



JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ ON ENHANCING AIR CARGO SECURITY AND FACILITATION – COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS TO FUTURE CHALLENGES

**MANAMA, BAHRAIN
17 APRIL 2014**

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the World Customs Organization (WCO), convened a Joint Conference on the subject of enhancing air cargo security and facilitation, in Manama, Bahrain from 16 to 17 April 2014. Hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Conference brought together international and regional organizations, regulatory authorities and other stakeholders to address current and future challenges in air cargo security and facilitation.

The event was attended by over 300 participants representing 42 States, and 50 international and regional organizations and industry stakeholders.

The Joint Conference acknowledged that a secure and efficient air cargo supply chain is essential for international trade and world economic development. In discussing the various challenges faced by the cargo industry today, ICAO and the WCO reiterated the importance of a global and cooperative approach to the establishment of a robust, sustainable and secure supply chain.

STATUS OF COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES

The first ICAO-WCO Joint Conference on this subject, held in July 2012 in Singapore, identified a number of action items for inclusion in a Joint Action Plan. Subsequently, ICAO and the WCO undertook a series of cooperative initiatives including:

- the publication of a joint brochure entitled “Moving Air Cargo Globally” in 2013;
- the development of a joint training module on air cargo security and facilitation;
- the development of a Joint Authorized Economic Operator/Regulated Agent pilot programme; and
- the creation of a Joint Working Group on Advance Cargo Information.

While the first Joint Conference paved the way for enhanced international cooperation, the Bahrain Joint Conference stressed the importance of coordinating secure supply chain implementation at the regional and national levels as a natural progression of these international initiatives.

The Bahrain Conference highlighted both current and future challenges to air cargo security and facilitation, and succeeded in identifying practical and sustainable solutions to these challenges.

COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The diversity of goods transported by air, the vast number of entities involved in the supply chain, and the reality of transnational operations in multiple regulatory environments, all underlie the security and facilitation challenges identified by the Conference.

As solutions to these challenges, the Conference proposed:

- coordinated implementation of risk-based, outcomes-focused air cargo and mail security measures that are adaptable to local circumstances while also complying with the ICAO and WCO regulatory frameworks;
- the development of air cargo and mail security measures and initiatives from a facilitation perspective that ensures sustainable implementation;
- the sharing of Customs and civil aviation statistics and analyses on the nature and volume of goods transported by air, including trade flows, for the purpose of designing air cargo and mail security regimes; and
- the promotion of initiatives such as the joint validation of entities, technical assistance, capacity building and training of supply chain personnel, based on shared experience and best practices.

EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Conference agreed that the streamlining of global supply chain documentation and processes is beneficial to both aviation security and facilitation. It reaffirmed economic and sustainable development of the air cargo and mail industry as a key objective, and underscored the role facilitation plays in bolstering the industry's competitiveness.

To enhance efficiency and sustainability, the Conference:

- encouraged further coordination of strategies within and between Customs and civil aviation authorities at the international, regional and national levels, with the involvement of other stakeholders including the Universal Postal Union (UPU);
- welcomed promising initiatives to replace paper documentation with electronic records for shipments ('e-freight initiatives') and introduce the Customs "single window environment", recognizing that these advancements can improve shipment traceability, eliminate or reduce unnecessary duplication, and allow for coordinated assessments by appropriate agencies, where required;
- recognized that advance cargo information, by contributing to risk assessments for cargo and mail, could enable adaptation of security controls early in the supply chain according to the risk associated with specific shipments, thus improving security while facilitating the movement of low-risk cargo; and
- recommended undertaking feasibility studies, impact assessments and operational pilot projects to evaluate and develop appropriate processes.

ICAO and the WCO further agreed that their cooperation should be expanded beyond efforts to enhance aviation security and facilitation to other air cargo and mail objectives in the areas of dangerous goods, economic development and environmental protection.