

The Electronic Airway Bill (eAWB) for Carriers

This guide explores how the eAWB is helping air carriers rise above industry and organizational challenges to realize meaningful benefits.

**Simpler.
Faster.
Better.**



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Why the eAWB Matters to Airlines

Air carriers face industry, government and operational pressures and are continuously challenged to modernize and to 'do more'. Shorter deadlines, rapid product lifecycles and innovative labor structures are prompting carriers to provide the highest level of service and value to customers. As a result, carriers know that they need to improve all aspects of business, from tender and transit, to delivery.

Add competitive rates, decreasing margins, shifts to other modes of transport, 100-ton airships and the rise of drone delivery; and airlines are compelled to operate as efficiently as possible to stay competitive.

Governments and customs authorities are also pressuring carriers for digital information hours in advance of wheels-up. Airlines must gather this information from supply chain participants and transmit the required data elements to ensure compliance.

The electronic Airway Bill (eAWB) is one method to address regulatory requirements and industry pressures as well as to maximize efficiency, increase customer visibility and provide additional services.

Carriers know that there is a prime opportunity with the eAWB, and are on-boarding the initiative at an increasing rate. With **Simpler, Better & Faster** technology enabling the eAWB, airlines are better equipped to provide long-term solutions that shippers will truly value and pay a premium to access.



Airlines are at the center of industry, regulatory and operational pressures. The eAWB is one technique that carriers are adopting to rise above challenges and add further value.

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The Benefits to Carriers

Significant Results in a Fast-paced Industry

Carriers who adopt the eAWB can realize rapid time-to-value. By replacing paper with digital information, airlines can reduce costs, speed processing and improve productivity.

Some of the specific benefits of the eAWB for airlines include:

- Better access to information driven by the electronic availability of documents
- Added connectivity and customer visibility
- Easier updates and correction of information
- Reduced costs with minimized paper storage and physical archiving; hard copies can be produced as needed on demand
- Accelerated regulatory compliance and a better ability to comply with global security filing initiatives
- Increased Information Technology (IT) security and the ability to maintain an audit trail
- Improved accuracy and consistency throughout the shipping process from booking through invoicing
- Decreased manual tasks including a significant reduction in the need to re-key information
- Increased shipment processing speed; airline agents only need to verify the pieces and weight to accept a shipment

In order for carriers to fully enjoy the benefits of the eAWB, however, other supply chain participants, such as forwarders, must supply digital airway bill information.



Customers expect excellence and speed from the air mode of transport. Methods that airlines can use to enhance business and improve efficiency are critical to staying profitable.

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The eAWB: Market Challenges for Carriers

Industry Perspectives & Changing Regulations

Carriers face a number of significant obstacles in regard to the eAWB. Some of these include:

Forwarder Adoption – With 80 percent of international air cargo tonnage stemming from forwarders, how an intermediary provides its airway bill information is of critical importance to carriers.

However, forwarders have been slow to make the transition to the eAWB, mostly due to a number of misconceptions regarding the initiative. For example, there is a common perception that it is complex and costly for forwarders to:

- Determine which trade lanes and airports are eAWB-enabled
- Establish what shipment scenarios qualify for an electronic airway bill
- Ascertain which message formats to transmit and when
- Clarify if they are responsible for all legs of a trip, even those legs that are not eAWB-enabled

Regulatory Compliance – The safety and security of cargo has always been a priority for air freight carriers; however, increasing regulations can offset operational efficiency. Some airlines have reported that the costs associated with security today are 10 times more than in 2001.



CARRIERS & GLOBAL SECURITY FILINGS

With global security filing regulations on the rise, the cost to stay compliant is increasing. As a result, some carriers are downloading the cost of these requirements to forwarders.

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The Single Process Approach

Simplifying Practices to Increase Forwarder Participation

In order to boost forwarder adoption, carriers are implementing a Single Process approach to the eAWB. As discussed previously, forwarders have been slow to adopt the eAWB since it is difficult to determine what information to send and what routes are eAWB-capable. The Single Process places the responsibility on carriers to:

- Determine whether a shipment scenario qualifies for an Electronic Contract of Carriage (ECC) or is an Electronic Contract Printed (ECP) shipment and requires paper
- Analyze applicable trade lane considerations, such as if a Country of Origin (COO) and the Country of Destination (COD) have ratified the Montreal Convention (MC99) or Montreal Protocol (MP4)
- Further determine if any additional local protocols must be adhered to, such as U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) requirements for the eAWB
- Apply any special handling or hazardous material codes to the shipment as required
- Help forwarders and Ground Handling Agents (GHAs) on-board and adopt the Single Process approach

In regard to the eAWB, the Single Process and technology, carriers should have multiple technology options to meet forwarder needs. The interface or system must be optimized for high volumes from larger forwarders and also have capabilities to handle smaller or lower volume filers.



HELPING TO REDUCE COMPLEXITY

The Single Process approach places multiple eAWB considerations on the carrier. Leading airlines are encouraged to contact technology providers who can assist with some of the validation processes and message translation complexity to reduce the IT workload on a carrier's business.

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Carriers: Helping to Drive Forwarder Adoption

Enabling Collaboration & Education for Industry Benefits

Many carriers are choosing to collectively or simultaneously rollout the eAWB in a given region, or as a group at a particular point in time. In addition, airlines are adopting informational outreach programs to educate forwarders on the benefits of the eAWB.

As discussed, overcoming forwarder objections remains a significant barrier to global eAWB uptake. Some forwarders were not aware of the benefits to their own operations or viewed the eAWB only as a method to reduce carrier fees.

Many logistics service providers are now working in conjunction with carriers and industry organizations to further leverage the information for better communication, to modernize business and to increase efficiency.

One of the foremost methods for both carriers and forwarders to work collaboratively is to unify under a single systems provider for the seamless exchange and reuse of data. By joining together and working in tandem, all parties can enjoy further value without the need for multiple points of integration or duplicate data entry. In addition, all of this can be performed without an in-depth knowledge of messaging formats.

Carriers are also partnering with systems providers with long-term industry experience and that can guide them through the steps needed for a successful eAWB implementation. The provider should be able to grow with a carrier's needs, offer extensible capabilities and free them to develop other avenues of business.



WORKING IN TANDEM TO REALIZE RESULTS

When carriers, forwarders and GHAs work together toward the common goal of modernization, all parties can realize mutual benefits. In order for the system to operate effectively, participants need to move in tandem and simultaneously.

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The eAWB: Self-Assessment Worksheet

Key Questions for Carriers While Approaching eAWB Implementation

When rolling out the eAWB, carriers should perform a quick analysis with a series of questions to identify capabilities and needs. Some questions include:

- ✓ *How are you currently receiving airway bill information from forwarders?*
- ✓ *When paper is required, are there processes in place to print hard copies on-demand?*
- ✓ *In regard to security filings, does your technology have room for you to expand into other regions?*
- ✓ *How much time do you spend re-keying information into back office systems?*
- ✓ *Have you considered joining a network with multiple stakeholders and partners already connected?*
- ✓ *If already using the eAWB, have you considered the Single Process approach? If so, how will you gather and translate data received from forwarders?*
- ✓ *Have you started to evaluate the technology capabilities of regional partners?*
- ✓ *How robust are the reporting capabilities within your existing technology?*
- ✓ *Have you considered partnering with a technology provider to enable the eAWB?*

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Descartes eAWB Solutions

A Simpler, Faster & Better Solution for Carriers

Descartes has been helping carriers move to more electronic processes for over 20 years. Descartes' solutions range from an advanced web-based interface to comprehensive air messaging. Our solutions are:

Simpler.

With Descartes, the eAWB is a streamlined and simple process. We offer the industry's leading communication and messaging infrastructure for air carriers. In addition, we can enable a streamlined web-based portal for airlines to meet expanding electronic compliance requirements and easily collect information from forwarders and GHAs.

Faster.

Our proven track record, expert technical support and industry experience has enabled Descartes to rapidly roll out the eAWB to carriers worldwide. Our broad offering of air cargo solutions helps the world's leading air carriers to quickly connect to their trading partners to improve performance and drive higher levels of customer satisfaction.

Better.

Descartes offers some of the most advanced capabilities available to standardize and automate air cargo and freight management operations, provide real-time shipment status monitoring and improve service by transmitting accurate and timely tracking updates to customers. Descartes' technology can expand with a carrier's needs in parallel to business growth as airlines expand into new regions and product offerings.

DESCARTES  **Leading the way in the eAWB**

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About Descartes

About Descartes Systems Group - Descartes (TSX:DSG) (Nasdaq:DSGX) is the global leader in providing on-demand, software-as-a-service solutions focused on improving the productivity, performance and security of logistics-intensive businesses.

Customers use our modular, software-as-a-service solutions to route, schedule, track and measure delivery resources; plan, allocate and execute shipments; rate, audit and pay transportation invoices; access global trade data; file customs and security documents for imports and exports; and complete numerous other logistics processes by participating in the world's largest, collaborative multimodal logistics community.

Our extensive customs and logistics domain expertise is embodied in a comprehensive technology platform designed to help brokers and forwarders more efficiently run complex international operations. On-demand solutions enable large and small organizations to take advantage of robust capabilities for bookings, security filings and customs entries, shipment and financial management.

Descartes' market-proven solutions automate the collection of shared data and multi-party shipment processes. Our advanced solutions can help brokers and forwarders extend the command of operations with their logistics partners to help meet their delivery performance objectives.



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