e-AWB QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE
FOR AIRLINES

ESSENTIALS ABOUT e-AWB

Background

↗ The Air Waybill (AWB) is the contract of carriage between the "shipper" (very often the freight forwarder) and the airline. The electronic Air Waybill (e-AWB) is an electronic cargo contract that is an alternative to the paper AWB contract

Scope

↗ Trade lanes where origin and destination countries have both ratified one of the two international convention allowing e-AWB (Montreal Protocol 4 (MP4) or Montreal Convention 1999 (MC99)).

↗ The Local Regulators must be willing to accept e-AWB or a printout of the e-AWB if and when the paper AWB is required.

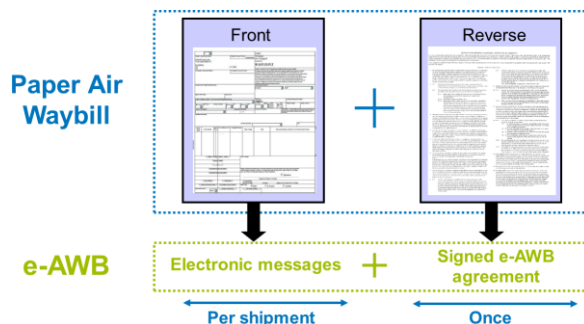Treaties and Regulators acceptance are available at www.iata.org/e-AWB.

Benefits of e-AWB

↗ Reduction in processing costs following the removal of paper AWB.
↗ Reduction in data entry errors because AWB data is entered once.
↗ Reduction in handling delays due to missing AWB.
↗ Elimination of the need to physically file paper AWB (electronically archived).
↗ Real-time access to AWB information for all personnel from all locations.
↗ Support regulators' efforts to use electronic data for automated processes.
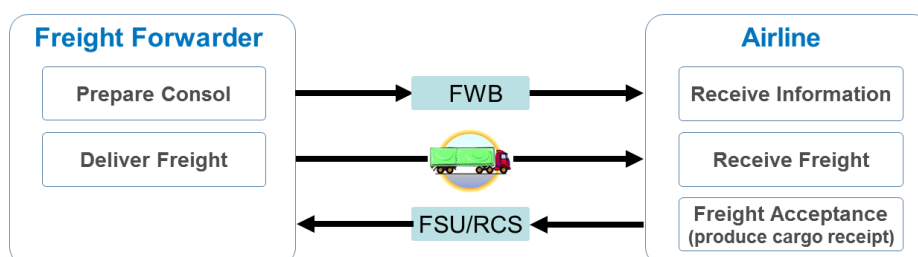↗ Environmentally friendly as less paper wasted.

How does e-AWB work?

↗ The information contained on the face of the paper AWB is replaced with electronic messages.
↗ The reverse side of the paper AWB, which provides the conditions of contract, is replaced by an e-AWB agreement, which is signed once between the airline and freight forwarder. The conditions of contract remain the same.

↗ The freight forwarder sends for each shipment an AWB message (Cargo-IMP FWB message or its Cargo-XML equivalent) to the airline.
↗ The airline sends to the freight forwarder a status update message (Cargo-IMP FSU-RCS message or its Cargo-XML equivalent) when the cargo has been received and is ready for carriage. This establishes the electronic cargo contract.

YOUR CHECKLIST TO IMPLEMENT e-AWB

Can you carry on your activities without paper AWB?

↗ The AWB is often used for other purposes than the contract of carriage with the freight forwarder.

↗ Together with your ground handlers, review your processes and make them paperless: the electronic document is as good as its paper version!

↗ To help you, IATA developed an e-AWB functional specifications and recommendations. Feel free to use it for your own operations.

www.iata.org/e-AWB-process.

Do you have the technology to support e-AWB?

Your software should be able to:

↗ receive the AWB messages (FWB or Cargo-XML equivalent)

↗ send status update messages (FSU-RCS and -FOH or Cargo-XML equivalents)

↗ archive these electronic messages

↗ produce Cargo Receipts and make them available to freight forwarders

↗ print on-demand AWB information if need be

What if some customers are not capable to manage electronic messages yet? Many IT providers developed ready-to-deploy e-AWB portals that your customers can use to generate electronic messages – check the list on IATA website.

www.iata.org/e-cargo-technology.

Do you receive high-quality electronic messages?

↗ The quality of the electronic messages should be close to 100% as there will be no more paper AWB.

↗ IATA can help you identifying your data quality issues through the Message Improvement Program (MIP) – it is free!

www.iata.org/mip.

Have you joined the IATA multilateral e-AWB agreement?

↗ If not yet, download the agreement, sign and send the submission form to IATA - it is free!

http://www.iata.org/e-awb-multilateral.

Have you engaged all your business partners?

↗ To facilitate the global rollout of e-AWB, it is recommended that you inform your partners (airlines and ground handlers) of your ability to use e-AWB for each of your stations. Your partners shall do the same.

↗ IATA can help you document your e-AWB capabilities and finding out your partners' with the e-Cargo Matchmaker tool – it is free!

www.iata.org/cargo-matchmaker

Are you ready to go-live with e-AWB?

↗ Decide at what airport you want to roll out e-AWB first. Typically the airline main hub is used.

↗ Train the personnel who will be involved in the day-to-day handling of e-AWB shipments

↗ Go live with selected freight forwarders.

↗ Move as quickly as possible to 100% e-AWB with them and then roll-out e-AWB for all shipments from this airport.

↗ Roll-out e-AWB to your other stations!

Find out more at www.iata.org/e-AWB
For any question, contact cargo@iata.org