

GHOST

GROUND HANDLING OPERATIONS SAFETY TEAM

GHOST Safety Swap - 01 (Loading Error)

The purpose of sharing this safety message is to provide industry with awareness of an incident that one of our Team has experienced, in the interest of learning, to hopefully prevent recurrence.

Please review the causes and preventative actions below. Compare them with your own policies, procedures and training materials, to ensure you are not vulnerable to the same scenario. Also, verify that all related activities are captured within your operational oversight program.

What happened?

- A cargo ULD weighing 1800kg was not offloaded from an inbound flight, during the turnaround. Positioned in the forward cargo hold, the PMC remained onboard for the subsequent flight, unaccounted for within the mass and balance documentation.
- When the cargo agent could not locate the pallet and spoke to the ramp team, it soon became apparent that it was probably still on the aircraft.
- Even though the aircraft had departed, ground staff did the right thing and asked operations to alert the Flight Crew of the error.

Why it happened?

- The ramp team offloading the aircraft did not collect a copy of the inbound Container Pallet Message (CPM), which would have identified the position of the pallet.
- Whilst the same ramp team were tasked with the on and offload, there was a different Team Leader for the outbound flight. He presumed that because the forward cargo door had been opened during the offload, one of the ramp team had checked the hold.
- The Team Leader supervising the onload, had issued an instruction to check the forward hold whilst he was tasked with other duties. He was subsequently told it had been checked and was empty, as per the Loading Instruction Report (LIR).

How to stop it happening again?

- Ensure that agents are in possession of the appropriate inbound flight documentation.
- Encourage agents to conduct a pre-arrival briefing, to review all details of the offload.
- If different Team Leaders are utilised for the inbound and outbound flights, ensure that a formal handover is completed.
- Remind Team Leaders that whilst they may rely on their Team for many tasks, they are responsible for verifying that the LIR reflects the loading of the aircraft.
- Complacency, or overconfidence from repeated experience of performing a task, is common human tendency. Ensure that sufficient awareness training is provided to all ramp agents.