



## EXPORT PROCESS GUIDELINES FOR e-AWB IN USA

USA

Version: 1

Date of issue: September 2017

### I. Objective:

Establish guidelines in export airfreight using the electronic air waybill (e-AWB).

### II. Scope:

This document delivers a reference for issuing e-AWB in the air export process in USA.

### III. References:

List of documents and regulations that need to be consulted to ensure due compliance on air export operations by air from USA.

Executive Order – Streamlining the Export/Import Process for America’s Businesses  
<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/02/19/executive-order-streamlining-exportimport-process-america-s-businesses>

[www.cbp.gov/ace](http://www.cbp.gov/ace)

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#### IV. Implementation plan and minimum requirements to issue e-AWB.

Once the location (country, airport) is declared e-AWB friendly, either completely or through the implementation of the *Single Process* the stakeholder will have to check if they comply with the minimum requirements to issue e-AWBs.

E-AWB and e-freight will become the new standard to handle air shipments in the coming months. Many airlines and agents have already modified their processes and we strongly recommend all the partners to adopt the change in order to guarantee their business continuity.

#### **COMMUNICATE**

As a major project, it will affect your employees' habits and procedures. To ensure the success of your processes, keep all your staff informed from the beginning about the scope, objectives, benefits, and phases of the project.

- **Management:**  
Decision makers to nominate a project manager and approve the main topics
- **IT department:**  
Have to understand the standards and message flows.
- **Operations:**  
Review and amend the current processes.
- **Warehouse/GHA:**  
Understand the new flows and codes specifying if the shipment has to be tendered with, or without paper documents.
- **Sales:**  
E-freight can represent a competitive advantage for your company (better control, security of information, improved transit time, transparent information, real-time based information etc.)
- **Business partners:**  
Talking to other airlines, agents or their corresponding association(s), attending informative sessions, conferences or workshops, you will gather the most updated information regarding standards and best practices.

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### BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AIRLINES and/ or AIRLINES' REPRESENTATIVES

#### Sign an e-AWB Agreement

Two options exist:

- IATA **Multilateral e-AWB Agreement (MeA)** – best practice.

The Multilateral e-AWB Agreement (IATA Resolution 672) provides a single standard agreement that airlines and freight forwarders can sign once with IATA, and start doing e-AWB with other parties to the agreement.

For more details visit:

<http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/e/eawb/Pages/multilateral-airlines.aspx>

- Alternatively, a **Bilateral Agreement** with each freight forwarder/ direct shipper.

IATA cannot provide any assistance on the negotiation, handling and storage of the bilateral agreements. If the airline decides not to be part of the MeA and prefers to sign bilateral e-AWB agreements, it should contact each Agent in order to manage and sign an agreement before issuing any e-AWB (test included).

#### IMPORTANT: ACTIVATION NOTICE

The airline should start doing e-AWB at a location only after sending the Activation Notice to the corresponding freight forwarder.

The multilateral e-AWB agreement comes into force between an airline and a freight forwarder at a location only upon airline sending an Activation Notice to freight forwarder (pursuant to Resolution 672, Attachment A, Article 3.1).

#### Ability to receive and send electronic messages

This is a basic and mandatory requirement for the Airline to communicate with the cargo agents, Customs, other Authorities and Ground Handlers.

Messaging Industry Standards:

- **IATA Cargo-XML**

*This standard is compatible with the WCO requirements and guarantees an easy flow of information not only between airlines but also with the Authorities, cargo agents and any other business partners.*

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- **Cargo-IMP version 32** or higher, which allows the emission of the FWB v16.  
*Cargo-IMP standard was sunset by IATA in December 2014, meaning no further version will be developed. It is highly recommended for everyone to move to Cargo-XML as soon as possible.*

### **Implement the Single Process**

The single process brings 2 important benefits to both airlines and agents.

- 1. It allows the carrier to implement the e-AWB, in most of the countries where the paper is still legally required.**
  - The cargo agent sends the FWB or XFWB to the carrier or its representative and makes the needed modifications as applicable.
  - The driver tenders the shipment to the carrier without any paper MAWB, and the carrier decides whether to print a paper AWB. For certain countries due to regulatory or technical requirements the carrier will communicate accordingly if they need additional information to be delivered by the cargo agent.
  - If not expressly required by an international convention or local regulation, the paper AWB should not be flown.
- 2. Whatever the destination is, the cargo agent has only 1 standard process with the carrier, which makes its operations much easier, and facilitates the e-AWB adoption as 100% of the airline's destinations become e-AWB.**
  - Provide your stations with an up-to-date information on origins and destinations needing a paper document
  - Order the necessary hardware.

### **Keep the IATA Matchmaker up-to-date!**

The IATA Matchmaker is a web-based tool developed and hosted by IATA.

<https://matchmaker.iata.org/efReport/airlinesAndAirportsAgrReport>

It contains very valuable information for your customers and the whole industry, like:

- Stations where a given airline can legally accept the e-AWB
- Stations where a given airline operates the Single Process

**This information is crucial to facilitate the e-AWB adoption.** It is the carrier's responsibility to ensure its correctness as part of the information to its customers.

- Check the information contained in the matchmaker for your corresponding stations on a regular basis.
- Should you notice any discrepancy, please liaise with the person in charge at your headquarters.
- If you don't know who the person in charge is in your company, please contact your IATA Cargo representative.

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### If you are a GSSA/GHA

Talk to your represented airline's manager to review and agree your processes:

- Information workflow
- Acceptance and handling of the shipment with or without paper documents (Single process, Yes/No?)
- Connectivity with airline's system or direct access to the airline's computers

### **BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CARGO AGENTS**

The e-AWB is an industry initiative. Being an IATA accredited and/or CASS participant is not a requirement.

#### **Sign an agreement proving the legal framework to the e-AWB issuance**

- **IATA Multilateral e-AWB Agreement (MeA)** – signed once with IATA.

The Multilateral e-AWB Agreement (IATA Resolution 672) provides a single standard agreement that airlines and freight forwarders can sign once with IATA, and start doing e-AWB with other parties to the agreement.

For more details visit:

<http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/e/eawb/Pages/multilateral-forwarders.aspx>

To check if your partner airline has signed the MeA at a given Airport, please refer to the web-based tool IATA Matchmaker.

<https://matchmaker.iata.org/efReport/airlinesAndAirportsAgrReport>

➔ **In case you notice a discrepancy, contact your corresponding IATA representative.**

The IATA Matchmaker web-based tool also brings you the possibility to check which airlines are ready to do e-AWB, by country and airport.

#### **Ability to, issue electronic messages.**

Issuing an e-AWB is, basically, **sending a FWB or XFWB message** containing all the information usually contained in a paper MAWB to the carrier's system.

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**Different solutions are available to you:**

**a. E-AWB issuance option in the Airline's webpage or portal**

This kind of solution is suitable for small companies or to perform test shipments. It does not require investment.

Liaise with the airline's customer service department in order to be granted credentials. This option is generally basic and does not offer any connection with your own computer systems. Check the different options of web portals with the corresponding airline.

**b. IATA eAWBLink Tool**

IATA have developed a web-based solution for small/medium forwarders to enable them to become e-AWB capable. This tool will allow forwarders to create, manage and send e-AWBs, e-HAWBs and e-CSD; track shipments, receive status alerts, print on demand every document, stock management and use C-XML or C-IMP message formats. For more information visit [www.iata.org/eawblink](http://www.iata.org/eawblink)

**c. Other ready-to-use Solutions**

Some system providers also offer cloud-based solutions. Depending on the chosen provider and/or options, the cargo agent will be able to issue e-AWB, create templates, save the records for legal purposes, translate the records in different formats compatibles with your own system, and generate e-freight shipments (i.e. HAWB, House manifest, etc.)

**d. Home-built Solution**

This solution usually requires a development of your existing system (if not done already). When choosing this option, the agent shall consider the following important points:

***Messaging Industry Standards:***

The most standard your system is, the most accurate the information will be.

Accuracy and integrity of the information are critical to the success as it save operational costs and transit time.

The air cargo industry commonly uses 2 different messaging standards:

- **IATA Cargo-XML**

This standard was developed by IATA with the support of FIATA. Based on the WCO's recommendations, it is thought to answer the whole supply chain needs (Airlines, Authorities and Cargo Agents) and to make easier any further updates.

- **Cargo-IMP version 32 or higher**, which allows the emission of the **FWB v16**.

This standard is the airlines' legacy standard developed by IATA, still used by many of them. However, Cargo-IMP standard was sunset by IATA in December 2014, meaning that no further updates will be developed.

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It is highly recommended to adopt the Cargo-XML. You can acquire the Cargo-XML implementation toolkit through your IATA representative. Should you be an IT provider developing a solution based on Cargo-XML, IATA will provide you with the information related to the licenses purchase.

### Which IT provider to choose?

- IATA does not provide a list of accredited providers. In our webpage <http://www.iata.org/about/sp/Pages/partners.aspx> you will find a list of the IATA strategic partners (companies working with us on establishing new standards). IATA does not recommend them over other companies. IATA should not be held responsible for their services.
- Contact your current IT provider and talk to them about the Cargo-XML or other standards.

### Perform Tests

#### a. Contact an airline of your choice and test the data exchange

An e-AWB with incorrect/ partially received data is like a paper AWB with incorrect/missing information: it may generate delays.

Ask to one of your business partners to **accept FWB or XFWB messages and analyse the quality of reception:**

- Transmission time has to be **fast and consistent**
- Contents have to be **accurate**
- Agent will check that acknowledgement (FMA/ XFNM)/ correction request (FNAs/XFNM)/ status update (FSU/XFSU) **messages received from the airlines or its representative arrive in due time and complete.**

→ **A shipment is considered safe when the associated message quality is 95% or more.**

#### b. Choose a carrier to ship pilot shipments

Day has come to ship your first shipments!

- All your **staff has now been trained on e-Cargo.**
- **Inform internal and external** stakeholders about the pilot (no MAWB accompany the shipment).
- **Track and fix any potential problem** with the corresponding business partner, until you reach the desired quality.
- **Make the e-AWB a systematic procedure** as early as possible with the chosen airline.
- Repeat the operation with other airlines.

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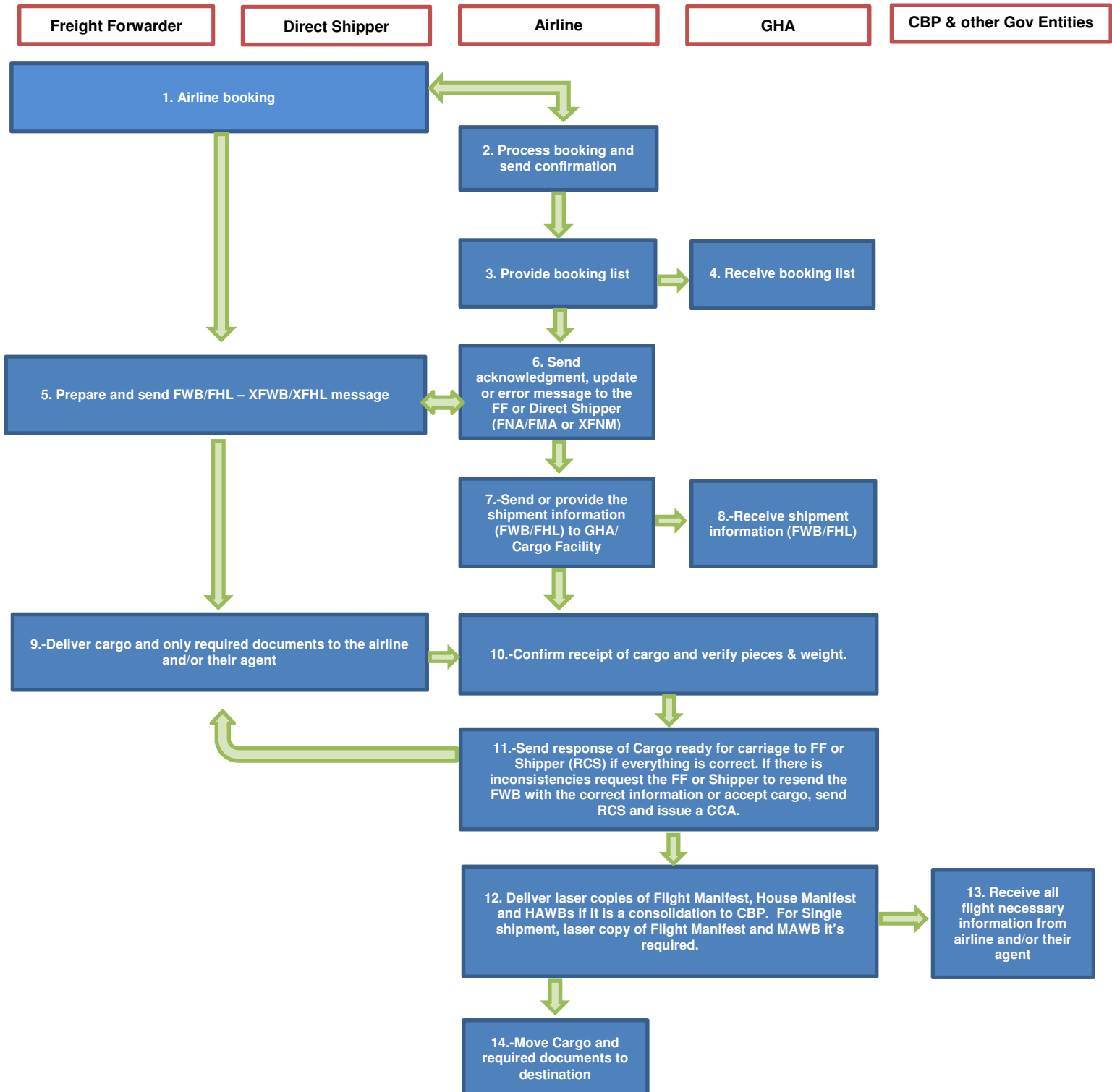
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## Current Export Process



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### V. Current Export Process:

Responsible	Activity
Freight Forwarder or Direct Shipper	1. Contact airline and make booking, this reservation can be done by telephone or through electronic means (recommended). Declare if it is an e-AWB shipment.
Airline	2. Process booking and send confirmation to the agent or direct shipper.
Airline	3. Provide initial booking list information to departure airport, either to local airline staff and/or ground handling agent.
GHA	4. Receive booking list.
Freight Forwarder or Direct Shipper	5. Prepare and send electronic message of master air waybill (FWB/XFWB) and house air waybill manifest list (FHL/XFHL) or submit information through the airline web portal with the final and most accurate data, containing EAW (without pouch) or EAP (with pouch) codes as applicable.
Airline	6. Check that all information is in order and send message of acknowledgment, update or error as applicable to FF or direct shipper. (FNA/FMA or XFNM). If error or missing data is found, request the FF or direct shipper to send a new FWB/FHL message.
Airline	7. Send or provide the shipment information (FWB/FHL) to the GHA / Cargo Facility, either by resending the messages or providing access to the airline system.
GHA	8. Receive shipment information from the carrier (FWB/FHL).
Freight Forwarder or Direct Shipper	9. Deliver cargo and only required documents to the airline and/or their agent.
Airline / GHA	10. Confirm receipt of freight and verify pieces & weight.
Airline / GHA	11. If everything is correct send response of "cargo ready for carriage" (RCS message) to FF or direct shipper. If inconsistencies are found request the FF or direct shipper to send a new FWB message with the correct information or accept cargo, send RCS and issue a CCA.
Airline/ GHA	12. Deliver laser copies of flight manifest, house manifest and house air waybills to CBP if it is a consolidation. For single shipments laser copy of flight manifest and master air waybill are required.
CBP / Other Gov. Authorities	13. Receive all flight necessary information from the carrier and/or their agent.
Airline	14. Move the cargo and required documents to destination.

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### VII. Glossary:

- **FWB:** Waybill message.
- **FZB:** House Waybill message.
- **FHL:** House Manifest message.
- **FFM:** Flight Manifest message.
- **FSU:** Freight Status Update message.
- **FNM:** Response message.
- **FFR:** Booking message.
- **RCS:** Ready for Carriage message. RCS indicates that the consignment has been physically received from shipper or FF and is considered by the carrier as ready for carriage on this date at this location. In an eAWB environment, the electronic contract of carriage (Cargo Contract) is established once the airline issues the FSU RCS message (or its Cargo XML equivalent) to the shipper / FF.

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