

First quarter gains soften Asian cargo dip for Schiphol

Despite continuing shortfalls in its top two markets of Asia and North America during the first three months of 2012, gains in other markets have seen Amsterdam Airport Schiphol's total cargo throughput hold up well, to end 3% below 2011 at 358,220 tonnes.

Asian traffic for January-March 2012 was down 15% on 2011, at 129,974 tonnes. Although the region continued to dominate Schiphol's traffic, its share of the total fell from 40% throughout 2011 to 36.3% in the first quarter of 2012. Meanwhile North American traffic, down 3% to 66,045 tonnes, took second place with 18.4% of the total.

But cargo tonnages between Schiphol and the European-, Middle East- and Latin American markets all showed healthy growth in the first three months of 2012, largely offsetting the weak performance elsewhere. European imports and exports rose 53% to 29,223 tonnes; meanwhile Middle East cargo totalled 43,973 tonnes (up 5.1%) and Latin American tonnages increased 6% to 44,139 tonnes.

Freighter aircraft movements through the airport from January to March grew to 3765, up 2% on 2011. This was despite the cessation of Jade and other carriers' freighter services in December and January.

Comments Schiphol Cargo Senior VP Enno Osinga: "Weakness in Asian traffic, which is our largest market, continues to impact overall tonnages through Schiphol. However, we have made good gains on other routes, and this growth has largely offset the 15% decline in Asian business - resulting in a more respectable 3% dip in total tonnage."

He continues: "Our aim for 2012 is to spread our business base more evenly, so that falls in individual markets have less impact. We are also examining ways of encouraging increased export business in collaboration with our cargo community."

He concludes: "Despite a poor start to 2012 with traffic down 11% in January, we have now made up most of the lost ground, and beaten our strong 2010 results by a small margin. But, with continuing market unrest in Europe and the USA still

impacting global air cargo flows, we are expecting the year to continue as it has started, with throughput slightly down on 2011.”

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