



International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

FALP/5-WP/15
20/03/08
English only

FACILITATION PANEL (FALP)

FIFTH MEETING

Montréal, 31 March to 4 April 2008

Agenda Item 4: Other matters

ADVANCE PASSENGER INFORMATION (API)

(Presented by the European Civil Aviation Conference¹)

SUMMARY

This paper presents key principles for Advance Passenger Information (API).

Action by the FAL Panel:

The Panel is invited to note the contents of this paper.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Advance Passenger Information (API) involves the capture and transmission of certain elements of a passenger's biographic data and flight details by the carrier to the border control authorities in the destination country. With an ever increasing number of countries introducing or contemplating the introduction of API systems, a significant amount of work in the area of API has already taken place in the international arena.

¹ Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES FOR API

2.1 In Europe, Council Directive 2004/82/EC of 29 April 2004 relates to the obligation of carriers to communicate advance passenger data to national authorities. Under the Directive, Member States were required to take the necessary measures to comply with the Directive not later than 5 September 2006. The European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) has been keen to apply the same degree of emphasis as other international organisations in helping to ensure a consistent approach to the introduction of API systems. ECAC has also been conscious of the need to carefully consider protection of personal data.

2.2 With the above Council Directive in mind the ECAC Facilitation Working Group identified a benefit in developing key principles in this area. It was fully recognised that although the EU Directive on API would be uppermost in these deliberations, any statement of principles should be broad enough to apply to all ECAC Member States, including those to whom the EU Directive was not relevant.

2.3 The ECAC Facilitation Working Group adopted the attached key principles for API. After adoption by the ECAC Directors General, these principles were incorporated as Annex M to our regional Facilitation Manual, i.e., ECAC Doc 30, Part I. A copy of these key principles is attached for the information of the ICAO Facilitation Panel (see **Appendix**).

2.4 Interactive Advanced Passenger Processing (IAPI) is a system whereby required data elements are collected and transmitted to border control agencies prior to flight departure. A directive (for each passenger) is transmitted back to the airline either permitting or denying boarding. ECAC intends to keep a close eye on developments in this area and to encourage adoption of international standards and best practice to ensure consistency of application. In pursuing this objective, the ECAC Facilitation Working Group will maintain close liaison with ICAO, IATA and the WCO.

3. ACTION BY THE FAL PANEL

3.1 The FAL Panel is invited to note the contents of this paper.

APPENDIX

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR ADVANCE PASSENGER INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. Introduction

Advance Passenger Information (API) involves the capture and transmission of certain elements of a passenger's biographic data contained in the travel document and flight details by the carrier to the border control authorities. API has a number of applications. It can facilitate passenger travel and border control processes. It can also, where appropriate, be a useful tool for law enforcement and anti-terrorism purposes.

2. Key Principles

- i) Member States, when seeking to introduce an API system, should take account of these ECAC Guidelines.
- ii) Member States should consider international Standards and Recommended Practices contained in Chapters 3-47 to 3-47.3 of ICAO Annex 9 on Facilitation (12th edition, July 2005). API data consists of data found in the machine readable zone of the travel document. In cases where no machine readable data is held, the same data required from machine readable travel documents will be required from the travel documents.
- iii) Member States should consider WCO/IATA/ICAO¹ guidelines on API of March 2003 and IATA/CAWG² statement of principles for APIS of November 2003. These guidelines refer to data relating to the flight (header data) that are not included in ICAO Annex 9.
- iv) Member States should carefully consider the cost to operators arising from the various options for obtaining API data.
- v) Member States, when requiring API data transfer, should take into account the issues affecting other States and the aircraft operators in their territories, especially with respect to costs and the potential impact on existing infrastructure and operational processes.
- vi) API data should be transmitted in the UN/EDIFACT PAXLIST format³. However this should not be seen as constraining the ability to adopt other internationally agreed standards in the longer term.

¹ WCO: World Customs Organisation

² IATA/CAWG: IATA/Control Authorities Working Group

³ UN/EDIFACT PAXLIST format: specified in ICAO Annex 9, Standard 3.47.1

- vii) Before operational implementation of an API system, Member States should allow reasonable time for operators to establish efficient infrastructure and procedures in order to carry out the requirements effectively.
- viii) The data requirements should originate from a single representative of the requesting authorities (single window concept).
- ix) Stakeholders should be consulted before development and implementation of an API system as early as possible.
- x) Sanctions should only be considered when carriers, as a result of a fault, have failed to transmit data or have transmitted incomplete or false data. Should sanctions be used, operators must have effective means of defence.
- xi) Where appropriate all opportunities for the improvement of service quality and cost efficiency should be realised.
- xii) With regard to API requirements, and taking into account all relevant differences, consideration should be given to non-discriminatory treatment of air transport and other modes of transport.
- xiii) An API system should be user-friendly and seamless. Where appropriate, it should facilitate the travel of passengers.
- xiv) An API system should be capable of 24/7 operation. In order to minimise disruption to aircraft operations in the event of system failure, contingency procedures should be in place.

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