



SITA

WHAT'S CHANGING AND HOW TO PLAN WITH CONFIDENCE

SITA CUSS 2

By now, you've probably heard plenty of talk about CUSS 2 – the next development in Common Use Self-Service. And if it's left you with more questions than answers, you're not alone. Between legacy platforms, different versions of the standard, and a lot of “readiness” messages, it's not always obvious what the next step should be.

IATA is leading the industry into its next chapter with CUSS 2, supported by a toolkit and migration plan designed to help airports, airlines and vendors move forward in a phased, coordinated way. The goal is simple: reduce ambiguity, avoid unnecessary disruption, and make the transition workable in real airport operations.

Here's what you need to know – in practical terms.

CUSS 2 isn't a minor upgrade. It's an entirely new architecture designed to replace ageing technologies and modernize the way Common Use applications are built and delivered. It's shaped around clear outcomes: contemporary technologies, stronger security expectations, broader device support, and shorter release cycles that improve time-to-market – helping create a standard that's easier to maintain and evolve over time.

And the timing makes sense. Common Use isn't just check-in anymore. It's bag drop, self-service, new devices and new touchpoints – all of which need a foundation that can evolve faster, integrate more easily, and stay secure as requirements change. IATA's direction with CUSS 2 is to make that evolution possible in a more flexible, web-native way, while strengthening the standards that keep deployments consistent across different environments.

When is it happening?

The key point to land is this: there isn't a single "switch-over day." In fact, IATA is explicit that the deprecation of CUSS 1 does not mean airline applications immediately stop functioning - it means no further updates or new functionality will be provided under CUSS 1, with enhancements moving under CUSS 2.

IATA's migration plan lays out phased milestones through 2026:



Now:

planning, testing and early engagement



End of Q1 2026:

soft transition begins, with vendors offering CUSS 2 platforms for testing/certification, and airports able to run a defined period supporting both CUSS 2 and CUSS 1.5 applications (including "bridges" to maintain compatibility)



End of Q3 2026:

mandate compliance phase (airports may begin requiring CUSS 2-compliant apps/platforms)



End of 2026:

full cutover phase

The most useful place to start is alignment. Talk to your internal stakeholders early. Talk to your airlines, airport teams and suppliers early. Not to rush a migration, but to reduce uncertainty – so everyone is working from the same assumptions about what’s changing, what the critical dependencies are, and what “readiness” means in your environment. It also gives you time to coordinate certification and testing sensibly, instead of compressing it into the final stretch.



This is also where the right partner matters. Because standards don't deliver themselves.

What airports and airlines need is a route forward that avoids duplication, keeps commitments stable, and makes the change feel predictable in live operations.

That's where SITA's focus sits:



Turning CUSS 2 into something practical and deliverable at scale, without unnecessary disruption.



With the industry's largest Common Use footprint across 400+ airports, SITA is helping customers align, plan, and move at the right pace.



Clear communication at every step, from early decisions through to delivery.

Yes, CUSS 2 is a major shift. But it doesn't need to feel like a cliff edge. With IATA's phased roadmap – and the right planning and partner – it becomes a steady, workable move forward, ready for the next era of passenger processing.