

AISATS keen to go local in new markets

The global economy depends upon the ability to deliver high-quality products to consumers worldwide and the air cargo industry contributes to the global economic development. **Mike Chew**, India Cargo Award winner 2016 & CEO, Air India SATS, talks about challenges and methods to develop this industry.



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What is the role of ground handlers in boosting air cargo operations?

When air cargo has a crucial role to play in growth of the country, it is imperative to develop necessary infrastructure supported by various government initiatives. Across the globe, ground handling agencies are contributing to the government's ambitious vision of air cargo growth by investing in development of on-airport cargo terminals, Air Freight Stations, off-airport common user facilities to handle air cargo, dedicated on-airport integrated perishable cargo handling centers and further integrating technology to create the best organisation network.

For example, use of technologically advanced equipment such as ASRS (Automated Storage and Retrieval System) and VNA (Very Narrow Aisle) allows efficient use of the space and easy cargo movement in the air freight terminal and use of information technology such as e-freight, an initiative to adopt paperless procedures for air cargo transports, facilitates faster cargo

shipment processing and online shipment tracking. Air cargo is also critical in flying temperature-sensitive pharmaceuticals in the

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best conditions, using innovative technologies and procedures.

As much as adoption of technology is important, equally important is the maintenance of the cargo throughout its movement from the entrance to the cargo terminal till its uploading on to the aircraft. For example, cargo security is ensured by having various security systems in place and which are once certified by governing bodies like TAPA (Transport Asset Protection Association) and GDP (Good Distribution Practices) further accentuate the credibility of the processes.

Furthermore, careful transport and storage of perishables has become an essential part of offering an un-broken supply chain to the stakeholders. Government of Karnataka realised the importance of having well-developed infrastructure for exporters of perishable commodities from the state and has supported Air India SATS Airport Services in establishing AISATS Coolport.

The ground handler with these positive developments will continue to contribute in developing sustainable ecosystem models in the growing environment of infrastructure and technology to deliver seamless services to the customer.

What services are you offering to freight agents and airlines to make their shipments easy?

AISATS Cargo has always been passionate about being

an e-freight compliant entity. In a bid to foster better communication and effective dissemination of information to trade partners, AISATS has launched the Airport Cargo Community portal (ACS-Airport Community System). The ACS act as a platform for e-freight and is compliant with IATA's e-freight guidelines and global industry requirements. E-freight offers the following features and facilities to its trade partners:

- ◆ **E-Customs:** Trade members can generate shipping bills, bill of entry through the online portal and file the

and entry into the Cargo Terminal

- iii. Freight Forwarders can send the Carting Order (CO) request of a particular air waybill to airlines
- iv. Using ACS, an airline user will be able to view the CO request and approve the same
- v. User can pay handling charges online

How do you see the air cargo market evolving and what are the key challenges?

The air cargo market has seen remarkable growth by contributing to about 35 per cent of the total world trade by value, according to

for air cargo while developing airports is a major challenge to adequately handle the increasing cargo volumes and needs careful consideration. Also for faster movement of express cargo and perishable cargo there's a need to develop integrated special handling facilities, with in house special services like 24x7 custom clearances, availability of drug controller testing lab etc. Apart from special handling facilities, there is a need to integrate the airport infrastructure with air cargo facilities to handle increased air cargo volumes.



same with ICEGATE. Along with EDI, trade members also have an option to generate documentation like checklists, and annexes.

- ◆ **E-booking:** Trade members can send electronic booking requests to multiple airlines from ACS, thus avoiding usage of multiple airline websites or frequent telephone calls for booking.

- ◆ **E-AWB:** Trade members can send airway bill information to multiple airlines using the ACS hence eliminating printing of the air waybill by trade members following the E-AWB processes.

- ◆ Other value added features which are beneficial to our customers are:

- i. Users can register MAWB & SBs
- ii. Update vehicle & driver details in ACS portal for swift check

IATA. Out of this, the demand of Indian air freight market is expected to reach level of 2.8 million ton by 2018.

Noteworthy developments in the Indian aviation sector have directly impacted the air cargo sector. Substantial policy reforms and initiatives like 'Make In India', 'Open Sky Policy', replacement of 5/20 rule with 0/20 rule, Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS), UDAN (Udey Desh ka Aam Nagrik), relaxation of the FDI norms and the emerging e-commerce market are all set to help the growth of air cargo market.

Despite positive developments, the industry faces several challenges such as relatively low priority in planning, allocation of space, budget, and human resources while developing cargo facilities at Indian airports. Insufficient capacity planning

AISATS trivia

- ◆ The AISATS air freight terminal in Bengaluru is TAPA FSR-2014 Class A certified.
- ◆ Completion of AISATS COOLPORT holds the merit of being India's first integrated on-airport perishable cargo handling center.

What are AISATS' expansion plans?

AISATS' ambitions are not limited to the airports that it is currently operating at and would continue to explore opportunities to replicate the experience at other airports as well.

We are keen on expanding our local footprint in new and emerging markets. The company will endeavour to implement innovations in the airline industry, to further enhance services.



Mike Chew
 India Cargo Award winner 2016 & CEO, AISATS