



Frequently Asked Questions

Bags

Q. Are all bags accepted by the system?

A. All airlines impose limitations on hold bag dimensions. Most require that the addition of length, width and depth not exceed 156 cm. Selfcair, in turn, imposes maximal dimensions: 73 cm in length, 49 cm in width and 33 cm in depth (or a total of 155 cm). The effective volume is practically identical in both cases and significantly larger than the average hold bag volume (85 litres).

As a result, more than 85% of existing bags satisfy Selfcair criteria (against 95% today).

Q. Is there a risk that the number of oversized bags increase drastically?

A. Oversized bags that do not satisfy standard requirements are processed through the oversize channel and placed in hold 5 (in the tail of the aircraft). Airlines and airport authorities with whom Selfcair is currently speaking do not recognize this risk. On the contrary, they see Selfcair as a way to induce passengers to carry more manageable bags and even discipline the contradictory travellers.

Q. How is bag's security enforced?

A. In order to be sure that the bag has been placed in the right container and that nobody takes it off without authorisation, a small electronic case integrating an active RFID tag is directly attached to the handle of each bag by an agent. This case also allows the real time tracking of the bag inside the airport.

These cases are made available to passengers for the time of the flight and must be returned on arrival.

Q. How do passengers obtain the required equipment (covers and padlocks)?

A. The padlocks and covers are made available to passengers for the time of the flight and are returned on arrival. Padlocks have a seven-year lifespan and covers are estimated to withstand 500 cycles. Passengers who wish to acquire both, in order to gain time, for exemple, have the possibility to do so. The present cost for the padlock is less than 20 €.

Q. How is bag overweight taken care of?

A. Equipped with scales, the new kiosks presently being installed in terminals allow for bag weighing and overweight fees collection. Selfcair gears to this same solution.

Q. Are passengers under the obligation to keep their bags with them all the way to boarding, in particular in lounges and commercial malls?

A. No. Bag deposit takes place after inspection, when entering the restricted area. Once out of the deposit area, which is isolated with security back draft doors, passengers are free to circulate wherever they wish.

Passengers

Q. Will passengers subscribe to a system that demands an additional effort?

A. All surveys - including the one conducted by Air France with Selfcair participation on 5000 passengers - show that passengers want a lighter process and less dependency on airlines and airports employees. They aspire to maximum autonomy. Some 80% of the participants in our survey accept the additional burden that Selfcair implies in exchange for the serenity it offers. (They tend to appreciate the absence of anxiety linked to bag loss, theft of the bag or its contents on arrival).

"The Selfcair proposition is in fact to adapt the disruption that railways initiated half a century ago. Indeed, in the past, bags were deposited by passengers at the entrance of the train station, then carried and stored in the bag wagon by the railway staff. One must acknowledge the fact that the present solution, whereby railway passengers take care of their own bags, has become so natural that nobody even thinks of questioning it."

Q. What about passengers wishing to check more than one bag?

A. Only 4% of fully autonomous individuals travel with more than one hold bag. It is therefore relatively easy to find a way to assist them without abandoning the benefits of the system for the remaining 96%.

Q. How will unaccompanied minors and other dependent passengers be able to easily deposit their bags?

A. Whoever has accompanied them to the airport will be allowed to receive a platform pass which will allow her/him to walk through inspection all the way to the boarding gate.

Q. How is the autonomy of handicapped people facilitated?

A. Selfcair stations provide for the necessary facility as do present inspection areas today. In addition, the relative infrequency of this category of passengers (one passenger per flight in average) permits, if necessary, processing their bag through the oversize counters (see above).

Security

Q. Does the system fulfil all regulatory obligations concerning airport security?

A. In conformity with the European 300 directive issued April 2010 that determines the new airport security rules, Selfcair has produced an Airport Security Program in relation with the European Airport Security Authorities. This document should be used as a template for each specific Airport Security Program.

The new regulation, enforceable in 2014, will impose the scanning of all hold bags (with a known rejection rate of 10%). This new constraint is impractical for the present centralized systems as they maintain too large a distance between the passengers and their bags in order to allow for easy and rapid search. But this will be much more manageable with the Selfcair system, where passengers and their bags are kept in close vicinity.

Airports

Q. Why should airports enrol in the Selfcair program?

A. The numerous difficulties (breakdowns, missed bags...) of today's over-mechanized processes should naturally lead the industry to engage in serious reengineering efforts. More concretely, enforced airport security regulations (see above) will impose, in the years to come, major changes in the bag handling process and offer a unique opportunity to question a thirty-year approach that progressively led the industry into a situation where all participants feel extremely frustrated. Self-service is a simple alternative when automation cannot cope with the level of complexity of the task that needs to be accomplished. No need to insist on the fact that it has proven its efficiency in many service industries.

Air transportation has already been engaged in such a direction for years. Selfcair is simply a solution to extend this approach throughout the bag process where it is sorely needed. Its simplicity guarantees its robustness. In addition, while airports are constantly under pressure from the airlines to reduce costs, and therefore are desperately looking for commercial space (which has become a critical source of income), Selfcair permits to halve the necessary investment for processing bags as well as the dedicated space (presently close to 30% of total terminal floor space).

Q. What to do with the existing equipment?

A. Selfcair is a natural buy for new airport and installations renewals. As far as presently functioning installations are concerned, the economics rational is not profoundly different. Indeed, as economic benefits directly available to airports through Selfcair are significantly superior to present equipment depreciation,

conversion to the Selfcair system is immediately justifiable. But considerations other than economic may have to be taken into account, in which case the conversion might be organised in steps.

Airlines

Q. What are the primary airlines motivations to join?

A. The actual cost for processing bags is close to 7% of short and medium haul trips total cost. This is behind fuel 20%, crew payroll and maintenance for 11% each, and identical to fleet depreciation. No savings may actually match Selfcair promise of a cost reduction of 58%, at a time when the market solvency has become more problematic (strong price elasticity), and recent traffic growth has satisfied very low fare demand.

Q. What is the impact of Selfcair on turnaround time?

A. The impact of Selfcair on turnaround time is several: the reduced frequency of no shows limits the risk for delays; in addition, the transporters-loaders proposed by Selfcair allow for a reduced number of handling operations and therefore for a shorter loading and unloading time (8 minutes for a 4 containers hold); more indirectly, the faster delivery time Selfcair allows, as well as the guaranty that the bag will be returned untouched, motivates passengers to check what they would otherwise have carried inside the cabin. Yet, the considerable increase in cabin bags has slowed down boarding by a good ten minutes on short and medium haul flights.

Q. Does Selfcair reduce available space in the holds?

A. Yes. On short and medium haul flights, as available space is pre-allocated to each bag, one may only load 22 up to 26 bags per AKH (narrow body) container against 32 actually. But the weak ratio of hold bags to passengers (60% of the passenger number) implies that in most flights the rear hold is the only one in use, making the problem irrelevant (short and medium haul flights do not take any freight). As far as long haul flights are concerned, wide bodies holds are so important that the question is less relevant.

Q. Is the system relevant for non-containerized flights?

A. The essential of the bag process value chain takes place at departure before loading the aircraft; as a consequence, 70% of the economic benefits of the system remain when loading in bulk.

Q. How does Selfcair take care of connecting bags?

A. Fares for economy class passengers imposed by the low cost airlines competition do not allow any more for hub mechanized, leave alone manual bag handling transfers. Those actually amount to one third of total bag processing costs. With Selfcair the transfer cost is divided by ten.

In order to achieve this, Selfcair requires that passengers, in connecting hubs, take own care of the transfer from the first leg to the next, as they may already do when transferring from the train to an aircraft in the countries where very fast trains are widely used (As an illustration: Charles de Gaulle survey on train to airline transfer acceptance show a 77% passenger satisfaction level on bags). Nevertheless, in order to ease this transfer and insure proper connecting times, passengers, in case of containerized incoming flights, may be asked to preposition their bags in a pre-allocated container at the place of initial departure, in order for the bag to be directly delivered, upon arrival at the hub, in the departure terminal of the next leg.

For premium passengers, once the economy class traffic volume is gone, the sorting installations are no more justified. But the savings are so significant that any customized solution might be considered.