

## Air Cargo Advance Screening Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why did the government implement the Air Cargo Advance Screening (ACAS) program and under what legal authority does it operate?

A: Following a terrorist attempt in October 2010 involving explosives concealed in U.S.-bound packages from Yemen, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) worked to enhance air cargo supply chain security by piloting ACAS to target shipments inbound to the United States. CBP's legal authority is derived from the Trade Act of 2002; TSA's legal authority comes from the Aviation Transportation Security Act.

Q: What are the benefits of the ACAS program?

A: Several universal advantages include:

- Increased security by leveraging Department of Homeland Security (DHS) threat data and other data to employ a risk-based approach to improve air cargo security through targeted screening
- Gained efficiencies by automating identification of high-risk cargo for enhanced screening before it is consolidated and loaded on U.S.-bound aircraft
- Reduced paper processes related to cargo screening requirements, thereby increasing carrier convenience

Q: Who is required to submit ACAS data to CBP?

A: The inbound air carrier is required to file the ACAS data if no other eligible party elects to file. CBP is allowing parties other than the inbound air carrier to file because in some cases, these other parties will have access to accurate ACAS data sooner. For effective targeting to occur prior to loading, it is essential that the most accurate ACAS data be filed at the earliest point possible in the supply chain. This approach is consistent with parameters in the Trade Act of 2002 that require CBP to obtain data from the party most likely to have direct knowledge of the data and to balance the impact on the flow of commerce with the impact on cargo safety and security.

Q: Who do I contact to begin sending ACAS data?

A: All parties required to or interested in transmitting ACAS data should contact their assigned CBP Client Representative. If one has not yet been assigned, please send an e-mail to **[gmb.clientrepoutreach@cbp.dhs.gov](mailto:gmb.clientrepoutreach@cbp.dhs.gov)**.

Q: What type of data do I need to submit, and how should the data be submitted?

A: The ACAS data elements are a subset of the data required pursuant to section 343(a) of the Trade Act of 2002:

- Shipper name and address
- Consignee name and address
- Cargo description
- Piece count

- Weight
- Air waybill number

Airlines and freight forwarders exchange advance security filing data and related action messages for air cargo with CBP using new messages modeled on either existing Cargo-IMP format messages or CBP CAMIR-Air messages. While the overall form of the ACAS message is similar to the message on which it is based, the new message formats have slight differences in edits, timing, or new coded values as needed. CBP has developed an ACAS Implementation Guide, but for quick reference, the messages used for ACAS are as follows:

<b>Optional ACAS Message Format</b>	<b>Based On</b>	<b>Source</b>
PHL	FHL	Cargo IMP
PRI	FRI	CAMIR Air
PSN	FSN	CAMIR Air
PER	FER	CAMIR Air
PWB	FWB	Cargo IMP

Q: How far in advance does ACAS data have to be submitted?

A: ACAS data should be transmitted prior to consolidation and loading the cargo on an aircraft. This timeline is required to enable risk assessment for each cargo shipment and to conduct the required screening. The sooner data are submitted to ACAS, the sooner screening or Do Not Load (DNL) determinations can be communicated to industry stakeholders, which minimizes the impact to operations.

Q: Are there penalties for incorrect or untimely ACAS data submission?

A: Yes, ACAS violations are subject to liquidated damages claims. However, CBP will be taking a common sense approach to enforcement, and will not generally be issuing liquidated damages claims for the first 12 months following the publication of the rule.

Q: Which government agencies have access to my organization’s ACAS data submissions?

A: CBP and TSA.

Q: What are the costs of participating in ACAS?

A: The government does not charge for ACAS participation. Organizations that use third-party service providers may find that those providers will charge for ACAS services.

Q: To what extent is the international community (for example, Border Action Plan, European Union, World Customs Organization) involved with ACAS, and how is the U.S. Government promoting uniformity of air cargo security programs globally?

A: A critical component to achieving a global solution to terrorism is international cooperation on data collection standards that promote a harmonized approach to international air cargo security. The United States sees ACAS as a model for the international community to effectively enhance air cargo security, and will continue to work with the World Customs Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization as harmonization of air cargo security standards spread to all areas of the globe, further facilitating trade and enhancing security worldwide.

Q: What are the benefits of ACAS from a freight forwarder perspective?

A: While the benefits of ACAS participation vary between organizations, several advantages include:

- Avoiding the reduced cut-off times that may result from carriers requesting earlier data submission from freight forwarders that are not ACAS filers
- Facilitating freight forwarder business operations by increasing consolidation lead-times through improved visibility into which shipments require enhanced screening
- Increasing security by leveraging DHS threat data and other data to employ a risk-based approach through targeted screening

Q: How would it work for a freight forwarder if a shipment requires enhanced screening?

A: Should a shipment require enhanced screening, email or phone notification will be provided to the freight forwarder as soon as possible, in order to afford the freight forwarder an opportunity to segregate or screen the shipment under its National Cargo Screening Program (NCSP), or as an authorized representative of the carrier, as appropriate. Where a freight forwarder is not able to perform the enhanced screening, the forwarder should communicate the ACAS disposition of the cargo to the carrier, and the carrier will perform the screening.

Q: How does ACAS apply in countries that have NCSP recognition through TSA?

A: ACAS is required for air cargo supply chain participants in all countries, including those operating under an NCSP. Operating in an NCSP country does not exempt participants from ACAS requirements; the NCSP program simply allows approved air cargo supply chain participants to screen in accordance with that country's domestic cargo screening regime.

Q: What do I do if my data transmission is rejected?

A: Correct the error and resubmit. If you are not able to determine the issue, please contact your Client Representative.

Q: Who do I contact if I have technical issues?

A: Please contact your Client Representative. If one has not yet been assigned, please send an email to **[gmb.clientrepoutreach@cbp.dhs.gov](mailto:gmb.clientrepoutreach@cbp.dhs.gov)**.

Q: What happens if there is a duplicate filing?

A: Subsequent filings are treated as updates by the ACAS system. Unlike the CAMIR, there is no need to distinguish between inbound messages (such as FRI) and change messages (such as FRC).