

Air Transport

Air transport is by far the most time efficient mode of transporting goods, and in humanitarian contexts is used both domestically and internationally. Unfortunately, along with the speed and efficiency of air transport comes significantly higher costs and far more restrictions and complexities on handling of goods. In emergencies, and especially natural disasters and conflict situations where road access is difficult, air transport is often the preferred alternative.

Common Terms in Air Transport

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| Fixed wing | The most common type of aircraft – any airborne vessel with wings that requires horizontal take-off and landing space. |
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| Rotor wing | Helicopters of any configuration that have top mounted rotors to provide vertical lift, and have vertical take-off and landing capability. |
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| Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) | Any authority that maintains legal jurisdiction over the airspace above any country. Aircraft operating within a country or flying over a country (overflight clearance) must make arrangements through CAAs, registering flight plans and obtaining proper clearances. |
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| International Aviation and Transportation Administration (IATA) | An international governing body that sets safety regulations on commercial flight. Any aircraft commercially operating between two different countries that mutually recognise IATA standards is legally obliged to follow IATA regulations. |
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| International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) | A specialised UN agency that supports the development of mutually recognised civil aviation standards among UN member states, including air safety regulations. |
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| Tech Stop | Used to describe a situation when an aircraft must be on the ground for technical reasons. Usually tech stops refer to refuelling, but they can also be for unscheduled maintenance. Sometimes referred to as “going technical.” |
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| Domicile | Where the “permanent” home of the aircraft is, usually where the aircraft is originally licensed, and near the owner and operator. Domicile location are also frequently where aircraft receive routine maintenance as well, but not always. |
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| Repositioning | Moving an aircraft from one location to another location in anticipation of another future need. |
| Ground Support Equipment (GSE) | Any equipment involving the offloading or moving of cargo around an airport or landing strip, in lead up to loading or offloading cargo and people. GSE also includes catering, refuelling and power supply units. Ground handling crews can be employees of governments, or sub contracted service providers. |
| Airside | Any part of an airport beyond a secure checkpoint usually associated with loading/offloading, service operations and take off/landing. Airside operations occur within close proximity to working aircraft. |
| Cube/Weigh Out | The act of reaching the maximum limitations to a specific airframe, either by reaching its maximum volume (cube out) or its maximum weight (weigh out). |
| Flight Hours | Defined as the specified hours aircraft, pilot or crew are allowed to operate for. Physical aircraft may only be able to operate for a maximum number of hours in any week or month period, while pilots and crew can only operate for a maximum number of hours per day/week before mandated "crew rest." |
| Loading | All the special considerations surrounding aircraft loading, such as loading specifications and safety concerns. Loading is overseen by a "Loadmaster" or other trained crew, who will ensure proper distribution of weight and balance of cargo, while also screening for prohibited or controlled items. |
| <u>Dangerous Goods (DG)</u> | Any cargo that might pose a threat to aircraft while in transit or loading/offloading. DG is universal to all forms of transport, but is especially important to air aviation. Definitions, handling and labelling standards for DG are outlined in the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulation (DGR) . |
| Sling Loading | The act of transporting cargo on the outside of a rotor wing aircraft using a net or cable of some kind, with cargo hanging below the aircraft. Sling loading requires special equipment and specially trained pilot and crew, and can only be used in some ideal circumstances. |
