



SAFETY, GLOBAL STANDARDS AND MODERNIZATION - GROUND HANDLING PRIORITIES

News / Airlines



The International Air Transport Association (IATA) called on the ground handling industry to focus on three priorities to effectively accommodate the expanding demand for air travel and air cargo.

The three priorities are;

- **Continuing to put safety first;**

- **Implementing global standards;**
- **Accelerating the speed of innovation and process modernization.**



“Effective ground operations are essential to meet the doubling in passenger and cargo demand over the next two decades. Putting safety first, implementing global standards and accelerating the speed of innovation and process modernization are key,” said Nick Careen, IATA’s Senior Vice President, Airport, Passenger, Cargo and Security, speaking at the 32nd IATA Ground Handling Conference in Madrid, Spain.

Safety

IATA called on industry stakeholders to collaborate effectively to improve safety.

“Ground handling operations have increased in parallel with airport development and traffic growth, corresponding to larger numbers, sizes and types of aircraft. Also, the demand to achieve minimized turnaround and stand occupancy times has increased. This has led to a rise in simultaneous ground handling operations and the support equipment required. Industry collaboration is essential to maintaining and improving safety in this complex environment,” said Careen.

Specifically, IATA called for industry’s support with;

- Recording incidents through IATA's Safety Exchange platforms
- Implementing ground support equipment (GSE) proximity sensing and warning devices
- Mitigating aircraft loading errors

Modernizing training for ground handling was identified as another key element to improving safety. “The training of employees is paramount to safe operations. New training technologies have an important role to play. This includes innovative virtual reality tools,” said Careen, highlighting the success of IATA’s RampVR (TM), offering the first virtual reality training tool for ground operations.

Global Standards

IATA called for the ground handling industry to accelerate the global adoption of the IATA Ground Operations Manual (IGOM) to ensure a level of operational consistency and safety across the industry worldwide.

“Global standards applied consistently are the only route to safe, secure and efficient ground operations. IGOM has been proven to be effective and continues to gather support from not only airlines and GSPs but also regulators, airports and other industry bodies. This is good news but there is more to be done – our target remains worldwide implementation,” said Careen.

IATA also called on governments to recognize the IATA Safety Audit for Ground Operations (ISAGO)—based on IGOM standards—in their regulatory frameworks.

“Recognition by governments of ISAGO in their regulatory framework, as an acceptable means of compliance for operators’ oversight of outsourced services in ground operations, is the key to greater harmonization across the industry, reduction of duplicate audits the providers are facing, and improving safety and enhancing operational efficiency,” said Careen.

As of April 2019, the number of Ground Service Providers (GSPs) in the ISAGO Registry surpassed 184, with 311 accredited stations in 212 airports worldwide. ISAGO is recognized by numerous airports, including Amsterdam Schiphol, London Heathrow, Seattle Tacoma, Miami, Hong Kong, and Singapore. And Civil Aviation Authorities including Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Netherlands have also recognized ISAGO.

Innovation

IATA called for the modernization of processes and infrastructure using innovative technology. This will be critical to efficiently meeting the expected doubling of demand expected over the next 20 years.

The industry's vision for the ramp of the future is outlined under CEDAR (Connected Ecological Digital Autonomous Ramp). CEDAR is focused on the following three areas:

- Digitalization of aircraft turn around
- Modernization of Ground Support Equipment and Processes
- Enhanced Stand Design

CEDAR brings together key stakeholders to develop a common vision for the future of ground operations. Key partners involved in CEDAR include members of the recently created IATA Ground Operations Group (GOG), and the Airport Services Association (ASA).

The CEDAR project is part of the New Experience in Travel and Technologies (NEXTT) initiative being run in collaboration with Airports Council International (ACI) to develop a common vision to enhance the on-ground transport experience, guide industry investments and help governments improve the regulatory framework.

“Passenger demand is growing. Airport infrastructure is nearing capacity. New, smarter, more effective ways to operate, harnessing the power of new technology need to be found. We are seeing innovations in passenger processing but unless we have corresponding innovations in turnaround at the gate, we will just be moving the congestion problem to a different part of the journey,” said Careen.



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