

New platform to enhance digital collaboration across air cargo industry

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has launched the IATA Enhanced Partner Identification and Connectivity (Epic) platform to support the digitisation of the global air cargo supply chain. EPIC simplifies the complex process of making digital connections across the air cargo value chain including enabling the efficient exchange of critical information such as messaging capabilities and identities.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

As the air cargo industry continues to digitalise, airlines, freight forwarders, ground handlers and customs authorities need to be able to securely work together digitally.

This is a considerable challenge as today more than 40,000 freight forwarders exchange messages with more than 450 airlines, and 23 third party messaging service providers. In the absence of a tool for companies to exchange the information needed to make these business links, the process of digitisation is essentially manual, slow and unduly complex.

"Epic is a simple idea. It makes the information needed to do business across a digitised air cargo supply chain easily accessible. And in doing so, it will accelerate efficiency gains for air cargo. The timing of this initiative is important. Covid-19 has led to the exponential growth of e-commerce and shippers are demanding quality services that only a digitized supply chain can provide," said Nick Careen, IATA senior vice president, airport, passenger, cargo, security.

In addition to supporting business-to-business processes, the participation of customs organisations in EPIC also supports digital customs clearance processes. In particular, this will help the efficient roll-out of Advance Cargo Information (ACI) requirements, including Preloading Advance Cargo Information (PLACI) programs.

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