



**POSITION PAPER**  
**OF THE GEA and IATA ON**  
**AIR CARGO ADVANCE SCREENING (ACAS-TYPE) PROGRAMMES**  
November 2012

In response to the October 2010 Yemen incidents, customs and civil aviation authorities around the world have started to pilot new ways to increase security in the supply chain. The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in close cooperation with the industry rapidly established the ACAS (Air Cargo Advance Screening) system, which is currently at pilot stage. Other countries are also testing similar programs, but are considering different approaches with potentially adverse effects on business globally. The following key principles are vital to a successful global ACAS-type solution that enhances air cargo security while creating least disruption to the business:

**1. A common global solution for security; mutual recognition**

From an industry perspective (e.g. express, passenger and all cargo), it is vital to develop **a common global solution** that accommodates the different air cargo business models and to achieve **mutual recognition of security programs including risk assessment results**. All efforts should be made to enable the global solution to eliminate duplication by ensuring shipment data is only submitted once and assessed for security risks by one location/country only. This will save added costs for international business, allow the sharing of information globally and quickly, and thereby improve governments' risk assessment capabilities. Such a global solution should form part of a one-stop, outcome-based, multi-layered, risk-based and threat-managed approach to air cargo security.

**2. Co-creation of standards and recommended practices**

The results of the pilot projects should be the basis for developing any standards and regulations on air cargo security at the international, regional (e.g. EU) and national level. Participants in the pilots and industry bodies should be fully engaged in drafting the regulations and the setting of implementation timelines.

**3. Data requirements limited to security; no HS code**

ACAS programs shall be limited to data elements necessary for aviation security risk assessment: besides the house air waybill number (HAWB) these include shipper name, shipper address, consignee name, consignee address, gross weight, number of packages and commodity description. This list of data includes only free text information as provided by the shipper and not any coded information such as the HS code as it is meant to support aviation security risk assessment only.

#### **4. Advance data submission on best effort basis; no penalties**

Industry should provide shipment data to the appropriate authorities engaged in air cargo security activities as soon as the information is available. In order to transmit the data as early as possible, participants should not be required to provide the data in a formal declaration format. When participants submit ACAS data, there should be no penalties for inaccurate or incomplete information or for late submissions for practical or technical reasons.

#### **5. Access to additional shipment information**

To support aviation security risk assessment and data validation, appropriate authorities engaged in air cargo security activities should consider access to images of the shipment documentation held in the express carriers proprietary IT systems, or by exception, the available electronic formats of shipment documents held by relevant entities or passenger and all-cargo carriers that allows authorities to verify other details. In order to avoid duplication of security controls, confirmation of the security status, screening or examination of a shipment would be available upon request.

#### **6. Globally standardized security measures and handling protocols**

The WCO and ICAO working with International Organizations, Governments and trade partners are urged to develop a global standard and solution for ACAS type programs and to incorporate the standard into the relevant global instruments and recommended practices administered by these bodies, all parties should strive to adhere to them accordingly. This should include the development of standards and protocols with globally harmonized approaches to handling high risk cargo, e.g. responsibilities for loading/unloading, instructions when cargo is in flight, instructions when cargo is on a third party carrier which is not owned by the data-submitting company, coordination of media, etc.

#### **Basic statistics on the US ACAS Program (as of November 2012)**

- Over 47 million consignments have been reported to ACAS.
- For 640,000 (1.3%) additional information or clarifications have been requested.
- For 4000 (0.009%) screening has been requested. Many of these shipments had already been screened by the carrier in the normal operation of the supply chain and in these cases a report on the results of the screening was sufficient to meet the government's requirement.
- No 'DNL – Do Not Load' - messages have been issued.