

IATA launches new platform to connect air cargo companies

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IATA has launched a new platform to support the digitalisation of air cargo supply chains.

The airline association's Enhanced Partner Identification and Connectivity (EPIC) platform claims to simplify the process of connecting companies across the air cargo supply chain.

IATA said that more than 40,000 freight forwarders exchange messages with more than 450 airlines, and 23 third party messaging service providers.

In the absence of a tool for companies to exchange the information needed to make these business links, the process of digitalisation “is essentially manual, slow and unduly complex”.

Nick Careen, IATA senior vice president, airport, passenger, cargo, security, said: “EPIC is a simple idea. It makes the information needed to do business across a digitised air cargo supply chain easily accessible. And in doing so, it will accelerate efficiency gains for air cargo.

“The timing of this initiative is important. Covid-19 has led to exponential growth of e-commerce and shippers are demanding quality services that only a digitised supply chain can provide.”

IATA said that the system also support digital customs clearance processes, companies will retain full control of data and is open for use by airlines, freight forwarders and any third party, intermediary or IT provider in the air cargo business.

“EPIC has already attracted the participation of 32 airlines, 900 freight forwarder branches, 10 governments/customs authorities, 5 international organizations and 13 third party messaging providers,” IATA said.