



Sep 22, 2018 11:57 CEST

10 years of the Frankfurt Animal Lounge

More than a billion animals already hosted at Lufthansa Cargo's Frankfurt Animal Lounge Celebrations to mark the anniversary held with customers and partners at the Opel Zoo.

Europe's largest animal station opened its gates and doors at Frankfurt Airport for the first time ten years ago. Since then, Lufthansa Cargo has operated one of the world's largest and most advanced animal stations at its hub in the heart of Europe, offering animal guests a unique service. The anniversary was marked with countless partners and customers at the Opel Zoo on Tuesday.

"Special thanks are due to our customers, who have remained loyal to us for many years", said Sören Stark, Board Member Operations and COO of

Lufthansa Cargo, directing his comments towards the representatives from animal shipping companies before him. “Our highly trained employees, who provide for our animal guests every day with an incredible amount of dedication, passion and experience, are crucial to the excellent reputation of the Frankfurt Animal Lounge”, continued Stark.

More than a billion animals of all kinds have already been hosted over the years. The most frequent visitors include ornamental fish, with some 80 million of these coming through each year. Jörg Bodenröder, Senior Director of Handling Specials at Lufthansa Cargo, gave an overview of the history of the Animal Lounge and the development of animal transport by air at Lufthansa: “Many exotic species have already flown with us. From giraffes and hippopotamuses through to Mesopotamian fallow deer, Lufthansa has reliably risen to every logistical challenge to date. Of course, special memories include famous guests such as the two pandas Meng Meng and Jiao Qing sent by China’s President Xi Jinping to German Chancellor Angela Merkel as special animal envoys in 2017.”

The Animal Lounge is also particularly well equipped for horses. 42 large animal stalls with up to 28 square metres of space are available on the ground for the some 2,000 animals that pass through annually, while new, premium-quality horse containers are used inflight. Lufthansa’s cargo division actually has more than 30 years of experience of handling hooved animals. The premium partnership with the German Equestrian Federation (FN) emphasises Lufthansa Cargo’s special expertise in transporting sports, breeding and leisure horses.

Dogs and cats, some 15,000 annually, are regular visitors as well and there are 39 small animal boxes for these. Three separate quiet zones for cats give them somewhere to retreat to. With “Pet Premium”, Lufthansa Cargo also offers pets a very special service: as soon as a little visitor has made itself comfortable in the Animal Lounge in Frankfurt, its owners are sent photos if they wish to reassure them of how well their pets are being looked after. And there is always someone available to speak with an owner if needed. If animals require medicines, special food or the like, these special requests can also be accommodated.

The Frankfurt Animal Lounge combines all areas – handling, animal coordination and veterinary services – under one roof over approx. 4,000 m². 50 employees and qualified animal caretakers ensure round-the-clock care.

Attention was paid during the design stage to ensuring the animals' stay would be as pleasant as possible: the entire facility is equipped with a non-slip asphalt floor which is more pleasant and comfortable for animals and people than a conventional concrete surface. All of the loading area is weather protected. The animal station contains export, import and transit areas, all physically separated from each other to avoid any contact between animals being exported and imported. The individual areas can, in turn, be subdivided into multiple zones to prevent certain animals from seeing or hearing each other if necessary. Ornamental fish can be examined under black light and specialists are available in the case of an emergency. Besides this, 18 individually temperature-adjustable climate-controlled chambers are available for all kinds of species. There are four special aviaries for our feathered friends. People accompanying the animals have been thought of too and have access to their own washroom.

Lufthansa Cargo AG

Lufthansa Cargo ranks among the world's leading air freight carriers. In the 2017 business year, the airline transported around 1.6 million tonnes of freight and mail and sold 8.9 billion revenue tonne-kilometres. The company currently employs about 4,500 people worldwide. Lufthansa Cargo focuses on the airport-to-airport business. The cargo carrier serves around 300 destinations in more than 100 countries with its own fleet of freighters, the belly capacities of passenger aircraft operated by Lufthansa, Austrian Airlines and Eurowings, and an extensive road feeder service network. The bulk of the cargo business is routed through Frankfurt Airport. Lufthansa Cargo is a wholly owned Lufthansa subsidiary of Deutsche Lufthansa AG.

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