e-Freight drive continues at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol

e-Freight@NL – the Dutch Government-funded project to encourage the move towards paperless air cargo through its main airport, Schiphol - has completed its programme with a string of successes.

Launched in July 2010 with funding of €1.2 million, the project has successfully achieved a five-fold increase in e-Freight shipments through Schiphol. In 2010, only 1,665 shipments were sent as paperless e-freight; by December 2012, the annual total had risen to 21,176.

Schiphol's top ten e-Freight routes are now Singapore, Hong Kong, New York, Tokyo (Narita), Vancouver, London Heathrow, Kuala Lumpur, Seoul, Los Angeles and Atlanta.

Other achievements of E-Freight@NL include the establishment of a help desk and the e-Freight@NL Online Academy, to give advice and provide online training to the industry and potential users.

A Business case for all supply chain parties has also been drawn up, and five master theses have been written covering topics such as the key steps towards global adoption of e-Freight, benefits of e-Freight for shippers and forwarders, and the role of e-Freight in revenue management.

The e-freight@NL project included 6 "workpackages" that involved assessing the requirements of the industry, identifying gaps in IT systems, setting up an open platform for data exchange and transmission, testing and validation of data, and reporting and making recommendations.

Several pilot projects were started between shippers and forwarders, using OCR equipment to transform paper documents into the required "e-Freight ready" XML format. These pilots resulted in substantial time savings, and several companies have now adapted their processes to continue to working in this way.

Among the many findings of the project were that innovation in logistics is difficult, that such fundamental change requires a longer timeframe than originally thought, and that international law creates resistance to change.

Schiphol Cargo – the airport's dedicated cargo development arm – played a neutral liaison and facilitation role between the various parties in the supply chain throughout the project, establishing what would be required to improve the cargo process at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.

Schiphol Cargo Development Director Saskia van Pelt was a founder member of e-freight@NL, and a member of its steering committee. She comments: "The e-Freight@NL project may be completed, but e-Freight will not stand still now, and the process of digitising supply chains will certainly carry on at Schiphol. Amsterdam Airport Schiphol considers paperless transport as one of the top priorities to improve efficiency in the supply chain.

"IATA's target for this year is to start two pilot programmes in the BRIC countries, to increase global coverage from 33-45%, and to achieve 20% e-AWB use across the industry. By the end of 2015, it is hoped that e-Freight will be live in 80% of all world trade lanes, that the industry will achieve 100% paperless substitution of the three core transport documents (airwaybill, house manifest and flight manifest), and that the document pouch will be eliminated for most general cargo shipments."

She concludes: "We will continue to drive the use of e-Freight at Schiphol. It reduces costs, improves efficiency and speed, is environmentally responsible and will help to differentiate air cargo from other transport modes. Schiphol supports any initiative that is good for our industry, and by continuing in the front line of innovation we further our aim to be Europe's preferred air cargo gateway."

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Download a picture of Saskia van Pelt from: www.pilotmarketing.co.uk/ downloads/Schiphol/vanPelt.zip

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol Cargo at a glance:

- third largest cargo airport in Europe
- seventeenth largest cargo airport in the world
- Schiphol's air cargo community employs over 26,000 people.
- 1.5 million tonnes of cargo in 2011
- 313 scheduled airline destinations in 90+ countries
- 106 scheduled airlines

- 22 scheduled freighter operators
- Highest share of (non-integrator) maindeck capacity in Europe
- 25 dedicated full freighter Cat 8/9 stands
- 5 main runways, ranging from 3,400 – 3,800 metres in length
- Ready to handle multiple A380s & B747-8Fs
- Eight cargo handling companies
- 400,000 m2 of cargo warehouses, of which 60% have direct air side access
- 11,000 m2 of new cargo buildings under construction with direct air side access
- Airside access for logistic service providers
- Over 150 logistic service providers situated at or in vicinity of Amsterdam Airport Schiphol
- Over 50% of all American and Asian European Distribution Centres located in the Netherlands
- Airport-seaport synergies: Amsterdam Airport Schiphol close to Ports of Rotterdam and Amsterdam
- Unparalleled European road feeder and distribution network
- Over 25 trucking companies operate at the airport

Amsterdam Connecting Trade:
- 3 new logistic parks planned
- dedicated freight lane planned to connect air cargo terminal directly to logistic parks, truck-, water- and High Speed Train Cargo terminal of ACT

Schiphol SmartGate Cargo
The airport, air cargo industry & customs have joined forces to integrate monitoring of goods leaving the EU from Schiphol, allowing rapid and efficient clearance:
- Integrated cargo control & inspection
- Shorter lead times & lower costs
- Increased reliability, safety & security

See www.schiphol.com/smartgate

About e-freight:
E-freight is an IATA initiative which aims to replace paper with digital documents throughout all elements of the air cargo supply chain – including shippers, forwarders and export customs, carriers, import customs, handling agents, forwarders and consignees. Traditional paper-based air cargo involves some thirty documents for every shipment, and is estimated to create the equivalent of eighty Boeing 747 freighter-loads of paper every year. E-freight eliminates re-keying of data: reducing cost, speeding processes and enhancing accuracy.

About e-Link:

This is a pilot scheme operated by Amsterdam Connecting Trade in collaboration with Schiphol Smartgate Cargo. Three handling agents and three forwarders are currently testing the system, whose aim is to reduce customs clearance times and unnecessary paper in the supply chain.

Under E-link, the existing ACN pass has been expanded into a "smartcard" that carries data for Customs-cleared shipments. The card provides security access for vehicle and driver at the handling agent's premises, where the data and responsibility for the shipment is transferred from the card to the next party in the supply chain. The system then allocates a door for offloading the cargo. E-link complies with all customs procedures, and has already demonstrated 25% time savings in some processes.