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INTERNATIONAL NEWS • PEOPLE • PRODUCTS September/October 2012

Tanks only for liquid acids

France-based global shipping line CMA CGM says it is cracking down on poorly-packed shipments of some hazardous goods out of certain markets in a review of its safety policy. In one specific case the deepsea carrier now refuses to accept acids in liquid form unless shipped in tank containers.

In a notice to customers and local offices, the carrier stated that "following repeated incidents resulting from faulty packaging and subsequent leakages, CMA CGM has decided to take measures to restrict some dangerous good shipments".

The new measures include shipments of all acids in liquid form (IMO Class 8, corrosive substances) from India which henceforth will "only be authorised if transported in tank containers".

Shipments of aluminium phosphide, UN 1397 Class 4.3 subsidiary class 6.1, from China are prohibited. Shipments of the same material from other countries remain authorised "under the condition that, in addition to the IMDG Code requirements, ref. the wording of the Special provision 932, the shipper provides a weathering certificate stating that packing operations were conducted void of any rain or liquid exposure". The note adds that Ukraine prohibits import of this class of aluminium phosphide wherever the origin.

Shipments of thalium nitrate, UN 2727 class 6.1 subsidiary class 5.1, from China are also prohibited due to the subsidiary risk 5.1.

"CMA CGM refuses to compromise with the safety and security of its staff and those of its partners and will therefore strictly enforce the above guidelines with immediate effect," the notice concluded.

For further information, customers are requested to contact their local CMA CGM office.

• In an unrelated development discussions have been held between the Chemical Distribution Institute (CDI) and the International Cargo Handling Co-ordination Association (ICHCA) over the drafting of a proposed CDI-mpc (marine packed cargo) audit scheme for container terminals.

ICHCA's International Safety Panel (ISP) members have been asked for their comments and these have been passed on to CDI. A final draft was presented to the ISP and the topic was discussed at a panel meeting earlier in the year in London. The ISP recommended the scheme for members of ICHCA International on a voluntary basis. This was referred to ICHCA International's board meeting in May, in Melbourne, where the panel's recommendation was endorsed.

The purpose of the scheme is to reassure chemical companies and shippers that the terminals they are using are fit for purpose and satisfy minimum standards.

A statement from ICHCA Australia read: "Members are advised that the CDI-mpc Audit Scheme for Container Terminals is available for those members who wish to avail themselves of it (www.cdi.org.uk). The scheme is the last in a number of similar programmes which have been developed by CDI in consultation with trade and other bodies in the industry sector."

It went on to explain that IMPCAS scheme (the SQAS for marine packed cargo) is potentially the largest project of its kind in the world, with almost 200 auditors based in the major container handling ports.

"Developed to provide audit reports on each category of service provider involved in the distribution supply chain, the scheme extends to include: shipping companies, ships, tank container operators, container freight stations, freight forwarders, agents and container terminals.

"Recognising that marine packed cargo is not limited to the chemical industry, the IMPCAS scheme is open for participation by non-chemical companies. Following the transparency example of CDI-M, access to audit reports is extended to international authorities with a vested interest in verifying cargo security. The flexibility of the audit protocols allows for rapid amendment to include new elements."

IN THIS ISSUE

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Fax: +44 (0)1565 755607

Published 6 times a year.

Biofuels about turn

The European Commission is looking to change the rules encouraging the use of biofuels following concerns that the policies may have contributed to deforestation and rising global food prices.

The changes will set a limit to the amount of transport fuels made from food crops that member states can use to achieve binding EU targets.

However, European companies that make biodiesel and other biofuels have expressed serious concerns because they have already made large-scale investments in the sector based on the target originally set by the European Commission.

Under the new proposals, being drafted by Gunther Oettinger and Connie Hedegaard, respectively, energy and climate commissioners, member states will only be allowed to meet half the 10 percent target through so-called first-generation biofuels – those derived from food crops. The rest will have to come from 'next-generation', ie, waste or agricultural residues that do not compete with food crops.

Member states will also receive less credit for fuels that score poorly on an assessment of their impact on land use and energy intensity. The commission is also suggesting that there will be no preference for food-based biofuels in any targets or policies beyond 2020.

"We are pushing biofuels that help us cut substantial CO_2 emissions, do not compete with food and are sustainable and green at the same time," the commissioners said in a joint statement.

The proposals must win approval from member states, including Germany and France, which have both been at the forefront of the biodiesel industry.

The plans also include a promise to end all public subsidies for crop-based biofuels after the current legislation expires in 2020, which some say effectively ensures the decline of a European sector now estimated to be worth €17 billion a year.

The policy u-turn comes after EU scientific studies cast doubt on the emissions savings from crop-based fuels, and following a poor harvest in

key grain growing regions that pushed up prices and revived fears of food shortages.

Learn big lessons from small disruptions

Learn from other sectors with fast moving supply chains

Managing resilient supply chains implies companies need to manage their vulnerability, a combination of the likelihood of a disruption of their business processes and its potential severity. This was the central theme of the held by the European Petrochemical Association (EPCA) Annual Supply Chain Seminar, held in Frankfurt in May this year.

Anticipating and managing shocks to the supply chain are becoming the favoured topics at industry conferences. In the previous issue of *Bulk Distributor*, we reported on how this year's Logichem conference was dominated by learning how to spot risk before it actually hits your business.

Resilient companies' supply chains are designed in order to cope with low-probability occurrences with severe outcomes. A company's potential financial, strategic, operations and hazard vulnerability needs to be mapped out using layered and balanced methods, separating threats from baseline activity, building partnerships, building a culture of awareness and sensitivity to security.

Beyond this, resilient supply chain management needs to focus at the margin and not mainly on volume flow as was the case in the past. Understanding value chain dynamics implies shifting the balance from the micro to the macro: increased planning decision frequency and shortening planning horizons, shifting the balance from planning precision to big picture understanding and risk awareness.

As *Bulk Distributor* has pointed out on more than one occasion, current chemical supply chains are becoming longer and more complex. Logistics are also becoming more important. Longer supply chains create challenges for managing safety, on-time delivery, flexibility, responsiveness and sustainability. And if that wasn't enough chemical producers might cut these longer supply chains up and parcel them out between many LSPs creating yet more complexity.

Achieving efficient supply chain implementation is important both for chemical companies and LSPs. IT tools will be needed to track and trace, vendor-managed inventory (VMI) will increase and LSPs will need to communicate and collaborate in a 'pro-competitive' way. Faced with volatility, supply chains will need global networks, with variable cost models, asset availability and speed. Responsiveness and flexibility will be key. These were the 'take-aways' (to use the management jargon) from the EPCA seminar.

Small disruptions, big lessons

Professor Behzad Samii of Vlerick Management School told the workshop it is important "to learn big lessons from small disruptions". There are certain pillars to resilient supply chains, Dr Samii said. These include a culture of telling a wide range of people bad news quickly; detecting problems early through constant monitoring of critical parts supply; using strong relationships to get core suppliers into action fast; and having a good knowledge of supply markets.

He urged the chemical industry to look to learn from other sectors with fast moving supply chains, such as the computer industry or the fashion business. These are industries where demand changes very rapidly due to the speed of product obsolescence or seasonal fluctuations. Because things go wrong, Samii told the workshop that it is important for companies to understand their vulnerabilities.

Lean operations with low inventory are great when business runs smoothly, but a supply disruption can mean big trouble. In 1995, for example, a brake shoe shortage cost Toyota US$200m in lost revenue. More recently in April 2012, a fire at Evonik's Marl plant had impacted 25 percent of global automotive fuel and brake line production.

Alternatively, companies may adjust strategies quickly in response to events. In wake of recent natural disasters in Japan and Thailand, Dell has responded by gradually shifting from a two-hour to a four-day inventory holding. "They stayed lean, but adjusted their strategy to circumstances," he noted. "Resilience means focusing on low-probability occurrences with severe outcomes – 'the Black Swans'. Avoid them if you can, but design your supply chains to cope if you can't!"

In a volatile world

"Managing volatility is an ever increasing challenge in chemical commodities," said AT Kearney's Otto Schulz. After the relatively stable 1990s, commodity price volatility has shown a marked increase over the past decade, he noted. Is this a trend that is likely to continue? Probably, Schulz predicted, given the changing patterns in the markets with a build-up of assets in the Middle East and Asia Pacific and transformed petrochemicals economics in the US due to shale gas.

"The challenge is to understand risks, and the trends impacting the chemical industry, and prepare for volatility," said Schulz.

He promoted a three-layer approach to address supply chain challenges across a timeline. At the operational layer – looking out 90 days – the key factors are order management, purchasing, logistics and production. At the tactical layer, looking 1-36 months ahead, the focus is on supply chain planning, covering demands, production, inventory, logistics and finance within the context of annual budget and sales planning scenarios. At the strategic layer – over 1-5 years – companies should look at service levels and options such as customer clustering and cost-to-serve analysis; at network modelling, focusing on location/flow optimisation; value chain design optimization; and strategic planning, defining long-term objectives and portfolio lifecycle management.

Looking at the supply chain through these layers offers a broad perspective, and enables managers to identify key issues for planning, and react to volatility, he suggested.

But how can we go beyond these layers, to the next level of supply chain management? Schulz said it was important to consider the 'Magic Triangle' of cost, inventory and service, to achieve margin optimisation. "Resilience used to focus on volume flow, but today resilience is at the margin level," he suggested. The key is to expand the scope of internal and external inputs and better understand value chain dynamics. That means increasing planning decision frequency and shortening planning horizons, shifting the balance from planning precision to big picture understanding and risk awareness – from the micro to the macro.

He also urged companies to try harder to detect problems by using early warning indicators. Schulz pointed to a client whose monthly board meetings use an 'early warning cockpit', with 19 indicators, including current and future economic outlook, and macro-level, industry-level and internal indicators, to complement its market environment and opportunity review.

Longer logistics

Additional chemical manufacturing capacity and changes in production location to the Middle East and China are lengthening supply chains and driving up relative cost, complexity, and the importance of logistics, said Koert van Wissen, CEO of Interbulk Group. "Middle East capacity is expanding and in the future larger quantities will be exported in packed, containerised and/or bulk form. In addition, while eventually much of China's, and a vast majority of Asia's, new capacity will be consumed locally, for the medium-term, exports will grow."

In this environment, the traditional response of building inventory levels to mitigate risk and create resilience won't be enough or can be too costly. "The situation is creating traffic flow imbalances and consequently cost challenges to all stakeholders in the supply chain," he noted.

Longer supply chains are also bringing new challenges for managing safety, on-time delivery, flexibility, responsiveness and sustainability, van Wissen remarked. Greater distances, a lack of logistics and supporting infrastructure in some emerging markets, multiple transition points, many LSPs with differing levels of expertise or HSE awareness, the complexity of communication between partners; these are all elements of the challenges facing the supply chain. "We see that for longer supply chains chemical manufacturers can cut up one supply chain between many LSPs creating more complexity and they might not even know who is at the final part of the supply chain delivering the goods," the Interbulk CEO noted.

Longer supply chains means also a longer product forecasting period that potentially leads to forecasting inaccuracy. Based on these observations a focus on creating efficient supply chains is important for chemical companies and LSPs. IT tools will be needed to track and trace, vendor-managed inventory will increase, and LSPs will need to become more efficient: "Otherwise, stock could end up in the wrong quantity and location and it will be harder to deliver on time."

Subtly shifting sands

England's north east coast has historic links with the chemical industry; it was, after all, home to the once mighty Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI). In recent times though, the region has suffered a degree of deindustrialisation with a number of job losses, just as in other parts of Europe that have seen the production of commodity chemicals move to emerging markets with access to cheaper feedstock. This has seen many once familiar industry names consigned to the history books.

However, almost without being noticed the north east has been building on the established process industry cluster in the regions inviting investment from numerous multinational companies. Mass production might be on the wane, but it is being steadily replaced by the manufacture and handling of specialised materials across a range of industries.

In fact, sitting opposite the Antwerp/Rotterdam/Amsterdam (ARA) cluster across the North Sea means the UK counterpart complements its continental giant rather than competes. This fact alone helps explain why the region is home to the biggest oil storage capacity in the UK, as short sea shipping from the Rotterdam crude hub is relatively cheap and easy.

Air Products new Syngas unit at Seal Sands is just one of many process sector investments that has recently been announced. North East Process Industry Cluster's (NEPIC) Bioresources Group NEBR has been working with Air Products for several years helping to enable this investment. Key relationships have been developed with local supply chain companies who are challenged to provide the feedstock for the unit.

The process industry is particularly keen that this investment succeeds, as it begins to show that significant amounts of renewable syngas could be produced locally, which in turn, will require an infrastructure and supply chain to manage both the novel and renewable feedstock in the industrial quantities that would be needed.

Renewable syngas is thought to be one of the key future raw materials for a significant proportion of the chemistry-based process industry. It seeks to become a more sustainable industry and capable of demonstrating a reduction in its carbon footprint. This and other technologies will be discussed at the NEPIC International Bioresources Conference on 22 November 2012 at the Vermont Hotel, in Newcastle upon Tyne. The conference objectives are to get global organisations talking to each other, sharing knowledge, tackling complex issues and topics and seeking opportunities for collaboration, business growth and investment.

Dr Stan Higgins, NEPIC's CEO, said the latest investment by Air Products is important for two reasons. "First, it is a provider of green energy; it demonstrates that Teesside has the infrastructure to make significant quantities of syngas from bio-resources. Furthermore, this announcement follows on from the MGT Power announcement again signifying our capability in terms of infrastructure for such projects."

NEPIC argues that these announcements, together with the opening of the Mitsubishi Battery Chemical plant, the SITA up-scaling project, the reopening of the SSI Blast furnace, EPAX Pharma Plant in commissioning, Lotte Chemicals reopening and expansion underway and Cleveland Potash investing, demonstrate that the region is very much open for business and things are starting to move.

In addition, low carbon manufacturing is also well underway in north east England with a number of live projects including the production of renewable fuels, electricity, biopolymers, biopharmaceuticals and the recycling of polymer for food packaging. Dr Higgins added: "How many other regions in the UK or Europe could say this?"

Tata goes Lupa for soda ash

India's Tata Chemicals is taking another step towards greening its supply chain for soda ash.

Tata Chemicals is the world's second biggest producer of soda ash and the most geographically-diversified soda ash company, manufacturing facilities in India, the UK, the US and Kenya and an efficient supply chain that can service customers across the globe.

The company has a global capacity of around 5.5 million tonnes of soda ash a year, of which 60 percent is from natural deposits in Wyoming, USA and Lake Magadi, Kenya. Besides this, the company owns 35 percent of the world's low cost and sustainable natural soda ash capacity.

Consisting of four categories – light, dense, medium dense, granular – soda ash has a number of uses. In the manufacture of glass, it reduces the melting temperature of the sand used in glass formation and helps in the 'workability' or shaping of glass articles such as tableware and float glass. In soaps and detergents, it is employed as a builder, or filler, to give a smoother surface. It is also used in the production of certain chemicals, such as sodium silicate, sodium bicarbonate and percarbonate, sodium chromate and dichromate. Finally, it is also used in pulp and paper manufacture, water treatment, effluent treatment, metallurgy and drugs.

Tata Chemicals has now decided to deploy German-designed and patented Lupa bulkers to help reduce the carbon footprint of the total supply chain by eliminating the usage of plastic bags for packaging.

The bulkers are manufactured and supplied by Meher Hermanns, the Indian arm of Hermanns Silo GmbH, Germany. Meher Hermanns has been present in India for the past 12 years. They carry loose soda-ash as they are specially designed to transport unpackaged bulk cargo which is pneumatically loaded and unloaded, thereby making the complete process automatic, and, says Tata, cost effective and eco-friendly.

The bulkers are already in operation at Tata Chemicals' Mithapur plant, in Gujarat state. There they help prevent pollution, minimise waste, eliminate the efforts of packaging, loading and unloading, along with other critical resources at every stage of the life cycle of the product. Each bulker has an approximate capacity of 25 tonnes and can replace 3 million plastic bags each year. The company plans to incorporate 10 more bulkers in the current financial year.

Zarir Langrana, COO, chemicals business (India), for Tata Chemicals, sees the move as a pioneering step for the Indian chemical industry. "As a significant global soda-ash manufacturer, Tata Chemicals is committed to reducing CO_2 emissions and its environmental footprint in support of environmentally benign and responsible transport of chemicals," he commented. "In the near term, we are targeting 150,000 tonnes of the movement of soda ash by bulkers which will help in CO_2 reduction since there will be no usage of plastic bags and material handling equipment. A move like this within the industry will certainly revolutionise the way bulk chemicals are transported in India. We are also planning other alternate and innovative modes for long distance bulk movement of soda ash."

Get tough on chemicals management

At the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-3), the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) is calling on all stakeholders to take action to strengthen the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), in order to improve and enhance the sound management of chemicals globally.

The goal of SAICM is to ensure that, by 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimise significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment. ICCA's appeal for a recommitment to SAICM echoes the call from world leaders at the June United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), to implement and strengthen SAICM as part of a robust system for the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle.

"Today, the chemical industry faces the task of driving innovation in order to develop new products and applications that solve world problems and enable a more sustainable future, while also ensuring the safety and protection of human health and the environment," said ICCA Council Secretary Cal Dooley, president and CEO of the American Chemistry Council.

"SAICM provides the innovative framework necessary to meet this challenge and promote the safe handling of chemicals globally. Through our voluntary initiatives, such as the Responsible Care Global Charter and the Global Product Strategy, ICCA stands ready to work with world leaders to strengthen SAICM."

Since the United Nations launched SAICM, ICCA has undertaken a number of activities to support the implementation of the programme, including a global training programme, through which it has conducted more than 40 'capacity building' workshops over the past four years, to train small- and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries on how to implement the Global Product Strategy (GPS) to enhance their chemicals management programmes. ICCA also works with various partners, including the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, to provide technical support to address chemical legacy issues, to help prevent human exposures from legacy contamination.

ICCA hosted a high-level session at ICCM-3 on 19 September focusing on some of these projects. The event highlighted the importance of partnerships among government, inter-governmental organisations, NGOs and industry in strengthening SAICM and share examples of capacity building activities in Africa, Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe.

In the UK the Chemical Industries Association has long supported this approach. Its chief executive Steve Elliott said: "The chemical industry is showing real leadership and responsibility in the management of chemicals. Our desire to work with all stakeholders at ICCM 3 in Nairobi and beyond is evidence of our commitment to the economic, social and environmental progress of the world in the 21st century. We are fully supportive of the approach being led by Cal Dooley in Nairobi and will be supporting him and his team to ensure continued success in this work."

Hoyer takes on gas

Hoyer is expanding its global gas logistics business and has ordered an additional 200 ultra-modern gas tank containers. Its investment amounts to more than €8 million. By the middle of 2013, the fleet of gas tanks will thus increase to 700 units, consolidating Hoyer's position as one of the world's leading service providers in this sophisticated market.

The new 20 ft containers feature a low empty weight of less than eight tonnes, maximising the available payload capacity and thereby increasing the efficiency of gas transport operations, the company says. Some 150 of the gas tank containers are designed for transporting gases liquefied under pressure (such as the refrigerant R-134a, butene, ammonia or propane), whereas 50 will be used for gases liquefied at low temperatures (such as nitrogen, argon, oxygen or nitrous oxide).

The newly built containers are needed especially to support the growing overseas transport operations at Hoyer's sites in the Middle East, Russia and China, a business that has developed very favourably in recent months. Hoyer maintains that customers will profit from the fact that the group is able to offer both gas transport services and equipment, all from a single source.

In a separate development, Hoyer is acquiring a majority interest in Aktifsped, a forwarder founded in 1996 and based in Gebze, near Istanbul. Aktifsped is an established business in the Turkish market, specialising in national and international road haulage and container trucking.

The company currently employs 70 people and has three branches, in Istanbul, Konya and Adana.

Hoyer has had its own office in Istanbul for the past 15 years, which manages transport of chemical products, foodstuffs, liquid gases and petroleum.

The take-over of Aktifsped ticks several boxes in terms of Hoyer's goals, the Hamburg-based logistics group says. By building up its regional presence it will be in a position to exploit other geographical markets, as well as expanding its portfolio of services and improving its competitive standing. Also, by enlarging its own fleet of 40 tractors through the addition of the Turkish company's 30, as well as 80 container chassis, Hoyer enlarges its capacity in Turkey. The take-over also brings with it potential synergies and an increased share of the market.

Günter-Friedrich Maas, head of the Chemilog business unit at Hoyer, and Ekin Tirmann, of Aktifsped, will be joint managers of Aktifsped.

Finally, Hoyer Deep Sea has recruited welcomes Virginie Colombier as new area sales manager, to take over joint responsibility with Manuel Piot for regular customers and acquisition of new ones for flexi and ISO tanks in the French market. Additionally, she is in charge of the Mediterranean area. Colombier, a native Frenchwoman, has the job of pushing forward expansion of the transport business of the forwarding specialist in France itself, the Mediterranean area and the French overseas dependencies, particularly Guadeloupe and Martinique.

Virginie Colombier has many years' experience in logistics. As an expert for liquids transport, she spent the past 17 years working in executive positions of globally active logistics businesses.

Between 1995 and 1999 she was in charge of flexitank business in Asia transport at Seaflex International, a joint venture between Challenge International and Hoyer. She subsequently took on responsibility as regional sales manager at Stolt-Nielsen for ISO and flexitank business in France. Until her move to Hoyer Deep Sea, she was mainly supervising major clients in the foods and oil industries.

InBulk gains 'Worksafe' approval

InBulk Technologies working together with Ammermann Partners, of Somersby, NSW has set its sights on the thriving Australian intermodal market by gaining the Australian 'Worksafe Approval Certificate'.

As InBulk's ISO Veyor dry bulk tank container is a pressure vessel, in Australia it comes under the jurisdiction of Worksafe. ISO-Veyors are already certified by ISO 1496 (Europe), ASME VIII (USA) so registering the design under worksafe was largely an academic process.

ISO-Veyors offer increased choice for dry bulk materials, the company says. Patented and built by InBulk Technologies, ISO-Veyors are versatile, intermodal containers for effective transportation and storage. The standard H Type ISO Veyor is 20 ft and made from mild steel. It is ideal for all types of cement, limestone, ash and a wide range of minerals used within construction, mining and general materials supply.

Compared to traditional designs for dry bulk tanks, the ISO Veyor comes with a number of design improvements which provides better performance during operation, such as horizontal discharge (without need for tipping) and residues of only 0.2 percent following discharge. The ISO Veyor complies with the specifications for intermodal freight containers and can be handled and moved from one mode of transport to another like any standard shipping container across rail, road and shipping options. The design is capable of multiple discharges of powders without the need to calibrate and has a class leading payload.

The ISO Veyor complies with specifications for intermodal freight containers

ISO-Veyors are available through Ammermann Partners for the Australian and New Zealand market. Ammermann Partners equipment portfolio covers bulk materials handling, processing, storage, distribution and service for a wide range of materials supplying to industries such as cement, lime, gypsum and fly ash.

Martin Press, managing director of InBulk Technologies, commented: "We are delighted to be granted the Australian worksafe approval through our nominated partner Ammermann Partners. We have been working hard towards entering the Australian marketplace in recent times and now we want to take it forward to the next stage by meeting customers and providing trials."

Going it alone

InBulk's parent company InterBulk has announced the ending of its representation by Ben Line Agencies in China. Ben Line Agency will continue to represent InterBulk in a number of other Asian countries, but following the acquisition by Sinotrans of 35 percent of InterBulk PLC shares a review was undertaken to establish how the company should serve the needs of its customers in China.

It was eventually decided that as from 30 September 2012 this would be best accomplished by building on InterBulk's own offices in the country and working directly with customers via its own organisation. The owned offices, in Shanghai, Guangzhou and Qindao, will co-ordinate all customer requirements, while as InterBulk's business partner Sinotrans will support operations.

CEO Koert van Wissen commented: "We thank Ben Line Agencies for their excellent service delivery in the past years in China and are excited about the next step serving and China chemical industry via our own organisation."

LNG tank offers ship fuelling solution

Hamburg-based marine consultancy Marine Service GmbH has unveiled what it says is the world's first LNG fuel tank container.

Developed as a mobile LNG tank, the 40ft standard ISO tank is claimed to provide a reliable and safe solution for two of the main issues concerning the use of LNG as marine fuel: overcoming the limited availability of LNG due to lack of infrastructure, and the provision of a safe technical set-up for the retrofit and operation of existing fleets.

Worldwide LNG is considered as one of the most promising alternatives for the classic oil-fired diesel propulsion used in shipping – in particular following the introduction of harsher emission directives due in the next few years. But one of the key issues in moving towards more environmentally-friendly gas is the limited or sometimes non-existent infrastructure outside of certain regions like Scandinavia.

"Worldwide there are only a few LNG bunker facilities outside of Norway. Ships, intending nowadays to use LNG as fuel, are facing considerable supply problems in availability and bunkering," Jörg Redlin, director marketing & LNG\ division at Marine Service, told European media. Marine Service thinks that the millions of euros or dollars need to invest in the right facilities will mean that by 2015 when a new European Directive comes into effect there will still not be sufficient fuelling facilities to meet demand.

Until then, the LNG Fuel Tank Container is said to provide a practicable, technically safe and reliable alternative. "The container can be considered as a replaceable and rechargeable battery," explained Redlin. "The LNG Fuel Tank Containers can be loaded aboard like every other IMDG container. Ships using these containers will be independent of the availability of sophisticated LNG bunker facilities." After filling the container within the safe environment of a LNG terminal, with specially trained personnel, the tank can be transported to each required destination by sea, rail and/or road. "Thanks to the vacuum insulation the containers can be stored intermediately up to 80 days, before the pressure inside of the container reaches the set value of the safety vent." The tank's construction allows stacking of filled containers up to six high.

Another issue for ship owners is the cost of modifying existing fleets. While the reconstruction of the propulsion machinery is a demanding but solvable task, the integration of dedicated, separate LNG tanks is challenging and cost-intensive. To date there are only 30 LNG fuelled ships sailing – mostly in Norway – plus a number of LNG carriers also using LNG as fuel.

But instead of complex modifications to integrate permanently installed tanks in existing vessels, the fuel tank containers can be stacked aboard and connected with dry-quick couplings to the gas handling system and the fuel supply system serving the modified gas fuelled engine. "The concept of the Marine Service LNG Fuel Gas System is designed for on deck stowing for safety reasons," added Redlin.

Supply and control of the required gas pressure for the propulsion system is managed by a separate gas handling plant and the gas control valve unit. This gas handling plant can be arranged in a separate container and placed next to the containers. The LNG Fuel Gas Supply System, developed by Marine Service, was approved in principle by Bureau Veritas in July 2011.

Margin squeeze

Revenue in VTG's tank container logistics division amounted to €79 million in the first half 2012. This represented an increase of €1.7 million, or 2.2 percent, on the figure for the first half of 2011 (€77.3 million). EBITDA fell to €5.9 million compared with €6.3 million. The EBITDA margin on gross profit also narrowed slightly, to 46.5 percent (H1 2011: 49.4 percent).

Uncertainties about future developments in the eurozone and forecasts of lower levels of growth in China had no significant effect on demand for transport services in the first half of the year. However, strict cost management in the chemical industry, along with increasingly aggressive competition, led to noticeably intensified pressure on margins.

Tank container logistics managed to stand its ground well in Europe in this environment and also generated additional volumes of transport in Asia, then company reported.

Pro-klima Bruhn

Bruhn Spedition is supporting the German Federal initiative Wirtschaft pro Klima (Pro-climate Economy). Ecology and climate protection are central guidelines for Bruhn's company policy. "Therefore," said a company statement, "we support the Wirtschaft pro Klima initiative which demonstrates and promotes climate engagement by German companies." To do this companies present their own climate actions to the general public and lodge them in a public database.

"We want to encourage other companies to be reliable, sustainable economic actors, and we also want to get some more inspiration for our own environmental management," said Bruhn.

The company's tank traffic department held its annual Driver Day on Saturday 1 September. Besides exchanging experience and information, the drivers were received further training in areas such as food hygiene and liquid sugar transport. A major topic this year was 'social regulations', one of the further education modules legally specified by the German Occupational Drivers' Qualification Act, (BKrFQG) which must be executed by a recognised training centre.

OOO Bruhn Spedition, Moscow has a new address:
OOO Bruhn Spedition
Business Center Greenwood
korp.9 of. 145 69 km MKAD
Pos. Putilkovo, Moscow region
Krasnogorskarea, 143441

The team supporting general director Simon Gibbons in Moscow and St.Petersburg deals with existing Russian clients and the development of business activities in the Russian market. The St Petersburg office handles harbour formalities, arranges trailer and container transport from Russian ports and cross-border transport via Finland.

New VP for ITCO Tank Services Providers Group

A new vice-chairman of the ITCO Tank Service Providers Division has now been appointed. Cor Mol, project manager at Den Hartogh Logistics and responsible for the company's tank cleaning division, will now undertake the role.

Mol will join will Jochen Köppen, who took over in July 2012 as chairman of the TSP Division, on the ITCO board.

ITCO is also undertaking a survey to establish the global tank container fleet. The purpose of this the report is to promote the tank market and its growth to industry organisations, investors and regulatory authorities.

As part of the work being undertaken by the organisation's technical secretary to compile the report, ITCO members will be contacted to request relevant information, including fleet sizes.

Over 80 delegates have now registered for the next ITCO General Meeting, taking place at the Sofitel Hotel, Hamburg, on Monday 22 and Tuesday 23 October 2012. The Event Programme, including Registration Form, is on the ITCO website. www.itco.org

The Meeting will commence with a Welcome Reception for all delegates on Monday 22 October. The Reception will take place on-board a Cruise Boat, organised and sponsored by the Port of Hamburg Marketing, with delegates having the opportunity to view the port from the water.

The Cocktail Reception on board the Cruise Boat is being sponsored by ITCO member Germanischer Lloyd.

On the following day (Tuesday 23 October), there will be a full-day General Meeting, comprising both plenary and break-out sessions. The General Meeting will end with a Reception and Gala Dinner on the evening of Tuesday 23 October 2012.

In the meantime, a number of new members that have now had their applications for membership approved:

- Jiangxi Oxygen Plant: Manufacturers Division - www.jopm.cn
- Joint Tank Services: Tank Services Providers Division - www.jts.ae
- Logix Tank Operations: Operators Division - www.logix.nl
- Overmeer Transport: Operators Division - www.overmeer-transport.nl
- Shanghai Supreme Intl Freight Forwarding: Operators Division - www.spmlog.com.cn
- Telenor Traxion: Tank Services Providers Division - www.telenortraxion.com

Den Hartogh gets smart

Den Hartogh Logistics has introduced a new business concept it calls 'Chemistry through smart logistics'.

The company says it reflects the importance it places on maintaining close customer relationships (built on 'personal chemistry') and signals its growing focus on 'smart logistics' solutions – smart teamwork and using powerful IT and communications tools combined with real-time business analytics to create 'best-case' solutions for every shipment.

A new company website www.denhartogh.com has been launched to provide customers and partners with an information resource that is more consistent with this market positioning.

Den Hartogh remains a leading logistics service provider for the (petro-) chemicals industry. The privately-owned company, founded in 1920, today operates from 30 different sites in 17 countries around the globe. It operates its own fleet of over 4,500 tank containers, 400 road barrels, 500 trucks, and numbers about 1,000 employees.

The company has also Den Hartogh has moved its Hungary office to Budapest. The new address is Den Hartogh Trans Kft, 1172 Budapest, Cinkotai út 34, Hungary.

Tel: +36 1 701 1010

Fax: +36 1 701 1019.

Growing intermodal

Finnish tank container and tanker operator Haanpaa has announced that Daniel Hauffe will move to the group's Moerdijk (Netherlands) office to focus on developing new intermodal business. The move will be effective from 1 November 2012.

"Working in close co-operation with the local team, Daniel will bring his entrepreneurial spirit to the Haanpaa BV team and we look forward to continued rapid development of the business," commented CEO Vesa Itkonen

Haanpaa BV currently has road tanker, intermodal and trucking business in Moerdijk.

Shanghai for @tco

The Asian Tank Container Organisation (@tco) will hold its next General Meeting in The Eton Hotel, Shanghai, China on Wednesday 7 November.

The theme of the meeting will be 'The Safe Domestic Distribution of Chemicals by Tank Container in China'.

@tco says it promises to be a very informative meeting as the organisation has invited speakers from a major chemical company, chemical industry association and two @tco tank container operators.

"It is hoped that we can stimulate an in-depth discussion on the various issues facing domestic China deliveries and help to promote the safe handling of tank containers in China," said an @tco statement.

The full agenda will be published on www.atcoasia.com

UK-based global logistics operator Suttons International has become the latest company to join @tco.

Suttons is a pioneer intermodal operator in Asia, opening an office in China in 1997. Since then, Suttons has expanded across the region and is a major operator with offices in Singapore, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Tianjin, Ningbo, Nanging, Qingdao, Mumbai and Tokyo. The company also operates a tank container storage, cleaning and maintenance depot in Shanghai's Chemical Industry Park.

Andrew Palmer, Suttons Group Managing Director, said: "We are delighted to accept @tco's invitation and to support their efforts to promote safety and raise standards of operation across Asian markets. This is a significant and growing area of our business and we are pleased to be working alongside an organisation that seeks to promote best practice throughout the industry."

Reginald Lee, president of @tco, added: "The board is pleased that Suttons International has accepted its invitation to join the organisation with immediate effect. We welcome them and look forward to their involvement in the safe handling of tank containers in Asia."

Meanwhile, Suttons has made another key appointment in Asia and the Middle East. Andrew Baird, who has been with Suttons for seven years, is taking up a new role as vice president, safety and technical, Asia and Middle East. It follows the announcement last month that Simon Bury has joined the company as vice president for Middle East Operations based in Saudi Arabia.

Both appointments are said to show the company's commitment to the regions and its proactive approach to safety management. Andrew Palmer said: "This is a key appointment in the group supporting our commitment to providing the highest levels of safety and customer service. Andrew Baird brings to this role significant experience and professional accreditations gained through many years working in the logistics and chemicals sectors, most recently as Suttons quality safety health and environment (QSHE) director."

Baird will be based at Suttons' Singapore office, with Stephen Rowland joining the company as QSHE Manager, Europe, USA and Asia based in Widnes.

Suttons is a pioneer intermodal operator in Asia, opening an office in China in 1997

Singamas completes tank plant

Singamas, the second largest producer of dry freight containers, has completed the expansion of its tank production capability with a new dedicated tank plant located in the Jading District of Shanghai.

The purpose built facility, totalling 73,000 sqm with workshop space of 30,000 sqm, incorporates equipment secured from leading sources with real time X-ray and a semi-automated pickle and passivation process confirming the drive to automate processes wherever possible. The location and capability of the new plant has been well received by an increasing number of customers, Singamas said.

The plant commenced production in January 2011 and completed some 1,900 units in 2011. Singamas' total tank output for 2011 was close to 5,000 units.

The range of tanks offered by Singamas continues to grow with the introduction of offshore tank containers, a high temperature swap type tank and a hot air heating capability developed together with TRS. The initial units of this type have been in operation for over a year and the production numbers are steadily increasing for this new type of tank.

The European full service facility, Tank Cleaning Europoort (TCE), has further increased its cleaning, repair and storage capability to meet customer demand. The location is being used extensively for the completion of highly specialised units.

A quick word with....

Heike Clausen, Managing Director, VOTG & Vice President, ITCO

How do you view the prospects for the future use of tank containers for bulk liquids transport? In particularly, do you see its take up in emerging markets growing?

Global economic growth today is mainly driven by the emerging countries with their huge potential as consumers. Hence, the need for consumer goods as well as for construction, cars, trucks is particularly increasing in these countries affecting positively also their neighbouring countries. Production of these goods is following the demand and, as a consequence, influences also the demand of and the flows of chemicals.

It is therefore inevitable that the demand for transporting liquid chemicals to and from remote locations around the globe where transport infrastructures are not yet as developed as in Europe or the US, will increasingly require flexibility while offering also the opportunity of short term storage. The tank container therefore is the most appropriate mode of transport and will see tremendous growth potential. In addition, being repeatedly confronted with accidents due to inappropriate handling and marking of hazardous material being stored in drums, customers may review their supply chains and, in favour of more safety, use tank containers.

The increasing demand for food stuff around the world will allow further growth for the tank containers.

Can you give an update on VOTG's joint venture in China – Cosco VOTG Tanktainer Limited?

Since 2008 this Joint Venture is active in China and perceived as a most reliable, experienced and skilled partner for the Chemical and the Foodgrade Industry. With five offices covering the major chemical clusters along the coast, we are able to accommodate all export and import requirements of European and American multinational companies as well as from the Chinese Industry. By the increasing use of intermodal transport structures to inland destinations or from inland origins, we are following our ambition to provide sustainable and environmental-friendly solutions.

In close co-operation with Cosco Chemical Logistics we are providing logistics concepts for domestic supply chains, in particular with regards the new developed zones in Central and Western China.

How do you see the much talked shift in petrochemical production to the GCC/Middle East region affecting VOTG's business?

VOTG is providing transport solutions according to the needs of our customers. Undoubtedly, the Middle East region requires high attention in regards of the huge production facilities being built. We are preparing various strategic options, but do not foresee a significant change of our business model.

Conversely, how do you see prospects for tank container usage in Europe?

The demand for the usage of tank containers in the traditional Western European trades will probably be stable, although there is some room for growth through transferring cargo from road tankers to intermodal equipment. Interesting growth potential can be expected in the Eastern and South Eastern countries, provided that the economic conditions stabilise. Long distances from the heart of the chemical industry in Central Europe to the areas of demand will favour intermodal transport structures, and thus, provide an interesting growth scenario for the tank container industry.

Is there anything in particular you would like to achieve, or any specific issues you would like to address, during your time as Vice President of ITCO?

In close co-operation with the current President we are trying to enhance further the perception of ITCO as a platform for professional development of the industry. Joint initiatives towards better technical support, representation in regulatory bodies, general market development, etc, will increase the benefit for its members and motivate individuals to play an active role in ITCO.

In view of the increasing complexity of the business done and the responsibility taken by the ITCO members in view of the challenges of international transportation, it is my personal ambition to strengthen the relationship with the users/end-customers of the industry and to enhance further awareness of Responsible Care, in particular in emerging markets.

Training day

New Alchemy's five day Tank Container Operators Course will be presented again next year in week 3, week commencing 14 January 2013 in Southport, Merseyside, UK.

This highly popular course, now in its 25th year examines dangerous goods regulations, the classification of chemicals, design and construction of tanks and finally operating requirements, whereby the previous parts of the course are all brought together.

It will be of interest not only to tank container operators but also to shippers who can gain an insight into the problems and requirements for tank operating as well as dangerous goods matters generally.

Tank container manufacturers, lessors and truckers have all found their staff have benefited from attendance at this course. Trainees from around the world have benefited from the course – from Australia, Belgium, Brasil, Bulgaria, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Thailand, Venezuela, UAE, UK and USA.

There are mandatory training requirements for the transport of dangerous goods incorporated in to many national and international regulations. The course will help attendees fulfil legally binding requirements.

The course deals with the UN requirements for second-generation portable tanks and T-codes. It also deals with the various transitional periods for the continued use of first-generation IMO style tanks and further changes to T-codes allocated to various products in 2014, 2016 and 2018, eg, to UN 1595.

The MSC Circular published by the IMO explaining in greater detail the interface between IMO tanks and UN tanks will be introduced to trainees.

Onerous changes concerning the security of dangerous goods were introduced into the international regulations in 2005. These provisions affect virtually all tank container operators who will have to develop security plans. These measures, introduced as a result of the events of 11 September 2001 in the USA, will be discussed.

Further important changes to the international regulations concerning the classification of aquatic pollutants start to come into force from 1 January 2013. These changes will be outlined during the course.

The full training course costs €1,270 for non-UK trainees based in the European Union. For UK based trainees and trainees located in non-EU countries the fee is £1,015 + 17.5 percent value added tax. Trainees registering by the 30 November 2012 may claim an earlybird 10 percent discount. Numbers are limited to a maximum of 12 per course, and the course is non-residential.

Please email applications to rboneham@premiumuk.com

Polish agent for Trifleet

Tank container lessor Trifleet Leasing, based in Dordrecht, Netherlands, has appointed BTA Cargo, as its agent for Poland. BTA has years of experience in handling, storage and transportation of chemical products.

The agent will be led by the Trifleet Hamburg office in Ahrensburg. The co-operation agreement was made with the assistance of Port of Hamburg Marketing Association.

General Counsel

Marie-Louise Skafte has been appointed vice president & general counsel of Cronos Group. Skafte will be based in San Francisco, CA, and she will be responsible for Cronos' global legal activities, corporate governance and general policies.

Skafte was previously general counsel and corporate secretary of Deutsche Post DHL-Canada in Ontario. Prior to that she held key management positions at DHL Express (USA), Inc, APL Limited, MasTec Inc, and the Massachusetts Port Authority.


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OPW, Goodyear ink hose deal

OPW Fueling Components EMEA, part of OPW Fueling Components Group, has reached an exclusive, long term sales and marketing agreement with Veyance Technologies, the manufacturer of Goodyear Industrial Hose, to act as the sole sales and marketing channel for Veyance Technologies petroleum dispensing hoses and other related products used in commercial and retail fuelling markets.

The markets covered in the agreement include Europe and other select markets within EMEA. A new, locally assembled and co-branded hose named 'Avance by OPW' is available from OPW's European operations. Avance hoses are available as individual products or an integral part of the new Avance Next Generation Hanging Hardware kits.

Veyance Technologies manufacture a complete family of Goodyear petroleum dispensing hose products, all of which are EN- and UL-listed. They are claimed to provide durability and reliability through increased flexibility, lighter weight and extended flex performance. By virtue of this agreement, OPW will combine the strengths of its EMEA sales team, technical support capabilities and distribution network with Goodyear's decades of success in the petroleum hose industry.

Carman Kobza, managing director of OPW Fueling Components EMEA commented: "By bringing together two of the world's strongest and most respected fuelling equipment brands, we are able to provide customers an unparalleled fuelling solution. As a result, this is a win-win for both of our companies. OPW will provide the industry-focused marketing expertise and distribution channel to help Veyance Technologies expand its petroleum hose sales. In return, Veyance Technologies will help OPW by providing a high quality, complementary fuelling component that completes our 'hanging hardware' solution offering to our customers."

"Being aligned with OPW is very exciting for us," stated David Da Silva, Veyance Technologies general manager and vice president EuroAsia. "This agreement brings our petroleum hose sales and marketing efforts into focus. It will allow us to engage the commercial and retail petroleum markets and promote the benefits of our technologies to this important market."

Sure Seal, which is part of OPW Fluid Transfer Group (like OPW Fueling, a division of US-based Dover Company), has launched its new 345-Series Butterfly Valves for use in rugged environment conditions and with various types of loads. The 345-Series valves have been designed to be lightweight without sacrificing component strength. Flow is improved through the use of one of the thinnest discs and largest valve openings available in the industry, which also requires low opening and closing force.

The 345-Series valves, all of which are constructed of aluminium, are available in six sizes, from 2-6 ins, and contain no hardware on the disc that could come loose and contaminate the product being handled. All sizes use the same handle, which reduces the amount of inventory needed. Additionally, the 345-Series valves use industry standard dimensions and bolt patterns.

The valve seats are available in a wide range of materials, including FDA-approved and chemical-resistant compounds such as Viton, black nitrile, white nitrile, EPDM, silicone and EPDM backed Teflon. This allows the valves to be used with all types of products, from hydrocarbons to oxidising acids (nitric, sulphuric, etc), alkalis and organic/inorganic acids, and at wide temperature ranges from –46 degC to 177 degC). The valve seats are interchangeable with Sure Seal 500-Series seats.

The valves are assembled and tested in Sure Seal's manufacturing facility in Kansas City, MO, USA.

www.opwglobal.com
www.civacon.com

Sure Seal's 345-series butterfly valves

Bond-Rite receives IECEX approval

Newson Gale's Bond-Rite Intrinsically Safe Self-Testing Static Grounding Clamp has achieved upgraded hazardous area certification. It is now certified to the latest applicable sections of IEC 60079, enabling it to be used in global markets where the IECEX scheme is recognised, in addition to its existing approvals according to ATEX (European) and NEC (North American) hazardous area standards.

As part of the updated certification, the unit has now been tested and approved for a wider ambient temperature range from –40 degC to +60 degC. This enhanced rating, coupled with its IP65 and NEMA4X ingress and environmental protection increases the range of applications where the Bond-Rite clamp may be put into use, both indoors and outdoors, while the long-life lithium battery power source means that installation is simple and cost effective, requiring no mains/line voltage power supply.

The Bond-Rite Clamp is suitable for use in all IEC/ATEX Gas and Dust Zones (0, 1, 2 and 20, 21, 22) as well as NEC Hazardous Location Classes I, II, III and Divisions 1 and 2. The standard unit is supplied complete with 5m/16ft retractable (coiled) hytrel static-dissipative cable, earth/ground connection junction box and stowage point for the clamp, and models are available where the clamp is fitted to alternative cable lengths or self-rewind cable reels. Another popular option is the Bond-Rite EZ which is a totally portable bonding and verification system for use in temporary or mobile applications, or wherever there is a requirement to continuously monitor an equipotential bond between two conductive items or earth/ground.

Newson Gale also supplies a range of ATEX certified retractable static grounding reels that prevent the discharge of incendive electrostatic sparks within combustible flammable and dust atmospheres.

Located within a robust and easy to install weatherproof powder coated steel housing, the R-Series of reels incorporate a 1/8ins (3.2mm) thick galvanised grounding cable that is protected by Newson Gale's custom formulated Cen-StatTM coating which is a yellow, high-visibility, anti-static coating resistant to normal levels of industrial wear and chemical attack.

Depending on the distance between the mounting position of the reel and the equipment to be grounded, the reels can be supplied with cable lengths of 20ft, 30ft and 50ft (6.1m, 9.2m and 15.2m, respectively).

All R-Series reels incorporate a ratchet locking mechanism that enables the operator to pay out the required length of cable, and then lock it into position prior to applying the clamp to the equipment at risk of accumulating hazardous levels of electrostatic charge.

Retraction of the cable is achieved with an internally mounted coiled flat steel spring that is 'back wound' to ensure cable retraction is quick, reliable and repeatable. Back winding is a production technique that enhances spring stiffness resulting in a more durable and reliable level of cable retraction performance.

All R-series reels are fitted with FM & ATEX approved X90 or X45 static grounding clamps that have been subjected to rigorous mechanical and electrical testing ensuring they are suitable for grounding equipment located in potentially combustible atmospheres. The all stainless steel construction of the X90 and X45 enhances their durability in industrial chemical environments and minimises life-cycle purchasing costs in comparison with lower quality static grounding clamps and cable reels.

www.newson-gale.com

Finding the ideal waste oil pump

Lubricant oils are a common element in daily lives. They help engines and mechanisms function properly. However, during this use, lubricant oils become unsuitable for their original purpose due to the presence of impurities or loss of original properties.

At this point, oils need to be replaced and become waste oils. Some typical waste oils include hydraulic, transmission, motor, black, electric transformer, cooking, fuel, and synthetic oils, as well as brake fluids and machining lubricants.

Waste oils are very abrasive, environmentally harmful, have the potential to contain thin and thick particles, and have a tendency to become highly viscous in colder temperatures. Because it is considered an extremely hazardous material, waste oils pose an extreme risk to the environment. It only takes a litre of waste oil to contaminate a million litres of water, while severe soil contamination can occur from waste oils being exposed to the ground for a short period of time.

Unlike many other lubricants and oils that can be recycled and re-refined, waste oils must be collected and disposed of regularly. Although these disposal processes vary, it is no surprise that the collection and disposal of waste oils must follow strict environmental regulations. Also, collecting waste oils is precise and difficult, often involving high capacity strainers and heavy-duty pumping equipment. Hence, companies like France-based Chimirec Delvert have been able to turn waste into profit by specialising in the collection and treatment of hazardous waste oils and materials since 1928.

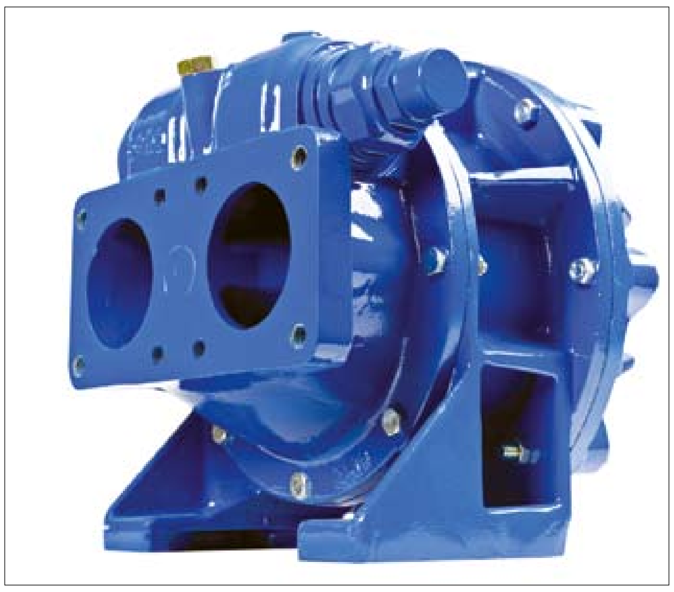
As part of the Chimirec Group since 1995, Chimirec Delvert got its start by specialising in the collection of used oil. It gradually extended its expertise to include the collection and treatment of hazardous waste. With a fleet of over 320 specialised trucks, the company currently serves customers throughout France, Poland, Turkey, Canada and Spain in industries such as automotive, transportation, aerospace, energy, construction, chemical, and pharmaceutical. Annually, the Chimirec Group collects over 80,000 tons of waste oils and 250,000 tons of hazardous waste from 27 depots and platforms for certified collection, grouping and pre-treatment throughout France and abroad.

Tough on pumps

It was important that Chimirec Delvert serve its customers in the most environmentally-friendly and efficient manner possible, while also protecting personnel. When the company first became involved in the collection of waste oils, it placed the upmost importance on only using equipment ideally suited for this type of application.

This included the heavy-duty pumping equipment that it installs on all of its tanker trucks. Ultimately, the company needed to find a pumping technology that was extremely resistant to the abrasive nature of waste oils to avoid unwanted pump wear while preventing spillage. In addition, these pumps had to be designed with a high suction capability since many of Chimirec Delvert's tanker trucks use long suction hoses to remove product from drums and underground tanks.

"At Chimirec Delvert, we understand how difficult waste oils can be to work with," said Pierre Delvert, director. "So, in order for our fleet of tanker trucks to serve our customers efficiently, we need components that continuously perform at their highest level, and one critical component on our trucks are the pumps. If we experience a pump failure on one of our trucks, it has the potential to put that truck out of commission and slow down our collection process."



Mouvex CC20 Eccentric Disc Pump

Pierre Delvert, director of Chimirec Delvert, in front of one of his waste oil recovery trucks

In an effort to find the best pumping solution for its operation, Chimirec Delvert tried using several types of pumping technologies over the years. However, when put to the test of working with waste oils, the company found that most of these pumps could not meet its expectations, experiencing consistent product loss and breakdowns that led to unnecessary downtime. For example, after installing gear pumps on a few of its tanker trucks, it was discovered that these pumps were not very efficient for transferring abrasive products. These inefficiencies led to large amounts of harmful pump wear and lower suction capabilities. In addition, lobe pumps were tested, but do not have the ability to run dry, which Chimirec Delvert considers a must during the collection of waste oils. Progressive cavity pumps were even considered, but the very long dimensions typically found on these pumps made them difficult to mount onto tanker trucks.

With all of these challenges, Chimirec Delvert began to question whether it was ever going to find a pumping solution that could satisfy its needs. That was until Chimirec Delvert discovered Mouvex pumps, based in Auxerre, France, and the leading developer of eccentric disc pump technology.

Mouvex eccentric disc pumps meet the operational parameters needed in the handling of waste oils because they have been designed with self-adjusting discs that maintain consistent flow rates with minimal wear. Eccentric disc technology consists of a stationary cylinder and disc that are mounted to an eccentric shaft. As the eccentric shaft is rotated, the disc forms chambers within the cylinder, which increase at the suction port and decrease at the discharge port. During operation, the discharge pressure exerts itself against the eccentric disc, preventing it from slipping. This low slip between the disc and cylinder gives eccentric disc pumps the ability to self-prime and line strip. This pumping principle allows for the consistent transfer of fluids from suction to discharge, with very low maintenance.

A major benefit offered by Mouvex eccentric disc pumps in the handling of waste oils is their compact design with side-to-side ports. By using small dimensions and reduced weight, the pumps offer a simple installation when vehicle mounted or used as a ground-based unit. In addition, they have the capability to rotate clockwise or counter clockwise by moving the by-pass device from one side to the other, giving users the ability to operate the pump safely from both directions.

Another important consideration when selecting pumping equipment for use with waste oils is the pump's suction capability. In addition to the need to clear lines, many collection tankers require strong suction lift through long hoses from drums and underground tanks. Mouvex eccentric disc pumps are claimed not only to meet this demand, but even at low speeds, the suction capability of the pump allows for perfect priming and draining. Many eccentric disc pumps use speeds ranging from 0 rpm to 500 rpm, with maximum capacities ranging from 333 L/min to 666 L/min. Eccentric disc pumps can also handle working pressures of up to 5 bar and handle particle sizes up to 3 mm.

After discovering eccentric disc pump technology, Chimirec Delvert began using Mouvex pumps on all of its tanker trucks, specifically the CC20 Eccentric Disc Truck Transport pump. CC20 pumps feature reduced weight and easy installation, and have been specially designed to handle corrosive and viscous liquids such as waste oils. CC20 pumps are available in cast-iron, with optional bronze pistons and stainless steel shafts, and have built-in relief valves to protect the pump from overpressure situations. The CC20 is also available with flow rates up to 333 L/min with pump speeds up to 500 rpm maximum. Optional features include drain plugs, ICE drive and drive through PTO drive shaft of hydraulic motor drive.

"When we started using Mouvex eccentric disc pumps in 1950, we had our doubts," explains Delvert. "But as it turned out, these pumps offered us the best balance between repeatability and performance. That is why we have been using Mouvex pumps for over 60 years for applications involving waste oils. Mouvex pumps work down to the last minute and only need to be replaced every two years or roughly after pumping 3.5 million litres. Since the CC20 pump is specifically designed to deal with resistant, abrasive product, it is by far the best pump technology that we have seen to deal with heavy-duty waste oils. If the CC20 was pumping clean oil, who knows how long it would last, maybe even over 10 years. If I would have to give some advice to other waste oil companies, I would say that the CC20 is the most efficient tool to be used for transporting waste oils."

www.mouvex.com

New Girard website

Girard Equipment has unveiled a new website that promises to be user-friendly and informative. The new site features more in-depth product information, categorised by industry.

Customers will be able to download sales literature and technical bulletins for the most popular Girard products directly from the site. Full digital editions of all three Girard Equipment catalogues are available on the site for customers to browse, download, or print.

An updated industry links section provides access to regulation information, tank manufacturers, carriers, and repair facilities for the Americas, Europe, and Asia.

The new customer support section of the website features testing instructions and assembly manuals for many products, including animated assembly procedures for the megaflop Pressure Relief Vents.

The website also features links to the company Facebook page and YouTube account, where support documentation and company updates can be found.

A training link allows customers to fill out a request to visit the Girard Manufacturing Plant, located in Vero Beach, FL, for a hands-on training seminar.

Earlier this year, Girard added a Hydraulic Tankflo valve to its line of composite foot valves. The new valve features a hydraulic cylinder that actuates to full flow.

The Tankflo valve employs an integrated butterfly valve into a bottom outlet valve body. The 'slim-line' valve poppet opens up and away from the discharge area allowing an unrestricted 3ins flow path capable of fast unloading rates. The built-in cleaning position exposes both sides of the valve disc, allowing expeditious and easy cleaning.

The new Girard Hydraulic Tankflo valve

The hydraulically actuated model features the most popular connection style in North America: the cam and groove outlet. With seals and O-Rings made from PTFE, the valve is suitable for operating temperatures between -40 degC and 200 degC.

www.girardequip.com

Drip Trap

Shand & Jurs Biogas has announced the latest in its drip trap series: the 97100E Electric Drip Trap.

The 97100E removes condensate from low points in low pressure gas piping systems up to 25 psi. Available in either 3 or 6 quart sizes and with 1 ins NPT inlets and outlets, the unit collects liquid until the ported rotating disc valve is electrically opened. The actuator seals the gas inlet port prior to opening the drain port allowing for removal of condensate without gas escaping.

The S&J 97100E adapts to any condensation or drainage collection requirement. The 97100E can be mounted in Class 1, Division 1 & 2, Gas Group D rated areas. An optional Local Control Panel, the 97100P, is available in NEMA 4X or NEMA 7 enclosures for all Class 1, Division 1&2 applications.

Shand & Jurs has also added the 99060 Duracator to its line of Conservation Vent Accessories. The 99060 Duracator is a visual pallet lift indication device for conservation vents and allows plant personnel to detect visually the percentage of pallet lift that has occurred.

The Duracator is fastened to the top of a conservation vent pressure cover or hood. The 99060 uses a modified pallet stem to engage a magnet which causes the flipping of magnetic indicators as the pallet stem rises when there is a release of product vapour. As it rises, the magnetic indicators will flip from 0 percent, 25 percent, 50 percent and finally 100 percent pallet lift.

The 99060 Duracator features two modes of operation: Memory Mode and Following Mode. In Memory Mode, the maximum percentage of pallet lift will remain displayed on the device until it is reset with a special resetting magnet. In Following Mode, the Duracator's indicator will follow the position of the pallet and return to zero when the pallet closes.

www.ljtechnologies.com

Alpeco updates Caldo depot

The Scott family had been in business as Iron Founders and Engineers in St Helens, Lancashire (UK) from the early part of the 19th Century. In 1922 the five Scott brothers - Austin, Leo, George, Walter and John - started The Caledonian Oil Company, also based in St Helens, which, following major expansion pre and post war, was renamed Caldo Oils Limited in 1951.

Today, Caldo Oils Limited is still a successfully run family concern with a large and diverse portfolio, including property investment, printing and plastic card production, operating alongside the lubricant blending, contract packing, and fuel distribution business.

The main depot at St Helens was originally fitted with a top loading facility which, though regularly serviced and maintained, was deemed too old. The top loading rack and the meters had done sterling service but had to be changed, so Caldo Oils managing director Mike Scott initiated a detailed search for a replacement.

His enquiries led him to contact Adrian Baskott, at Aylesbury-based Alpeco Limited. Several meetings later, the brief had been confirmed, a detailed design prepared and a proposal submitted for consideration.

Alpeco was able to satisfy Mike Scott's requirement to provide an analogue installation as he had well-founded faith in 'cogs and wheels'. This wasn't by any means an old-fashioned approach; he just preferred the traditional technology that had worked for him and his family for generations.

Alpeco was awarded the contract to supply and install Caldo Oils with a new bottom-loading skid equipped with four loading arms and mechanical meters configured for 900 LPM loading rates. Alpeco was also able to provide a finance package through its business finance partner CBF.

Mike Scott commented: "I specifically elected to use an analogue system as I am a traditionalist. I very much liked the cogs and wheels of our previous system which had lasted more than 30 years, so we have no reason to expect any less from the new installation. We are very happy with our new system has seen all new pipework installed right back to tanks, and very good it looks too.

"Although we have a number of depots, we provide all of our fuel supplies from our St Helens facility as this is our only 'wet' depot. Alpeco came up with a very good deal through its finance partners CBF and we believed, quite correctly as it turns out, that it is much easier to use one source to design, manufacture, install and even finance the whole project.

He added that Alpeco also offers good back up service. "This means a lot to me as I can pick up the telephone certain in the knowledge that they won't present us with an invoice for something that should have been provided in the first place. Also, you can actually speak to someone on the phone which is always a great help."

A quick word with....

Andreas Zink, president of European Chemical Transport Association

What do you hope to achieve in your time as president?
That ECTA members are satisfied with the service they get from our Association, especially for the money the pay for the membership.

I would like and hope to see the enlargement of Responsible Care – which until now has been only for transport services – to warehousing and tank cleaning. I would also want to build ECTA as the European voice for chemical transport and logistics.

What has been ECTA's greatest achievement?
Responsible Care - ECTA is the first association that has launched a Europe-wide Responsible Care programme in the logistics field. So far Responsible Care scheme has been treated only on a national level. ECTA applies the RC Sheme to its member companies in all European countries in the same, transparent manner, based on self-assessment combined with objective and externally verified data on safety management and improvement processes.

What do you see as the Association's biggest challenges at the moment and how do you plan to overcome them?
There are challenges in the market which our members face: the financial situation of a number of Eurozone countries; stagnation in volumes; driver shortages; CO_2 reduction, development of intermodal solutions, etc. The Association wants to give its members a help in all these issues by exchanging data, facts, experience, standardisation and harmonisation (eg, calculation of CO_2 emissions).

What are the benefits of becoming a member of ECTA?
Already today ECTA members carry out more than 70percent of all chemical shipments in Europe and all major players in transport and logistics of chemical products are members. The benefit is to gain from the experience, expertise and joint efforts in Working Groups (also in close collaboration with CEFIC) from a large industry of service providers.

Are we on track to meet carbon emission reductions by 2020?
The point is that we do not find a calculation of CO_2 emissions in transport harmonised across industries. So whatever is reported is close to a good estimation. My personal opinion is not to count every single tonne of CO_2. We have to concentrate on transport modes which have by definition fewer carbon emissions, meaning we have to use more and more intermodal solutions (train, short-sea, barges, etc) in combination with a flexible road service at both ends of the logistic chain. The EU White paper sets one important goal. By 2030, 30percent of all transport with a distance of more than 300km will have to be carried out by intermodal means! This is the only way to reach the targets.

What more can be done in this area?
Investments in rail infrastructure, terminals (rail and short sea) and rail equipment. And the highest priority is to overcome the interoperability of railways in Europe. Railway locomotives are not able to drive outside their country. The reasons include different voltages in the individual countries of the EU, and signalling which is in the local language. This jeopardises the productivity and efficiency of railway services.

Does the increased costs of Responsible Care and sustainability not affect Europe's competitiveness?
Investments in RC and Sustainability have a payback. With such actions you increase the company's performance. Less incidents/accidents save money! Europe's competitiveness suffers from inefficiency of rail services and the crisis of the Euro. But I do not see transport as a reason.

Lehnkering, Clariant JV

Lehnkering and Clariant have announced a new joint venture in which the logistics services provider will operate a central import centre in Hamburg on behalf of the specialist chemicals company. Lehnkering will take over its client's entire warehouse logistics for special chemicals and colorants. Operations started at the Altenwerder site in February, and the handover and induction phases have been successfully completed without any problems.

The goods will come from international production and be shipped from Hamburg to European customers. In future, several thousands, out of a total of 22,000 pallet places at the Altenwerder hazardous goods warehouse, will be allocated to Clariant. Lehnkering provides warehousing options for all common storage and water hazard classes.

The advantages of the new import centre at Hamburg-Altenwerder are clear, the two companies state. Proximity to the seaport guarantees the shortest possible follow-up times from the waterfront, which greatly increases the client's flexibility. The warehouse's modern technical equipment with direct IT system connectivity allows the most rapid communications. Lehnkering takes over from Clariant the complete co-ordination and processing of goods from the docking of ships to dispatch from the warehouse – this includes value-added services such as the repacking, labelling and picking of goods as well as customs clearance.

Clariant is already looking at other uses for the warehouse, for example, for the temporary storage of raw materials from Asia, followed by direct supply to production sites in Germany. For the time being, however, the use of the warehouse to service customers in Eastern Europe is planned as a second phase.

Uwe Willhaus, CEO of Lehnkering, commented: "In close affiliation with our parent company, Imperial Logistics International, we are providing Clariant with warehouse logistics and value-added services under one roof. Our years of experience as a specialist in

chemical logistics mean we can provide customers with comprehensive and flexible warehousing and distribution solutions throughout the supply chain. Clariant will benefit from that at the new import centre to a very great extent

The new warehouse is not the first joint venture, noted Rudi Leonhardt, Clariant's group vice president for logistics and supply chain services: "Imperial Logistics and Lehnkering are increasingly becoming one of Clariant's global partners – for example, we are currently using them to implement our new logistics strategy in South Africa. Another potential joint venture will result from the development of Clariant's 'Infrapark Baselland' concept with its existing trimodal orientation in the Basel region."

Walkers turns to Turners

Leading UK logistics group Turners of Soham has acquired rival Walker to strengthen is container division.

Walker Transport Services Ltd, based in Grays, Essex, was formed in 1980 by Keith Parker, undertaking military work for the government freight agents in both the Falkland and Gulf wars and then specialised in container distribution to and from the ports in the London area, particularly Tilbury and Thamesport. Walker's assets will be added to the vehicles already operated by Turners' office in Tilbury.

This acquisition, following the purchase of Dart Distribution in 2010, is a further step in Turners' strategy to develop its container division into a national provider of road and rail services to shipping lines, freight forwarders and shippers. Turners' capacity in the London area is increased substantially by the acquisition and recognises the potential of the new London Gateway port, due to open at the end of 2013.

In addition, Turners has successfully negotiated a further five year contract with Omya UK for the management and transportation of fine powder products, predominantly calcium carbonate.

The operation includes a Turners team based at Omya Hull operating a modern and specialised fleet of 30 trucks and 40 pressurised tank trailers delivering over 250,000 tonnes of product a year in the UK.

Genk expands capacity

Euro Terminal Genk (ETG), Belgium, has started infrastructure work to expand and modernise its terminal. The development of the intermodal activities within the region has encouraged the company to commit to the investment.

In particular demand for intermodal train connections towards south east and southern Europe from Genk has increased significantly. There is also a demand from nearby logistics companies to set up fast connections with the sea ports. So in order to come up to these expectations, the terminal needs to be adapted.

The surface of the terminal will be expanded from 25,000 sqm to 52,000 sqm, offering a capacity of 60,000 units a year (instead of today's capacity of 35,000 which was fully reached in 2010). The number of loading tracks will be increased from two to four and certain tracks will be elongated to 650m, in order to be able to accept longer trains. An investment in an extra mobile crane is also foreseen. Moreover, the entranceway to the terminal and the parking will be adapted. There will be additional illumination and the terminal will be completely fenced off.

In a subsequent phase, investment in the Interman terminal management system and Scangate, a system which registers detailed images of rail wagons and trucks, is envisaged.

In total, an investment of €3.35 million is involved, for which the company has received financial support from the European Fund for Regional development (EFRO) and the Flemish government (Hermes fund). Thanks to the expansion of the terminal, six extra jobs will be created.

Euro Terminal Genk, located in the North of Genk, has direct connections with the ports of Antwerp, Zeebrugge and Rotterdam.

Bertschi, MSC stake on Crossrail

Private rail operator Crossrail has strengthened its shareholder structure with the addition of MSC Belgium NV and Swiss chemical transportation specialist Bertschi.

With MSC and Bertschi now as shareholders, Crossrail can count on the support of one of the three largest container shipping lines in the world, and an established trans-European logistics operator.

The two companies continue the strengthening process of Crossrail AG which started in February 2012, following stakes acquired by GTS and LKW Walter.

Crossrail AG is incorporated under the laws of Switzerland, with its registered office in Muttenz, near Basel. It operates in Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Belgium, France and in Netherlands. It has two fully owned daughter companies, Crossrail Benelux NV and Crossrail Italy Srl.

A broad shareholdership of international logistics companies supports the business project of Crossrail. Shareholders are: Le Jeune Capital & Partners AG (20 percent), LKW Walter (25 percent), Hupac (25 percent), GTS General Transport Service (10 percent), MSC Belgium NV (10 percent) and Bertschi (10 percent).

A statement issued by Crossrail after the latest announcement said the new shareholding "underlines the strong interest of the market to develop private railway initiatives in the cargo business. The involved companies clearly demonstrate their trust in supporting the future of Crossrail as a leading European private railway undertaking and their belief in the growing importance of Crossrail as a private operator promoting the shift from road to rail."

Crossrail now aims to develop traffic connections all over Europe in the coming years. The company is focused on the development of its strong position in the Belgian market, especially in the port of Antwerp, with the optimisation of the existing network covering transalpine traffic via Switzerland, as well as the traffic on the east-west axis.

LKW Walter was one of the earlier logistics operators to take a stake in Crossrail

Abbey renews AAK contract

Abbey Logistics Group has won a contract renewal with AAK (Aarhus Karlshamn) to continue to transport refined oils from a production site at Hull which will see the AAK and Abbey partnership extend into 20 years.

Dave Coulson, commercial director at Abbey, said: "We are delighted to extend our contract with AAK – especially in the current market place where competition is so keen – which is testament to the levels of service Abbey has provided over the years and the excellent business relationship between the two companies. While we are on target to achieve our five-year expansion plans, we are very aware that winning new business on its own will not sustain our growth aspirations, and therefore the importance of ensuring we renew our contracts with our long term partners is critical to our future ambitions."

Andy Parker, UK supply chain manager for AAK, added: "We are happy to extend our contract with Abbey that has been in place for a number of years. Abbey is following an expansion plan that takes it into a broader offering of services and not just the traditional tanker transport of the past. Areas such as the ALG Twin Cargo are a great innovation for road transport in our industry and it is this approach that AAK is looking for with its supplier base."

Abbey now operates 210 trucks and 270 trailers from 10 UK bases.

Morocco to Russia via Dunkerque

France's foremost port for containerised fruit imports Dunkerque is reinforcing its existing services ahead of the forthcoming 2012-1013 campaign, thanks to a new initiative by CMA CGM.

Supporting the development of exports of citrus and other fresh produce to Europe, the CMA CGM Group has just announced the start of a new service, the 'Dunkrus Express', linking Casablanca, Agadir, Dunkerque and St Petersburg by a combination of services which guarantees a competitive transit time.

For the forthcoming 2012-2013 campaign, transhipment to Russia will take place on Sundays at Dunkerque, where CMA CGM's Baltic service will take over on the same day for St Petersburg. This will considerably improve the service between Morocco and Dunkerque (4.5 days from Agadir to Dunkerque) and mean a total transit time of 10.5 days between Morocco and Russia, allowing CMA CGM to support Moroccan producers in the development of exports to this fast-growing market.

Keeping tracks on containers

Tracking maintenance & repair operations improves asset utilisation, writes Blair Peterson

Disparate internal and external systems make tracking billions of dollars of equipment and transport event information challenging for intermodal companies, their trading partners and their customers. This lack of consolidated information can cause missed revenue opportunities and impact customer service. Lack of visibility into the location of assets and how long they were at a given location results in wasted time spent manually tracking down assets, which results in process inefficiencies and lost productivity.

To maximise profits and stay competitive in a demanding market, forward thinking intermodal companies must improve visibility into their operations to track their valuable assets, especially in maintenance and repair (M&R) operations. The faster a container or chassis is repaired and available for use, the quicker that asset can return to revenue-generating service.

Sophisticated tools are necessary to ensure successful and timely maintenance and repair (M&R) of intermodal assets. In today's world these tools must be automated and must include complete workflow management, estimate revisions and approvals, survey request and tracking, powerful search capabilities, estimate attachments, and comprehensive reporting. Equally important to the features of the system is its ability to integrate the workflow of the asset owners trading partners with the data that network generates. A comprehensive system captures the data, provides all network partners with visibility of what has occurred and what should happen next, and leverages collaborative tools to achieve asset management objectives.

Best practice should include managing and tracking M&R activity at all depots on a global basis

Tracking assets in the M&R process leads to greater utilisation and revenues

Implementing an asset management programme begins with establishing your organisation's strategic objectives for managing its assets and identifying the specific measurable performance and service levels needed to meet those objectives. An asset management plan can then be developed that identifies where containers and chassis are located, what condition they are in, what is required to return them to service, as well as other critical data points. It is also important to collect information, such as chain of possession, and what condition it left and returned in. The collected data can be evaluated to inform decision-making on how specific assets should be maintained and managed.

In a successful maintenance and repair operation, automation ensures that repair estimates are created accurately and approved efficiently. As containers and chassis move through the M&R cycle, their locations must be tracked to ensure that assets are checked quickly and repairs executed promptly. If there are hang-ups in the M&R cycle, inefficiencies occur that can mean lost bookings and revenues. Automation and cycle-time metrics keep the asset moving through the process so that idle time is minimised. This efficiency improvement in the M&R process gets assets 'back on the road' to generate revenue.

Best practice

Best practices for managing containers and chassis within an M&R operations should include:

- Managing and tracking M&R activity at all depots on a global basis
- Checking incoming repair estimates against a standard tariff and automatically flagging discrepancies
- Gaining high-quality data feeds from all M&R vendors, no matter the size
- Identifying and eliminating process gaps and lag time in the equipment M&R cycle
- Managing by exception with automated alerts to potential problems
- Connecting the vendor/depot network, regardless of a vendor's technical sophistication
- Viewing estimate revision history and variances between the original and approved estimates to better understand costs
- Eliminating manual processes (phone, fax, email and 'system jumping')

Global ocean carriers are improving equipment utilisation through automation

With an M&R system in place, equipment owners are able to automate communications with depot vendors, track equipment, and control costs. One large international ocean carrier, a market leader on the north-south container trades and in refrigerated logistics, implemented a web-based solution and communications hub to coordinate worldwide repairs for its entire container fleet. Managing the M&R process on over 400,000 TEU was problematic without automating the process.

The carrier was able to connect to its full network of over 300 repair and storage depot vendors and offices, regardless of technology capability. With improved data accuracy and process management, the company is able to apply consistent repair standards for its global container fleet. Having standard processes in place, combined with improved data transparency, the management teams are able to directly impact M&R costs and equipment turn times. Users can instantly check the status of a repair, view past repairs, quickly identify any delays in the repair cycle, and even be alerted automatically to anomalies. The system also provides valuable feedback on container damages that enables improved monitoring of container safety issues and new equipment under warranty, as well as being used in the design stage of future equipment procurement.

In the demanding shortsea trades where containers may incur depot activity more than 10 times a year, keeping firm track on repairs and gate events plays an important role in controlling equipment costs and availability. A European ocean carrier is utilising a web-based system to track and control container M&R and gate in/out events across a network of more than 25 depots. The new system enables the carrier to capture all M&R data into a single database accessed by users in multiple offices, providing increased visibility into activity and measurements. The system allows the analysis of trends, including specific issues where the carrier might be spending more on repairs with a particular container type or design. This information can be used to identify improvements to the company's container designs that will reduce future repair costs.

Another European carrier was able to secure additional traffic simply by having more equipment available due to shortened M&R turn times and better tracking of equipment. Previously, their complex repair process was administered manually and fraught with numerous errors, putting a heavy burden on administrators. From one single location, they may now access the status of containers at maintenance and repair facilities located around the world. They can view stock levels, get a quick inventory view, and can quickly and easily speed up the repair process when they need to provide containers for bookings. They are able to manage their container fleet to cover all bookings and avoid taking on additional equipment. The carrier is able to see average repair times and costs and can exert better control over the process, thus also improving customer service.

Tracking assets means investments used profitably

With shipping companies spending an average of US$110 billion a year (*The Repositioning of Empty Containers*, Dr. Jean-Paul Rodrigue, Dept of Global Studies & Geography, Hofstra *University*) in the management of their container assets (purchase, maintenance, repairs), tracking the utilisation and improving the maintenance and repair operations will ensure their investments are administered profitably. Transportation asset management allows businesses to make optimal use of existing assets to maximize their performance.

Asset management is not merely the identification and inventorying of transportation equipment; it is the process of making the assets you own or control work most productively - and profitably - for the business. Poor asset management can be identified by lack of business controls for managing asset data, insufficient asset data quality, and an out of balance investment in people, process, data, and technology. It can lead to uncontrolled capital and expense budgets, under or over-utilised assets, increased operational costs and headcounts, and can ultimately degrade customer service delivery.

The solution is an established program that successfully and optimally aligns the on-going collection of data from the maintenance and repair process with customer service level requirements while tracking assets through all touch points. The result is improved productivity and efficiencies so that the right equipment is available to the right customer at the right time at the right location.

Blair Peterson is SVP of commercial for International Asset Systems.
www.interasset.com

Isotrak helps deliver the milk

Lloyd Fraser Dairy Services Ltd has entered into a contract with vehicle tracking, telematics and integration specialists Isotrak to install its Active Transport Management System (ATMS).

The deal will see tracking, telematics and driving style installed into Lloyd Fraser's fleet of 26 tractors. One of the UK's leading 3PLs Lloyd Fraser had a number of systems in place to provide fleet management services and therefore identified a need for a single end-to-end supplier for all their contracts, one of which is Dairy Services. Following a recommendation from another Isotrak customer, the supplier was reviewed in 2011 and 2012 along with many other potential providers. A strong Transport Efficiency Analysis (TEA) ran over a number of vehicles for three months, and helped support the business case for Isotrak in satisfying Lloyd Fraser's goals of mpg improvements, fuel saving and increased fleet visibility.

Isotrak was up against two significant competitors but Lloyd Fraser recognised the vehicle tracking and telematics company's expertise in milk distribution and was impressed by its existing customer base within that sector. The telematics specialist was also noted for showing strongest willing to advance the core product.

ATMS provides enhanced, automated visibility of vehicle movement and location. This will enable Lloyd Fraser "to set new standards of pro-activity in managing its operational performance and maximising the accuracy of planned deliveries", Isotrak claims.

Lloyd Fraser's transport management was previously administration-heavy, with ETA information being requested by dairy farmers and collated by calling drivers and establishing their location over the telephone.

The introduction of Isotrak's ATMS will enable Lloyd Fraser Dairy Services to manage transport operations through a browser-accessible hosted 'managed service', which interprets satellite tracking and vehicle telematics data to create business efficiency insights. These insights are based on real-time visibility and measurement of whole-fleet (and individual-vehicle) performance.

Installation is now complete, and ROI is expected within a year. Isotrak is confident it will deliver a dramatic improvement to the efficiency of Lloyd Fraser's operation, allowing the company to benefit from Isotrak's extensive experience within milk distribution, enjoying significant mpg and operational improvements.

Alan Gunner, sales & marketing director of Isotrak, commented: "Isotrak is pleased to use its expertise in the dairy sector to help bring benefits to another of our valued customers. We look forward to delivering significant savings and supporting Lloyd Frasier Dairy Services in their journey to a more modernised operation."

Lee Westgate, regional manager (south), Lloyd Fraser Milk Division, added: "Lloyd Fraser made the choice to implement the Isotrak ATMS system based on the quoted MPG improvements that the system could provide along with the exemplary support and customer service provided to us. This was proven via an initial trial period fully supported by the Isotrak project team throughout. We have full confidence that the system will assist in providing the projected savings in the real world operational environment while also bringing added benefits via the tracking and reporting suite.

In a separate move, Isotrak has completed a deal with Martin Port to partner with his newly established BigChange AppsCentre to promote Isotrak services in over 20 countries in continental Europe. BigChange AppCentre is a web based portal where companies can sign up to software as service applications that use BigChange's mobile computer technology.

Isotrak is the longest established and largest provider of high end supply chain vehicle tracking and telematics solutions to the FMCG sector in the UK with customers such as Marks & Spencer, Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Morrisons.

BigChange AppsCentre has already negotiated other partnerships with complimentary technology in the MRM (mobile resource management) area including asset management applications, job management applications, and now includes Isotrak.

Isotrak's latest development ATMSi is claimed to revolutionise supply chain management by integrating data from the customer's back office and linking the data with real time scheduling of deliveries, reporting live in advance of any exception. This has proved a success with supermarkets and the massive home delivery market.

Greville Coe, Isotrak managing director, said: "By signing up to the BigChange AppsCentre Isotrak will open up brand new markets in continental Europe and the rest of the world. It's a perfect fit to support our expansion plans and we are confident in Martin's ability to deliver a sound return on investment as he has a fantastic track record and reputation in the industry."

www.isotrak.com

Rental4000 passes the test at Combipass

Specialist intermodal equipment lessor Combipass SAS purchased Real Asset Management's Rental4000 software when it was looking to automate its business processes and increase optimisation of the fleet.

Established in 1989 and headquartered in Avignon, France, Combipass' core business is the rental of intermodal equipment for dry bulk goods such as minerals, chemicals, food products and hazardous powders. The fleet, which has now reached over 1,400 units, consists of bulk boxes, pressurised silo containers and different types of container chassis, including those that tip or contain a rotary feeder.

The team at Combipass had previously been using a system that had become outdated and took a considerable amount of manual input to control equipment and business transactions. "As the fleet grew, this manual process became more time-consuming and increasingly difficult to administer," explained Emmanuel de Maistre, managing director at Combipass. "The need for an automated system which was tailored more exactly to the container leasing business prompted us to look for an alternative supplier. RAM was an easy choice as it is so well known in the industry and is a specialist supplier to the container leasing sector," continued de Maistre.

The sales team at Combipass will use Rental4000 to gain quicker access to the status of units and to filter unit specifics much more easily. Administration time can be cut dramatically, as free days and rental penalties will no longer have to be manually calculated and adjusted for. The new system automates the most time-consuming procedures and large orders will be more manageable and easy to track.

"I am hoping that the automation will have a significant impact on profitability," declared de Maistre. "Not only can this be enhanced further by using Rental4000's EDI functionality, saving us even more time, but we will now be able to perform detailed analysis of the fleet to help us determine the direction of our fleet sales, fleet purchases and where to locate them geographically.

"We are also looking forward to Rental4000 providing us with transparency of information across departments. Information from the technical team will now be easier to share and the flexibility within the reporting tools will allow us to analyse important aspects of our business.

"By implementing a specialist system, we can have peace of mind that industry requirements are always met. For example, there is an ever increasing amount of compulsory inspections required in the tank leasing sector," he added. "This new software will help us to manage testing effectively by warning users who try to on-hire tanks that have an overdue test date and providing access to test due reports. The automated system alerts that generate timely emails to key personnel will be particularly valuable."

The project to implement Rental4000 is now in progress and was due to go live as Bulk Distributor went to press. Combipass adds to RAM's growing customer base in France, matching similar market penetration in Norway, Germany, The Netherlands, USA, South Africa and the UK.

www.realassetmgt.com

Flexicon system cuts carbon

Elastomer manufacturer Kirkhill-TA Co has slashed inventories of carbon black and improved plant cleanliness, replacing a large silo storage system with a Flexicon bulk bag discharging system. It has enabled the company to cut inventory by 90 percent, while preventing carbon black dust from contaminating the plant environment. The overall outcome has been significant cost savings, greater production efficiency and improved competitiveness.

The bulk handling system is the latest upgrade for this company that began making gaskets, seals and other elastomeric products in 1919, and gradually shifted production from general industrial products to highly engineered silicone parts for commercial and military aircraft, missiles and even the Space Shuttle.

"During the mass production era railcars delivered 136 tonnes of carbon black pellets at a time," said Larry Pierce, vice president of technology at Esterline Technologies, Kirkhill's parent company. "We only received shipments a few times per year and were tying up close to US$250,000 in inventory with each shipment." Product diversification resulted in lower volume production which made it unnecessary and costly to maintain large quantities of carbon black in silos. The move to using Flexicon's bulk bag and discharge system has also enabled Kirkhill-TA to comply with Esterline Technologies' wish of placing a premium on controlling inventory costs, reducing inventory by a factor of 10. The bulk off-loading system improves efficiency and competitiveness and brings our costs in line."

Bulk handling priorities

California-based Kirkhill-TA had several priorities for its new materials handling system. With its parent company Esterline putting a premium on controlling inventory costs, the company had to improve inventory efficiency, keeping costs in line. It needed to use as much of the existing infrastructure as possible. Finally, it had to prevent carbon black dust, caused by the friable pellets rubbing against one another, from escaping into the plant or processing equipment.

Carbon black is one of Kirkhill-TA's main processing materials. Adding carbon black to an elastomer reduces its rate of thermal expansion, thereby enabling it to maintain an airtight seal in high temperature applications. It can also modify elongation, rigidity and other physical properties, and impart conductivity to prevent static discharge. Carbon black is produced by burning heavy oil or tar to form soot-like particles. When airborne, they can penetrate operating equipment.

"Carbon black tends to soak up lube oil," Pierce added. "If it gets into the bearings and rollers, they will wear out prematurely." It can also cause short circuits.

As carbon black is a petroleum product, California classifies it as a hazardous material. Since it is shipped as 1-3 mm diameter pellets, to reduce the likelihood of airborne release, manufacturers must remain vigilant to prevent spills and the clean-up that would follow.

Kirkhill-TA had a significant infrastructure to handle the product, with a rail offloading station incorporating screw conveyors, bucket conveyors and two large storage silos.

Carbon black pellets flowed from the silos to the company's Banbury mixers two ways: by pneumatic conveyor and when weight in the silo fell below 22,675 kg by large steel totes (IBCs) that hold approximately 900 kg of carbon black. These are moved by forklift, the carbon black gravity fed into a weighing container, with an integrated weigh scale, on a mezzanine above the mixers. When the container and pellets reach the required weight, the container's chute opens, discharging material into the mixer for compounding with elastomers prior to moulding into finished seals.

Since material delivery to the site by rail is no longer possible, coupled with lower volume requirement, there was no longer any need for silo storage and associated pneumatic conveyors. However, the steel totes and weighing system remain as part of the new bulk handling installation.

During this shift in production requirements the city of Brea, where Kirkhill-TA is located, decided to tear up the railroad tracks that supplied the plant to expand its park space. "We were the only industrial facility left in the city, and agreed to it," says Pierce. "In return, the city gave us a loan to buy the new bulk off-loading system."

Simpler handling

Bulk bags were a clear choice for receiving carbon black. First, they are available in 450 kg and 900 kg sizes, large enough to receive bulk discounts. While vendors charged less for bulk railcar shipments, the savings were largely offset by higher rail transportation costs. By switching, Kirkhill-TA would pay only a fraction of a cent per kilo more for bulk bag deliveries. Add in the savings from the actual lower inventories and elimination of silo maintenance, and the bulk bag system pays for itself.

The bulk bag discharger also improves site cleanliness since it moves bulk material handling operations inside the facility, so any accidental leaks are contained within the plant. The discharger also uses dust-tight connections to contain the carbon black until final addition to the mixer.

Trucks deliver 10 to 12 palletised bulk bags at a time. A forklift raises each bag by its straps and delivers it to a storage site on the mezzanine. When carbon black is needed, the forklift operator attaches the bag straps to a detachable bag lifting frame and then lifts the frame into the cradle on the bulk bag discharger.

The Flexicon discharger unloads carbon black pellets from the bulk bag into a purpose-built hopper, from which a 4.5m long model 14.5 flexible screw conveyor transfers the material to a steel tote. At this point the operation proceeds as it did originally using the steel totes. A forklift transports the tote along the mezzanine to the container above one of the mixers, where it releases its load.

The Flexicon bulk bag discharger, hopper and flexible screw conveyor fully contain carbon black pellets, preventing dust from entering the plant environment

The Flexicon bulk bag discharger is engineered to contain the material being unloaded, preventing contamination of the product and plant environment. The bag spout is attached to a Spout-Lock clamp ring, which forms a sealed connection between the clean side of the bag spout and clean side of a Tele-Tube telescoping tube (through which the material is discharged). The tube pneumatically raises the clamp ring, allowing the operator to make a dust-tight connection with the bag spout. The tube then lowers, elongating the bag to discharge the pellets. Also promoting full discharge, Flow-Flexer bag activators - two plates located under the bag - raise and lower opposite bottom edges into a 'V' shape, directing material toward the bag spout.

Above the clamp ring, a Power-Cincher flow-control valve encircles the upper portion of the bag spout to allow retying of partially empty bags. When the bag is empty, the operator actuates the Bag-Vac dust collector, which generates vacuum within the sealed system, collapsing the empty bag dust-free for retying and removal.

The conveyor incorporates a flexible stainless steel screw with specialised geometry to minimise

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Kirkhill-TA receives carbon black in bulk bags to minimise inventories

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Dust is created as 1-3 mm diameter carbon black pellets rub together.

compression of materials like carbon black that tend to compress in conventional conveyors. As the screw rotates, it self-centres within the plastic tube, providing clearance between the screw and tube wall, allowing sufficient space for pellets to flow without damage.

The intake end of the conveyor attaches to the outlet of the hopper. At the discharge end, a 5hp (4kW) motor drives the screw as the material passes from the conveyor outlet, through a 6ins (15.2cm) diameter flexible downspout into the steel tote. Being fully enclosed, the conveyor further assures plant cleanliness. A batch timing control activates the conveyor for a repeatable time interval to fill the tote.

• To support increased demand by overseas processing plants for bulk handling systems Matthieu Philippault has joined the international sales team of Flexicon (Europe). The new appointment strengthens Flexicon's overseas drive, where there is continued interest in UK designed and manufactured solutions for the transfer and handling of bulk materials such as powders, flakes and granules.

Philippault will have specific responsibility for French speaking territories, providing advice to enable processing plants in established Flexicon industry sectors, such as food, chemical and pharmaceutical to increase plant efficiency and improve safety. His proven business development background is expected also to help the company to expand into other industrial sectors, particularly where improving productivity is a core requirement.

Effective discharge

In 2008, Multisol Ltd of Irlam, Manchester (UK) invested in a new aqueous solutions facility to manufacture a urea solution, commonly known as 'Adblue'. This is required by Euro 4 & 5 trucks with selective catalytic reduction (SCR) equipment, to reduce NOx levels in exhaust gases.

'Adblue' is manufactured by the dissolution of urea prills into a pre-heated, high purity water source. The urea prills are delivered to Multisol in bulk bags and so need an effective discharge system. Once Multisol had won the contract to produce 'Adblue', it had to be in production within a couple of months.

Now part of Brenntag UK & Ireland, Multisol formulates and distributes high value speciality chemicals on behalf of global technology leaders, focusing on aftermarket transportation and general industrials markets.

Three potential bulk bag discharger manufacturers were identified. After evaluation, Spiroflow was selected as the preferred supplier; it was able to meet the required delivery and guarantee performance. Testing at Spiroflow's own centre confirmed that the combination of 'Spiroflow' bulk bag discharger and flexible screw conveyor was the correct choice to unload the FIBCs and deliver the urea prills to the inlet on top of the dissolver tank.

The Spiroflow discharger has an integral lifting hoist. Fourteen bags of Urea Prills are used per batch taking approximately 10 minutes per bag to discharge. The Prills are then conveyed to the top of the dissolver tank by a 17m long Spiroflow flexible screw conveyor inclined at 45 degs. The outlet of the conveyor has an integral slide valve and fan arrangement that prevents ingress of moisture into the conveyor from the warm water in the dissolving tank.

Richard Hands, operations director for Multisol, confirmed: "We are pleased with the performance of the Spiroflow Bulk Bag Discharger and Flexible Screw Conveyor and, also, the after-sales support. As with all projects, during commissioning and initial start-up there are issues that arise, some more serious than others, and it is the response to these challenges that identifies if you have made a good decision with respect of your provider.

Spiroflow worked alongside us to resolve any issues and handed over a fully capable system. It was this partnership which gave me confidence to sign a maintenance contract with Spiroflow to ensure that our equipment is always in good working order through preventative maintenance."

The bulk bag discharger is complete with side and base bag massagers to deal with agglomerated prills. In addition, bag spout clamps only allow product discharge after the containment doors are close to obviate exposure of operators to dust hazards. Additional, and more powerful, bag massagers were fitted to the discharger to cope with bags of prills being received in even more consolidated a condition.

FIBC being hoisted into the Spiroflow discharger

Zeppelin still flying

Zeppelin Systems' acquisition of the Reimelt-Henschel Group means that Zeppelin Systems UK is now responsible for the entire Reimelt Food Technology range. This means that UK food and beverage sector customers will now benefit from one point of contact for all their handling and mixing room technology requirements.

The handover has begun, with the transition being effective from February 2013. Starting with immediate effect, people can now contact Zeppelin directly regarding the purchase and service of both mixers and bulk material handling systems from component to turnkey plant.

In a further announcement Zeppelin is investing in a brand new, state of the art, food technology centre in Rodermark, Germany. This is a purpose-built facility designed to ensure that Zeppelin remains at the forefront of processing technology.

The centre was designed according to the highest hygienic standards for food and offers the modern conditions for testing raw material in powder, granule or liquid forms. In line with the client focus, the facility includes a customer zone; an area with conference rooms suitable for training, confidential discussions and international meetings.

Zeppelin Systems provides a comprehensive selection of high quality bulk material handling systems to industries such as plastics, rubber, chemical, mineral and now food & beverage.

The Uk division has already expanded its sales organisation to support these two initiatives with the recruitment of Derek Burrows and Paul Herron who bring experience from material intake to end of line packaging.

The Zeppelin Group is a direct successor of the legendary airship builder Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin. Zeppelin Systems UK was formed in 2007 when the parent group acquired the batching division of Chronos Richardson. The Nottingham-based facility offers a full range of bulk material handling services such as design, manufacture, installation, commissioning, servicing and spare parts.

Starlinger in Uzbekistan

Starlinger & Co has opened a representative office in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The office is headed by Yuldosh Kazakov, who has joined Starlinger in 2009 and is the chief representative for the region. Providing sales and aftersales service, he is the contact person for Starlinger customers in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

In addition, a locally based technician is available for immediate customer care and troubleshooting in case of machine problems. The office is the first address for any requests or queries of the Central Asian customers; this way, Starlinger wants to ensure quick and efficient service and support.

Powder packing

Matcon's new design 'Powder Packer' was the centre-piece of its stand at PPMA, in Birmingham, UK. The system provides fast and accurate packing into 10-25kg lots and can be cleaned down within minutes. The Powder Packer is said to be an attractive solution for 'business-to-business' applications where the driving factors are efficiency, simplicity, lean and clean, rather than high throughput.

Also on display Matcon's IBC Blender 'Intensifier', which provides enhanced mixing capability, extending the range of applications that can benefit from the use of an IBC blending system.

A quick word with....

Richard Heath, director Middle East & Asia, Alfred Talke

What do you see as the key issues comparing the transporting of dry bulk and liquid bulk?
While not all dry bulk is easy, most of the products produced in the Middle East are commodity plastics which are relatively uncomplicated to transport in bulk. When it comes to liquid chemicals the main challenges are those of dangerous goods classification and potential concerns related to the temperature of the products when in transit.

As a largely export-oriented market the equipment available for liquids mainly consists of ISO tanks which are operating in the global deepsea market. (In the Middle East) this is fine when it comes to standard equipment, but if specialised equipment is required, the availability is more difficult than in a market such as mainland Europe where there is more 'domestic' movement of specialised vehicles.

The Middle-East is currently experiencing rapid growth, what will be the region's biggest challenge to sustain this?
As a petrochemicals producer the Middle East has already been manufacturing substantial amounts for many years and has done this very successfully, obviously with the advantage of lower cost feedstock. The available allocation of further feedstock is of course a challenge for those manufacturers who wish to expand their production capacities in the region.

The decision of certain Middle East manufacturers to move further downstream in the chemical chain and produce specialty chemicals provides a new horizon for the region and supports local wishes to manufacture more end products for their own consumption. The feedstock cost advantage is then not as significant and it will be important to have reliable, safe and cost-effective logistics to handle this more specialised area.

Customers have growing demands when it comes to shipping their products, in terms of both lead time and quality of service. What's the solution to providing this effectively in the current climate?
Quality of service is something that always comes at a certain price and the customer needs to understand that a fair price has to be paid for high quality. By working closely together the customer and the LSP can develop solutions to ensure good quality for a reasonable price.

Lead time is a challenge for the GCC manufacturers and while on the one hand the most cost-effective way to deliver is directly to the client, a buffer in the supply chain is often required with storage closer to the receiver. Ultimately, the best solution is usually a combination of direct deliveries, sales on water and a certain amount of stock closer to the receivers for fast deliveries.

What can Alfred Talke offer to customers to enhance their supply chains?
We are a specialised chemical logistics provider. I see our role in emerging markets as being one of supporting our multinational customers with the standards of services that they are used to having 'at home' while developing their business in new markets where challenges, say in HSSEQ, are much higher.

What would you like to achieve during your time as director Middle East/Asia?
I hope that we and our customers can benefit from Talke's first-mover advantage in our sector in the Middle East. There are still some very large projects coming up in which we believe we can participate well, particularly due to the fact that there is more diversity in the products being manufactured, which brings TALKE back to its roots as a chemical liquids service provider in addition to the huge dry bulk market.

Hoppers to Newcastle

Demag Cranes' subsidiary Gottwald Port Technology has supplied two identical G HMH 750 DS Mobile Harbour Hoppers to Port of Tyne, Newcastle (UK). Each of the hoppers has a capacity of 750 tonnes per hour and they are being used to unload bulk carriers with cargoes of wood pellets.

The order follows the introduction by Gottwald of various types and sizes of hoppers to its product range. The company has also drawn together its bulk handling activities to create its International Dry Bulk Competence Centre (IDBCC) based in Banbury.

"The two Gottwald hoppers are each designed to handle 750 tonnes of wood pellets per hour," explained Brian Reeve, chief technical officer at Port of Tyne. "Unloading wood pellets is a very demanding task and we strive to lead the way in developing the best practical means of handling this material, whilst fully meeting all legislative requirements. Gottwald's hoppers comply with our stringent environmental requirements while providing robust and reliable handling."

Handling bulk materials is a growth market for terminal operators all over the world. Bulk cargoes have their own characteristics, whether coal, fertilisers, biomass or agribulk and these affect the way they have to be handled.

"Among other enhancements, the hoppers are fitted with dust suppression systems as an economical response to environmental protection legislation at the location," added Mark Reardon, head of the IDBCC.

In addition, an environmentally aware power supply and efficient drive technology are incorporated in the design. All the energy required to operate the hopper is generated on-board in a diesel-powered generator. Alternatively, power may be supplied without generating additional local exhaust gas emissions by hooking up to the harbour mains.

The dust suppression system also minimises the amount of bulk material lost during handling. To suppress the dust, Gottwald uses a number of different measures designed to complement each other. Besides a complete enclosure and wind protection around the charging opening, which is also fitted with a flex-flap grid, air curtain and extractor systems as well as telescopic chutes for loading trucks minimise dust generation. The telescopic chutes also ensure gentle handling of the bulk material.

Gottwald hoppers can be specifically configured in a wide range of equipment variants with capacities of up to 2,000 tph for practically all bulk materials. A number of different types are available: mobile on wheels, on rails or fixed. Depending on the terminal requirements, bulk materials handled by Gottwald hoppers are unloaded onto HGVs, goods trains or conveyor belts.

In the palm of their hands

Indonesia's plans to boost its palm oil refining sector could change the logistics of this popular, yet controversial, product


For decades Indonesia simply shipped tanker loads of raw palm oil to other processing centres

Golden Stena Weco should allow Golden Agri-Resources to achieve more competitive freight rates and better management of its transport needs

Palm oil is popular and relatively cheap when it comes to using the refined product in food and consumer products, from peanut butter, margarine and ice cream to lipstick and shaving foam. It is also commonly-used as cooking oil across Asia and is becoming more popular as a biofuel. Laws that encourage the use of biofuels are adding to demand.

The product provides benefits for food manufacturers, including a long shelf life and stability at high temperatures. But the palm oil industry has become a bête noire among assorted environmental activists and animal lovers, who accuse it of encouraging deforestation in parts of Asia, destroying habitats and affecting biodiversity, particularly in Indonesia, the world's biggest palm oil producer.

Such groups have campaigned to draw attention to the alleged damage done to Indonesia's tropical rainforests by the production of palm oil. The allegations include not only being a danger to Asian wildlife but also to the health of the planet. Between 1967 and 2000 the area under cultivation in Indonesia expanded from less than 2,000 sq km to more than 30,000 sq km. Deforestation in Indonesia for palm oil and illegal logging is so rapid that a report in 2007 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) said most of the country's forest might be destroyed by 2022. Although the rate of forest loss has declined in Indonesia in the past decade, UNEP says the spread of palm-oil plantations is one of the greatest threats to forests in Indonesia and Malaysia. Deforestation has made Indonesia one of the world's largest carbon-dioxide emitters.

Such has been the power of the anti-palm oil lobbyists that a number of European countries have walked (blindly some would say) along the path to boycotting or banning the ingredient altogether. Products labelled 'no palm oil' have become more common on French supermarket shelves in recent years, for example.

Industry representatives from many of the leading producer nations have started to fight back. In a meeting with French politicians and bureaucrats in September, Malaysian officials said that such labels misrepresent an industry that has made big strides toward greater sustainability. The meeting was part of a two-week long delegation to various European countries to put the case for Malaysia's palm oil and timber exports.

Malaysia is the world's second largest palm oil exporter. The country's minister for plantation industries and commodities Tan Sri Bernard Dompok told French counterparts that Malaysia is committed to ensuring sustainable palm oil supply, and French manufacturers' and retailers' pledges to avoid palm oil misrepresent the industry. Malaysia's 1992 Rio Summit pledge to conserve 50 percent of forest cover is ahead of European commitments, he pointed out.

"We want to increase our exports to France of certified (sustainable palm) oil (CSPO)," the minister told officials and media in Paris. However, 'no palm oil' is appearing more frequently on labels, according to market research organisation Mintel, which says there were 72 new products in Europe carrying such a claim front of pack in 2011, compared to 16 in 2010. Up to the end of July this year, there were 66 new products bearing the claim, and France accounted for 80 percent of those.

In June, an association of palm oil producers from Ivory Coast filed a business tribunal complaint against French retail chain Magasins U for its negative portrayal of palm oil in an advertisement, which it claimed could harm its farmers' livelihoods. The Casino supermarket chain has also pledged to remove palm oil from its own-brand foods, while Carrefour decided to switch to CSPO by 2015 instead, following the lead of Belgian and Dutch retailers.

However, pro-free market campaign group World Growth (WG) has commended the Indonesian government's strategy to counter the global campaign to restrict trade in Indonesian palm oil exports and give customers confidence in the sustainability of the industry there.

Addressing Indonesian trade officials and business figures in Jakarta, World Growth chairman Alan Oxley said: "The Indonesian government has taken effective action to demonstrate to buyers that Indonesian palm oil is sustainable."

It has established the Indonesian Sustainable Palm Oil Commission (ISPO), which puts Indonesian producers under a legal obligation to demonstrate they have followed the Commission's standards of sustainability before they can export. ISPO provides an alternative sustainability certification for both producers and buyers that is "robust", added Oxley. "The emergence of ISPO means that attempts by Greenpeace and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) to control trade in palm oil will have less traction."

Until now, the only system which measured sustainability was the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil. But WG says that has lost the confidence of Indonesian growers.

Bringing it home

CSPO, however, is on the increase, and now represents about 11 percent of global crude palm oil production. And running parallel to the campaign to promote more sustainable palm oil is another strategy of the Indonesian government which has major implications for the logistics business.

For decades, Indonesia simply shipped tanker loads of raw palm oil for processing into higher value cooking oil and margarine in other food processing centres like Rotterdam, Mumbai and, closer to home, Malaysia's capital Kuala Lumpur.

However, in a move that has echoes the transformation of the Middle East's petrochemical industry, Indonesia now expects to see more than US$2.5 billion of inward investment to build an indigenous refining industry that will double capacity and could supply the entire needs of Asia's top food consumers, India and China.

A recent survey by Reuters news agency of 30 firms operating in Indonesia — from the world's biggest listed palm oil firm Wilmar to conglomerate Unilever — revealed plans to nearly double refining capacity to 43 million tonnes, or 80 percent of global output. There is the threat of over capacity. But palm oil firms with the entire supply chain behind them, from plantation to mill to ports, could be the real winners.

Storage tanks are becoming a regular feature of Indonesia's landscape as more refineries are started, threatening the dominance of Malaysia's processing industry. Under its refining plans, Indonesia could meet domestic needs of around 10 million tonnes annually as well as supplying the combined 20 million tonnes of edible oil imports required by the largest consumers, China and India.

Flexitank bonanza?

With more refined palm oil produce coming onto the market this could be good news for transport equipment providers as a large proportion of the refined product is likely to be breakbulk for shipping in smaller parcels. Food grade tank containers are possible beneficiaries, but the absence of much backhaul traffic into Indonesia would limit opportunities. A comparable situation is that of Turkey where fish oil is major export commodity. However, tank containers into Turkey are overwhelmingly geared to meeting the needs of the country's chemical processing industry; there are virtually no food grade imports.

Hence, Indonesia could become a happy hunting ground for flexitank operators. Malaysia already uses a significant number of flexitanks for transporting refined palm oil and if Indonesia's refining ambitions pay off then it is likely that flexitanks will be more in demand to move smaller parcels on both shortsea and deepsea legs.

In the meantime conventional tanker trades still have a market. Stena Weco – a joint venture between Stena Bulk and Weco – has formed a 50/50 joint venture with Indonesia's Golden Agri-Resources (GAR) to provide international logistics for GAR's palm oil products. The new company, Golden Stena Weco, will allow GAR to achieve more competitive freight rates and better management of its transport needs, especially in the Asian market, according to Jesslyne Wigjaja, GAR's corporate finance vice president.

GAR is the world's second largest palm oil plantation company, with a total planted area in excess of 450,000 ha and integrated operations for oil palm processing in Indonesia.

Stena Weco is one of the world's major transport companies for palm oil, with a sizeable share of the market for cargoes from Asia to Europe. The company said the new joint venture would extend this strength into the intra-Asian market.

Prior to the joint venture with Stena Bulk, Weco was part of the privately owned Dannebrog shipping group, specialising in products such as palm oil, other edible oils and caustic soda. The companies have access to 10 modern Stena P-Max tankers (65,000dwt with an "extremely shallow draft") as and when they become available from existing long-term charters.

Abu Dhabi's turn

Abu Dhabi Ports Company (ADPC) has opened its brand new container terminal, Khalifa Port, for commercial operations.

The terminal is one of the most significant port developments in the Middle East, a region that has seen staggering amounts of petrodollars invested in new infrastructure to support the region's rapidly growing trade links with the rest of the world.

Now Abu Dhabi, the largest of the Emirates that make up the UAE, has a port to rival that of its neighbour Dubai. Khalifa has a capacity of 2.5 million TEU a year, with an additional 12 million tonnes of general cargo, including 4 million tonnes a year from the busy Emirates Aluminium (EMAL) berth which opened in late 2010. The opening of Khalifa is a tactical move by ADPC - it has been designed to be rolled out in phases should the market require it.

For now, the port has been dredged deeper than is needed to accommodate larger vessels in future and the six giant ship-to-shore cranes have been built to cater for the next generation of ultra large vessels.

At the heart of the new port is its advanced terminal operations building which houses new technology used to control most of the container terminal. Khalifa is the first semi-automated port in the region; a development which surprised a number of industry watchers as port labour costs in the region are still low compared to regions such as Europe and North America.

The complex also includes the UAE's longest bridge and the 8 km environmental protection breakwater which curves around the port to protect the Ras Ghanada coral reef – the only example of its kind in the Arabian Gulf.

ADPC says it will have transferred all container traffic from the existing port of Mina Zayed – which is expected to reach maximum capacity by the end of the year after 40 years in operation - by the first quarter of 2013. Mina Zayed will then focus on cruise business.

The Khalifa development is at the heart of the first phase of the US$7.2 billion megaproject in Taweelah which consists of Khalifa port and the Khalifa Industrial Zone Abu Dhabi (Kizad).

Bio opening

A new biodiesel terminal is up and running in Long Beach, CA, established by the Renewable Energy Group (REG). The first truckload of biodiesel was picked up by Whole Energy, a fuel distributor and retailer operating in Washington, Oregon and California.

"Whole Energy is committed to biodiesel, helping Californians meet their carbon reduction goals, and offering supply for Oregon and Washington blending requirements," said Gary Haer, VP sales and marketing at REG. "REG's terminal agreement with Maxum Petroleum expands the opportunity for West Coast distributors like Whole Energy to blend biodiesel for public and private diesel fleets."

Atul Deshmane, CEO and president of Whole Energy, said that biodiesel has demonstrated both performance and low carbon characteristics and is an important part of meeting California's Low Carbon Fuel Standard. REG recently registered its REG-9000 biodiesel produced at its biodiesel facility in Seneca, Illinois with a carbon intensity as low as 4.0 gCO2e/MJ.

"We are excited about the opportunity to offer biodiesel from the nation's largest biodiesel producer and marketer in California," added Deshmane. "Whole Energy is committed to a multi-region approach for offering biodiesel blends for fleets and consumers who are looking to go green, enhance performance and protect the earth with a sustainable fuel."

Simon Storage Seal Sands terminal

Simon Storage harvesting new opportunities

The partnership between Simon Storage and Harvest Energy is going from strength to strength as Harvest Energy expands its presence in the UK's road fuels market.

It is less than three years since Simon started storing road fuels at its Seal Sands Terminal for Harvest Energy, and now a substantial proportion of the terminal's fuels tankage is used by Harvest to supply its distribution network and growing commercial customer base.

Harvest Energy is part of the Blue Ocean group of companies, one of Europe's largest independent suppliers and blenders of motor fuels, with operations in the UK, Holland, Germany, France and the Baltic.

In the UK, Harvest is one of the largest independent suppliers of road fuels, supplying more than 10 percent of the UK's motorfuel requirements. It also operates a 250,000 tpa capacity biodiesel production plant on the Seal Sands chemical complex in Teesside.

Simon's Seal Sands Terminal provides a fast and convenient fuel storage and distribution hub. As well as storage for a range of road and commercial fuel grades, Simon provides Harvest Energy with specialist biofuels blending in order for it to meet the UK government's Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation. A bioethanol in-line injection system is provided for Harvest's unleaded and super unleaded gasoline products, while diesel and FAME (Fatty Acid Methyl Ester) are blended in-tank.

In addition to growing its downstream business, two years ago Harvest took over a biodiesel production plant at Seal Sands. Simon stores and handles raw materials for the plant, including used cooking oil, ready to meet production demand. Simon can also provide storage for tallow, another potential raw material for the production of FAME, should the customer require it. FAME produced by the plant is then transferred by pipeline from the plant into the terminal for use in Harvest's biodiesel blending operations or for export to out-buyers.

Simon Davis, Harvest Energy's head of sales and logistics, said reliable supply partners like Simon Storage are vital, particularly during these volatile times for the oil industry. He commented: "Simon's expertise in storage and handling helps us to provide products that are competitively priced, supplied and delivered with a customer-focus. The Seal Sands terminal plays a critical role in Harvest Energy's UK-based storage and supply network and we look forward to developing new market opportunities with Simon's support."

Harvest Energy has recently announced that Trafigura, one of the world's leading international commodity brokers, has invested in the company, providing a long term financing platform to enable future growth in the UK market.

Stolt moves in on London

Stolt-Nielsen is to buy the former TDG bulk liquid terminal at Dagenham, Port of London. TDG was acquired last year by French logistics group Norbert Dentressangle SA.

The Dagenham terminal occupies 9.4 ha and consists of 195 tanks with a total capacity of 134,000 cbm and a jetty with a draft of 9.3m. In addition to bulk liquid storage, services include warehousing, drumming and bulk container filling, laboratory services, blending, dilution and product heating. The facility has immediate access to Britain's national highway system.

Commenting on the acquisition, Walter Wattenbergh, president of Stolthaven Terminals, said: "This terminal is our first in the UK and joins Stolthaven's growing global network of bulk liquid storage facilities. The Dagenham terminal gives us a foothold in the UK market and will provide added support to the Stolt Tankers' inter-European coastal fleet. Our initial plans include an immediate upgrade program, with the decommissioning of several old tanks and the construction of new ones."

The transaction is expected to close during the company's fourth quarter of 2012. Terms were not disclosed.

Stolthaven Terminals reported second-quarter operating revenue of US$47.3 million, up from $46.2 million in the first quarter. Increased revenue from capacity expansions at Singapore and from Moerdijk's (Netherlands) first full quarter of operations was partially offset by lower revenue at Santos (Brazil), due to a decline in throughputs of both chemicals and ethanol. The average terminal capacity at Stolthaven's owned terminals increased by 4.4% in the quarter to 1.11 million cbm.

The average terminal capacity for non-consolidated joint venture terminals was unchanged. Average rental rates were also essentially unchanged in the quarter. A decrease in utilisation to 96.2% from 97.4% was more than offset by an increase in total product handled to 2.2 million cbm from 2.1 million cbm in the first quarter.

Stolthaven reported a second-quarter operating profit of $18.1 million, compared with a first quarter operating profit of $23.3 million that included a one-time gain of $5.8 million on the acquisition of the Moerdijk terminal. Total operating expenses in the second quarter were essentially unchanged from the first quarter. Equity income from the company's non-consolidated joint-venture terminals rose to $5.5 million from $5.2 million in the first quarter.

Low sulphur facility

Novorossiysk Commercial Sea Port Group subsidiary IPP has launched a low-sulphur fuel handling facility.

On 22 August the first vessel with low-sulphur fuel left the IPP berth. IPP cleansed three reservoirs for storage of the new type of fuel in preparation for the launch.

NCSP group CEO Rado Antolovic said: "The first cargo arrived at the terminal on 15 August 2012, and on 20 August we were already working with the first tanker – the Nikos Tomasos. Loading of 30,000 tonnes of fuel was completed in two days.

"The IPP fuel terminal is the only one in southern Russia with the capability to handle low-sulphur products. This product contains only 10 ppm of sulphur and is therefore less damaging to the environment. We plan to handle between 120,000 and 150,000 tonnes of low-sulphur fuel per month going forward."

Koole expansion

Koole Tankstorage has initiated the expansion of its Pernis, Rotterdam terminal with 30 new tanks in two new pits.

For this expansion the pits, TP 23 will comprise eight tanks of 3,000 cbm each and five of 1,800 cbm each. TP 24 will have seven tanks of 750 cbm each and 10 tanks of 350 cbm each. With these new tanks total capacity will be in excess of 560,000 cbm.

APMT spot opportunities in Russian market

Petrolesport, St Petersburg – one of Global Ports' facilities

APM Terminals, the container terminal arm of AP Moeller Maersk, is now entering the attractive Russian market in a strategic partnership with Russian transport group N-Trans.

By acquiring 37.5 percent of the public company Global Ports, APMT becomes an equal controlling partner in the leading operator of container terminals in Russia. Until now, N-Trans had been the sole controlling shareholder of Global Ports with 75 percent ownership.

The transaction values Global Ports approximately at US$2.3 billion, making APMT's share acquisition the largest foreign direct investment in Russia's transport industry to date.

With this new partnership APMT adds three container terminals in Russia, two container terminals in Finland, one inland container depot in the vicinity of St Petersburg and a major oil and oil products terminal to its global network. APMT will also be able to play a major role in expanding terminal capacity for future demand in Russia and neighbouring countries when the right opportunities present themselves.

CEO Kim Fejfer believes that the strategic investment will offer value to APMT's shipping customers today and create further opportunities to accommodate their growth in the future. The Russian market showed impressive growth rates in the past with an average growth over 15 percent a year in the past five years. The rapidly developing middle class, Russia's integration with the global economy as evidenced by the recent WTO membership and the country's wealth of natural resources will continue to fuel the growth in exports and imports in the long run.

"Russia will need world-class port infrastructure and operational excellence to serve global shipping lines and its own ambition of economic development. Today we are proud to announce that we found an excellent partner to expand our network to Russia. Global Ports has a well-diversified port network, a very experienced management team, a sound customer-focus, and a good eye to grow the business," commented Kim Fejfer.

"This investment underpins our long term business development strategy of increasing presence in high-growth markets. The scale of entry in a market like Russia will further strengthen our diversified global portfolio. The partnership will also serve as our platform for future business development activities in this attractive part of the world," added Francois-Xavier Delenclos, APMT's vice president of strategy and business development.

Nikita Mishin, chairman of the board of directors of Global Ports, stated: "I am confident that by drawing on the expertise of a leading international player like APM Terminals and N-Trans's significant experience in developing infrastructure in Russia, we will further strengthen Global Ports' leadership in our markets. With the support of these shareholders we can look forward to the successful development and efficient deployment of new capacity and will be able to respond even more quickly to the opportunities for growth in our underlying markets to the benefit of all of our stakeholders."

Global Ports reported revenues of $501 million and an adjusted EBITDA of $282 million for 2011. It has been listed on the London Stock Exchange since 2011.

EVENTS

EPCA Annual Meeting
6-10 October 2012
Budapest, Hungary
Meeting Administration
EPCA
Avenue de Tervueren 270
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ITCO General Meeting
Sofitel Hotel, Hamburg, Germany
22-23 October 2012
secretary@itco.be

Gefahrgut 2012
14-15 November 2012
Essen, Germany
easyFairs Deutschland GmbH
www.easyfairs.com

7th European Conference on Inland Terminals
15-16 November 2012
Palais des Congrès, Strasbourg, France
T +32 3 231 93 65
paul@confor.be
www.inlandterminals.com

Intermodal Europe 2012
27-29 November 2012
RAI, Amsterdam, Netherlands
T +44 207 017 75112
sophie.ahmed@informa.com
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Across the Mersey

Liverpool Bulk Liquids (LBL), based at Port of Liverpool, is now handling more vessels following expansion of the company's West Langton Terminal.

LBL embarked on a challenging exercise in 2009 to move the complete oil terminal across the River Mersey; a process that took three years of planning and execution.

As explained by managing director, Paul Maxwell, this was not for the faint-hearted. "The sheer logistical challenge of moving very large tanks 50 ft in diameter by 30 ft high would have been enough for one of the major storage operators, but for us with just myself and our small team it was exceptionally difficult. Fortunately I have extensive experience in the movement of out-of-gauge cargo going back to my shipbroker days so in the end the project was completed on time and on budget, moving 35 tanks in six barge trips, with the final load arriving in January 2012."

The business plan that underpinned the venture stems from the shortage of bulk liquid storage space along the Mersey, as Maxwell continued.

"We had as a port lost various facilities over the years that did not get replaced and the time had come to invest in infrastructure again. The three recent vessels have contributed £150,000 in income that simply would not have come to the port if we hadn't done this. We have thus demonstrated that investment in port infrastructure can pay off handsomely and this is why we are behind Peel Ports one hundred percent in their forthcoming plans to invest on a much larger scale in the port. In fact, we would recommend companies to follow our lead in all of the different cargo handling sectors. Infrastructure creates opportunities for us and our customers alike with our investment bringing money into the local economy that wasn't there before and this money equals jobs and prosperity."

LBL invested approximately £1.5 million in the terminal in the past three years and plans to handle as diverse a range of bulk liquids as possible. With 43 tanks of varying sizes, including heated & insulated tanks all linked to deepwater tanker facilities, LBL say business prospects look extremely good.

Underpinning the venture was a shortage of bulk liquid storage space along the Mersey which made new investment viable

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