

## SITA reports rise in baggage problems

Mishandled or lost baggage remains a serious problem for the aviation industry, according to a report from SITA released on 17 April 2008 during the Passenger Terminal Expo in Amsterdam.

Introducing his company's fourth annual baggage report, Francesco Violante, chief executive officer (CEO) of SITA, said: "Once again, the past year has seen an increase in the amount of baggage mishandled worldwide."

Other studies reflect this worrying trend. The Association of European Airlines reported earlier in 2008 that the number of mis-

handled bags in Europe went up by 21 per cent from 13.7 per 1,000 passengers in 2004 to 16.6 per 1,000 in 2007. This is the equivalent of 1.8 million extra bags a year being reported missing on arrival by Europe's major airlines.

The aviation industry handles around 2.25 billion items of checked luggage annually, but the growing pressures on baggage handlers – tight turnaround times, heightened security measures and rising passenger demand – resulted in losses from misdirected items of around USD3.8 billion in 2007.

Using data from its WorldTracer system, which traces lost and mishandled passenger baggage from around 400 airlines and

ground-handling companies, SITA concluded that 42.4 million bags were mishandled or delayed in 2007. This equates to 18.86 mishandled bags per thousand passengers.

The report found that the 49 per cent of baggage delays occurred during flight transfers. This figure marks a distinct improvement on the 2005 figure of 61 per cent. Failure to load accounted for 16 per cent of delays, while factors such as ticketing errors represented 14 per cent. Mishandling of luggage at the arrival station accounted for 8 per cent; loading or offloading errors 5 per cent; space-weight restriction 5 per cent; and tagging errors 3 per cent. *BV*