



International Civil Aviation Organization

**WORKING PAPER**

A39-WP/373

EX/147

7/9/16

**(Information paper)**

**English only**

**ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 16: Aviation Security — Policy**

**JOINT WCO-ICAO INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE AIR CARGO SECURITY AND FACILITATION**

(Presented by the World Customs Organization)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This paper describes co-operative initiatives by the World Customs Organization (WCO) and ICAO with regard to air cargo security and facilitation.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective C – <i>Security and Facilitation</i> .
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<i>Financial implications:</i>	
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<i>References:</i>	
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## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The international air cargo supply chain is a complex system of interconnected parties, places, movements and exchanges of information. That it operates effectively is of critical importance to global prosperity, but it is vulnerable to disruption.

1.2 In June 2011, the WCO and ICAO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the purpose of promoting greater co-operation on air cargo security and facilitation matters. The need for a closer working relationship had been recognised in the wake of the incident involving improvised explosive devices in cargo shipments originating in Yemen in October 2010.

1.3 In 2013, the 38th ICAO Assembly endorsed a roadmap for implementing the recommendations on air cargo agreed at the 2012 High-Level Conference on Aviation Security (HLCAS). These included collaborative working between international bodies and the definition of a framework for advance cargo information.

1.4 To take this work forward, the WCO and ICAO have initiated a number of joint projects in the field of air cargo and mail security and facilitation. The progress made since the last Assembly is summarised below.

## 2. JOINT ACTION PLAN

2.1 The WCO and ICAO agreed a Joint Action Plan following their first Joint Conference on 'Enhancing Air Cargo Security and Facilitation', held in 2012. This Action Plan is regularly updated to take account of developments. The Secretaries General of the two Organizations have more recently agreed that it should include other joint activities which could have relevance for cargo security, such as cargo economic issues, the use of advance data for passenger security issues, e-commerce, implementation of electronic communication channels for air cargo shipments (e-freight), the development of advanced screening technologies as key to sustaining a secure and efficient air cargo network; and that joint work could usefully be carried out in relation to emerging threats, such as attacks by insiders.

## 3. JOINT PUBLICATION

3.1 In July 2012, the WCO and ICAO Secretaries General decided to enhance the understanding of each other's work through the production of a Joint Brochure introducing the principal factors of the international air supply chain, with an emphasis on air cargo security and facilitation from both the civil aviation and Customs perspectives.

3.2 In June 2013, ICAO and WCO published the first edition of the Joint WCO-ICAO Brochure '*Moving Air Cargo Globally*', which was presented at the 38<sup>th</sup> ICAO Assembly in September 2013 by the Secretaries General of both Organizations.

3.3 The Joint Brochure provides information on the Customs and civil aviation regulatory frameworks, various operational aspects, security factors, facilitation processes and documentation of the air cargo supply chain together with various security and facilitation measures implemented by ICAO and

WCO Members. It also identifies the roles and responsibilities of various entities and highlights how they can work together effectively to secure air cargo and mail.

3.4 The second edition of the Joint Brochure was launched at the 3<sup>rd</sup> ICAO-WCO Joint Conference in July 2016. The revised text includes a section on the Economics of Air Cargo, information on the Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information (PLACI) and the role of the United Nations Office Drugs Control (UNODC), amongst other updates.

#### **4. JOINT TRAINING MODULES**

4.1 The joint ICAO-WCO Workshop on Air Cargo Security and Facilitation was piloted at the ICAO regional office in Bangkok, 28-30 April 2015. A second event, with updated resource material, will take place in Rabat, Morocco, from 17 to 20 October 2016 and a third is scheduled to take place in Geneva from 15 to 17 November 2016.

4.2 Details of the training modules have been provided to those WCO and ICAO Members who have expressed an interest in reviewing/enhancing them.

#### **5. JOINT WORKING GROUP ON ADVANCE CARGO INFORMATION (JWGACI)**

5.1 In 2014, a Joint Working Group of the WCO and ICAO was set up, comprising eight Members (and one additional Member to co-chair) from each side, as well as six representatives of relevant stakeholders. The purpose of the Joint Working Group was to discuss and recommend modalities for sharing and using ACI in carrying out security risk analysis by Customs and Civil Aviation Authorities, enabling them to mutually support each other and thus strengthen air cargo security. The JWGACI has met five times so far, between August 2014 and January 2016.

5.2 The fifth meeting of the JWGACI took place on 19 and 20 January 2016 in Geneva. In Phase II of its work, the JWGACI produced an Interim Report which documents the topics on which consensus has been reached and identifies several challenges that require additional practical experience and analysis in order to finalise the ‘concept of operations’ for the implementation of PLACI, which is the required deliverable under Phase II of the JWGACI’s Terms of Reference. The Interim Report is linked to this Agenda Item as a separate file. More detailed guidance will be developed as the necessary information becomes available from ongoing pilot projects and other sources.

5.3 The Interim Report was endorsed by the 9th Meeting of the ICAO Working Group on Air Cargo Security (WGACS) in January 2016 and by both the 10th WCO Technical Experts Group on Air Cargo Security (TEGACS) and the 27th ICAO Aviation Security Panel (AVSECP) in March 2016.

5.4 As a way forward, the JWGACI agreed that the Pilot States will provide a prioritised list based on the identified challenges, which will be subject to testing or further discussion. Arrangements for testing, including a provisional time-frame, will be agreed with the industry. The next JWGACI meeting will be convened when sufficient information is available from the testing, with a view to then concluding Phase II.

## 6. JOINT AEO/RA PILOT

6.1 The joint AEO/RA pilot project has begun in Viet Nam. The WCO and ICAO have completed the gap analysis process, on the basis of completed questionnaires, discussions with the Vietnamese Civil Aviation Authority and Customs administration and a visit to facilities in Vietnam, including Noi Bai airport.

6.2 Viet Nam has considered the necessary amendments to its legal framework to allow a Regulated Agent system to operate for a trial period and a practical phase of the project could begin if this is put in place. Any States which might be able to assist with capacity building as part of this or similar projects are invited to contact the WCO and ICAO Secretariats.

6.3 The Secretaries General of the two Organizations also agreed that more progress was needed on proposals to exploit the synergies between Regulated Agent and Authorized Economic Operator programmes. This could be achieved by closer analysis of information from nationally or regionally recognised schemes, current pilots and any new pilots launched in the context of regional development plans.

## 7. JOINT CONFERENCES

7.1 The WCO and ICAO have successfully held three Joint Conferences in Singapore (July 2012), in Bahrain (April 2014) and in Malaysia (July 2016). The theme of the 2016 Conference was 'The Path to Effective Implementation'. A fourth conference is being planned for 2018.

7.2 Following the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Conference, the WCO and ICAO will continue their work to:

- a) Enhance international cooperation to prevent acts of unlawful interference;
- b) Further encourage close coordination between authorities at the Regional and National level responsible for aviation security and Customs;
- c) Align policy and regulatory frameworks to achieve synergy, avoid duplication, and promote mutual recognition of air cargo security regimes and joint oversight activities;
- d) Update the Joint Action Plan;
- e) Prioritize promotion of implementation of electronic communication channels for air cargo shipments (e-freight);
- f) Encourage paperless environment i.e. Electronic Consignment Security Declarations and Air Waybills;
- g) Work together on issues of e-commerce;
- h) Develop advanced screening technologies as key to sustaining a secure and efficient air cargo network;
- i) Promote dialogue between regulators, the air cargo industry and equipment manufacturers to identify needs and develop a roadmap with clear milestones;
- j) Carry out joint work in relation to emerging threats, such as attacks from insiders and the possible use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems ('drones');
- k) Reinforce the close working relationships developed between aviation security and Customs regulators to other bodies dealing with the transport of air freight and cargo screening, such as the Universal Postal Union, the International Maritime Organization and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; and
- l) Promote capacity-building assistance to support the implementation of air cargo security and facilitation measures.

## 8. CONCLUSION

8.1 ICAO and the WCO have already achieved a considerable degree of success through cooperative working projects by aligning and strengthening regulatory requirements and raising awareness of air cargo security and facilitation issues. This work will continue through on-going projects and new areas of cooperation, also involving other international organizations and, where appropriate, private sector stakeholders.

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