

Airside Pharma Transport at Brussels Airport is a European first

Unique opportunity to further develop Brussels as European pharma hub

Last Friday at BRUcargo, Brussels Airport presented a European first: the "Airside Pharma Transporter". This passively conditioned trailer holds pharmaceutical shipments within the correct temperature limits during transportation between warehouses and aircraft at an affordable cost. This is crucial because an incorrect temperature can cause rejection of medicines. Until today the period on the tarmac was considered the most hazardous link in the transportation process,

"The pharmaceutical sector is of great economic importance to our country. Brussels Airport Company has set a goal to become the preferred gateway in Europe for the cold chain industry and medicines in particular," says Steven Polmans, head of cargo at Brussels Airport. "Within the Flanders Pharma Hub Project, the local freight partners are brought together by Brussels Airport to realize innovations for an improved treatment of pharmaceutical products," explains Nathan De Valck, cargo & product development manager at Brussels Airport. This cluster includes handling agents (Aviapartner, Swissport, WFS), airlines (Brussels Airlines), forwarding agents (Adelantex, DHL Global Forwarding, Expeditors, KN, Panalpina, UTi), truckers (JDR), knowledge centers (VIL, 4Advice), VOKA, Nallian NV and Brussels Airport Company. Within this cluster the Airside Pharma Transporter was developed together with SPS-Belgium as a partner for the engineering and production of the trailer.

European scoop

The Airside Transport Pharma Project is a first, because it ensures that the temperature-sensitive pharmaceutical shipments are transported to the aircraft within the correct temperature limits. This project allows the weakest link in the transport process of drugs to be eliminated, because the transport regulations for pharmaceuticals and the cold chain are generally very strict. A too high fluctuation in storage temperature can ensure that the drugs should not be used, with large losses as a consequence. The Airside Pharma Transport Project provides an answer.

Alcon, a pharmaceutical manufacturer with a production site in Belgium will be involved in setting up and validating the test protocol for the mapping of the airside transport solution. Paul Leysen, Traffic & Distribution Manager at Alcon states "the efforts made by Brussels Airport are very valuable to improve the handling of pharmaceutical shipments and to reduce the risk for temperature deviations during the transport".

Continuous co-operation with pharmaceutical manufacturers

PRESS RELEASE

Steven Polmans: "Brussels Airport commits to an ongoing dialogue with the shippers of pharmaceutical products in order to know their needs and specific expectations for air transport. For the fourth time Brussels Airport organized the biannual BRUcargo Pharma Forum to moderate an open dialogue with the industry and work on solutions and improvements together. All the major pharmaceutical manufacturers with production or distribution centers in Belgium are represented at this Forum, something we are very proud of"

The Airside Transport Pharma Project is an excellent example of an innovation aimed at solving a priority issue indicated by the shippers. Shippers indicate where improvements are possible within the airfreight logistics chain and then remain involved in the development and testing of innovative solutions.

Further steps in optimizing pharma-transport

The Airside Pharma Transport project is not the first realization of the Flanders Smart Hub workgroup. Previously BRUcargo partners developed and designed a certification program for the transportation of pharmaceuticals, today known as the IATA CEIV program. Brussels Airport also became the first airport with a fully certified community of air cargo handling companies.

In addition, a Cargo Community System in the Cloud was initiated to allow transparency, based on the data sharing platform Naillan. A BRUcargo Cloud application, the BRU Pharma Dashboard, is currently being developed specifically for the pharma shipments. This interactive online scorecard allows all partners in the supply chain to track quality data, allowing continuous improvement within the entire chain.

Brussels Airport aims to further develop its position as Preferred European Pharma Gateway, in co-operation with the shippers and the entire BRUcargo community.

Logos:

