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Introduction

1 Introduction

The meaning of the term 'Bulk Unitization Program' is equal to the commonly used Special Handling Code 'BUP. The IATA TACT Rules provide the decoding for BUP as 'Bulk Unitisation Program, Shipper/Consignee Handled Unit.

As commonly agreed in the Industry, and documented in the IATA Industry Master Operation Plan, ULD build-up is a Carrier Activity. It is usually carried out by ground handling agents contracted by the Carrier.

By allowing Forwarders, in their role as Shippers, to perform ULD build-up activities, the Carrier deviates from the industry-agreed sequence of safety-related activities and verifications.

For that reason, the parties that are allowed to perform the formal roles and activities of the air carrier must be subjected to compliance oversight by the carrier.

This document describes the conditions within which Forwarders are allowed to handover built-up aircraft ULDs to Air France, KLM or its ground handling suppliers.

2 Terminology based on the AFKLMP Cargo Handling Manual

- **BUP** = Bulk Unitisation Program - Shipper/Consignee Handled Unit (IATA definition). BUP refers both to the program and to the ULD built-up under the conditions of the program.
 - A BUP, when delivered to AF, KL, or MP Cargo must comply with these characteristics:
 - An aircraft ULD built-up by a shipper or forwarder.
 - Accepted as one 'parcel' on the (X)FWB/AWB
 - More than one BUP is allowed per consignment, but not more than one consignment is allowed per BUP.
 - The airline handles the ULD as 1 parcel in all phases of handling, including the delivery to the consignee or his agent.
 - The aircraft ULD is interchangeable on all types of aircraft or trucks between origin and destination
 - All Cargo must be placed on and above the pallet blade without standing on or overhanging the pallet edge rail with the net attachment points.
 - Flight-safe tie-down and restraint strapping in all directions is mandatory, even if the transportation's first stretch is executed by truck.
 - The Carrier holds no responsibility or liability for the condition or completeness of any of the individual parcels included, apart from that which is apparent on the outside of the unit.
 - If the ULD contains a 'Consolidation', the Forwarder must deliver an (electronic) ULD manifest and exact (X)FZB/HAWB details for each individual house waybill.
 - No ULD-tag may be applied by the Forwarder. This shall exclusively be done by the Ground Handling Supplier or by the airline, in the station where the BUP is accepted for carriage.
- The term "**Ready-for-Carriage**" as used in this document refers to the full contents of paragraphs 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 of the IATA TACT Rules.
- The term "**Shipper**" in this document is equivalent to the term "Consignor" and refers to the contracting party who is identified on the transportation contract ((X)FWB or AWB) under "Shipper's name and address".
 - In the context of this document, that can either be
 - a Manufacturer/Trader of goods who performs ULD buildup activities, or
 - a Forwarder acting as an agent of such party or acting as a Consolidator who combines goods from various Manufacturers/Traders onto one Aircraft ULD.

- SLAC means “**Shipper’s Load and Count**”. It is an indication of an alleged quantity of parcels, which the carrier cannot verify and for which the carrier assumes no legal liability, nor responsibility to deliver.
- “**TSO**” or “**TSO tag**” refers to the Technical Standard Order of any certified ULD or accessory. One example out of many is visualised here.



3 Pre-requisites

3.1 Training

The Shipper ensures that their staff involved in the build-up of ULDs are up to date with the ULD Build-up training requirements. These can be found in

- IATA ULDR 1.4.2, of which specifically items (e), (f), (g), (h), (l), (o), and (p) apply to Shippers who build-up ULD’s under this agreement. It shall be noted that through item (f) any exempted dangerous goods shall be accepted and loaded in full compliance with the IATA-DGR, § 9.1.4.1,
- IATA ULDR 1.5.5 + 1.5.8 + 1.5.9 + 1.6.1.2 + 1.6.3 (at Knowledge base level or at the level of Processing/Accepting Cargo, depending on the case)
- IATA ULDR 1.6, in particular in the “ULD Build-up” column of Table 1.6.A.

IATA is able to validate the ULD training programs and instructors’ qualifications developed by non-airline organisations.

3.2 Facilities

The Shipper ensures that their facilities are suitable for the handling of ULDs. This indicates at minimum that they operate:

- Docks equipped with a roller bed loading/off-loading system
- ULD Build-up pit(s) or mobile ULD handling stations (formerly called ‘slave pallets’) as the location for the ULD build-up or break-down activity.

Warning: As a flight safety precaution, a loaded ULD may never be forklifted and may never be placed on the ground. An empty ULD may never be loaded with freight or mail while resting on the ground or on any surface without a roller bed.

4 Preparation for ULD Build-up

4.1 Preparation of ULD and Accessories before ULD build-up

A complete ULD serviceability check will become impossible for the carrier’s GHA once the ULD is built up.

The Shipper must therefore determine whether or not the ULD and its accessories are serviceable. These checks must be done just before the first freight is loaded on or in it.

Note: As of a yet to be communicated date in 2024, confirmation of the performance of these checks must be given on CFO-130 ‘Checklist for Shipper-built ULDs (BUP)’. This checklist must then be handed over to the Carrier/GHA together with the physical ULD at the off-load from the Forwarder truck.

The serviceability check shall include all the ULD components listed on the Operational Damage Limits Notice (ODLN) that is attached to the specific aircraft pallet, aircraft pallet net, or container. If any damage exceeds allowable limit(s) expressed in the ODLN, the ULD is unserviceable. See also annex 1.

Unserviceable ULDs shall not be loaded with cargo. They shall be returned in empty condition to the carrier or the carrier's cargo handling agent with the information to tag it immediately as unserviceable.

4.2 Ready-for-Carriage checks on all individual parcels

As the receiving airline cannot physically verify what has been loaded onto or into the ULD, the Shipper must perform ready-for-carriage checks as defined under 2 above.

The Shipper who operates under the Bulk Unitisation Program commits himself not to load any shipment or parcel onto the ULD:

- that is damaged/open
- that is improperly packed (i.e. that may get damaged or may damage other freight during transportation movements)
- of which the security might be compromised
- of which the weight deviates from its indicated weight that is used in the booking and for export customs declaration.
- that is carried in violation of any international trade restriction.

If any of these observations are made during the ready-for-carriage checks, the respective shipment shall not be loaded on the ULD. The Carrier's Ground Handling Agent can only perform ready-for-carriage checks on the outer appearance of the entire ULD, as one contractually accepted parcel.

4.3 Restrictions on Commodities

Items that are not allowed to be loaded in a BUP:

- Dangerous Goods in general, with the exception of the items listed in the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations 9.1.4.1
- Lithium ion batteries UN 3480 in accordance with IATA DGR, PI965 (previously coded RBI)
- Lithium metal batteries UN 3090 in accordance with IATA DGR PI968 (previously coded RBM)
- Weapons, ammunition, war material or any other military/dual use goods for which no pre-approval is obtained
- Live animals (AVI) except entire pallets with day-old-chickens
- Valuable shipments (VAL)
- Human remains (HUM)
- Obnoxious cargo (OBX)
- Piercing and cutting items like metal pipes or bars
- Parcels exceeding the base dimensions of the ULDs (Overhang, 'OHG').
- Parcels exceeding the height of 160 cm (except when maindeck capacity is contracted).
- Single parcels with an area load in excess of 659 kg/m² each.

5 ULD Build-up

As mentioned in paragraph 3.1 above, an IATA accredited training is a prerequisite for the execution of this activity.

Before commencing ULD build-up activities, the following checks must all have been executed:

- the ULD serviceability checks
- the full ready-for-carriage checks
- the security checks
- the dangerous goods checks (where applicable).

The following items must at all times be adhered to during ULD build-up, in the mentioned sequence:

1. Ensure that the ULD is cleaned from any accumulated garbage.
2. Remove any ULD tags and labels that may remain from previous use.
3. The application of bottom plastic on an empty pallet floor
4. Place the heaviest parcels around the middle of the ULD surrounded by lower-weight parcels, in such a way that the centre-of gravity of the entire load will not be off-set more than 10% of from the middle of the pallet. That is 10% of the length and 10% of the width of the base of the ULD.
5. Place lighter parcels on top of heavier parcels.
6. Respect the special handling labels "This way up", "Fragile", "Do not stack", "Do not tilt", etc.
7. No freight may stand on or overhang the ULD's edge rail with net attachments points.
8. Equally sized boxes must be stacked corner-on-corner in order to maintain their optimum *strength*. For *stability*, the resulting stacks of boxes can be encircled by stretch-foil or rope.
9. If parcels of varying weight, type and size are consolidated on one ULD, stability of the stacked items may require forward, aft and sideward tie-down straps to be applied *before* application of the pallet net. In such cases the tie-down straps serve the stability of the entire unit, and do not require calculations on the basis of g-forces to be restrained.
10. Individual pieces that might shift or be lifted up under the pallet net during heavy turbulence, must be tied-down with tie-down straps in such quantity that they can withstand forces of 1.5 g forward, aft and sideward, and 3 g upward.
Also in containers, such tie-down may be required if the container is not filled up to its roof.
11. Verify the height of the unit at its highest point. The maximum height of the freight stacked on a lower deck pallet is 160 cm. That leaves just enough space for the pallet net to be added on top. The maximum height of the freight stacked on a maindeck pallet is 240 cm.
Make sure to measure from the pallet floor, not from the top of the pallet edge rail.
12. Apply the top plastic over the built up pallet and outside the bottom plastic.
13. Apply the pallet net in the following sequence of activities:
 - spread the net equally over the load,
(be sure that no old ULD tags are still attached to it)
 - fasten all the double stud fittings at equal distances
 - weave the sides together at the corners by means of the corner ropes
 - adjust any net surplus upward by attaching the adjusting hooks as high as possible.
14. Weigh the entire ULD as input for accurate FWB/AWB completion.
A ULD tag, however, may never be made and attached by a Shipper. That is the exclusive obligation of the Carrier or its contracted ground service provider at the airport of origin.



6 FWB data / AWB completion

Accurate FWB (or AWB) completion is necessary for the airline to accept built-up aircraft ULDs.

1. The FWB/FHL data (or AWB/HAWB completion) should be according to TACT 6.2 Completion of AWB and TACT 6.3 AWB completion examples 17-24 + 27.
2. FWB (and where applicable FHL) creation should conform to the IATA XML Toolkit.

Annex 1 ODLN(s) for Aircraft Pallet and for Aircraft Pallet net
Operational Damage Limits Notification for an aircraft pallet

| OPERATIONAL DAMAGE LIMITS FOR PALLET | | | - DO NOT COVER - | MANUFACTURER XYZ |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| FOR REFERENCE ONLY | | | Visual Check of Pallet is REQUIRED BEFORE USE | PALLET TYPE/SERIES xxxxxx |
| | | | | NOTICE Reference No. xxxxxx |
| Location | Component | Code | ULD MAY NOT BE USED IF ANY OF THE CONDITIONS BELOW ARE EXCEEDED | |
| Pallet | Sheet | SB | NO MORE THAN XXX INCH / XXX MM SIZED CRACKS, HOLES OR INDENTATIONS | |
| | Extrusion | EB | NO BROKEN OR MISSING PARTS | |
| | | | NO PENETRATION INTO HOLLOW CHAMBER | |
| | | | NO MORE THAN XXX INCH / XXX MM SIZED CRACKS IN ANY DIRECTION | |
| | | | NO MORE THAN XXX INCH / XXX MM SIZED GOUGES | |
| | NO MORE THAN 1 INCH / 25,4 MM BOWED, WARPED OR DEFLECTED EXTRUSION | | | |
| Tie-Down | TB | NO BROKEN, CRACKED OR DEFORMED TIE-DOWN LIPS | | |
| Fastener | FB | NO CLOGGING WITH DIRT OR OTHER CONTAMINANTS | | |
| | | NO MORE THAN XXX BROKEN, LOOSE OR MISSING RIVETS | | |
| Corner Connection | CB | NO LESS THAN XXX INCH / XXX MM BETWEEN BROKEN, LOOSE OR MISSING RIVETS | | |
| | | NO BROKEN, CRACKED, BENT OR LOOSE CORNER CONNECTIONS | | |
| | | NO DEFORMED, BROKEN OR MISSING CORNER ASSEMBLIES | | |
| Others | TSO | TM | NO CRACKS IN ORIGINAL CORNER WELDINGS (FOR WELDED PALLETS ONLY) | |
| | | | IN PLACE AND LEGIBLE | |
| Special Requirements | | | OWNER AIRLINE / MANUFACTURER REQUIREMENTS | |
| When in doubt refer to CMM | | | Notice for operational use ONLY | Serviceability NOT affected when missing or illegible |

Operational Damage Limits Notification for an aircraft pallet net

| OPERATIONAL DAMAGE LIMITS FOR PALLET NET | | | - DO NOT COVER - | MANUFACTURER XYZ |
|--|---------------------|------------------------------|---|---|
| FOR REFERENCE ONLY | | | Visual Check of Cargo Pallet Net is REQUIRED BEFORE USE | NET TYPE/SERIES xxxxxx |
| | | | | NOTICE Reference No. xxxxxx |
| Location | Component | Code | ULD MAY NOT BE USED IF ANY OF THE CONDITIONS BELOW ARE EXCEEDED | |
| Braid / Rope | General | GN | NO CONTAMINATION; EXPIRY DATE NOT EXCEEDED | |
| | Mesh + Border-Cords | MN | NO SEVERED OR PARTLY SEVERED CORDS | |
| | | | NO CUT OR BROKEN STRANDS | |
| Lashing-Lines | LN | NO MORE THAN SLIGHT ABRASION | | |
| | | NO MISSING LASHING LINES | | |
| Hardware | Attachment Fittings | FN | NO LINES SHORTENED BEYOND THAT REQUIRED FOR THE PALLET LOAD HEIGHT | |
| | | | NO MISSING ATTACHMENT FITTINGS | |
| | Adjusting Hooks | HN | NO DISTORTION PREVENTING NORMAL USE | |
| NO CORROSION PREVENTING NORMAL USE | | | | |
| Labels / Tags | TSO | TM | NO MORE THAN ONE MISSING FROM ANY NET FACE | |
| | | | (IF MORE, ADJUST USING HOOKS ON OTHER THREE FACES) | |
| Special requirements | | | IN PLACE AND LEGIBLE | |
| | | | NOTE THAT IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO USE A NET WITH DAMAGE GREATER THAN THE LIMITS SET OUT, BY REDUCING THE MAXIMUM PAYLOAD ON THE PALLET. A PAYLOAD VERSUS DAMAGE TABLE IS INCLUDED IN THE CMM. | |
| | | | ALTERNATIVELY, IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO EFFECT A REPAIR USING A 'TEMPORARY REPAIR STRAP' (SEE CMM FOR DETAILS) | |
| | | | IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS PERMITTED TO 'DOUBLE NET' IN ORDER TO | |
| Compatible pallets | | | CERTIFICATION CODE OF COMPATIBLE PALLET | |
| When in doubt refer to CMM | | | Notice for operational use ONLY | Serviceability NOT affected when missing or illegible |

Operational Damage Limits Notifications for Aircraft Containers are usually stickered on one of the container panels.