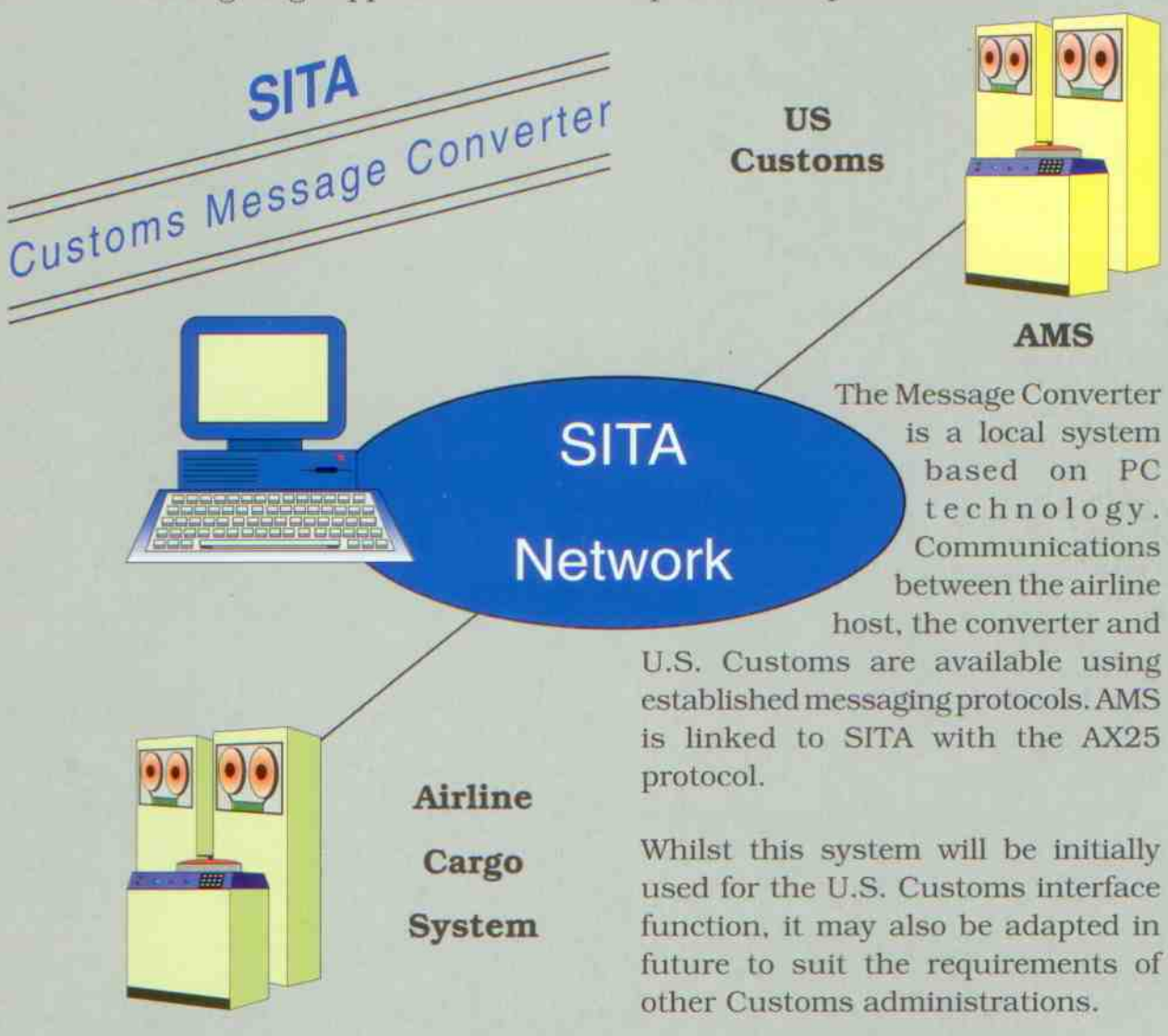
SITA Data Exchange with U.S. Customs AMS

As a result of the U.S. Customs Automated Manifest System (AMS), an opportunity has arisen for air carriers to expedite the clearance of goods by using Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).

U.S. Customs will accept data electronically from carriers provided it complies with their message standards. As these do not correspond with current airline messages, in order to transmit directly to the AMS, airlines either have to make costly modifications to their current applications or develop a software interface between their systems and the AMS.

SITA is offering a Message Converter to provide an interface between existing cargo applications and the specific AMS procedures.



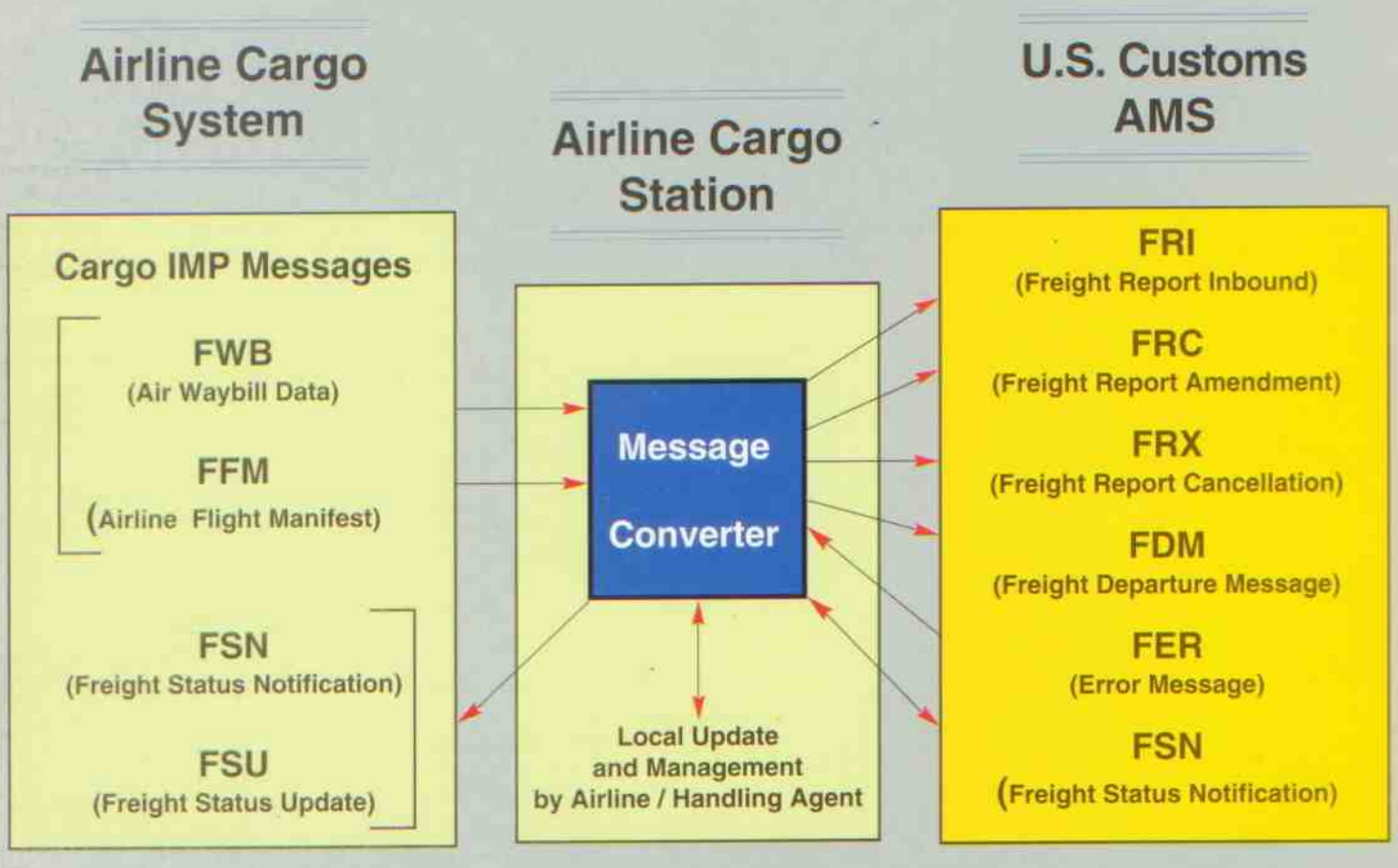
The Message Converter is a local system based on PC technology. Communications between the airline host, the converter and U.S. Customs are available using established messaging protocols. AMS is linked to SITA with the AX25 protocol.

Whilst this system will be initially used for the U.S. Customs interface function, it may also be adapted in future to suit the requirements of other Customs administrations.

Customs Message Converter

DATA SOURCE

The SITA message converter is organised around a data base of incoming shipments. Source data consists of messages received automatically from the host system and which are analysed to create and update the data base. Recognized messages received from the host are Cargo-IMP FFM, FWB (or FSB). Additionally, other data formats could also be handled.



It is also possible to enter data locally to create and amend information in respect of air waybills and house air waybills.

Messages automatically received from US Customs, i.e. FSNs are analysed to update the status of shipments.

MESSAGES GENERATED

The FRI, FRC, FRX and FSN are assembled in the format required by US Customs, and sent automatically or on request.

The message converter will also send FSU and FSN messages to the airline host to automatically update the status of the shipment.

LOCAL FUNCTIONS PROVIDED

- Update of data base for air waybill/house air waybill.
- Management of data base of shippers/consignees.
- Display and production of reports for shipment status.

- Capability to receive/send free-text messages, as a Type B terminal.
- User friendly display and entry of customs data.
- Management of message history (sent/received).
- Archive, restore functions on a per flight basis.
- Back up and restore facilities.

WORKSTATION REQUIREMENTS

The message converter is designed to work as a stand-alone PC or in a LAN environment with the SITATEX communications software running in background mode. A synchronous connection to SITA is recommended; the protocol includes an end-to-end security with the SITA message handling system. Speed can be between 2400 to 9600 bps.

The system can be expanded to suit individual carrier requirements. The station set-up may vary from a single PC to a Local Area Network configuration capable of handling several daily freighter services.

BENEFITS

Less Warehousing Needed

- As goods move on the day of arrival instead of 72 hours later, less than half the current amount of warehouse space is required.

Paperless Environment

- Resulting from the implementation of the U.S. Customs Automated Manifest System together with the SITA Customs Message Converter, the vast majority of accompanying documentation can be eliminated.
- The message converter expedites clearance and delivery and, if required, sends an automatic notification to the consignee.
- More reliable information as data is captured at source.

Local/Distributed System

- Easily adapted to existing host systems using either Cargo-IMP or other standards.

CHARGES

- Applications software licence fee (for any number of stations).
- Software maintenance charge per station.
- Connection and transmission charges as per SITA Schedule of Charges.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

When other Customs Administrations implement EDI systems, other messages e.g. IATA CCC version of CIR, CSI and CSN will be handled with limited software changes in the converter and without changes to the host system.

The EDIFACT version of the messages will be available when required.

For more information on the SITA Customs Message Converter, please contact your Account Manager or
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