



Border control costs

National border control is a State responsibility and provided directly to citizens. As such, States implement processes and provide resources to support their national legislations, policies, and objectives. National budgets must provide adequate funding of the control agencies in charge of meeting the national border control objectives.

SITUATION

National governments are responsible for State border control functions such as passport control, immigration, quarantine, customs, and clearance functions irrespective of the mode of transport. States around the world are reviewing their processes, notably using new tools and systems to improve the effectiveness of these controls while simultaneously working towards facilitating passenger and cargo processing. Different jurisdictions have diverse needs in this respect, and States balance these needs with their national budgets.

In some countries, however, aviation has been singled out, and airlines or their customers are being asked to cover the costs of State public functions, which is not the case for other modes of transport, where the national budget is in adequacy with national ambitions.

Whereas airlines and their customers benefit from other public services provided by governmental authorities directly or on their behalf, as e.g. passenger and luggage security screening, they do not have a benefit from the obligation that their customer need to go through passport control, immigration etc. This obligation is imposed directly towards the individual citizens.

INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES

"Each contracting State agrees to adopt all practicable measures, through the issuance of special regulations or otherwise, to facilitate and expedite navigation by aircraft between the territories of contracting States, and to prevent unnecessary delays to aircraft, crews, passengers and cargo, especially in the administration of the laws relating to immigration, quarantine, customs and clearance."

- Chicago Conventionⁱ

"Civil aviation should not be charged for any costs that would be incurred for more general security functions performed by States, such as general policing, intelligence gathering and national security."

- ICAO Policies on charges for Airports and Air Navigation Servicesⁱⁱ

"Contracting States shall develop effective information technology to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their procedures at airports." - ICAO Annex 9 - Facilitationⁱⁱⁱ

IATA POSITION

It would violate fundamental principles and be discriminatory if airlines and their customers were to pay for border control measures or other comparable State responsibilities, especially when no equivalent charges are levied on other forms of transportation.

In addition, lengthy border queues and complex processes hurt States by negatively impacting the general attractiveness of the country, and the social and economic benefits of aviation. International air cargo and passenger travel are enablers of economic growth and are enabled by smooth crossing of national borders. States must staff and equip national border facilities at airports appropriately and efficiently to provide a reasonable border-crossing experience and maintain connectivity.

If States are unable or unwilling to fund these facilities and processes, it is not the role of cargo supply chain, passengers, or airlines to fund these facilities. It is also not the role of other bodies, such as airport authorities, to force airlines to pay. Border control is not the core business or safety role of airlines.

States aim to ensure their facilities and procedures are effective in their primary border control role while being cost efficient. Technologies automating border crossing benefit States by leading to lower processing times and, most importantly, allocating border staff to crucial value-added tasks such as secondary inspections. It is inappropriate to charge cargo, passengers, airlines, or airports for these improvements.

IATA encourages consultative dialogue between all parties to find the most appropriate solution based on national circumstances.

BORDER CONTROL COSTS FOR STATES

Airlines should not be directly or indirectly charged via taxes or fees for border control measures^{iv} which include:

- Border control, customs, or related staff costs
- Automated or electronic substitutes for manual document checks including automatic border control, websites/applications, or immigration/emigration kiosks.
- Underlying Information Technology equipment and infrastructure
- Screening and inspection material
- Biometric or personal information capture devices when the information is only used for national border control
- The buildings or land required by State services to perform their duties
- Projects or measures taken to facilitate or expedite border-crossing processes

For other modes of transport, these facilities are not charged to persons crossing the border and aviation should not be subject to discrimination in this respect.

ⁱ Chicago Convention, Article 22

ⁱⁱ ICAO Doc 9082, ICAO's Policies on charges for Airports and Air Navigation Services (ninth edition), Section II paragraph 7 iv) and Section III paragraph 3. v).

KEY POINTS: WHY STATES ARE REQUIRED TO FUND BORDER CONTROL MEASURES

1. Border control functions are States' responsibilities and thus border control and facilitation systems and processes should be funded by the national budget. Airlines or their passengers should not be charged for any costs that are incurred for general policing, intelligence, or national security functions. Any deviation from this principle would violate ICAO's policies.
2. The specific requirements for customs and immigration formalities come from States and each State decides on the appropriate level of control and automation required. Airlines should not be required to cover the costs of State choices in this respect.
3. Increased costs resulting from additional taxes or charges on passengers or cargo will restrict economic growth and tourism by negatively impacting the competitiveness of the aviation industry in the States concerned.
4. The proposed funding does not distribute the cost of border management equitably. People who do not travel also benefit from effective border management and therefore, the proposed funding model excluding other beneficiaries from contributing to the upkeep of the said borders.
5. Implementing specific charges for aviation would be discriminatory when other forms of transportation such as road and rail do not pay the cost of equivalent facilities.

ⁱⁱⁱ ICAO Annex 9 – *Facilitation*, Chapter 1, B. General Principles 1.4.

^{iv} See also IATA positions on [Passenger Data Charges](#), [Security Charges](#) as well as [Passenger Security](#)