

Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

25 June 2012

Forty-first session

Geneva, 25 June – 4 July 2012

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Electronic data interchange for documentation purposes

Update on proof of concept on the use of electronic data transmission in lieu of a paper dangerous goods transport document

Transmitted by the International Air Transport Association (IATA)

Introduction

1. As indicated in ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2012/55, IATA has been working on a Proof of Concept on the use of electronic data transmission for dangerous goods with shippers, freight forwarders, ground handling agents, airlines and technology providers since April 2012.
2. The objective of the Proof of Concept is to use a XML transport document as defined by the IATA Cargo XML Task Force. The message is called SDDG and is to be used as the basis for the transmission of the dangerous goods data from the shipper to the freight forwarder and/or ground handling agent/airline. It is recognised that at the present time very few forwarders, ground handling agents or airlines have the capability to accept XML messages. However, many of these stakeholders have implemented systems to utilise Cargo Interchange Message Protocol (IMP) messages.
3. For this reason, this documented procedure describes the process where the XML SDDG is sent from the shipper via the conversion platform to the forwarder and/or ground handling agent/airline. The conversion platform allows the conversion of the XML SDDG into a Cargo IMP compliant Declaration for Dangerous Goods Data (FDD) message or for the XML SDDG to be converted to PDF or other format as required.
4. The first “wet” test was performed with two shipments originating from Geneva, SWITZERLAND and terminating in Montreal, CANADA. The shipments were carried with the regular documentation and the electronic versions in parallel.
5. The shipper created the XML messages in their system and emailed them to the conversion platform. The messages were edited by the freight forwarder, adding air waybill and destination information. The conversion platform generated the XML, FDD and PDF versions of the messages and forwarded them to the airline and ground handling agent. There the test ended as the ground handling agent could only load the message in its test system to avoid creating double data in the live environment.
6. We have concluded that that FDD messaging is possible but that XML was not an option at that moment due to systems that needed development to work with XML or other reasons why XML was not an option to use.

7. In parallel to the Proof of Concept and as a result of the testing done, improvements to the SDDG message have been proposed. These improvements address operational requirements that would allow systems to better validate the information within the message.

8. The next steps for the project are as follows:

- Identify new trade lane partners that have the ability to accept FDD or XML SDDG messages.
 - Continue “wet run” shipments from origin to destination where shipments are processed as if the paper declaration was no longer present, though physically available.
 - Identify 3 new Proof of Concept locations for 2013
 - Prepare for go live
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