

FAI F2 WORLD CHAMPS 2004 WHY USE AIRFREIGHT? – and - SOME “TYPICAL” AIRFREIGHT COSTINGS

1. **All** the world's airlines are in **big** financial trouble right now, and the “good old days” are over – maybe forever. That means that although discounted tickets are even more available today than perhaps in the past, these are invariably “hedged around” with all sorts of restrictions (particularly regarding travel dates, destinations, duration of stay, **excess baggage, groups, special handling**, etc), and it seems likely that even the European national flag carriers are much less likely to “support their national teams” with special group deals/arrangements than perhaps they were in the past.
 2. After September 11th 2001 the US Government publicly announced that **all** pax luggage on **all** flights **into/out of/within** the USA would be subject to 100% security checks, i.e. covering **all** carry-on and **all** checked-in luggage. A new US Government Agency (the TSA) was set up to oversee this within the USA itself, and TSA have also issued “guidelines” to other countries which fly into the US (both scheduled and charter). 100% checking finally came into full scale practice within the US in January 2003.
 3. Those TSA regulations prohibit carrying any type of “inflammable liquid”. Result if found? **Definite refusal to carry**, regardless of quantity. Batteries (whether charged or discharged) may also be refused; some tools may be OK, others not.
 4. With the huge volume of pax luggage within the US itself, 100% checking can only be achieved by automation. There are basically 2 types of security-checking machine, X ray and “sniffer”. X ray is obviously going to show up “something unusual” in the typical model/tool box!! (leading to physical check and possible refusal to carry), and “sniffers” may detect odours such as castor residue (probably with the same result). In addition, some “large” model boxes (e.g. a non-take-apart F2B model) will not fit into these machines, which would mean a physical “by hand” check, again with the same result probably.
 5. **See** <http://modelaircraft.org/comp/travelrecommendations.htm> (current AMA info; also various articles and links at Goeran Olsson's web site).
 6. Security checks (to meet the above TSA requirements) made at European departure points vary from airport to airport and country to country (and even from flight to flight!) at present, but note the above within-the US practices in the light of return-shipping of models and equipment back home after the event.
 7. Airfreight, whilst at first glance “expensive”, is certainly cheaper than “1% of 1st class fare” (typical airline charge for excess/overweight baggage), and better yet, airfreight does not suffer from **any** of the other disadvantages above! Actually, because of the airlines' financial situation there are some good airfreight price deals around, with different “service levels” available too (see next page).
 8. But for our purposes, what Airfreight **does require** is **good, early-enough organisation!**
 9. Airfreight pricing rates are based on a 1 Metre cube, priced by either the “bulk out” or “weigh out” method, with the weight/bulk limit typically set at 167 Kgs per cubic Metre. This means that if a 1 M³ box weighs less than 167 Kgs, it's charged as if it weighs 167 Kgs, multiplied by whatever the going airfreight rate is. Assume a typical non-take-apart F2B model, 2 of those should easily fit inside a 1 M³ box (with LDG removed, and including suitable “surround the models” interior packing, but without tools, spares, batteries, etc). Assume each model weighs, say, 2 Kgs bare, allow for that internal packing, add the weight of a good stout plywood box, and we have, at a guess, a 1M³ box weighing about 20 to 25 Kgs – i.e. nowhere near that 167 Kgs limit.
 10. Typical prices, direct flights ZRH/CHI/ZRH, as at June 2003 for “rack rates”, are around CHF 2.30 to CHF 2.50 per Kg (“full service”, see next page). This means that the above 1 M³ box (2 models) would travel Zurich/Chicago/Zurich for a cost of CHF 768 to CHF 834. So with that as an example, 3 x F2B models for 1 national team could go airfreight for about CHF 1,536 to CHF 1,668 (assuming 1.5 M³ for the 3 models, and 1 extra 0.5 M³ box for “tools/equipment/batteries” to be shared by all 3 team members). And 3 x F2C'ers should be able to get all their models (**with** existing transport boxes) into 1 x 1 M³ box (plus another 0.5 M³ box for their “tools/equipment”); much the same for 3 x F2A'ers; plus, say, 2 x 1 M³ boxes in total for the F2D'ers. So we have F2B = 2 M³, F2C = 1.5 M³, F2A = 1.5 M³, F2D = 2.0 M³, i.e. **7.0 M³** total. This gives a rough total cost for a full team of 12 pilots of about **CHF 5,376 to CHF 5,838**, or **CHF 448 to CHF 487 per pilot** (less per head if the cost is also split with the F2C mechanics and F2D helpers). Note: That rough price **excludes** the cost of boxes.
 11. **THE ABOVE IS AN INDICATIVE/BUDGETING EXAMPLE ONLY!** Expect variations for:
 - a) Your departure point and preferred routing/s;
 - b) The freight rate “deal/s” available at the time (**I repeat**, the above prices are ZRH/CHI/ZRH, as of June 2003);
 - c) The number of airlines/freight forwarders/shipping agents competing for freight on your chosen routing/s;
 - d) The “service level/s” (see over) on offer.
- AND:**
- e) The above cubic assumptions are pretty generous I think, and space savings can be made by arranging custom-size boxes to fit actual models, and by sharing boxes between team members. Obviously, as the largest C/L models, volume-wise, there are considerable savings if some/all F2B models in a team are take-apart type (and don't forget, a 1 M³ box does **not** necessarily have to measure 1.0 M x 1.0 M x 1.0 M – and anyway, airfreight can deal with boxes which are fractions of a cubic Metre too of course).

FAI F2 WORLD CHAMPS 2004 - AIRFREIGHT PROCEDURES

1. Find your local "reasonably high-profile/well known company" (e.g. an airline with it's own freight department, a "freight forwarder", a "shipping agent", etc. – in this paper I'll just call it "company" from now on). Then compare prices, remembering not just the price per kilo but also:
 - a) Your routing (where to where)? Direct or "via mid point/s"? (Note: via mid points is not recommended, if possible);
 - b) Is the company a "consolidator" (i.e. Offers regular "space available" service on your preferred route)?
 - c) Is the company "full service" (e.g. Will they do all paperwork, including a Carnet ATA (below), for you? Have they a "corresponding agent" – or own branch – in place of destination/mid point? Will they clear Customs on arrival for you? Will they deliver to the end address? Will they do all above in reverse for the return?), etc;
 - d) Do they offer space on pure freighter flights only, or on pax flights too?
 - e) Available flight times/dates (both ways)?
 - f) Company locations (your end **and** in relation to Muncie)?

2. Create your "credibility". Because there is no security checking of airfreight as for pax luggage - page 1 - the whole world-wide airfreight system works on the basis of "established shippers". In the majority of cases, companies have their own established customers with whom they deal daily, and "everyone knows" what is/is not allowed. As a model aircraft team rep, you will be a complete stranger to the company you select, and that company will not want to loose his "established" status by allowing you to ship all manner of "dangerous goods". Therefore, in my opinion you need work & time to establish a **personal relationship** whereby the company you select realises that you are "serious". How? Here are my own ideas:
 - a) When 1st meeting company staff, enquire if they have a "Special Projects Dept" (or similar name) to take care of unusual shipments, and be prepared to build relationships (e.g. explain, show model pix, mag contest reports, etc);
 - b) Get an "Official Invitation" for your team from AMA on their official letterhead, suitably signed and stamped by their official/s, listing **all actual individuals' names** for each member of your team invited to the Worlds 2004, and then show that to the people in your selected company right at the start;
 - c) Ditto b) above with a similar "Official Confirmation" on your NAC's letterhead, again with team names. Show that too;
 - d) Prepare in advance a "Packing List" form for every team member, in which he/she will list **every** item in his/her box/es, plus sign a declaration that all that is listed (and **only** that listed) is included (see also Carnet ATA below); then make clear to your selected company that you will arrange completion of the above individual Packing Lists on behalf of all team members. You will also need to check your company's regulations re batteries, etc, (it seems "sealed-type" will be quite OK). Also make clear that it will be a single shipment only - e.g. "Swiss C/L Team, total X boxes, total Y M³, total Z Kgs, consisting of Box 1 (dimensions and weight), Box 2 (dimensions and weight)", and so on and so on;
 - e) Ask to see the "Haz Mat" book at your selected company (you'll possibly be asked to sign a declaration anyway).

3. Agree the "service level". This is largely a matter of how much you want to spend (!), which in practice means:
 - a) Decide (in discussion with the company) what level of service you want (e.g. Pick up at several addresses, or you deliver all to company? Company does all paperwork, inc Carnet ATA – see below - or you do it? Company clears Customs on your behalf at US port of entry, or you do it? Company transports shipment from US port of entry to Muncie, or you do it? And all the same Q's to be answered for return shipment too);
 - b) If selecting "full service" (i.e. your company does all for you, both ways, as above) then you must give them the actual shipping address for AMA Muncie. Also agree with the company how you will get a copy of the Air Way Bill ("AWB") and details of flight numbers, times and dates for your shipment (both ways), **plus** – very important - how you can track your shipment from your departure end (**and** from the US end when returning home).

4. Customs Duty. The USA and Switzerland (and almost all other countries too – see list at your local Chamber of Commerce) have a bilateral agreement whereby in special cases it is possible to "Temporarily Import" goods into the USA (provided those same goods are "Re-exported" out of the USA again; provided that those same goods are "Re-imported" back into the country of origin; and if all that happens within a certain period). A good example of the use of the Carnet is a company exhibiting products at a US trade fair – or a Team going to the US for the World Champs! Full service companies will arrange a Carnet ATA for you (the fee for that job here is around CHF 150 – or it's added into the per-Kgs freight rate), but it is also very easy to do yourself, even on-line in some cases. Contact your local Chamber of Commerce to find out how, and the costs – here in Switzerland it is simply a case of filling in an on-line form (with a Packing List – see above!) and hen paying a fee of approx CHF 50.

"Swiss Team Procedure" – just for general info:
 For the Swiss Team I will arrange manufacture of boxes (ply, screw-shut, dimensions to suit individuals' models); Individual member/s will pack their own boxes and fill in/sign the above Packing Lists (one per each box/team member), and then transport their own packed boxes to me at a central point; I will liase with our chosen company, including doing all the "extra" paperwork such as the "Haz Mat" Declaration and Carnet ATA; I will time my own flight to arrive CHI "same time" as our shipment; I will clear the shipment through US Customs, transport the whole lot by road to Muncie (rented van); And all same in reverse for the return. I will charge the team my "raw costs" (Carnet ATA, rental van, etc) but certainly for Team SUI this will be cheaper than "full service" by our selected company. Clearly, **early selection** of team members will also be required for this procedure (our NAC rules normally have final team confirmation in April of the year of the event).

5. In addition to the above "Official Invitation" from AMA and "Official Confirmation" from our NAC (items 2 b) & c) above), for the "Swiss Team Procedure" I will also be requesting the following from the AMA:
 - a) A specific list of F2B fuels and F2C fuel ingredients which will be available in Muncie, so that we can order well in advance (but note, it is possible to pack and air freight **small** quantities of ingredients such as oil by air. Just talk to your selected company first if deciding to do this, and, purely my advice, but do **not** consider large quantities, **or** materials such as ether, kerosene, etc - although with airfreight, that too **is** possible, if special packaging is used – it's "just" a matter of the cost);
 - b) A central point in Muncie (a "shed") where boxes can be unpacked, stored for duration of the event, and re-packed for the return (by individual team members, and including completing/signing their own Packing Lists).

So see you in Muncie in July 2004 – with all your models and gear!