shipment can be processed as e-AWB or not. Using the ECC code has the following operational advantages:

- It evidences that an e-AWB is used for the shipment
- It alerts operational staff to accept consignments without a paper AWB
- It alerts interline carriers of an e-AWB consignment
- It harmonizes the communication between parties
- It can be used to identify in what cases the cargo receipt shall be made available to the forwarder

Can a shipment be processed as e-AWB even if the shipper did not mark the shipment as EAP or EAW?

The fact that the forwarder assigns the code EAP or EAW to a shipment should not be interpreted by the airline as a request to handle the shipment as e-AWB. The e-AWB agreement signed between the airline and the shipper specifies what shipments should be processed as e-AWB.

The airline should ultimately decide for each and every shipment if this shipment should be processed as e-AWB or paper AWB, considering its properties (origin, destination, nature of the goods...) and what has been agreed in the e-AWB agreement regardless of the codes EAP or EAW. [The industry recommends that the ECC code is assigned by the airline](#) to e-AWB shipments.

Should a paper air waybill be printed at the time of freight acceptance as a proof of contract in an e-AWB environment?

A paper AWB should not be printed at the time of freight acceptance.

In case a proof of the electronic contract is needed, the cargo receipt should be used. The carrier must make the cargo receipt available to the shipper. It can be on paper or electronically, as agreed between the parties.

Note: In the event that a party chooses to use a document in the form of a paper air waybill as a Warehouse Receipt or as a Shipper's Delivery Note, any mention or reference to the conditions of contract shall be disregarded and considered null and void. Additionally, when using a document in the form of a paper air waybill, the form should include a clear indication on its face that it is a "Warehouse Receipt" (or Shipper's Delivery Note) only and not an air waybill to avoid confusion.

How is the relation between airline and ground handler (GHA) impacted by e-AWB?

Carriers typically outsource the acceptance of cargo and handling of cargo to GHAs.

The correct flow of information between shipper, carrier and GHA is a pre-requisite to e-AWB:

- Shipper provides AWB data electronically to carrier, that then forwards the data to the GHA
- The GHA performs the acceptance and sends the status update message to the carrier, that then forwards the electronic data to the shipper (forwarder)

GHA do not need to sign the e-AWB agreement. However carriers may have to adapt the contract and operational procedures with their GHA to take advantage of electronic transactions and removing paper from the process.

What is the Warsaw concept?

The Warsaw concept is offered by some airlines for Warsaw shipments: An airline can print, on behalf of the forwarder, the paper AWB based on data received in the AWB electronic message.

This optional feature is described in Annex D of the revised RP1670.

This approach simplifies the interface between the shipper and the carrier: The shipper never needs to bring a paper AWB together with the shipment, whatever is the destination for the shipment.

In case of a Warsaw shipment, how can the GHA be informed about the shippers for which it should accept shipment without a paper AWB contract?

Sometime the GHA has access to the IT system of the airline: In that case, the information can be made available to the GHA through this system.

When not using the airline system, the airline must provide the GHA with an up to date list of forwarders with whom it has signed an e-AWB agreement that includes the Warsaw concept (Annex D). There is no industry recommendation on the technical way to achieve this, as this highly depends on the way the GHA and the airline are used to work together.

In case of a Warsaw shipment with stopping place(s), is it possible to print the paper AWB contract not at origin but at one of the stopping places (or even at destination)?

We assume here that the e-AWB agreement signed between the airline and the forwarder includes the annex D as specified in the revised RP1670 (Warsaw Concept).

The Warsaw Convention requires the use of a paper AWB contract that must travel with the shipment. Hence it is necessary to print at origin the paper AWB contract for a Warsaw shipment.

In there an industry recommendation for the processing of Charges Collect shipments when an e-AWB is used?

There is no formal industry recommendation regarding the processing of Charges Collect shipments when an e-AWB is used.

For information, we can describe one of the possible processes (this does not constitute an industry recommendation):

- Activities that are similar to the ones performed for a regular AWB:
 - Electronic AWB messages are received by airline as for a regular AWB (for instance FWB and FHL using Cargo-IMP)
 - Physical cargo is received at airline warehouse as for a regular AWB
 - The consistency between the FWB + FHL and the received goods is verified as for a regular AWB
 - Shipment is assigned and loaded to a flight as for a regular AWB
 - The staff at origin and destination have access to the shipment record (the e-AWB)

- Activities that are specific to Charges Collect AWB:
 - The airline staff at origin will identify within all shipments of the flight the ones with AWB collect charges
 - A report is sent electronically to the destination listing these AWB with collect charges
 - The airline staff at destination will print out a copy of the paper AWB for these shipments in order to collect the payment before releasing the cargo.

How do you process Letter of Credit (LoC) in an e-AWB environment?

The paperless letter of credit process have not been investigated in details. The e-AWB Advisory Group decided that for the time being this would be looked at by industry stakeholders that would feedback IATA.

Some airlines as part of their e-AWB implementation did some investigations with some banks and implemented the LoC under e-AWB. One of the most important comments is that it should be managed by the shipper/forwarder and the consignee at house waybill level and not at air waybill level.

When managed at the air waybill level (typically in case of a direct shipment) industry stakeholders provided to us some information that can be summarized as follow:

- e-AWB will have the bank as consignee
- e-AWB will have a notify party
- The airline will give a copy of the AWB printed from electronic record
- The notify party will go to the bank to get an endorsement letter from the bank
- The notify party with the endorsement letter from the bank will come and pick up the cargo

Under this process one copy of the AWB has to be printed from electronic record and accepted by the bank.

The UCP600 that governed LoC is now completed with an eUCP600 that allows for electronic submission of LoC and supporting documents. It has to be noticed that if agreed upfront between the parties and under certain conditions, electronic can already replace paper submission.

Technical aspects of e-AWB

What are the system integration scenarios for the e-AWB?

Carrier and shipper must exchange electronic messages that create the electronic contract of carriage:

- Air waybill (AWB) data message is sent by the forwarder to the airline
- Status message is sent by the airline to the forwarder to indicate the acceptance of the contract

The AWB data and the Status message together forms the electronic contract of carriage, which can be evidences using the Cargo Receipt.

Industry standards have been developed by the industry for these messages:

Type of message	Cargo-IMP	Cargo-XML
AWB data	FWB	Waybill
Status message	FSU-RCS	Status update RCS

What are the e-AWB implementation (EDI) technical requirements for an airline?

- Ability to receive AWB messages (typically Cargo-IMP FWB message or the Cargo-XML equivalent)
- Ability to send status update messages (typically Cargo-IMP FSU-RCS message or the Cargo-XML equivalent)
- Electronic archival capability (AWB and status update messages constitute the Shipment Record and should be archived)
- Ability to produce the Cargo Receipt on demand
- Recommended: Ability to print a document with the layout of the first page of the paper AWB to satisfy the requirements of customs in some countries
- Recommended (Warsaw concept): Ability to print a paper AWB contract based on data received electronically

What are the e-AWB (EDI) technical requirements for a Shipper when implementing e-AWB?

- Ability to send AWB messages (typically Cargo-IMP FWB message or the Cargo-XML equivalent)
- Ability to receive status update messages (typically Cargo-IMP FSU-RCS message or the Cargo-XML equivalent)

Electronic archival capability (AWB and status update messages constitute the Shipment Record and should be archived)

What are the functionalities that should be provided by a Web Portal to support e-AWB?

- Support the acceptance of the terms and conditions for the carriage (equivalent to the EDI e-AWB agreement)
- Provide a mask for the entry of AWB with data validation
- Generate & visualize e-messages (FWB, FSU-RCS, XML)
- Provide status of previously submitted e-AWB
- Provide access to Cargo Receipt & allow printing e-AWB paper copies
- Provide an functionality to generate the label to be put on the pouch in place of the paper AWB

Recommended: Produce a document with the layout of the first page of the paper AWB to satisfy the requirements of customs in some countries

In case the AWB data are transmitted using Cargo-IMP, which version of FWB should be used?

It has to be noted that older version of the FWB message are sufficient to support e-AWB but IATA recommends the use of the most recent version of electronic messages to meet Regulatory requirements and to be as efficient as possible.

Cargo-IMP specifications are published in the Cargo-IMP manual which [can be purchased on line](#).

The industry plans to sunset IATA Cargo-IMP manual by the end of 2014: Changes to IATA standard EDI messages will only be done to IATA XML messages afterwards. New messages will only be developed in Cargo-XML format.

It is now recommended to adopt IATA Cargo-XML as it improves compliance to Customs and Security requirements though better data quality by removing technical limitations inherent to Cargo-IMP. [The specifications for IATA Cargo-XML are available on line](#).

Implementing e-AWB

Where can I be trained on the e-AWB?

A formal training endorsed by IATA is available. Participants who passed the examination will get an IATA certificate. [The training can be accessed on line](#).

How can an airline participate in the e-AWB program?

Step 1: Go to www.iata.org/e-AWB and download and read the following documents:

- Revised model EDI Agreement (RP1670)
- e-AWB Functional Specification

Step 2: Identify the critical technology enhancements needed to support the e-AWB implementation in your organization. The answer to the question “What are the e-AWB implementation requirements for an airline?” can help you in this activity.

Step 3: Develop and test your e-AWB Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). The e-AWB SOP should describe the step-by-step process required to handle e-AWB shipments. The answer to the question “How does the e-AWB work?” can help you in this step.

Step 4: Sign an e-AWB Agreements with your technically capable forwarders and shippers. Whenever possible the agreement should be signed at the corporate headquarter level to limit the administrative burden of having multiple agreements locally. The model agreement for the data interchange (Recommended Practice 1670) can be found at: www.iata.org/e-awb.

For forwarders and shippers that are not technically capable to issue and receive electronic messages, you might decide to set up an e-AWB portal. See more information in the answer to the question “What are the system integration scenarios for the e-AWB?”.

Step 5: Prepare the e-AWB roll-out. The following are some suggested key activities to ensure a smooth transition:

- Train all personnel who will be involved in the day-to-day handling of e-AWB shipments
- Prepare contingency planning to minimize disruption to your day-to-day operations in case of go-live issues

Step 6: Start with your first e-AWB shipment

Step 7: Inform more of your business partners about your readiness with e-AWB. IATA has developed a free of charge tool to help practitioners to communicate about their e-AWB capability. Each airline can publish the list of airports where it is e-AWB capable using the e-AWB section of the [e-freight Matchmaker tool](#).

How can a shipper or a forwarder participate in the e-AWB program?

Step 1: Go to www.iata.org/e-AWB and download and read the following documents:

- Revised model EDI Agreement (RP1670)e-AWB Functional Specification

Step 2: Identify the critical technology enhancements needed to support the e-AWB implementation in your organization. The answer to the question “What are the e-AWB implementation requirements for a shipper?” can help you in this activity.

Step 3: Develop and test your e-AWB Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). The answer to the question “How does the e-AWB work?” can help you in this step.

Step 4: Sign e-AWB Agreements with the airlines with whom you plan to exchange automatically electronic messages. Whenever possible the agreement should be signed at the corporate headquarter level to limit the administrative burden of having multiple agreements locally. The model agreement for the data interchange (Recommended Practice 1670) can be found at: www.iata.org/e-awb

In case you are going to submit e-AWB through a web-portal, the acceptance of the EDI agreement is mostly managed through the portal.

Step 5: Prepare the e-AWB roll-out. The following are some suggested key activities to ensure a smooth transition:

- Train all personnel who will be involved in the day-to-day handling of e-AWB shipments
- Prepare contingency planning to minimize disruption to your day-to-day operations in case of go-live issues

Step 6: Start with your first e-AWB shipment

Step 7: Inform more of your business partners about your readiness with e-AWB. IATA has developed a free of charge tool to help practitioners to communicate about their e-AWB capability. Each forwarder can publish the list of airports where it is e-AWB capable using the e-AWB section of the [e-freight Matchmaker tool](#).

I am about to implement the e-AWB, do I need to inform my local Customs?

In general, you don't have to contact your local Customs authority to inform them of your intention when they are live with IATA e-freight.

In the case that they are non e-freight countries, the legal environment of the origin and destination countries should satisfy the minimum legal requirements of the e-AWB, which means they must:

- Have ratified the same international treaty, Montreal Protocol 4 (MP4) and/or Montreal Convention 1999 (MC99)
- Have passed local laws authorizing electronic contracts
- Have Regulatory authority (e.g. Customs) that is willing to either accept the electronic air waybill or is requesting by exception the printout of the electronic air waybill (generated from the electronic record).

IATA recommends that the airlines inform the local Customs authority at origin and destination of the upcoming e-AWB implementation and go-live.

What happens for those stakeholders that cannot send and receive EDI messages?

Some forwarders do not have the technical capability to issue or receive electronic message automatically.

An e-AWB web portal can then be made available to them. Some airlines are offering such portals to their Customers. Some local IT service providers e.g. CCS provide also such service to the Industry.

Finally some local forwarder association may decide to develop such portals.

We refer to the question “What are the functionalities that should be provided by a Web Portal to support e-AWB?” for more details.

Who is live on the e-AWB and where?

Each participants (in particular airlines and forwarders) can publish the list of airports where it is e-AWB capable using the e-AWB section of the [e-freight Matchmaker tool](#).

Is there a functional specification for the e-AWB?

Yes, IATA has developed and published the [e-AWB Functional Specification](#). This document provides an overview of the business process, business rules and electronic messages that could be implemented to support the e-AWB.

The e-AWB Functional Specification can be found at: www.iata.org/e-AWB

I've read the e-AWB reference documents, but need more information. Who do I contact?

You can contact the IATA Cargo team at cargo@iata.org