

Go Paperless

Become an actor in the e-freight programme! E-freight represents the ultimate digital cargo journey: freight shipments without any paper attachments. The goal of e-freight is to digitise paper documentation throughout the cargo supply chain, providing you with a faster, more cost efficient, accurate and reliable shipping process.



It pays to stay ahead

Today, paper still plays an important role in the air cargo industry. However, handling paper takes valuable time, paper documents can get lost and paper leaves an ecological footprint. E-freight shipments represent the ultimate digital cargo journey as they travel from origin to destination without any accompanying paper documentation.

Fully paperless shipments offer multiple benefits for all stakeholders in the supply chain:

- **Faster supply chain:** the ability to send electronic documents before the cargo itself can reduce the industry cycle times.
- **Cost savings:** the total air cargo industry can save up US \$ 4.9 billion annually.
- **Greater accuracy:** allowing electronic data entry at point of origin until RCS reduces shipment delays due to inaccurate or inconsistent manual data entry.
- **Increased security:** electronic documents are only made available to parties who require them for the completion of a shipment.
- **Regulatory compliance:** e-freight meets all international and local regulations relating to the provision of electronic documents and data required by customs, civil aviation and other regulatory authorities.
- **Environment friendly:** e-freight helps to reduce the environmental impact of the air cargo industry. According to IATA, the e-freight programme has the potential to eliminate almost 8 tonnes of paper documentation every year.

Types of documents to be digitised

To achieve the full potential of these benefits, e-freight aims to remove all paper documentation from the cargo journey.

- **Air Waybill:** One of the key documents in air cargo transportation is the Air Waybill (AWB): the document that serves as the contract of carriage between the shipper and the carrier. This document can now legally be replaced by its electronic variant: the e-AWB. Switching from paper to e-AWB is an important step in e-freight: read here to see how to activate your account and remove this paper document from your supply chain!
- **Security declaration:** The Consignment Security Declaration (CSD) provides insight into the complete security audit trail of a shipment according to a standard IATA format.
- **Special Cargo documents:** In order to transport special products, accompanying special cargo documents are often required, either attached to the cargo or in the document pouch. This includes a Dangerous Goods Declaration or certificates for live animals and perishables, for example.
- **Other transportation documents:** For many air cargo shipments, the first and last part of the journey is covered by road transportation, which uses paper documents as the contract of carriage (e.g. the CMR Waybill). To be able to achieve a fully paperless journey, these documents should also be digitised.

Digitisation of one of the key documents: the e-AWB

The e-AWB is the dematerialisation of the Master Air Waybill (AWB), which is replaced by an electronic message called the FWB. The House Air Waybill (HAWB) can also be dematerialised using the electronic FHL message.

The e-AWB refers to a transportation contract between a shipper/forwarder and an airline. With the e-AWB there is no longer a need to print, handle or archive a paper AWB. The contract obtains its legal status by an electronic combination of:

- The FWB message sent by the forwarder to the airline;
- The FSU/RCS message sent in return by the airline to the forwarder (legal transfer of responsibility of the shipment between the forwarder and the airline).

E-AWB is possible for every destination and product except Charges Collect and Letter of Credit shipments. Please always be sure to provide all other necessary paper documentation such as the Dangerous Goods Declaration, veterinary certificates, etc.

Improving data quality of your e-AWB

Because the e-AWB replaces the paper AWB as the legal transportation contract, it is vital for the data quality of the e-AWB to be as high as that of its paper predecessor. Good data quality is a prerequisite to take full advantage of the benefits of a paperless cargo journey and contributes to a fast acceptance process on delivery of the shipment.

For each e-AWB, you receive a response message from the airline in the form of an FMA or FNA message, indicating whether your message has been processed correctly (FMA) or whether it contained a syntax or content error (FNA). In the details of the FMA or FNA, you will see the MIP 2.0 codes and an explanation of the error, indicating where it was in the message. You can now also see details of your AWB validation on your MyCargo page.

e-AWB related Special Handling Codes

EAW: Special Handling Code used for an Electronic AWB shipment without accompanying documents and without Pouch. All documents, including the AWB, are substituted by an electronic message. This SHC is added in the FWB by the forwarder.

EAP: Special Handling Code used for an Electronic AWB with accompanying documents or Pouch. The AWB is substituted by an electronic message, but there is still a paper pouch with other documents attached to the shipment. This SHC is added in the FWB by the forwarder.

ECC: Special Handling Code used for Electronic Contract of Carriage: this signifies that the FWB replaces the paper AWB as the legally recognized contract between forwarder and carrier. The SHC is added to the FWB automatically by the carrier, noting that an EDI contract is signed and that no paper copy of the AWB is required.

ECP: Special Handling Code used for Electronic Contract of Carriage with Pouch. The SHC is added automatically to the FWB by the carrier, indicating that an EDI contract is signed but a paper AWB needs to be printed to comply to any applicable legislation. The carrier will take care of printing the paper AWB so the shipment can still be delivered paperless by the forwarder.

We distinguish data quality warnings and errors:

- Errors prevent the message from being processed and will thus lead to an FNA; a new message should be sent before delivering the shipment.
- Warnings do not prevent the message from being processed and the shipment can be delivered. However it could mean that corrections are necessary during the acceptance process, potentially leading to delays. We therefore urge you to look into the warnings you receive frequently to ensure the efficient delivery of your shipment

Checklist: how to switch to e-AWB

Step 1: Sign the IATA Multilateral e-AWB Agreement

The Multilateral e-AWB Agreement provides a legal framework for parties to conclude cargo contracts by electronic means. Sign it online: <https://www.formstack.com/forms/iata-multilateral>

More details and FAQs: <https://www.iata.org/en/programs/cargo/e/eawb/multilateral/>

Step 2: Be able to transmit electronic data (FWB/FHL)

There are different ways to send an FWB:

- Your own IT system: your system may already have the FWB and FHL transmission functionality. To find out if this is the case, you can contact your IT department. If this is not the case, your IT department may eventually develop this feature on your current system.
- 3rd parties, providing the possibility to send FWB and FHL: you can use an IT Solution Provider with a system that meets your requirements including building and sending FWB and FHL messages. Several tools are available on the market.
- Cargo Portal Services (CPS): this free web portal allows you to create your e-AWB / e-HAWB. You first have to create an account and then have it validated by Air France KLM Cargo before you can start sending FWB/FHL messages.

Step 3: Send a request for a bilateral e-AWB contract

To become an e-Freight customer you will first be required to fill in an e-AWB Activation Request Form, which can only be sent once you have fulfilled the conditions of Steps 1 and 2, and after having successfully transmitted several FWB/FHL messages.

Step 4: Data quality tests and e-AWB contract

The AFKL e-Freight team will run a number of data quality checks. The data must be correct, complete and compliant. After establishing that the electronic data meets the required quality, the e-freight team will activate you by sending an Activation Notice which will finalise our e-AWB agreement. This agreement is valid only for one specific branch/country: a global organisation cannot simultaneously activate all its branches.

Step 5: From now on, send your FWB/FHL messages as the legal contract of carriage

Once your e-AWB agreement has been finalised, your FWB and FHL messages will now serve as the legal contract of carriage and you can deliver your shipments without paper MAWB and HAWB documents.

For destinations that may still require a paper AWB copy, according to the IATA Single process, AFKL Operations will print an e-AWB PDF copy and send it to the final destination. Please insert the proper special handling code according to the delivery:

- EAP for a shipment delivered with some accompanying paper documentation (paper pouch, DGD, ...)
- EAW for a shipment delivered without any paper documentation.

Useful definitions

Need to freshen up your shipping terminology? Here are a few useful definitions that will help you fully enjoy the benefits of going digital!

FWB: Electronic message containing transportation and commercial information. The FWB is the digital equivalent of the front of the paper Air Waybill. Note: this does not contain any legal conditions of carriage. You can update the FWB message as often as necessary, until the shipment has received a so-called RCS status from us. Only the last sent version of the FWB will be used.

FHL: The electronic equivalent of the paper House Waybill. The data is required for customs filing as well as regulatory compliance checks.

e-AWB: Not every FWB is an e-AWB. For a FWB to be considered an e-AWB the customer needs to be EDI activated with AFKL and should have sent a timely and correct FWB for the shipment. An e-AWB can be recognized by the SHC ECC or ECP that is added to the FWB by the airline after validation.

Activation Notice: before you can use the e-AWB, airline and freight forwarder need to decide about the locations where they will start with e-AWBs. Together they can validate and ensure e-AWB operational readiness of both parties (such as business processes, electronic communication and data quality). The Activation Notice is a formal way for airlines to confirm these decisions to forwarders, before using the e-AWB.

EDI: Electronic Data Interchange. The transfer of structured data by agreed upon message standards from one computer system to another.

EDI agreement: Contract between a forwarder and an airline or IATA, in which the forwarder accepts the conditions of carriage on all FWB sent in the future. The EDI contract replaces the paper AWB as the legal contract of carriage. This agreement can be signed bilateral (between forwarder and carrier) and multilateral (between forwarder and IATA).

e-CSD: Electronic Consignment Security Declaration provides regulators with an audit trail of how, when and by whom cargo was secured along the supply chain. To facilitate an efficient, paperless acceptance process, we encourage our customers to provide the CSD information in their FWB message in accordance with IATA's FWB standards. The required information includes:

- a special handling code indicating whether or not the shipment is secured;
- for secured shipments: an indication of how, by whom, and when the shipment was secured.

FMA: The FMA is an acknowledgement message sent automatically to the sender of the FWB/FHL. It assures you that AFKL has received your message in their system. The FMA is always sent to the originator of the message, which is the freight forwarder.

FNA: The FNA is a rejection message sent automatically to the sender of the FWB/FHL. It indicates a syntax or content error of the message. You need to correct this and send it again. The error message starts with the name of the segment (example: RTD) and a description of the error (example: invalid or missing rate description details). The FNA is always sent to the originator of the message, which is the freight forwarder.

MRN: The Movement Reference Number is a unique identification reference assigned to a customs movement (ECS*, ICS*, Transit). ECS refers to export control system, ICS refers to import control system. If only a FWB is sent, the MRN needs to be included in the FWB message in the OCI fields. If there are House Waybills, the MRN has to be in the FHL messages, in which case no MRN numbers are to be included in the FWB.

If your question isn't addressed in this document or on our website, don't hesitate to contact our e-freight team for support via mail.efreight@airfrance.fr