

Mooncakes for flowers: Schiphol and China celebrate first e-freight shipments

Schiphol Cargo – the dedicated cargo arm of Amsterdam Airport Schiphol - IATA and China's Central Customs Department have set October 1st (the National Day of China) as the target date for the first e-freight shipments between China and Amsterdam.

In a highly-symbolic celebration, they plan to exchange simultaneous e-freight shipments of mooncakes - a delicacy eaten during China's important Mid-Autumn Festival - and Dutch flowers.

The idea was one of several positive outcomes from a visit to Schiphol by a delegation of high-ranking officials from China's Central Customs Department. The group wanted to see e-freight in action, and explore collaboration with Schiphol Cargo and its logistics community to assist China's ambition to introduce paperless airfreight.

During the two-day visit, the group, accompanied by IATA representatives led by Cargo Director Des Vertannes, met with senior executives of Dutch Customs, SkyTeam and member carriers Air France KLM, China Southern and China Cargo Airlines, Schiphol Cargo, Air Cargo Netherlands, Cargonaut, Damco and Rhenus.

The programme included tours of logistics facilities at Schiphol, the Customs Control Centre and the AFKLM Cargo handling base. Delegates learned about Schiphol's extensive airline links with China, the alignment of e-freight with the World Customs Organisation SAFE standards framework and RKC (Revised Kyoto Convention), and SkyTeam's progress with e-freight.

The group was shown how Cargonaut (the Dutch Cargo Community System) caters for e-freight, and witnessed a live e-freight shipment's progress through Rhenus' logistics operation, the AFKLM Cargo handling facility, and Dutch Customs' own system.

Mr Miao Yuexue, Deputy Director General of China Customs, thanked IATA, Schiphol Cargo and the other parties involved in the visit for their tremendous efforts, and he particularly thanked Dutch Customs for sharing their knowledge.

He told delegates they had been given a golden opportunity to observe how a paper-based environment could be converted to an electronic one, and expressed the ambition to form a working group in China together with IATA, comprising representatives of the entire supply chain and China Customs.

Paying tribute to Schiphol's great importance as a gateway into Europe, he said the airport displayed a uniqueness among its competitors, as all stakeholders shared the same dream of implementing e-freight. He added that the passion of all involved was very inspiring, and had solidified the resolve of China Customs to implement e-freight as well.

Speaking after the visit, Schiphol Cargo Director – Business Development, Saskia van Pelt said: "China is the world's biggest exporter, and the single largest market for Schiphol's logistics community. We cannot realise our goal to make Schiphol a paperless cargo airport without the support and involvement of China's authorities and airlines.

"This was one of the best and most positive meetings we have ever held with Chinese representatives; our discussions were very good-natured and open. We are very grateful for their participation, and for the commitment they showed by fielding delegates of such a senior level.

"It's clear that China Customs fully understands the challenges it is facing , and its enthusiasm for e-freight proves its determination to take positive action. E-freight will bring much greater efficiency and processing capacity to China Customs' vast operations - benefiting Customs itself, Chinese and other carriers, and the global logistics industry."

+ ends +

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-Freight@NL:

E-freight@NL is an important initiative to turn Amsterdam Airport Schiphol into a paperless cargo hub. In 2010 the project was awarded a € 1.2 million grant from the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs. With KLM Cargo as secretary, the project's participants include various supply chain partners and organisations including Air Cargo Netherlands. Amsterdam Airport Schiphol plays a key role in strengthening relations with other major worldwide hubs involved in e-freight, such as Singapore and Hong Kong.

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.

For further information, please contact:

Pilot Marketing

Derek Jones, Account Director dj@pilotmarketing.co.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)20 8941 5381

Or

Press Relations Department press@schiphol.nl.

Telephone: +31 20 601 2673