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IATA reports flat trend in airfreight volumes

The IATA has reported a continued flat trend in airfreight volumes in May 2013



The International Air Transport Association (IATA) reported this week (2 July) that airfreight volumes in May 2013 were "broadly in line" with the flat trend over the last 18 months.

The IATA attributed the recent stall in airfreight markets and business confidence to "emerging softness" in some developing economies, including China, Brazil, Russia and India, reflecting lack of demand from advanced economies.

The association also reported that 60 per cent of air cargo is currently transported by passenger aircraft, making capacity management particularly challenging.

The Middle East was the only region to see strong growth in airfreight demand in May 2013, supported by airlines' network and capacity expansion strategies, re-export and sea-air traffic, growth in Asia-Africa trade and further expansion into markets like Japan, the IATA said.

Growth in airfreight demand was also forecast in Latin America, supported by overall increases in export volumes in recent months.

However, falling exports from China resulted in a "downbeat" outlook for Asia, offset by better results in Japan.

European and North American cargo airlines continue to face weak demand, and flat growth trends are expected to continue.

IATA director general and CEO Tony Tyler said: "It is getting harder to find optimistic signs for air cargo growth. The Middle East remains a bright spot, and the rate of decline in the Eurozone is easing. But this is offset by the weakening of expansion in Asia-Pacific. It is now clear that the positive global upswing in air cargo at the end of 2012 was an illusion. Air cargo, along with many parts of the world economy, appears to be in suspended animation at the moment."