



**ASSEMBLY — 40TH SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 14: Facilitation Programmes**

**FOSTERING FACILITATION INNOVATION  
THROUGH EFFECTIVE REGULATORY POLICY**

(Presented by Airports Council International (ACI))

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The high rate of growth of aviation requires systems and processes that can cope with tomorrow's challenges in the facilitation of passengers, baggage and cargo. The industry is already leading many initiatives that can address capacity issues, reduce queues and crowds, and optimize use of resources. This is done by adopting automation and advanced technologies, defining a common vocabulary to facilitate data exchange, and embracing digital solutions such as biometric recognition technology. In this context, Airports Council International (ACI) and International Air Transport Association (IATA) launched in 2017 a joint initiative known as NEXTT - New Experience Travel Technologies - to look at the future of travel.

There are many areas where there are significant opportunities within the control of national authorities to encourage innovation. These include, enabling faster clearance of the majority of passengers, promoting adoption of automated and electronic processing for customs and border control processes, and simplifying inspection points throughout the passenger journey. However, visionary leadership from ICAO is needed in facilitation and innovation to create and support partnerships between States and industry.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to:

- a) Request that Council brings its border and aviation security activities closer together by moving the border security elements of Annex 9 (Facilitation) into Annex 17 (Security), and thus ensuring that the full range of security threats at airports are addressed in a holistic manner; and
- b) Urge Council to develop Annex 9 to focus on issues related to accessibility, simplified and automated passenger clearance systems, and interoperable identity management solutions.

<sup>1</sup> Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish versions provided by Airports Council International (ACI).

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective — <i>Security and Facilitation</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	
<i>References:</i>	Annex 9 — <i>Facilitation</i>

## 1. CHALLENGES AFFECTING AIRPORTS

1.1 The future of air transport looks bright. The ACI World Airport Traffic Forecasts (WATF) projects that passenger traffic is expected to double by 2034 based on a projected growth rate of 4.3% per annum. Over the long term, it is expected to grow at an annualized rate of 4.1%, reaching 20.9 billion by 2040. Sizeable population bases and rapid rises in incomes in emerging markets are the main economic engines driving air transportation demand.

1.2 Many airports are facing congestion without having a way to increase capacity. Size matters in the airport business. Airports are asset-intensive businesses that require large minimum investments just to accommodate a single landing. The rapid growth of air traffic generates considerable benefits but also presents many challenges for airports. Airport leaders are faced with pressure to manage performance and growth, without constantly adding infrastructure and cost, while striving for environmental sustainability and robust security.

1.3 As airports have become businesses in their own right, they are increasingly focussed on the end user, the traveller, and placing excellence in traveller experience among the top priorities in their strategic plans. Airports also play an increased role in the processes and interactions that the passenger undergoes during her journey at the airport. Passengers are demanding more customised services based on their specific needs, requirements and tastes and airports are adapting their infrastructure, using technologies and deploying choices in processes to best match what their customers are telling them.

1.4 Meanwhile, threats to aviation security and border integrity have changed over the last decade. Airports must continuously explore ways to ensure operational integrity against a background of new and emerging threats. While inbound immigration controls authorities are standard, outbound checks vary greatly from State to State. Many airports want to leverage digital traveller credentials and other solutions that can help address the range of threats transiting through their infrastructure.

## 2. INDUSTRY INNOVATION PROGRAMMES

2.1 The industry is already taking a lead in many areas that can assist in addressing capacity issues, removing queues and crowds and optimizing use of resources. Some examples include adoption of automation and advanced technologies, definition of a common vocabulary to facilitate data exchange and embracing digital solutions such as the biometric recognition technology. ACI and IATA have launched in 2017 a joint initiative known as NEXTT - New Experience Travel Technologies - to look at the future of travel, thus creating a common vision that encompasses all individual projects and concepts.

2.2 NEXTT provides a vision rather than a project and will not create a single product to be deployed to the travelling public. It is, however, an initiative that allows the industry to challenge the ways in which it operates today and to create a new framework to meet the demands of tomorrow.

### 3. MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE INNOVATION BY NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

3.1 Many of the elements of facilitation, such as efficient clearances and strategies for addressing airport congestion, are critical for the future growth of the industry. Furthermore, there are numbers of areas where significant opportunities exist within the control of national authorities to encourage innovation, such as the following:

- a) Enable faster clearance of the majority of passengers rather than segregation of different groups with an inclusive and risk-based approach to **automated border controls**. Too often, only national citizens are considered eligible for automated processing, taking up valuable space in the customs hall and reducing the benefits from automated border control.
- b) Promote adoption of automated and **electronic processing** for all passengers for customs and border control processes, through innovative approaches to funding, agreement on responsibilities and the facilitation of regulatory amendment.
- c) **Simplify inspection points** throughout the passenger journey, to remove redundancy and bottlenecks. Current bottlenecks include repeated manual inspection of travel documents by multiple parties (boarding passes, passports, electronic travel authorizations), and in some cases, repeated screening of bags for customs and security purposes.
- d) **Use emerging technologies and innovation** such as biometric entry and exit clearance, electronic and mobile customs declaration and mobile boarding pass. Various worldwide trials and initiatives are currently taking place between private and public sectors which contribute to the vision of a seamless and efficient passenger experience.
- e) **Endorse greater data sharing** and clear allocation of responsibilities between all stakeholders in the airport ecosystem, including between agencies such as customs and immigration services, law enforcement and security agencies, airports and airlines, to remove duplication and increase efficiency.

3.2 Additionally, enabling States to set up partnerships between government agencies, airports and industry stakeholders to agree initiatives of mutual interest and deliver them jointly would be beneficial for all stakeholders. The framework for such partnerships should clarify the funding for joint initiatives. Their goal should be to enhance national security while achieving a more efficient use of airport space, government resources and passengers' time at airports.

3.3 For the majority of international travellers today, passports and identity cards are the only trusted form of identity; issued and owned by Government and inspected at multiple points through a journey. Most trials and concepts are only deployed at some parts of the travel journey, such as bag drop and boarding, only apply on departure and are not a truly end-to-end solution. Further efforts are needed to strengthen the collaboration between industry and national authorities in this regard and explore the opportunities to offer true end-to-end solutions. The development of innovative practices through pilots,

investment and regulatory relief will contribute to more efficient border control processes and an improved passenger experience while maintaining the highest levels of safety and security.

#### **4. THE ROLE OF ICAO TO FOSTER INNOVATION**

##### **Bringing border security and aviation security activities closer**

4.1 There is a need for visionary leadership from ICAO in the areas of facilitation and innovation to create and drive partnerships with industry. More progress could be made by breaking down silos between aviation security (covered under Annex 17) and border security (covered under Annex 9). Indeed, there is merit in national authorities sharing information and intelligence on a range of threats. Resources, efforts and equipment would not be duplicated to address similar needs.

4.2 ICAO should consider bringing its border security and aviation security activities closer together. This could involve transferring the border security elements of Annex 9 into Annex 17 and ensuring that the full range of security threats happening at airports are addressed in a holistic manner. For example, measures such as intelligence and threat information sharing, establishing behaviour analysis programmes, providing awareness training and establishing a strong security culture can benefit both aviation and border security. Greater synergies would arise by applying risk-based security to the physical and identity clearance of departing passengers, as well as the efficient use of airport real estate where infrastructure challenges exist. A joint ICAO Working Group on Aviation and Border Security, which would be made up of experts from the Facilitation and Aviation Security Panels, could further study these emerging concepts.

##### **Re-energizing Annex 9 (Facilitation) to focus on crucial process issues**

4.3 Moving the border security elements of Annex 9 into Annex 17 would not make Annex 9 less relevant, because the scale of growth of aviation and the change in social demographics highlight critical challenges that should be expanded within Annex 9. This includes the need for consistent and global Standards and Recommended Practices regarding accessibility, simplified and automated passenger clearance systems and the development of interoperable identity management solutions on a global scale. Industry is ready to work with States to develop a forward-looking and ambitious roadmap for aviation facilitation and innovation within the ICAO framework.

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