Digitalization of the FIATA Multimodal Transport Bill of Lading (FBL)

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Transport & Logistics Domain
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FIATA standard trade documents

More than 50 years ago FIATA started to establish standard trade documents to harmonize documents and forms used by freight forwarders.

- Negotiable FIATA Multimodal Transport Bill of Lading (FBL)
- Non-negotiable FIATA Multimodal Transport Waybill (FWB)
- FIATA Forwarders Certificate of Transport (FCT)
- FIATA Shippers Declaration for the Transport of Dangerous Goods (SDT)
- FIATA Shippers Intermodal Weight Certificate (SIC)
- FIATA Forwarding Instructions (FFI)
- FIATA Forwarders Certificate of Receipt (FCR)
- FIATA Warehouse Receipt (FWR)
Digitalization – key objectives

• Making the document easily accessible to our members – possibility to issue an eFBL through their everyday tools (TMS and others)

• **Strengthening of compliance control over the issuers of the document** – adding a trust layer by certifying the identity of the issuers of the document

• **Preventing fraud and ensuring full traceability of the document** – adding a security layer by allowing stakeholders to access an immutable document audit trail

• **Ensuring interoperability with all modes of transports and different actors of the supply chain** – using the UN/CEFACT Reference Data model to create our eFBL standard
The eFBL standard is based on the UN/CEFACT semantic to ensure the data exchanged can be understood in the same way by all actors of the supply chain.

Mapping exercise took place last year, involving UN/CEFACT experts and FIATA Technical and Business experts.

eFBL draft standard available as open source on Git Hub: https://github.com/FIATA/eFBL
eFBL – How it works

1. Freight forwarder connects to its TMS or other platform to input eFBL data through a form
2. Data together with freight-forwarder ID is shared with FIATA through a dedicated API
3. FIATA verifies the identity of the document issuer and issues document with a unique tracking QR code and number
eFBL – How it works

4. eFBL document is made available to the freight-forwarder who can print or send it as a PDF (and eventually as data)

5. Stakeholders can access the immutable document audit trail by scanning the QR code or uploading the document on FIATA’s verification page: https://fiata.github.io/eFBL/verification-page/
FIATA eFBL Proof of Concept

**Duration:** 7 Months (Feb – Aug 2021)

**Technical feasibility**
7 Software providers:
AKANEA, Bolero, eCustoms, eDox Online, CargoX, Cargowise, TradeWindow

**Objective:**
Demonstrate the technical feasibility:
Ensure the eFBL open source standard and API could be easily implemented by software providers

**Operational feasibility**
19 Freight-Forwarding companies:
FIATA and National Associations members

**Objective:**
Demonstrate the operational feasibility:
Ensure that FIATA digital identity solution and the eFBL solution would answer to the needs of both Freight Forwarders and their stakeholders
What worked well

**Technical aspects:**

- Easiness of technical implementation
- Speed of response/connection to FIATA document tracking system
- Open source standard
- GitHub repository to share technical documentation

**Operational aspects:**

- Easy issuance of eFBL through everyday tools
- User friendly solution
- Additional security added through the document tracking and verification processes
- Integration within already existing processes / re-use of data
What will be improved

Process improvements

- Allow QR code to be read by all common devices
- Business names corresponding to paper FBL fields name will be shared with software providers to improve user friendliness
- Amendment function will be implemented to allow freight forwarders to amend an eFBL even when already issued, while keeping the same tracking number and QR code
- A cancellation option will be available to allow users to cancel an eFBL once it has been issued
- Digital rider addition in case of long Goods Description
- A security will be added to prevent people from typing random numbers on the verification page to access eFBL data they should not have access to
- A watermark will be added to the document preview part of the Audit trail (a security will also prevent modifications and printing)

Table: eFBL data model improvements

| Goods Description | Digital rider created
| Container and Seal number will be added
| Goods description text will be added
| Dangerous goods information will be added (non-mandatory)
| Total weight will be added

| Contractual Clauses | Will be added on eFBL PDF at the bottom of the Goods Description field

| Ocean Vessel | Voyage number will be added

| Nbr of Original FBLs | Number and text will both be authorized

| Cargo Insurance | should be "not covered" by default

| Port of Loading/Discharge + Place of Receipt/Delivery | Both the city and the country will be displayed |

Description

- Digital rider created
- Container and Seal number will be added
- Goods description text will be added
- Dangerous goods information will be added (non-mandatory)
- Total weight will be added
Next steps – eFBL project implementation

- Technical Implementation
- Roll-out for direct FIATA members
- Roll-out for Europe Associations
- Roll-out for Asia-Pacific Associations
- Roll-out for Africa & Middle East Associations
- Roll-out for Americas Associations

Timeline:
- SEPT 21
- OCT 21
- NOV 21
- DEC 21
- JAN 22
- FEB 22
- MAR 22
- APR 22
- MAY 22
- JUN 22
- JUL 22
- AUG 22
- SEPT 22
- OCT 22
- NOV 22
- DEC 22
- JAN 23
- FEB 23
- MAR 23

Key milestones:
- FIATA Presidency Approval
- Launch
- Roll-out end
Next steps

**Extension FIATA solutions**

Possible extension of the document tracking solution to other FIATA documents (FWB, FCR, FWR) and non FIATA documents (House Bill of Lading)

**Cooperation with stakeholders**

Working with other key actors of the supply chain on development and adoption of relevant standards to facilitate the use & acceptance of electronic bills of lading worldwide:

- Digital identity standards
- Adoption of MLTER
- Interim solution to facilitate the use & exchange of electronic documents of title – facilitating interoperability between eBL providers
Q&A
Thank you