

Fradynskyi O.A.

Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor,
Senior Research Scholar,
Head of Department of Research of Problems of Customs Policy
Research and Development Centre of Customs
Institute of Fiscal Policy,
University of State Fiscal Service of Ukraine

DOMINANT OF ADVANCE PASSENGER INFORMATION ON AIR TRANSPORT

The concept of an Advance Passenger Information (API) system was first developed to meet the needs of the Customs services of certain States, in order to address problems of drug trafficking and threats to national security, as well as to respond to growing international traffic. Advance Passenger Information System governs the provision of a limited number of data elements (identification details from the passport and basic flight information) from commercial airline and vessel operators to the computer system of the destination state. Required information should conform to specifications for UN / EDIFACT Passenger List Message (PAXLST) formats. Private aircraft pilots must also provide the necessary information to the Customs. eAPIS (electronic Advance Passenger Information System) is a public website which allows small commercial carriers to transmit data to the Customs electronically. When traveling to or from certain countries, passengers are required to provide advance passenger information before they check in or they will be unable to fly.

A lack of uniformity in API/eAPI systems can adversely affect the viability of the air transport industry and reduce the effectiveness of utilizing such data for the purposes it is required. It is essential, therefore, that States worldwide standardize their data requirements and adopt a standard format for the electronic transmission of such data.

API data can be divided into two distinct categories: a) data relating to the flight available to air transport operators from their own automated systems; and b) data relating to each individual passen-

ger, corresponding to those items of data that currently appear on machine readable passports and other official travel documents such as visas, if any, and other data that may be available in the transporting carrier's Departure Control System (DCS).

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