

## **Lean Sigma Readiness Assessment Instrument for Air Cargo Ground Handlers**

For sustaining the difficult years for the cargo sector, air cargo ground handlers should consider providing tailor – made solutions for their customers, continuous process optimization, and comprehensive quality management. In other words, to invest in specialized quality management practices.

Recently, Lean Six Sigma<sup>1</sup> (L6S) emerged as an upcoming business strategy for service enterprises concerning cost reduction, improvement of profitability and enterprise growth.

A key challenge for the successful deployment of a (L6S) project is an enterprise's ability to assess its organizational readiness for it. To this end, Mr. Gerasimos Kontos, PhD Researcher at the Business School of the University of the Aegean, formulated a readiness assessment instrument for (L6S).

The instrument, aims to provide insight to an air cargo ground handler, concerning the degree of readiness to be involved in a specialized quality management practice, before investing its resources (financial, manpower and time among others).

The instrument may be used entirely for self-assessment, or the aggregated results may be used to stimulate group discussions when the possibility of implementing a quality improvement project is being explored.

The instrument itself has been empirically verified by business professionals and quality managers, as well as from the four air cargo ground handlers currently operate at Athens International Airport. In addition, the originality of the research has been presented in the 2014 Air Transport Research Society conference, held in Bordeaux, France, July 17 – 20.

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<sup>1</sup> For your convenience, lean six sigma is a quality improvement method of streamlining a process, resulting in increased revenue, reduced costs and improved customer satisfaction

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