



IATA-ACI-ASA Cooperation on the Ground Ops Standards Development

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1. Introduction

This document has been produced collaboratively by IATA, ACI and ASA to demonstrate cross industry cooperation and commitment for the adoption of standardized, internationally recognized ground handling processes.

List of Acronyms

| | |
|-------|---|
| ACI | Airport Council International |
| AHM | Airport Handling Manual |
| AMC | Acceptable Means of Compliance |
| ASA | Airport Services Association |
| BP | Best Practice |
| CoPA | Charter of Professional Auditors |
| EASA | European Aviation Safety Agency |
| GAD | Ground Operations Automation and Digitalization |
| GHSP | Ground Handling Service Provider |
| GOG | Ground Operations (WG) |
| GOS | Ground Operations Standards |
| IATA | International Air Transport Association |
| IDX | Incident Data eXchange |
| IGHC | IATA Ground Handling Conference |
| IGOM | IATA Ground Operations Manual |
| PSC | Passenger Standards Conference |
| PSCRM | Passenger Services Conference Resolution Manual |
| RP | Recommended Practice |
| SME | Subject Matter Expert |
| TSB | Travel Standards Board |
| WG | Working Group |

2. Position on Ground Ops Regulations

2.1 IATA and its members support data driven, risk based « SMART » regulation that brings actual benefits to the ground handling industry in terms of safety, efficiency, and risk reduction, supported by a credible cost benefit analysis which also recognizes the liability the airlines have for outsourced services.

2.2 The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) develops a ground handling regulation, which defines Acceptable Means of Compliance (AMC) and recognition of industry standards by the competent authorities to fulfil those requirements. IATA has requested EASA to recognize its initiatives as fulfilling AMCs requirements.

2.3 In that context, considering the role and responsibilities entrusted to operators, airports and ground handling service providers by the European regulatory framework, IATA, ACI and ASA have reached consensus on the governance of industry standards as set out in this document to ensure endorsement of these standards by all interested parties.



3. Ground Ops Standards

3.1 IATA drives ongoing development and implementation of the industry ground handling best practices, standards, and procedures published in the IATA Ground Operations Manual (IGOM) and the Airport Handling Manual (AHM).

3.2 The key benefits of implementing global standardized best practices are:

- Enhanced safety performance
- Reduction of ground handling complexity and operators' variations
- Better quality of training and increase of personnel competence
- Improved operational efficiency
- Simplified regulatory oversight and third-party monitoring
- Reduction of cost of ground handling services

3.3 IATA strongly promotes the adoption of harmonized handling processes and procedures as well as common training requirements to be accepted by all key industry stakeholders.

3.4 As a general principle, the development and implementation of the industry ground handling best practices, standards, and procedures through IATA's governance mechanisms is founded upon a collaborative and consensus building process that seeks to be inclusive and aims to continuously improve the levels of safety and quality across the ground handling domain using a risk-based approach.

3.5 IATA's and the associated working groups responsible for AHM and IGOM content enhancement work on the basis of consensus, which is an approach that will continue to be pursued and promoted also for the coordination of AHM and IGOM relevant in the European regulatory context.

4. Airport Handling Manual (AHM)

4.1 The AHM is a Recommend Practice (RP) 1690 in the IATA Passenger Standards Conference (not binding to IATA members). The structure of AHM comprise sets of polices and recommended practices for:

- a. Passenger handling
- b. Cargo and mail handling
- c. Load control
- d. Management and safety
- e. Ground handling contracts
- f. Ground support equipment specifications and management
- g. Training for the ground operations personnel

4.2 The AHM is designed to be a repository of a wide range of airport related standards, policies, and recommended practices. The users of the AHM are also expected to be from a wide range of people and companies that operate at an airport who would use the AHM as a reference and a guide. It also contains material that is used by ground handling service providers, airlines, airport personnel, suppliers and manufacturers who provide the aviation industry with services or equipment related to airport operations.



4.3 AHM is developed and agreed by the aviation industry represented by IATA member airlines, GHSPs, non-IATA member airlines and airports.

5. IATA Ground Operations Manual (IGOM)

5.1 IGOM is IATA Recommend Practice 1690a (not binding to IATA members) and is a manual containing procedures and instruction for frontline personnel and sets the minimum baseline for safe ground operations. It covers passenger, baggage handling, ramp handling, load control and operational oversight. Published in three languages (English, Spanish, French).

5.2 IGOM defines ground handling procedures for airlines and ground handling services providers (GHSP) to ensure ground operations activities are safely, efficiently, and consistently accomplished. The manufacturers' aircraft maintenance manuals (AMM) contain the maintenance instructions necessary to ensure the continued airworthiness of aircraft. They also provide servicing sections that give specific information required to service aircraft on ramps or in maintenance hangars. Procedures in the AMMs are drafted considering aircraft in a maintenance configuration whereas IGOM deals with operational conditions on the ramp. As such, the procedures may slightly differ from one to the other.

5.3 The procedures detailed in IGOM reflect the minimum standards identified and agreed to by the aviation industry represented by IATA member airlines, GHSPs, non-IATA member airlines and airports.

6. AHM and IGOM Governance

6.1 The development and approval of the AHM and IGOM is done as per IATA Passenger Standards Conference Resolution 009, which establishes governing rules for groups reporting to Boards under the Traffic Conferences as well as approval of the IATA Resolutions and Recommended Practices.

6.2 The changes to IATA standards are developed and reviewed by ground operations groups or other relevant IATA subject matter working group within the IATA Conferences governance.

7. Ground Operations Groups

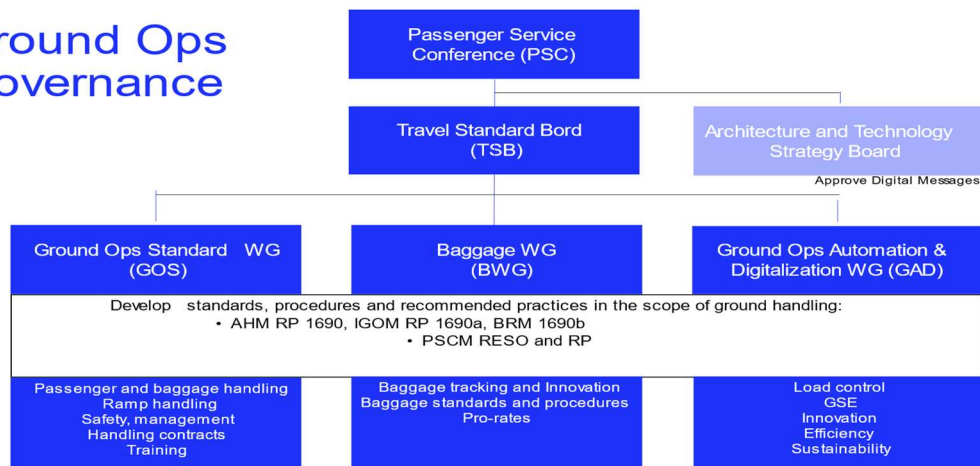
7.1 Ground Operations Standards (GOS) and Ground Ops Automation and Digitalization (GAD) are established by the IATA Travel Standards Board (TSB) reporting to the Passenger Standards Conference (PSC)

7.2 Their mandate is to develop and amend standards in areas of passenger and ramp handling; organization management, supervision and safety to include occupational health and safety, training, procurement of ground handling services and catering as published in:

- a. AHM (RP1690)
- b. IGOM (RP1690a)
- c. PSCRM
- d. Audit standards and methods for ground operations derived by the publications above



Ground Ops Governance



7.3 The GOS and GAD **members** are appointed by IATA secretariat for two years tenure from

- IATA member airlines
- IATA Ground Handling Partners represented by GHSPs, non-IATA airlines and airports

7.4 The GOS, GAD **observers** can be representatives of the IATA Strategic Partners (SP) for ground ops area, regulators, airports and various industry organizations.

7.5 6.5 IATA promotes a collaborative approach when developing industry best practice and this shall include seeking the input and consensus of representatives and SMEs from international organization including Airport Council International (ACI) and Airport Services Association (ASA).

7.6 The Airport Council International (ACI), , Airport Services Association (ASA), and International Airline Technical Pool (IATP) can nominate **observers** to participate in GOS and GAD WGs. Observers means participants of the working groups without voting rights.

8. AHM and IGOM Content Update

8.1 AHM and IGOM content is reviewed annually and if needed, its updated. Updates are done by the working groups in charge for the content as described in Section 6 above.

8.2 All updates developed by GOS and GAD are done in accordance with the groups working plans developed based on the identified strategic objectives, directions from TSB, the Ground Operations Groups (GOG), and /or other groups submissions as per Section 8 below.

8.3 Participants of GOS, GAD WGs as well as other SME working groups can submit their change request at any time via GOS/GAD Secretaries.

8.4 Any manual user or industry stakeholder can submit a change request via AHM & IGOM Change Request Form posted on the IATA websites, via email submitted to groundops@iata.org and igom@iata.org or via IATA customer portal.

8.5 IATA will share the work group agenda with ACI and ASA, which have an opportunity to provide their input to the annual work plan or submit a change request.

8.6 IATA evaluates any changes in the regulations and feedback gathered from the Regulators who endorse and/or accept IATA standards as acceptable means of compliance (AMC) to state regulation(s).



8.7 As part of continuous improvement, IATA collect industry input, inquiries, change request proposals, clarifications to publications content via multiply sources:

- a. IATA regional offices
- b. OPS portal users
- c. ISAGO via Charter of Professional Auditors (CoPA) and ISAGO accredited organizations
- d. participants of the annual IATA Ground Handling Conference (IGHC),
- e. IATA survey distributed to the manual users and ground operations experts annually,
- f. IATA Incident Data Exchange (IDX) collecting aircraft ground damages and injures reports.

8.8 All technical submissions are reviewed by IATA and assigned to the appropriate the working group responsible for further review and standards amendments.

8.9 GOS and GAD WGs work on change proposals. Any work is done based on the principle of consensus or if required by the formal voting as per Terms of References.

8.10 The proposed change(s) can be also prepared directly by other responsible groups, by IATA or external subject matter experts (SME) appointed by IATA. The proposals will be reviewed and finalized by the responsible group.

8.11 Any change impacting other IATA standards or operational areas not in the scope of the ground ops groups, relevant subject matter group shall be also consulted before finalization to ensure alignment and correctness.

8.12 Once the change proposal is finalized; the final draft will be open for comments to the relevant stakeholders as per Section 8 below and the group Terms of References. Proposal is put forward for comment only if there is a consensus within responsible sub-group to do so.

9. Industry Consultation

9.1 Finalized draft will be open for comments to

- a. GOS, GAD members and observers
- b. Other ground ops groups and IATA expert groups if relevant
- c. GOG and TSB
- d. Airport Services Association (ASA) and Airport Council International (ACI) representatives

9.2 All received comments will be reviewed by the relevant WG responsible for the proposal and

- a. Relevant comments addressed either for upcoming revision or for the following revision if the changes required are more complex.
- b. If comments are not accepted, the explanation shall be provided back to the submitter with reason of rejection and consensus shall be sought.
- c. If consensus is not reached, please see Section 11 for Dispute Process.

10. AHM and IGOM Approval

10.1 The Passenger Standards Conference (PSC) has delegated approval of AHM RP 1690, the IGOM RP 1690a and BRM RP 1690b to the TSB. TSB further delegated the approval to GOS and GAD WGs.

10.2 Each working group is responsible to approve changes in the sections of AHM and IGOM as per groups mandates defined in the Terms of References:



- a. GOS: AHM Ch,0, 4, 6, 8, 11 and IGOM Intro, Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4
- b. GAD: AHM Ch,5, 7, 9, 10 and IGOM Ch. 5

10.3 The approval process is accordance with GOS and GAD ToRs as well as with the Reso 009:

- a. All final proposals with changes arising from the Industry Consultation as per Ch.8 are formally voted by members of the GOS and GAD as per 9.2.
- b. Only members can vote.
- c. There is only one vote per company. Companies with multiply members need to assign a voter.
- d. 2/3 of positive votes of voting membership are required to adopt AHM/IGOM changes, taking in account that at least 50% of airlines voting agreed with changes.
- e. Quorum is met for the in person voting.

11. ACI, ASA Endorsement

11.1 IATA will provide timely notification to ACI and ASA of any proposed updates to AHM and IGOM

11.2 ACI and ASA are involved in the governance of these standards as follows:

- a. ACI and ASA can participate in the standards development as per Sections 6.5, 7.6 and 8.1d).
- b. ACI and ASA shall raise their comments and objections, if any, to the proposed change prior to the AHM/IGOM approval, during the Consultation period as per Section 8.1 to provide relevant working groups with sufficient time to review and address their concerns
- c. IATA will inform the ACI and ASA representatives about the status of their comments as per Section 8.2
- d. IATA will inform the ACI and ASA representatives about the results of the AHM and IGOM approval as per Section 9.
- e. ACI and ASA can start the dispute process as per Section 11 in case of disagreement with the status of their input or with the results of the voting.

11.3 Following notification of changes, IATA, ACI and ASA will hold an endorsement meeting/call to ensure that the proposed changes are acceptable and can be endorsed by all parties.

11.4 Following approval of changes, ACI and ASA should endorse the AHM and IGOM updates and encourage their members to use these updates. The endorsement is non-exclusive.

12. Dispute Process

In case on any disagreement with the proposed AHM/IGOM proposed changed, published or in the preparation, the following dispute process will apply.

12.1 Level 1: Review by the GOS and GAD

- a) The disagreement must be sent by a submitter in writing to the IATA Secretary of the group in charge of the content.
- b) Disputed item(s) needs to be accompanied with the factual evidence and expert opinions.
- c) The submitter must officially represent the company submitting a dispute.
- d) The IATA Group Secretary is responsible to
 1. request a formal statement from the sub-group and group in charge for the proposal,
 2. facilitate review of the dispute item by entire GOS or GAD working group,
 3. facilitate discussion with the submitter and the working group,
 4. formally record any discussions outcomes and dispute resolution if reached,
 5. seek for consensus between the working group and the submitter,
 6. formally reply to the submitter with the positive or negative response.



- e) The submitter has to acknowledge the result of the resolution or request further escalation.
- a) The IATA Group Secretary will inform Director of Ground Operations that the dispute will be escalated to Level 2.
- b) The disputed item will be temporarily suspended for publication or implementation until the dispute is resolved.

12.2 Level 2: Escalation to Travel Standards Board

- a) IATA Director of Ground Operations will
 1. escalate dispute to the Travel Standards Board for review, and
 2. seek expert opinion from the Ground Operations Group,
 3. facilitate discussion between TSB, relevant working group and the submitter,
 4. formally record any discussion outcomes and dispute resolution if reached,
 5. seek for consensus between the working group and the submitter,
 6. formally reply to the submitter with the positive or negative response.
- b) The submitter has to acknowledge the result of the resolution or request further escalation.
- c) If the submitter is satisfied with the resolution, the suspended item will be included into the publication in the upcoming AHM/IGOM revision otherwise it stays suspended until Level 3 is finalized.

12.3 Level 3: Arbitration

Any dispute not resolved within 60 days of the date of Notification should be exclusively and finally settled by arbitration under the Rules of Conciliation and Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce as appointed by IATA and agreed by the Submitter.

13. Attachments

13.1 AHM and IGOM Content Ownership

The AHM and IGOM is updated by working different groups and SMEs as per table below.

| AHM | Group - Sub-group |
|---|---|
| Ch.0 General | IATA |
| Ch.1 Passenger Handling | Travel Standard Board (TSB) in cooperation with GOS |
| Ch.2 Baggage Handling published separately as BRM | BWG |
| Ch.3 Cargo and Mail Handling | Various cargo groups – content is approved under the Cargo Service Conference (CSC) |
| Ch. 4 Aircraft Handling and Loading | GOS and ULD Board (ULDB) |
| Ch. 5 Load Control | GAD |
| Ch. 6 Management and Safety | GOS |
| Ch. 7 Aircraft Movement Control | GAD |
| Ch. 8 Ground Handling Agreements | GOS |
| Ch. 9 GSE Specification | GAD |
| Ch.10 Environmental Specifications for Ground Handling Operations | GAD |
| Ch.11 Ground Operations Training Program | GOS in cooperation with GAD |
| Annex – Terminology | IATA and all groups |
| IGOM | Group - Sub-group |
| Ch.1 Passenger Handling | GOS |
| Ch.2 Baggage Handling | GOS and BWG |



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| Ch.3 Aircraft General Safety and Servicing Operations | GOS |
| Ch.4 Aircraft Turnaround | GOS |
| Ch.5 Load Control | GAD |
| Ch.6 Operational Oversight | GOS |
| Annex - Terminology | IATA and all groups |

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| 6.3 | Supervision |
| 6.4 | Oversight Checklists |
| 6.5 | Incident Notification and Immediate Actions |
| 6.6 | Adverse Weather Oversight Procedures |

13.4 Correlation of the IGOM Edition12 and ICAO Ground Handling Manual Doc10121 Edition1

| ICAO DOC 10121 Edition 1 | IGOM Edition 12 | ICAO DOC 10121 Edition 1 | IGOM Edition 12 |
|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ICAO Ground Handling Manual reference | IGOM Reference | ICAO Ground Handling Manual reference | IGOM Reference |
| 6.2.1.4 | See note1 | 6.2.7.4 | 1.1.6.4 & Introduction point 2 |
| 6.2.1.5 | 3.1.1, 3.1.2.5 | 6.2.7.5 | 6.5.4 |
| 6.2.2.4 | 3.1.3.1, 3.1.3.2, | 6.3.2.4 | 5.1 to 5.8 |
| 6.2.2.5 | 3.1.3.2 | 6.3.2.5 | 5.2, 5.4.3.1, 5.4.3.3 |
| 6.2.2.6 | 3.1.3.1, 3.1.3.2, 3.1.3.3, 3.1.3.4 | 6.3.3.5 | 3.1.2.1, 4.1.1 |
| 6.2.2.7 | 3.1.3.2 | 6.3.3.6 | 3.1.2.4, 4.1.1 |
| 6.2.3.3 | 3.1.2.4 | 6.3.3.7 | 3.4, 4.1.1, 4.6.2.3, 4.6.6.4 |
| 6.2.3.4 | 3.1.2.4 | 6.3.3.8 | 4.1.3, 4.2.1, 4.1.4.1 |
| 6.2.3.5 | 3.1.3.2, 3.1.2.3, 3.1.2.4, 3.1.3.2, | 6.3.3.9 | 4.1.1, 4.1.3, 4.2.1 |
| 6.2.3.6 | 3.1.3.2, 3.1.2.3, 3.1.2.4, 4.6.3.1, 4.9.4.3, | 6.3.4.4 | 3.1.3.5 |
| 6.2.4.2 | 3.1.3.1, 3.1.3.4 | 6.3.5.4 | 3.1.3.1, 4.1.4.1, 4.1.4.2 |
| 6.2.4.3 | 3.1.3.2 | 6.3.6.2 | 4.5.1- 4.5.10 |



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| 6.2.4.4 | 3.1.3.2 | 6.3.7.2 | 3.1.3.1, 3.1.3.2, 3.1.3.5 - 3.1.3.9, |
| 6.2.4.5 | 3.1.3.5, 3.1.3.6, 3.1.3.9 | 6.3.8.4 | 3.1.3.1, 3.1.3.2, 3.5.2, 3.5.3, 3.6.2, 3.6.3 |
| 6.2.5.3 | 3.2.1 - 3.2.3 | 6.3.9.3 | 3.1.3.1, 3.1.3.2, 4.6.8.2, |
| 6.2.5.4 | 3.2.1 - 3.2.3 | 6.3.10.5 | 3.1.3.1, 4.6.1 - 4.6.10, 4.7, 4.8 |
| 6.2.6.3 | 3.3.1 – 3.3.7 | 6.3.11.3 | 3.1.3.1, 4.9.1 -4.9.4 |
| 6.2.7.3 | 1.1.2, 1.1.6.2,1.1.6.3, 1.1.6.4, 2.7.3, 4.5.3.5, 4.5.7.2, 4.5.7.5, 4.5.7.7, 5.4.1, 6.5.1, 6.5.4 | 6.3.12.5 | 3.8 |
| | | 6.3.12.6 | 3.8 |
| | | 6.3.12.7 | 3.8 |