



IATA Digitalization Leadership Charter (DLC)

DLC Forum – September 2024 – Report

1. Executive Summary

The second IATA Digitalization Leadership Charter (DLC) Forum, held in September 2024, brought together key stakeholders from the air cargo industry, including airlines, freight forwarders, and IT providers. The primary objective of this forum was to advance the industry's digital transformation by reviewing the progress made since the first DLC Forum, finalizing the DLC Adherence Checklist, and translating proposed initiatives into concrete action plans.

Building on the foundation set during the May 2024 Forum, the discussions reinforced the commitment to the five guiding principles of the charter: developing a unified and collaborative digital strategy, enhancing organizational resilience, pursuing sustainable digitalization, achieving digital excellence, and using new technology ethically. The finalization of the DLC Adherence Checklist provided a structured framework to guide companies in assessing their readiness and adherence to the charter's principles. Additionally, the forum facilitated the transition of industry initiatives from conceptual discussions to structured implementation roadmaps, ensuring that tangible progress is made in digitalizing air cargo operations.

Several proposals were formalized to accelerate the adoption of the ONE Record standard, develop a comprehensive IT resilience and security framework, promote digital environmental sustainability, and establish an annual Air Cargo Technology Radar and Innovation Forum. These

proposals are to be further assessed in terms of value, feasibility, and potential impact.

2. Recap of the 1st DLC Forum

The inaugural DLC Forum, held in May 2024, marked a significant step toward fostering digital transformation in the air cargo industry. The discussions emphasized the urgent need to move away from legacy systems and adopt a modern, interoperable data-sharing framework. The forum provided a platform for industry leaders to articulate the key drivers for digitalization, such as the operational efficiencies enabled by real-time data sharing, the growing customer demand for transparency, and the necessity of aligning with environmental sustainability goals.

A major outcome of the first forum was the recognition of IATA ONE Record as the industry's central standard for digital data exchange. Participants acknowledged that transitioning to a unified, API-based approach was critical to optimizing operations, enhancing visibility across the supply chain, and reducing inefficiencies related to redundant IT infrastructures.

Furthermore, the forum identified several challenges to digital adoption, including IT resilience, data security, regulatory considerations, and stakeholder alignment. To address these concerns, IATA proposed the development of a Digitalization Leadership Charter Adherence Checklist to provide a structured roadmap for organizations embarking on their digital transformation journey. The checklist aimed to



define key milestones, measure digital maturity, and ensure alignment with industry best practices.

The forum concluded with a commitment from stakeholders to collaborate on digitalization initiatives, including the promotion of ONE Record, IT security frameworks, and sustainable digital solutions. The participants agreed that achieving these goals would require a mix of technical support, policy development, and cross-industry engagement.

3. Charter Adherence Checklist

One of the key outcomes of the second DLC Forum was the finalization of the DLC Adherence Checklist ([available here](#)). Designed as a practical tool, the checklist enables organizations to assess their digital transformation progress and ensure compliance with the charter's principles. The checklist is structured around five key areas:

Developing a Unified and Collaborative Digital Strategy

Organizations must ensure awareness and adoption of the ONE Record standard as an integral part of their digital transformation. This includes establishing a structured training program using IATA's e-learning and on-site training modules. Companies should develop and document a clear integration plan for incorporating ONE Record into existing systems and business processes. Additionally, active participation in the IATA Digital Cargo Working Group and leadership in industry events or local workshops is encouraged. Maintaining strong stakeholder communication and fostering a culture of collaboration are essential to achieving a unified digital strategy.

Enhancing Organizational Resilience

To build a resilient digital infrastructure, companies should contribute to and adopt an industry-wide IT resilience and security framework. This involves implementing robust cybersecurity policies, conducting regular IT system reviews, and ensuring governance structures are in place to manage digital security risks. Performing periodic resilience audits helps organizations identify vulnerabilities and strengthen their defenses against cyber threats.

Pursuing Sustainable Digitalization

Organizations must commit to transitioning from paper-based to digital operations wherever possible. The adoption of energy-efficient technologies should be prioritized to reduce emissions and improve overall resource utilization. Establishing clear procedures for minimizing electronic waste, using circular economy strategies, and developing industry best practices for sustainability will contribute to reducing the industry's environmental footprint. Collaborative efforts should focus on creating shared digital infrastructure to optimize efficiency, while clear metrics and reporting tools should be developed to measure progress.

Pursuing Digital Excellence

Staying ahead of technological advancements requires organizations to actively participate in annual innovation forums and contribute to the industry's technology radar. Companies should foster a culture of continuous improvement by encouraging experimentation with new technologies, developing internal innovation strategies, and engaging with other industry stakeholders to implement forward-thinking solutions. Regular assessments of the impact of digital innovations on operational performance are necessary to ensure sustained improvements.

Using New Technology Ethically

Clear policies must be established for the ethical use of data and new technologies. Organizations should ensure inclusivity by making new technologies accessible to all stakeholders and complying with existing legal and regulatory requirements for data protection. Ethical considerations in data sharing and transparency should be prioritized, with structured programs to raise awareness and educate staff on responsible digitalization practices.

4. Industry Initiatives: From Proposal to Actions

A major focus of the second DLC Forum was moving from high-level proposals to assessing the feasibility and value of potential implementation strategies. Several key industry initiatives were



discussed, each aligned with the overarching goal of accelerating digital transformation..

Promotion and Implementation of the IATA ONE Record Standard

The primary objective of this initiative is to accelerate the adoption of ONE Record as the default data-sharing standard for the air cargo industry by January 1, 2026. To achieve this, IATA and industry stakeholders will drive awareness through global and community-led events and workshops. Additionally, the IATA Digital Cargo Working Group will provide guidance and best practices to facilitate the transition. Training programs will be developed, leveraging IATA's e-learning and on-site training modules to equip stakeholders with the necessary skills to implement ONE Record effectively.

Assessing the effectiveness of awareness campaigns and pilot programs will help determine the best approach for increasing adoption rates of ONE Record across different segments of the industry. A certification program could be evaluated for its ability to create clear implementation benchmarks and encourage more companies to transition to the standard. Training efforts would be analyzed to ensure that stakeholders gain the necessary expertise, resulting in smoother integrations and faster onboarding for new participants.

Collaborative Development of IT Resilience and Security Framework

With increasing cyber threats and IT disruptions, the need for a standardized resilience framework is critical. This initiative aims to explore the development of an industry-wide IT security framework by leveraging best practices and existing standards. A dedicated task force could be considered to define key security protocols, including authentication methods, access controls, and risk management strategies. Regular security audits, penetration testing, and incident response training could be assessed for feasibility to ensure continuous improvement. Furthermore, collaboration with IT solution providers will help in identifying vulnerabilities and improving cyber defense mechanisms.

A feasibility study will be conducted to determine the most effective way to enhance risk mitigation practices across the industry. Periodic security assessments could be evaluated for their impact on strengthening IT resilience, while structured response training could be reviewed for its potential to reduce the time required to detect and neutralize cyber threats. By assessing the implementation of robust access controls and compliance measures, organizations will be better positioned to enhance their overall security posture and minimize operational disruptions.

Digital Environmental Sustainability Program

This initiative aims to leverage digitalization as a tool for reducing the environmental footprint of air cargo operations. The initiative includes transitioning to paperless processes, optimizing IT infrastructure for energy efficiency, and reducing electronic waste. Industry participants could be encouraged to share best practices for sustainable IT management, including cloud computing solutions that lower energy consumption. Measurement tools and KPIs could be developed to assess progress and track the impact of digital sustainability initiatives.

A detailed analysis could be conducted to determine the expected reduction in energy consumption and waste generation through paperless processes and IT system optimization. The potential impact of cloud-based and shared IT infrastructure on resource efficiency could be measured. The development of sustainability KPIs would be reviewed for their ability to enable continuous monitoring of progress, ensuring accountability and commitment to reducing the industry's environmental impact.

Air Cargo Technology Radar and Innovation Forum

To ensure the air cargo industry remains at the forefront of technological advancements, this initiative proposes an annual Technology Radar and Innovation Forum. The technology radar could identify emerging digital trends, such as AI-driven analytics, blockchain applications for cargo security, and IoT-enabled shipment tracking. The forum could serve as a collaborative platform where stakeholders can share insights, discuss pilot



projects, and explore the adoption of new technologies.

The feasibility of the technology radar would be assessed to determine its effectiveness in facilitating the early identification of transformative technologies. The forum's potential to serve as a hub for knowledge-sharing and collaboration would be evaluated to ensure it fosters industry-wide discussions on new solutions. Companies would be encouraged to explore pilot programs and share findings, helping accelerate the adoption of cutting-edge tools to improve operational efficiency.

5. Conclusion and Next Steps

The September 2024 DLC Forum reaffirmed the industry's commitment to a digitally connected and resilient air cargo ecosystem. The finalization of the DLC Adherence Checklist provides a structured approach to guiding companies through their digital transformation journeys, while the next steps involve assessing the feasibility and value of key industry initiatives before moving toward structured implementation plans.

As the next steps, IATA will work closely with industry stakeholders to further evaluate the proposed initiatives and monitor adherence to the charter's principles. Additionally, follow-up discussions will be scheduled to track the feasibility assessments, with milestones and performance indicators established to measure success.

With continued collaboration and commitment, the air cargo industry is well-positioned to achieve its digital transformation objectives, driving operational efficiencies, improving resilience, and ensuring a sustainable and ethical approach to technological innovation.