LET'S GET DIGITAL
With the Electronic Air Waybill

“In our quest to continuously improve our innovative position, you have proven to be a true partner.”

Frank Roderkerk, Managing Director at Rhenus Air Ocean Netherlands
e-AWB: fully digital and paperless

An e-Air Waybill (e-AWB) is an electronic version of the paper Air Waybill. When transporting your cargo, there could be up to 34 documents involved. Some of these documents already have a digital equivalent. Now, more and more people are using the digitalised version of the Air Waybill. This e-AWB is our first step towards e-Freight: building a completely paperless supply chain, saving you time and money. So let’s get digital together, creating a smooth shipping process for all your cargo.

How does the e-AWB replace paper?
The e-AWB is the digital transportation contract we receive from you, our customer. It consists of the Freight Air Waybill (FWB; the equivalent of the front page of the classical AWB) and the EDI multilateral agreement (the digital equivalent of the reverse paper AWB). By signing the EDI multilateral agreement, you accept the conditions of carriage now, and in the future.

When using e-AWBs, you never again need to print, handle or archive a paper AWB. The e-AWB will update the operational systems at the airline. It will get its legal status upon delivery of the cargo, when we send the ReCeived from Shipper (RCS) message.

Airlines have signed EDI multilateral agreements with IATA. As a shipper or forwarder you can do the same and get connected.

Paperless really does mean paperless for you
We use what we call the “single process approach.“ Customers don’t need to deliver a paper AWB for any final destination. If a paper AWB is required at final destination we will take care of printing the documents.

How do I switch to e-AWBs?
First, you sign the EDI Multilateral Agreement with IATA. By signing this agreement, both forwarders (or shippers) and airlines subscribe to the intention to use e-AWBs instead of paper AWBs.

When we check and approve the quality of your FWB messages we activate your account, and you receive an activation notice. If you are a freight forwarder with multiple offices, give us the list with your different IATA/ CASS or URN codes. We will activate the e-AWB contract by sending the activation notices to each given location.
Now you can replace all paper AWBs by e-AWBs. There are different ways you can send a FWB:
A. Via your own IT system.
B. Via 3rd parties, providing the possibility to send FWB’s.

As soon as a station is ready for handling e-AWBs (FWB messages), our central e-Freight project team will open it. A majority of stations are already eligible for e-AWBs.

--- Shorter handling time
The e-AWB offers many benefits, including a shorter handling time. Because there is no separate documentation process flow next to the physical cargo process flow, a lot of time is saved. We can offer e-Fast Delivery to all our e-Freight customers in Amsterdam and a faster delivery process to all our e-AWB customers in Charles de Gaulle and Amsterdam as they can receive an electronic Delivery Notice allowing them to anticipate the customs clearance process.

Furthermore, the e-AWB ensures your shipment information arrives at its destination quicker than with paper AWBs, complying with the latest rules. Customs regimes (in the US, for example) are demanding to work with digital messages. They also require information to be available much earlier. This is not possible with paper AWBs, so we all have to get ready to adapt to this new way of working via electronic messaging.

--- How can I use e-AWBs?
You can enjoy the benefits of e-AWBs by taking three steps:
1. Sign the multilateral EDI agreement (you can check if this is done on the IATA website).
2. Connect your shipping experts to ours, to discuss details of sending FWB messages and organising the activation notice.
3. Send your first e-AWB.
Everything you need to know about...

Multilateral e-AWB agreement and activation notice

Is there a fee charged by IATA for freight forwarders to join or participate in the multilateral e-AWB agreement? No, it is free of charge.

Are we obliged to use e-AWBs after joining the multilateral e-AWB Agreement? No, the agreement does not oblige you to use the e-AWB.

What is an activation notice? Before you can use the e-AWB, the airline and freight forwarder need to decide about the locations where they will start using e-AWBs. Together they can validate and ensure the e-AWB operational readiness of both parties (such as business processes, electronic communication and data quality). The activation notice is a formal way for airlines to confirm these decisions to forwarders, before using the e-AWB.

What is a deactivation notice? As our customer you can deactivate your e-AWB (for example in case of temporary IT problems). In this event we will send a deactivation confirmation notice.

What happens if an activation notice is sent without confirmation from the freight forwarder? The multilateral e-AWB agreement states that the activation notice must be sent only after mutual confirmation of locations and starting dates. Any activation notice that is not agreed upon by all involved parties is considered invalid.

Is the activation based on origin-destination, or does it apply for all destinations from an airport location? The activation is for all destinations leaving an airport.

The role of freight forwarders

Both I, a freight forwarder, and my airline partner have joined the multilateral e-AWB agreement. Can we start using e-AWBs right away? No, you can start using the e-AWB when you receive your activation notice from us.

Do I need to send an activation notice to my airline partner(s), as a freight forwarder? No, we as the airline always send the activation notice.

Is it possible to start with a limited set of products or destinations per freight forwarder? No, when an activation notice is agreed upon, the freight forwarder mentioned is always fully committed to the e-AWB.

If I start using e-AWBs, can I choose the destinations? You can use e-AWBs for all destinations. When you have signed an EDI multilateral agreement and received an activation notice, your cargo can be forwarded without a paper AWB. In case a paper AWB is needed at the final destination, we will take care of it at our hubs (CDG or AMS).

What should I as freight forwarder do if I do not agree with the details of the activation notice? Please notify us immediately that the activation notice has not been accepted.
Where can I find the Special Handling Codes (SHC) related to the e-AWB? There are three SHC for the e-AWB:

- The Electronic Contract of Carriage (ECC) is inserted by airlines automatically.
- The Electronic AWB Without Pouch (EAW) is a completely paperless shipment. This SHC needs to be inserted by the forwarder when a shipment has neither a paper AWB, nor a pouch.
- The Electronic AWB with Pouch (EAP) is an e-AWB with a paper pouch.

Is the format of the e-AWBs the same as the paper Air Waybill? Yes.

Can I ship special cargo using e-AWBs? When shipping animals, perishables or any other type of special cargo, your first step is to replace the Master AWB. You can ship special cargo under Single Process, but a FWB containing all necessary information (such as Product Codes and Special Handling Codes) is still required. Also SPL EAP must be included. Other required documents in paper format (such as Shipper’s Declarations and CITES) must still accompany shipment.

What do I need to do when a FWB is rejected? You should receive a FNA explaining why this FWB was rejected. You can change the FWB and resend it.

Which regulations and specifications have to be considered when exchanging Air Waybill data electronically? The FWB message is the electronic equivalent of the front of the paper Air Waybill. This means that any regulation and completion instructions, which apply to the Master AWB, also have to be considered when exchanging data electronically.

How can FWB and/or FHL information be transmitted to the carrier? Messages can be transmitted via Cargo-IMP messages or Cargo-XML messages, of which the former is the more commonly used, but the latter is considered the future standard. There are many IT software solutions available for freight forwarders.

“With the e-AWB your have endless possibilities, and using it means you’re ready for the future.”

Kevin Spans
Project Manager and Consultant
at AIR FRANCE KLM MARTINAIR Cargo

Can I update the FWB information? Yes, you can update the FWB message as often as necessary, until the shipment has received a so-called RCS-status from us. Any update to the FWB or FHL must be sent as a complete new FWB or FHL message. There is no limit to the number of FWBs you can send for each shipment. Only the last sent version of FWB will be used. Any FWBs sent after the RCS-status will be rejected.

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What if I need to make changes to the FWB after you set the RCS-status? Please contact us, as charges may be applicable.
How do I know that the FWB has been accepted? After transmitting the FWB, you directly receive automated feedback:
- FMA: FWB is accepted and your goods can be delivered
- FNA: FWB is not accepted: the error code must be updated and you should resend the FWB.

To prevent errors, please check whether the FWB message includes all the necessary information that used to be in the AWB.

To whom are the rejection messages (FNA) sent? The FNA is always sent to the originator, which is the freight forwarder (PIMA address ex CCA Champ Cargo Systems – former Traxon).

How long does it take to transmit a FWB, and receive a FMA or FNA response? Transmission of the FWB will normally only take a few seconds, after which the FMA or FNA is sent out. We recommend allowing a few minutes since sometimes multiple IT platforms are communicating with each other.

What information needs to be included on the pouch? For EAP shipments, or shipments with the e-AWB and additional documents in a pouch, there is an IATA recommendation.

Will there still be a delivery receipt? Yes, you have several options:
- RCS Message (electronically): your shipment was accepted and a transportation contract was signed.
- Cargo Receipt (physical): can be printed after acceptance of the goods.
- Shipper’s Delivery Note (physical): can be stamped directly at the delivery. Also, you can include the security status.

How can the relevant security information be transmitted via FWB? Security information ECSD and SPX can be transmitted in the FWB in a format as specified in the IATA CIMP manual.
- ECSD: Electronic Consignment Security Declaration
- SPX: Special code to place in FWB to show that cargo is secure

Example below for illustrative purposes only; please check CIMP Manual.

FWB/16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[..]</th>
<th>[..]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPH/SPX/EAW</td>
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<tr>
<td>////SD/01JUL151235</td>
<td>Issued on - date and time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“GOING THE E-WAY SPEEDS UP YOUR SHIPPING PROCESS AND MAKES IT MORE TRANSPARENT. PLUS, IT’S BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.”

Lars Wever
Manager Documentation & Project Manager
e-Freight at AIR FRANCE KLM MARTINAIR Cargo
Useful definitions

Need to freshen up your shipping terminology? Here are a few useful definitions that will help you fully enjoy the benefits of going digital.

FWB: The FWB is the digital equivalent of the front of the paper AWB. Note that this does not contain any legal conditions of carriage.

EAW: Electronic AWB Without Pouch: all documents are substituted by an electronic message; even the Air Waybill (e-AWB/FWB). No paper pouch is handed to the airline by the forwarder.

EAP: Electronic AWB with Pouch. The AWB is substituted by an electronic message (e-AWB/FWB), but there is still a paper pouch with other documents attached to the shipment.

EDI: Electronic Data Interchange: the transfer of structured data by agreed-upon message standards, from one computer system to another. No human intervention is involved.

EDI agreement: Contract between a forwarder and an airline or IATA, in which the forwarder accepts the conditions of carriage on all FWBs sent in the future. The EDI contract replaces the paper AWB that used to be the contract. Signed with an airline (bilateral) or with IATA (multilateral).

ECC: Electronic Contract of Carriage. This signifies that the FWB replaces the paper AWB as the legally recognised contract between forwarder and carrier. This SHC is entered in FWB automatically by the airline noting that an EDI contract is signed. Meaning no paper AWB is required at acceptance of the shipment. The FWB must contain either EAW or EAP in order to be a potential e-AWB shipment.

Eligible network: The eligible network is the network where an e-AWB can be executed. This depends on the number of countries where local authorities accept digital documents instead of paper documents.

FHL: An IATA Cargo-IMP (Interchange Message Procedure) defined EDI message type. This message type is used to submit an extract of House Waybill data in an electronic way. The data is required for customs filing as well as regulatory compliance checks.

RCS: ReCeived Cargo Shipment is the Cargo-IMP status code to represent the current status of a consignment. RCS means that the consignment has been physically received from the shipper or the shipper’s agent, and is considered ready for carriage. It is set after the RCD (ReCeived Documents) and RCG (ReCeived Goods) or FOH (Freight On Hand) is completed. This status is provided in a Cargo IMP FSU (Freight Status Update) message.

Shipper documents: documents essential for forwarder distribution purposes and/or mandatory for customs clearance processes (role of the forwarder). Most of these documents have electronic alternatives; some are not allowed in electronic format.

Single process approach: when you have signed an EDI agreement (bilateral or multilateral) and accepted the activation, you can start using e-AWBs. No need to deliver your paper AWB to us, the airline. If a paper AWB is still used at final destination, the airline will take care of it.

Your many benefits of the e-AWB:

**Efficiency**
Saves you time and money, due to less handling of paper documents.

**Quality**
Digitally accurate data; no lost documents.

**Sustainability**
Lower carbon footprint.

**Confidentiality**
Data is more secure.

**Flight optimisation**
AWB information is received much earlier, ensuring fewer unexpected offloads.

**Improved invoicing**
Giving us the opportunity to replace manual adjustments on the paper AWB by electronic updates.

**Eye on the future**
The first step towards e-Freight, and a smoother shipping process.

For more detailed information about the e-AWB, please contact your local sales manager or check our website: www.afklcargo.com.