



Fact Sheet

e-Freight and the e-Air Waybill

Background

E-Freight is an industry-wide program that aims to build an end-to-end paperless transportation process for air cargo made possible with a regulatory framework, electronic messages and high quality of data.

Initiated by IATA in 2005, the e-freight program became an industry-wide initiative involving carriers, freight forwarders, ground handlers, shippers, customs brokers and customs authorities. The e-freight roadmap outlines a shared end-to-end industry approach with clear leadership roles, around three core pillars:

1. Engaging regulators and governments worldwide to create an e-freight route network with fully electronic customs procedures and, where regulations support, paperless shipments
2. Working collaboratively within the cargo supply chain to digitize the core industry transport documents, starting with the Air Waybill (AWB)
3. Developing a plan to digitize the commercial and special cargo documents typically accompanying airfreight today, in or outside of the Cargo pouch

Benefits

- **Operational Efficiency:** Through the reduction of the end-to-end processing time (up to 24 hours)
- **Cost effectiveness:** Through the reduction of document processing and archiving costs
- **Data Quality:** Improved data quality and accuracy (e.g. auto-checks, mandatory fields)
- **Innovation:** Standardization and digitization are key enablers for the development of new innovative services and solutions, thus increasing the value of the air freight to shippers (e.g. real time status update)
- **Sustainability:** Eliminating more than 7,800 tons of paper documents annually, the equivalent of 80 Boeing 747 freighters filled with paper
- **Regulatory compliance:** Facilitates compliance to international and local regulations (e.g. facilitate Advance Electronic Information (AEI) requirements for security purpose)

e-AWB industry objectives

The objectives of the e-AWB programme have been largely achieved. Over 85% of all air cargo transport is now using e-AWBs.

Key achievements

In order to address the e-AWB adoption challenges and to sustain the growth in the penetration rate, the following supporting initiatives have been achieved:

- **IATA Resolution amendments:** Since 1 January 2019, the electronic Air Waybill (e-AWB) has been the default contract of carriage for all air cargo shipments on enabled trade lanes. This key industry milestone ushers air cargo into a new era where digital processes will be the norm and paper processes will be the exception.
- **e-AWB Global Standard Operating Procedures (SOP):** A major revised version of the e-AWB Global SOP has been published which aims to describe the operational steps that stakeholders of the air cargo supply chain should follow when using e-AWB. This document should help to simplify the implementation of e-AWB and will progressively replace the existing SOP at airport level.
- **e-AWB Implementation Playbook:** The purpose of the e-AWB Implementation Playbook is to provide a step by step guide to implement e-AWB. The document has been designed as a pointer to the various resources made available by IATA, either the standard components or additional pieces of information/guidance materials.
- **Special Handling Codes (SHC) and Other Charge Codes (OCC) Compliance Monitoring Tool:** IATA developed a tool for airlines to monitor their implementation and compliance to IATA standard SHC and OCC as per the standard list defined in the Cargo XML toolkit.
- **e-AWB encouragement:** IATA published a set of best practices to increase the adoption of e-AWB and facilitate its adoption.

Note: The work associated with this program has been transferred to the [ONE Record](#) project.