



SUPPLY CHAIN WORKING GROUP

PAPU/OTC/SCG/PATF/01/2026 – Doc No. 2

PAPU-AFRAA TASK FORCE (PATF)

20TH JANUARY 2026 (VIRTUAL)

TIME: 09:00 (GMT)

AFRICA TRANSPORT THINK TANK (TTT) ACTIVITIES REPORT

Subject Africa Transport Think Tank Activities Report	References/Paragraphs
Decisions Expected <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt the Report;• Make Recommendations to the Supply Chain Working Group.	

1. INTRODUCTION

The Africa Transport Think Tank (TTT) was established in year 2024 following the Regional Transport Workshop held in December 2023 in Arusha, Tanzania, and it continued to implement its activities during the 20225/2026 financial year. The main objective of the TTT is to enhance transport performance (Leg 2) in Africa, as well as to foster the establishment of Regional Transport Hubs to ensure efficient international mail transportation.

The Transport Think Tank (TTT) consists of transport experts from ten (10) Designated Operators (DOs), two (2) UPU transport experts, and two (2) PAPU representatives. The DOs in the Team are **Botswana, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, and Togo.**

The TTT holds meetings to discuss international mail transportation matters in Africa and also participates in transport webinars organized by the UPU Transport Unit in collaboration with global stakeholders. Four (4) TTT meetings were held in July, August, October, and December 2025, and several activities were implemented.

The meetings were convened to assess concrete progress on regional hub development, the fulfillment of agreed KPIs, contingency planning for Import Control System 2 (ICS2), strengthening open and closed transit, compliance improvement, and accelerating the transition towards paper-free transport. The meetings further addressed the operational use of transport-related digital tools and monitoring dashboards.

2. REGIONAL TRANSPORT TRENDS AND COMPLIANCE

2.1 Import Control System 2 (ICS2)

The IB provides updates during the TTT meetings on the status of transshipment and transit via the European Union (EU). On average, the UPU data shows that over **45%** of mail from Africa continues to transit through the EU via ICS2-compliant global carriers, including for intra-African flows. While this ensures compliance, it highlights dependency on external networks. Posts were encouraged to reinforce their regional connections to reduce dependency and strengthen African operational autonomy. It is therefore essential for African Designated Operators to work on contingency plans to bypass the EU in case their mail faces challenges in complying with the Import Control System 2 (ICS2) Release 2 transit requirements.

2.2 Data Compliance

During the TTT meetings, the IB updates the status of data compliance on mail transportation for the TTT members. Emphasis is placed on the need for members to prioritize data quality improvement, especially on PREDES and CARDIT messages, as well as accurate flight information, as part of their broader compliance efforts. Compliance issues related to incomplete event reporting and data accuracy remain priorities for African DOs. Posts aspiring to serve as regional hubs must close these gaps for them to be eligible.

2.3 QCS big mail data transport dashboard

The IB revisited the functionalities of the IQRS transport dashboard for participating DOs, which provides a detailed overview of transport flows & EDI performance and can be used as a standard tool for monitoring and operational planning.

During the October 2025 meeting, a live demonstration was conducted on the transport monitoring features available in the IQRS system, focusing on dispatch monitoring, receptacle scanning (Monitoring dispatches and Receptacle scanning performance), and transport dashboard analytics. Members learnt how to access and interpret flat files to evaluate dispatch performance and identify operational bottlenecks. The EMS SMARTCARDIT and RESDIT were also demonstrated, highlighting how to use them effectively to track transport events and improve carrier coordination.

Members were strongly encouraged to integrate these tools into their daily operations and actively use them to analyze results and engage with partners, thereby strengthening visibility and ensuring timely corrective actions to drive performance improvements.

3. REGIONAL TRANSPORT HUBs

The TTT members agreed that regional transport hubs be established in the following countries: **Ethiopia, South Africa, Togo, and Kenya**. It was noted that the quality of service in transport and transit services should be at the highest level to ensure that the service provided by the Regional Hubs aligns with partners' expectations.

The TTT members were tasked with continually evaluating their transport data and ensuring improvements in areas where they lag, to ensure that they meet all the KPIs required for the Regional Transport Hubs.

The KPIs to be met are as follows:

S/N	KPI	Targets
1.	Network Coverage Targets based on region-specific Needs	1-2 direct or indirect regular connections to Europe and the Arab Regions
2.	UPU Certification on S58 & S59 standards	Certification Level: Gold, silver or bronze
3.	EDI Message Flow and Compliance <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. CARDIT vs RESDIT (outbound flow)ii. PRECON vs PREDES (outbound flow)iii. CARDIT vs PREDES (outbound flow)iv. RESCON vs. PRECON Inbound flow)v. RESCON vs. RESDES (inbound flow)	 ≥85% ≥85% ≥90% ≥85% ≥85%
4.	Customs Office Availability	during operational hours
5.	Signed FPSA (SLAs) -key carriers (by volume or importance for the region)	≥90%
6.	Publication of Transit Rate in UPU Transit Compendium	100%
7.	Participation in regional partnership agreements (DOs from the region)	≥90%
8.	Customer satisfaction (I-Care & GCSS)-customer complaints	≤5% or less
9.	Customer satisfaction (I-Care & GCSS)- resolution within 10 days	≥90%

Evaluation of the readiness of the four aspiring Regional Hubs, on the KPIs, indicated that there is slow improvement and more effort needs to be put to ensure that all the DOs are eligible to become regional mail hubs. EDI readiness of all DOs, as well as the carriers' readiness to support the initiative, remains critical. Togo is working on the EAD readiness of their leading airline, ASKY. Of the four appointed hubs, only Ethiopia and Togo are actively engaged in terms of data improvement and EDI visibility.

Kenya and Togo have been certified for S58 and S59 security standard compliance, while Ethiopia and South Africa are working on security certifications of their critical facilities.

Kenya is not actively participating in the meetings, making it difficult to assess progress. The limited participation from the other TTT members poses a direct risk to the project timelines. If this persists, the IB clearly indicated that alternatives may be considered, with Nigeria, Ghana, and other countries that may want to cooperate and provide better infrastructure for the region.

4. US IMPORT DUTY REQUIREMENTS FOR POSTAL MAIL

Since the issuance of the US Executive Order suspending duty-free *de minimis* treatment for all countries in July 2025, Designated Operators have to comply with the Executive Order (EO) when sending mail to the United States of America. Effective 29th August 2025, **all goods entering the U.S. are subject to duties**, except documents and gifts with a value below US\$100 only.

During the transition period (29th August 2025 – 28th February 2026), two duty collection models will apply: a flat per-item fee (USD 80–200 depending on origin) or ad valorem charges. After February 2026, only ad valorem duties will remain. This creates significant operational and financial implications for Posts, carriers, and e-sellers.

The Extraordinary UPU-IATA Contact Committee meeting held on 13th August 2025 noted that several carriers were unwilling to assume the new duty collection and remittance responsibilities required by the EO. This raised the risk of mail transport suspension if alternative solutions were not urgently secured. It was emphasized that *de minimis* is not only a U.S. issue, as similar measures may be adopted by other markets, making preparedness urgent. Posts must therefore strengthen ITMATT data quality, prepare for new clearance workflows, and evaluate their ability to integrate with Delivered Duty Paid (DDP) or Postal Delivered Duty Paid (PDDP) systems to streamline customs clearance and tax collection.

African Posts were encouraged to collaborate with PAPU and the IB to mitigate risks and adapt operational processes to these regulatory shifts.

5. PAPER-FREE TRANSITION AND EDI READINESS

Implementation of Paper-Free Transport by Designated Operators in Africa is one of the significant milestones to be achieved by the Africa TTT. Paper-free transport can only succeed if all participating DOs have robust EDI capability. A regional readiness assessment will be conducted, and DOs with strong EDI performance will be prioritized for pilot projects.

Most African airlines still cannot exchange EDI data with postal services. Togo facilitated a technical meeting between the UPU PTC and ASKY airline, intending to support the DO in EDI exchanges with the airline through the use of the EAD Transport Application.

6. IATA-UPU-ICAO WEBINAR: STRENGTHENING GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

The IATA–UPU–ICAO Webinar, under the theme “Strengthening global partnerships,” was held online on 3rd December 2025. The Webinar was a unique platform featuring speakers from airlines, civil aviation authorities, and the postal sector, fostering cross-sector dialogue to strengthen global connectivity and drive operational excellence.

The Webinar was delivered by various experts and covered the following topics:

a) Postal and Customs perspective:

- ✓ Javier Garcia (UPU Customs Programme);
- ✓ Carlos Eduardo Gomes Lontra Pires (Brazilian Post);
- ✓ Bat-Erdene Gungaa (Mongolian Customs).

b) Carrier's perspective:

- ✓ Sharon Rodrigo (Qatar Airways);
- ✓ Bernard Heuzeveldt (KLM).

c) Cooperation between relevant authorities and industry:

- ✓ Sonia Hifdi (ICAO);
- ✓ Yves Mabbe (Cargolux).

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) **Regional Hubs:** Eligible Designated Operators should develop SLA parameters with carriers, improve KPI performance to ensure measurable accountability.
- ii) **Exchange of EDI with mail carriers:** DOs should identify non-EDI-ready carriers in Africa and propose EDI integration or alternatives to ensure visibility of African mail flows.
- iii) **US de Minimis Coordination:** Designated Operators should closely monitor U.S. Executive Order impacts, ensure ITMATT compliance, evaluate readiness of UPU DDP and IPC PDDP solutions, and integrate *de minimis* considerations into routing strategies, SLAs, and customs planning to safeguard continuity of mail flows.
- iv) **Data compliance:** DOs should ensure practical and effective use of IQRS and SMART dashboards as standard tools for monitoring and operational planning.

8. DECISIONS EXPECTED

The Task Force is expected to:

- i) Adopt the Report;
- ii) Make Recommendations to the Supply Chain Working Group.