STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE_OPS009

Baggage Loading Irregularities & Reconciliation

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V2	25.08.2025	Reference	Reference added

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PURPOSE
This SOP establishes a standardised process for the identification, handling and documentation of baggage loading irregularities.
It ensures compliance with safety, security, and regulatory requirements, while providing a clear reference for training, audits and operational oversight.

OBJECTIVE
The objective of this SOP is to:
- guide Turnaround Coordinators (TRCs) and Load Controllers in identifying and handling baggage irregularities in a safe and standardised manner;
- prevent unauthorised, misrouted or unaccompanied baggage from being loaded on board;
- ensure coordination with Aviation Security (AVSEC) authorities and Lost & Found in accordance with local and international requirements (incl. ICAO Annex 17 baggage reconciliation standards);
- guarantee accurate documentation in the Loadsheet, including Last Minute Changes (LMCs);
- maintain compliance with DHS Safety Management System (SMS) and regulatory standards through reporting (e.g. Ground Safety Reports).

APPLICATION
Operations department:
- Turnaround Coordinator
- Load Controler

ABBREVIATIONS & DEFINITIONS
AVSEC = Aviation Security
FOD = Foreign Object Damage
GSE = Ground Service Equipment
LIR = Loading Instruction Report
LMC = Last Minute Change

PNL = Passenger Name List
Reconciliation = Process to ensure that only baggage belonging to boarded passengers is loaded, or that unaccompanied baggage has been subjected to additional security controls (ICAO Annex 17, 4.3.1)
Appointed Person = Designated responsible staff (e.g. TRC/Supervisor) confirming final baggage reconciliation prior to aircraft dispatch

PROCEDURE STEPS

1. Baggage without (or unreadable) tag

Step	Action
1.	Do not load this baggage into aircraft hold.
2.	Inform AVSEC for further checks according to local procedures.
3.	Enter the appropriate LMCs into Loadsheet.

2. Misrouted baggage (Baggage for another flight):

Step	Action
1.	Do not load this baggage into aircraft hold.
2.	Inform AVSEC according to local procedures.
3.	Enter the appropriate LMCs into Loadsheet.

3. Damaged or opened baggage:

Step	Action
1.	Do not load this baggage until re-packed in presence of the passenger.
2.	Baggage shall be packed by any available means (polyethylene bag etc.) in the presence of passenger who is owner of this baggage.
3.	If the passenger wishes to claim a right for damaged/opened baggage, advise him/her to apply to Lost&Found office upon arrival at the destination airport.
4.	Record in Loadsheet as LMC.

4. Excess baggage (more bags than recorded in Loadsheet)

Step	Action
1.	Unload all baggage and reconcile via PNL and bag tag numbers.
2.	Offload un-checked baggage according to local procedures.
3.	Notify Supervisor/Manager for Safety Report entry.

5. Short baggage (fewer bags than recorded)

Step	Action
1.	Enter LMC in Loadsheet with standard/Airline weights.
2.	Inform Lost & Found department of left-behind bag.

6. Passengers who fail to travel (No-show) / Unaccompanied baggage

Step	Action
1.	Identify associated baggage and ensure offload before departure.
2.	Exception: baggage may only travel as unaccompanied if Rush Bag Procedure is applied (additional security controls).
3.	Update DCS/Loadsheet accordingly.

4.	Report case to Supervisor/Manager.

7. Transfer baggage – security status

Step	Action
1.	Verify that all transfer baggage has a validated security status in the DCS.
2.	If status cannot be confirmed, coordinate AVSEC for screening.
3.	Document in Loadsheet/LMC.

8. Final baggage reconciliation

Step	Action
1.	TRC verifies reconciliation results (via BRS or manual bingo sheet).
2.	Ensure all loaded bags are: • accompanied by boarded passengers, or • unaccompanied but security-cleared (Rush Bag)
3.	Appointed Person (TRC/Supervisor) confirms reconciliation before pushback.
4.	Records retained for minimum 7 days (or longer if required by State or airline procedures).

For overall load supervision and communication responsibilities, refer to SOP_OPS008.

REFERENCE FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE
DHS GOM, Chapter 2.9 – Mishandled Baggage
DHS GOM, Chapter 2.10.2 – Baggage Reconciliation Systems
DHS GOM, Chapter 2.4.2 – Preparation for Departing Baggage
DHS GOM, Chapter 2.4.3 – Execution of Departing Baggage
DHS GOM, Chapter 2.4.4 – Handling Gate Delivery Items
DHS GOM, Chapter 2.4.5 – Monitoring Departing Baggage Operation
DHS GOM, Chapter 4.5.4 – Unloading
DHS GOM, Chapter 4.5.5 – Cargo Hold Inspection
DHS GOM, Chapter 4.5.6 – Loading
DHS ASM 11.5, 11.6, 11.8