

## The go-ahead for e-freight in Spain

### Traxon Europe supports IATA project as IT provider

*Madrid, November 2008* – The Spanish airfreight community is pointing the way to the future in supporting IATA's e-freight project with its aim of introducing paperless airfreight transport. Preliminary project work in Spain, an e-freight pilot country, began back in July. Iberia Cargo, the airline chosen by IATA to head the project, gave the official go-ahead on September 16th. Participants included Steve Smith, IATA e-freight project director, Alfonso Fuertes, managing director of Iberia Cargo, Felipe Rodrigo, director of the Customs Administration Department at the Spanish Ministry of Finance, Antonio López Matrán, chair of the Madrid forwarders' association "Asociación de Transitarios de Madrid," as well as representatives of Traxon Europe, IATA's IT provider for the project.

### An important choice

Spain is one of thirteen pilot countries chosen by IATA in January 2008 for the implementation of e-freight. Similar projects in Canada, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden and Great Britain were completed in 2007.

For IATA, there were two key factors in choosing Spain: the ratification of the Montreal Convention of 1999 (MC99) and compliance with its specifications and the importance of the Spanish airfreight market. Steve Smith likewise emphasized the opportunities for the Spanish airfreight industry in the process. Last year Spain's airfreight volume reached 695,293 tons, an increase of 1.7%, compared with declines of 2.3% and 4% in 2005 and 2006.

There were also good reasons to make Iberia Cargo the leading project airline. With a total freight volume of 260,601 tons in 2007, the airline is a major player in air traffic with Latin America, and has a leading market share in Spain of 31.3%. Moreover, Iberia Cargo is already exchanging freight data electronically on the domestic Spanish market.

Another crucial factor was outstanding cooperation with Spanish customs authorities. As Felipe Rodrigo points out, "The decision for e-freight was clear from the start – it's a solid project with a promising future. It will give new incentive to electronic customs handling and improve cooperation between different customs authorities, which ultimately translates into the ability to process goods faster and more efficiently." Antonio López Matrán of the forwarders' association ATEIA stressed the significance of forwarders using IT applications.

Alfonso Fuertes, director of Iberia, explained at the opening event that "it's a very important project. The airfreight industry has a need to catch up in terms of electronic

data transfer, and initiatives like IATA's can speed up this development." In Fuertes' view, many processes have a potential for improvement. There is a need for new initiatives like the e-freight project and for "all participants in the Spanish market to cooperate."

## Traxon Europe. A team with experience

The e-freight project was established in 2004 as part of IATA's "Simplifying the Business" initiative. Traxon Europe has worked with IATA since the start of the project and is one of its strategic partners. What's more, Traxon Europe has an extensive knowledge of the Spanish airfreight market thanks to its on-going cooperation with Iberia Cargo since 2001. In the coming months, Traxon Europe will join representatives of customs authorities, forwarders, general handling agents (GHA) and Iberia Cargo in project development, sharing its expert knowledge and experience. The focus will not only be on airfreight communication but, more generally, on the commitment to research and development in IT to create added value for all partners in the industry.

As the market leader in innovative electronic communications solutions in the airfreight industry, Traxon Europe was the first IT provider to offer monthly error reports and market-coverage information (MIP reports). The reports meet IATA requirements and form the basis for improved data quality, allowing errors to be detected and remedied more quickly. Improved data quality and a higher penetration of electronic data are the prerequisite for introducing e-freight.

## Company portrait

**TRAXON Europe**, founded in 1991 and based in Frankfurt, Germany, is the world's leader in providing innovative value-added e-communication services for implementing automation in the global airfreight industry. Operating a network of offices and joint ventures around the world, TRAXON Europe links over 9,000 forwarders' offices with around 90 international airlines worldwide, which together represent 95% of IATA-registered global airfreight capacity. The company works closely with its customers, researching new solutions and anticipating their needs. The underlying philosophy is to offer value-added services and products to hard-pressed companies, allowing more efficient and more cost-effective day-to-day operations. The end result is that TRAXON's clients are able to offer their own customers a better and more cost-efficient service. Over the last few years, the company's turnover has steadily risen, from 7.2 million euros and 61 million messages in 2005 to 8.5 million euros and 92 million messages in 2006. By the end of 2007, TRAXON Europe had sent about 102 million messages. To learn more about TRAXON visit [www.traxon.com](http://www.traxon.com).

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