4.8. Unit Load Devices (ULD) Charges

(For carrier deviating/additional rules see section 8.3.)

ULDs represent considerable capital and operating costs to airlines, although they also bring improved handling efficiencies. In the normal course of events ULDs move relatively seamlessly through the air-cargo supply chain, but there are scenarios where charges could be levied for the use or misuse of ULDs. These would typically vary from one airline to another and the following list is a guide as to some of the possible ULD related charges that might be levied:

Demurrage
Demurrage charges can be levied against a party that retains a ULD for an excessive period of time. The charge is typically designed to encourage prompt return of ULDs rather than generate revenue. The longer a ULD is out of active service, the more ULDs an airline or owner has to have to compensate for the ULDs that are out of service.

Replacement or Repair
Each ULD represents a significant capital investment as well as considerable repair costs. A lost or damaged ULD also represents loss of revenue earning potential. If a ULD is lost or damaged beyond economical repair, a ULD owner might claim a replacement cost. The cost of repair to return a ULD to serviceable condition also might be claimed. The costs are equally applicable to cargo nets and other ULD accessories.

Tracking and Retrieval
Unauthorised use of one airline's ULDs on another airline can result in considerable effort on the part of the ULD owner to retrieve the ULD for use within the owner's ULD network. Charges related to tracking the ULD and bringing it back to the owner's network could be levied against the party who last signed receipt of the ULD.

ULD receipt and checking
Most ULD operators and owners have systems in place to control the issue and return of ULDs. If followed, these procedures allow for controlled access to the ULDs by the correct parties for the smooth operation of the air cargo supply chain, and the ULDs should not go missing. ULDs are also supposed to be checked for damage at each handover point - if this is done the point at which the damage occurred can be correctly identified and unnecessary claims avoided.

Animal Stall Surcharge
Shipment of live animals can involve the use of special ULDs which require special preparation and cleaning. Charges for preparation, materials and cleaning as well as the use of the special ULDs might be levied.

One-way Surcharges
Use of special ULDs is typically a one-way traffic, and the special ULDs can either not be used for any return traffic, or offer a significantly less than ideal return payload. Often these special ULDs weigh considerably more than an equivalent general purpose ULD. An airline could levy charges for the less than optimal return leg.

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