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Huntsman and Den Hartogh open new Rotterdam centre

Den Hartogh and Huntsman have opened their new logistics service centre (LSC) 5210. The LSC is located next to Huntsman's port site in Rotterdam and is an important step the two have taken to promote a sustainable, safe and efficient port. LSC 5210 covers an area of over 2.5ha, was created within a year and built in accordance with the international ADR regulations.

All goods (bulk, packed, cargo, couriers) destined for Huntsman and the other companies operating from port site 5210 will now first pass through the service centre. Gwendolien Fonck, supply chain director Europe at Huntsman, commented: "This is the strong co-operation that Rotterdam's Botlek area needs. It enables us to combine the knowledge and skills of Den Hartogh Logistics with the opportunities offered by industry and the port. We are committing ourselves to a long-term relationship that will benefit the surrounding area and industry."

The growth in commercial activity in Rotterdam's chemical cluster was the reason behind raising access for goods traffic to a higher plane. With the arrival of LSC 5210 on Mannheimweg, congestion on Merseyweg will be a thing of the past and goods traffic will be separated from passenger traffic. The distance to the businesses, factories and other modes of transport, such as the rail terminal, is also shorter. This should significantly reduce the number of kilometres driven by trucks, which will yield an annual saving of 35,000 site kilometres.

Den Hartogh managing director Pieter den Hartogh, added: "There was an urgent need in Rotterdam's chemical cluster for logistics centres which

comply with ADR regulations. With around 100 temporary parking spaces, the new LSC 5210 meets this need and enables staff to work safely and efficiently."

Den Hartogh will organise entry control, transport on-site, loading and unloading of tank trucks and tank containers and the logistics operations for other goods. The partnership with Huntsman to set up the centre goes further than a traditional customer-supplier relationship. The information systems of Huntsman and Den Hartogh Logistics are also linked, meaning that stock management is up to date at all times.

Bertschi doubles up at Schwarzheide

Bertschi has broken ground on a significant expansion of its logistics infrastructure on the BASF site in Schwarzheide, in Eastern Germany. The handling capacity of the existing intermodal rail terminal will be doubled and its storage capacity tripled.

The increasing demand for storage will be met with a new local depot for hazardous products. The new facilities will start operation in 2015. Thereafter, the present East-West rail gateway function of the Schwarzheide terminal (Benelux-Duisburg-Poland-Moscow) will be complemented with new North-South intermodal connections (Hamburg-Schwarzheide-Southeast Europe).

The story of the terminal in Schwarzheide started in 1995 with a small gantry crane with a capacity of 25,000 handlings a year, and was built by Bertschi on site at the BASF plant. That facility, mainly focusing on the connection of BASF Schwarzheide to markets in Western Europe, soon reached capacity limits.

After two expansions of the facility, including a modern container gantry crane in 2007, the rail transport volumes started to grow significantly. The reason was that Bertschi, in co-operation with intermodal operator HUPAC, started to provide new services from Western Europe via Schwarzheide into Poland and Russia. This signified the birth of the Schwarzheide Gateway terminal.

Three years later the maximum capacity of 60,000 handlings a year was reached and expansion plans initiated by Bertschi, in collaboration with the site management of BASF. Due to the fact that an increasing demand for the storage of hazardous goods became evident, an application for appropriate infrastructure fully integrated into the terminal expansion, was submitted.

At the beginning of 2014, the site was prepared for building and construction work started in March 2014. This third expansion comprises a new intermodal area with six rail tracks under a new gantry crane and a container storage area for 1,700 TEU. The new area will be spanned by a gantry crane with a width of 90m and come into operation in January 2015. The hazardous goods depot, with a capacity of 150 tank containers, is expected to be completed by mid-2015.

With expansion the current capacity of container throughput will be doubled to more than 120,000 lifts a year. The storage capacity will be tripled, providing the potential to upgrade the terminal to a central hub for storage and logistics for deliveries to Eastern European markets.

China's changing chemical industry

Naphtha tanks at BASF YPC in Nanjing

In a survey of China's chemical sector published last September, KPMG, a consultancy, noted the country has entered a unique stage of development.

Economic growth is slowing down, but in a controlled fashion, with the country now heading down a more sustainable path, characterised by more modest growth rates and a more mature economy reorienting itself away from an investment-led model to one focused on consumption and services.

But even a slower growth rate — around 7 percent on average, KPMG reckons — along with steady urbanisation and infrastructure plans, ambitious sustainability targets, and a large middle class driving demand for consumer, auto, IT and electronic products will provide ample growth opportunities. This will enable the chemical industry in China to grow by between 9 and 11 percent over the period 2013-2015.

The modern Chinese chemical industry is based on the two pillars of self-sufficiency and sustainability. This has thrown up a large number of 'local champions' who represent formidable competition to global companies. While state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have scaled up their operations and ambitions abroad, private companies have also consolidated their operations, becoming more competitive and profitable and restructuring their management systems.

KPMG says data from the past 10 years indicate that Chinese companies have graduated from makers of bulk chemical raw materials to upgraded products and are now keen to conquer overseas markets.

However, as the country's chemical industry grows bigger, it faces a number of increasingly complex challenges. From feedstock to HR issues, every level poses its own difficulties. There is still a long way to go, but the whole world should be aware that this is an era of rapid and far-reaching transformation in China's chemical industry.

Supply chain integration

China has obviously become increasingly integrated into global supply chains and a greater number of chemical companies are planning overseas investments as a key way of taking their businesses to the next stage of development. In fact, many companies now see overseas direct investment as a channel for achieving a transformation of their business and a way of overcoming skills barriers. It is therefore essential that Chinese companies effectively restructure their internal management and staff training programmes.

At the same time China-based chemical manufacturers are increasingly working with foreign multinationals, Western research institutions and global supply chain companies.

Suttons Group and Bertschi were among the first bulk logistics operators to establish an on-the-ground presence in China. In 2011, China's state-controlled logistics group Sinotrans acquired 35 percent of InterBulk's shares.

Chinese chemical firms need to maintain close working relationships across their supply chains, understand the motivations of their trading partners and determine the best way to work together. An increase in overseas acquisitions will require a new breed of managers who can control operations in a foreign culture, which KPMG says will require a new spirit of partnership, transparency and visibility.

A further issue is the potential of shale gas to change the economics of other production locations. Parts of Europe and China are likely to have their own shale gas resources and this may well offer similar benefits to chemical production in these economies. In the time-scale of investment in large chemical projects this could inject substantial uncertainty.

Nevertheless, China has become an extraordinarily large market. It has a growing production capability within the country, but this is not enough to satiate its demand. Consequently it has become a major importer of both upstream and downstream chemical products.

The attraction of tank containers for moving product into and around China is considerable

This has triggered growth in demand for maritime logistics resources in particular, with tank containers being a particularly good example, but bulk storage and chemical tankers being other cases of sectors that have benefitted from greater trade between regions.

There are three main clusters of chemical production: Shanghai & the Yangtze Valley; Tianjin/Bohai Bay and the Pearl River Delta, opposite Hong Kong. These are also crudely approximate with the largest population and manufacturing hubs. However, Shanghai and the Yangtze valley are disproportionately large in terms of volume and breadth of chemical production.

Barge traffic is fundamental to the chemical industry located on the Yangtze. Capacity is generally provided by small private companies managed by large state owned entities such as Sinotrans.

Feedstock and bulk intermediaries in particular are moved from Shanghai to the more downstream production along the river. Downstream end product tends to be moved by rail and road, with key junction points, such as Nanjing, provided with intermodal terminals.

The attraction of tank containers for moving product into and around the Yangtze and the rest of China is considerable. However, all of this logistics provision is very recent, with much of the production capacity it serves just a few years old. Consequently, transport systems – such as barges – can still suffer from lack of available capacity and quality of service.

Merging triple cultures

In a report on Sustainable Chemical Supply & Logistics Chains, published last year, EPCA cited a case study of a polyolefin supply chain from the Middle East into China.

The study found that customer lead times in China need to be as short as those in Europe despite the longer physical supply chain. The complexity in this case was compounded by minimum bulk stock in the chain, multimodal supply chain planning, local customs and tariffs, free trade requirements and local road infrastructure.

There were also "different cultures" regarding safety and the length and volume of the supply chain.

However, an opportunity was spotted to initiate the first major bulk supply chain where the bagging is done in China. Traditionally, polyolefins were bagged at production and shipped to China for customer collection at a warehouse. To save cost and minimise carbon footprint the new supply chain solution involved loading bulk into 20ft and 40ft containers at production followed by multimodal shipping to China.

On arrival, product was immediately packed into 25kg and 1 tonne bags and delivered to the customer, so no bulk storage was needed. This change required detailed planning. Collaborative forecasting and planning by the solution provider and the producer ensured continuous flow from the Middle East production facility to packed stock in China with a 12 percent increase in the load factor and minimum intermediate stock.

Close liaison with Chinese regulators ensured minimum delay and compliance with Customs and local authority requirements.

Western safety standards have been applied across the whole supply chain using an advanced packing facility, an intensive Chinese distribution network and operator training programmes.

In terms of value the solution has made a long and complex supply chain effective. Large bulk shipments are packed locally, which puts the decoupling point between push and pull close to the customer.

Operations are now safer and more economical with minimum stock, short delivery time, reduced carbon footprint and minimum interruption to supply. Moreover, the supply chain can be easily scaled up to meet expected growth requirements. In sustainability terms, these efficiencies – including not having to return pallets to the Middle East – have reduced emissions by around 15 percent.

Safety and Responsible Care focus at Intermodal Asia

Current issues facing the Asian tank container market and Responsible Care of the global Chemical Industry were discussed at the inaugural Intermodal Asia 2014, which took place on 1-3 April at the Shanghai World Expo Center.

Mike Duan, marketing director of Exsif China, which is a board member company of @tco (Asian Tank Container Organisation), spoke at a conference session on day 2.

"The conference session demonstrated the benefits of the tank container versus the 45 gallon drum, as a more cost-effective and environmentally-friendly method for transporting liquids in Asia," explained Duan.

@tco's main objective is to promote the expansion and use of tank containers in the Asian region in an environmentally-friendly and safe manner. The organisation became involved in Intermodal Asia to present new content to the industry and share information about issues faced today within the tank container industry.

Safety, for instance, can be of particular concern during the cleaning or handling of tank containers. "A number of fatal accidents have occurred in the Asian tank container industry and all of them could have been avoided," added Duan.

Since @tco was founded in 2011 the organisation has introduced a Depot Audit Scheme, to assist depots in meeting safety standards, helping chemical companies to select a partner to work with. @tco polices depots using independent surveyors who are not affiliated with the container business.

"Companies in the chemicals industry need access to companies that have been approved and meet European standards," added Reg Lee, president of @tco. "What is important to @tco is our focus on Asia. Often, when tank container issues have been resolved in Europe, people are not aware that these same problems still exist today in Asia."

Ken Tsang, China Advisor, Responsible Care Leadership Group (CLG), International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA), also presented at a conference session on day 3 looking at Responsible Care as it relates to Transportation Safety and Environmental Protection in the Global Chemical Industry.

Mike Duan spoke on the benefits of tank container versus drums

"Two of the 6 codes of the 'Responsible Care of the Global Chemical Industry' model are pollution prevention and occupational health and safety," said Tsang. "Most of the incidents involved in intermodal transport could have the potential to create an environmental incident or involve injury to workers. With implementation of Responsible Care, environmental and safety incidents have both been reduced in the past 10 years."

The Responsible Care Model has been recognised by the United Nations. "The transport industry could pay more attention to environmental protection and workers' health and safety in order to enhance the image of intermodal transport globally," added Ken Tsang. "The audience for this session included people who care about the sustainability of intermodal activities and who would like to create a good image for the industry."

Suttons China win

Suttons Transport Group has been awarded a contract from Bayer Materialscience (China), to provide a range of traditional and value-added bulk chemical logistics and supply chain services.

In China Suttons operates five regional offices, domestic road transport operations and a tank container cleaning, maintenance and repair facility in Shanghai.

Anthony Latham, Suttons Regional Director North Asia said: "This contract is a significant win for Suttons. It's pleasing to know that our multi-service offering and dedicated account management approach is recognised by a customer of Bayer's stature and a deciding factor in us winning this contract."

Stolt Q1 results

Stolt Tank Containers reported first-quarter operating revenue of US$126.9 million, down from $131.2 million in the fourth quarter 2013. The decrease resulted primarily from a slight fall in total shipments in the first quarter and a continued increase in the proportion of intra-regional shipments, which generate less revenue than deep-sea shipments.

STC's first quarter is typically slow, the group said, compared with the fourth quarter, with the pace of tank container shipments lagging through January, before picking up in February and accelerating after the Chinese New Year. Utilisation edged upward to 73.9 percent from 73.7 percent in the fourth quarter, despite the addition of 458 tanks to the fleet.

During the quarter, the number of tanks in STC's fleet increased to 31,851.

STC reported a first-quarter operating profit of $15.1 million, down from $19.8 million in the previous quarter, in line with the decline in revenue for the period. Operating expenses were essentially unchanged. Ocean freight costs were flat, while inland freight costs slipped lower, offset by an increase in maintenance and repair, and repositioning expenses during the quarter.

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TYPICAL SPECIFICATIONS

ISO TANK CONTAINER // SINGLE COMPARTMENT INSULATED AND STEAM-HEATED STAINLESS STEEL TANK CONTAINERS

CAPACITY	TARE WEIGHT	MAX GROSS WEIGHT
26,000 ltr	3,790 kg	36,000 kg
25,000 ltr	3,740 kg	36,000 kg
24,000 ltr	3,670 kg	36,000 kg

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

WORKING PRESSURE: 4.0 Bar
DESIGN TEMP: - 40˚c to 130˚c

APPROVALS

UIC, CSC, TIR, IM101, UK-DOT, RID/ADR, AAR600, FRA, TC, UN PORTABLE TANK, IMDG, US-DOT, L4BN

STANDARD FITTINGS

MANLID: 500 mm (20˝) diameter, 8 point fixing

AIR LINE: 1.5˝ with stainless steel ball valve and 1.5˝ BSP cap

RELIEF VALVE: 2.5˝ SRV set at 4.4 Bar – provision to fit a second

TOP OUTLET: Provisions for 3˝ butterfly valve and syphon tube

BOTTOM DISCHARGE: 3 point stainless steel closure

STEAM-HEATING: 12 m^2 effective surface area external steam tubes

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Keeping track

Track & trace and other monitoring technologies are increasingly finding favour in tank container logistics. Technologies are being deployed on tanks and other types of container not just to keep track of where they are in the logistics chain but also to monitor the state of the cargo being carrier, particularly when temperature-controlled products.

Hoyer has been involved in the EU-supported 'ChemLog Tracking and Tracing (T&T)' project which is designed to use improved GPS surveillance to make the intermodal transport of dangerous goods in Europe safer and more transparent.

A specially equipped Hoyer tank container is being transported throughout Europe to help achieve that goal. The collaborative project started in July 2012 and involves public administrations, chemical business associations and research institutions from eight European countries. The goal is to test and standardise currently available T&T systems in order to improve them for use in intermodal transport. Future systems are even supposed to be enabled to send a message automatically notifying rescue crews of accidents.

Being one of the project partners, Hoyer has made a tank container available for a pilot transport project. The container is fitted with transponder systems made by five different manufacturers and the transport is carried out for a large chemical client under real-life conditions. The tank left the UK at the beginning of April 2014 and arrived on schedule a few days later at the Hoyer terminal in ValuePark Schkopau (Germany). From there, it was brought to its final destination in Ukraine via Hungary.

The tank's entire route was closely monitored. Among other things, the project partners documented the quality of the GPS information in order to enable the subsequent implementation of technical improvements.

"Transport safety is a core concern of ours," said Hans Demarest, manager Tankpool Management at Hoyer. "As a partner of the project 'ChemLog T&T' we are glad to contribute our know-how and our many years of experience in intermodal traffic. That way we are actively supporting the development of future tracking and tracing technologies."

Tank Management

Norway-based Tank Management AS has had track & trace since 2011. All its tanks are now fitted with T&T and temperature control systems.

Tank Management was founded in 2006 and operates from a modern office close to port facilities in Oslo. The company has grown into a professional transport operator with considerable experience in carrying temperature-sensitive cargo.

Tank Management's fleet comprises over 200 modern units with either one or two compartments. They range from 25,000-33,000 litres.

All Tank Management are fitted with track & trace and temperature control systems

The company says it was the first tank operator with two-way communication for temperature control over the internet. The system allows Tank Management to be notified when temperature changes relative to the set master temperature. As an advanced two-way system it also allows the operator to set and adjust temperatures remotely while en route to the customer allowing for full control of tracking and temperature control during the whole transport chain.

A log-in feature for customers gives them full access to temperature logs and real time information. In addition, customers can search via their customer order number (PO) numbers for temperature logs in the archive. These temperature logs are kept for a minimum of 1.5 years containing tank number and PO, log-time, set point, glycol temperature, product temperature and position.

Reading of glycol temperatures and product temperatures is taken every five minutes when connected to a power source, and every 30 minutes when not.

A built-in alarm system notifies the operator when the product and set point deviates more than required, informing both operators and customers by SMS. Staff can enter the system and control the unit in real-time to ensure the correct temperatures are held during transport and storage. Alarm system is also in place for critical battery and glycol levels.

A Hoyer tank was fitted with transponders and a shipment carried out for a large chemical client

Tracking showcase in Shenzhen

CIMC Intelligent Technology Company, a subsidiary of the world's largest container builder China International Marine Container Company, is creating a tracking and monitoring showcase at Shenzhen ports in southern China.

CIMC Asian Tracking, Monitoring, Remote Management and Trade Data Sharing Showcase is being constructed in collaboration with Globe Tracker International, ApS, a specialist in global 'end-to-end' supply chain visibility systems.

The relationship combines the breadth and scale of CIMC and the advanced technologies of CIMC Intelligent Technology Company and Globe Tracker International.

CIMC and Globe Tracker are working together to integrate the latter's tracking and communications device, the GT Communications Unit, into ISO containers, trucks, truck trailers, railway cars and in the terminals at Shenzhen port. The project began mid-April and was due to be completed by end of May. The Asian Showcase demonstrates the functionality and benefits of Globe Tracker's and the CIMC Intelligent Technology Company's combined technologies, the two companies claimed. "We are pleased to be working with Globe Tracker to demonstrate this exciting technology for the Asian marketplace," said Dr Shouqin Zhou, of CIMC Intelligent Technology.

"This project fully endorses GT's solution as the world's leading tracking technology and begins a new era in asset management and monitoring for containers, trucks and railway cars and their touch points globally. Our Asian Showcase demonstrates significant increases in efficiency and utilisation for all assets across all intermodal sectors," added Jim Davis, CEO of Globe Tracker International.

CIMC Intelligent Technology Company has been focused on the intelligent study of containers since it was established, and is expanding its remit from containers to all logistics equipment. By combining traditional equipment with intelligent technologies, CIMC Intelligent Technology says it is developing intelligent system solutions for new generation transport units.

M&R functionality convinces TWS to take RAM

Germany-based TWS Tankcontainer-Leasing GmbH has been prominent in the tank leasing sector for more than 25 years. Its fleet has been growing at a rate of over 500 units a year in recent times and the company now has over 6,000 tanks for hire.

The lessor provides state of the art equipment to transport chemical and food products, and, if required, it can provide tank containers fitted with electrical heating systems for temperature-controlled cargoes and agitators for food products. The range is comprehensive and includes phosphorus, top only, top bottom, super insulated, bitumen and reefer tanks, along with swap bodies and spill troughs.

Following this growth, the management team at TWS, based in Camin, conducted a review of its custom-built IT systems and flagged up some key areas for improvement and modernisation. There was a requirement to create documents automatically, improve financial history, enhance data integrity and centralise all processes into one core system.

"Our leasing administration and depot stock control were managed in two different IT systems," explained Andreas Herbertz, financial manager at TWS. "Although both worked well, we wanted to streamline our processes, reduce the requirement for manual data input and increase automation."

After this review, TWS, which is headquartered in Camin, opted for RAM Intermodal's Rental4000 tank leasing software. "RAM Intermodal was the obvious choice for us due to its reputation in the tank sector," continued Herbertz. "Following meetings both at the Intermodal event in Hamburg and at our head offices, it became clear that Rental4000 was the ideal specialist solution to help us with our growth strategy. We were impressed with the functionality and noted many ways that it would help us to reduce costs. The automatic generation of documents would cut administration time significantly and the fast analysis of financial data would enable us to work smarter. Additionally, we could use the time saved by eliminating the manual updates of depot stock to optimise equipment utilisation.

The control of maintenance and repair (M&R) is of major importance to TWS as it prides itself on the excellent quality and safety of its fleet. With complex fittings to control temperature, provide insulation and to stop the slashing of liquids, tanks are more likely to spend lengthier spells of time in M&R as opposed to such equipment as dry boxes. Every day spent in the depot results in a potential loss of revenue.

"A major advantage for us will be the visibility over the status of the fleet and the ability to improve both the testing and M&R processes," declared Herbertz. "The Repair4000 module analyses the turn time of units so that we can see which are being delayed and for what types of repairs. It also highlights which depots are turning round equipment most efficiently and which are performing badly. Regular reviews of this information will help us to make decisions that will have a very positive impact on profitability."

TWS will also use the functionality in the Rental4000 and Repair4000 modules to improve and simplify the complex process of test scheduling. Reports are available to flag all units due for tests and future tests can be predicted and scheduled to coincide with when units are in depot for M&R.

"This is a massive advantage for us," explained Herbertz. "Meeting test due dates is crucial for our business and the new system will take the headache out of the whole process, improving efficiency and dramatically reducing costs. It will also minimise the time tanks are out of service, increasing utilisation and boosting profits."

TWS is the latest in a series of business wins in the tank leasing sector. Other customers include Taylor Minster Leasing, Peacock Container, Tankspan Leasing, Cargostore International, Modalis SAS, Multistar Leasing, Combipass and Unitas Services.

"It's great news to gain another tank leasing customer that is experiencing such positive growth," concluded Nicola Byers, RAM Intermodal's marketing manager. "It confirms our position as the specialist IT provider to the tank container sector and with over 1 million man hours invested in the software, both tank lessors and operators are selecting RAM Intermodal as their preferred solution."

Composite tank

Russian Maritime Register of Shipping (RS) in co-operation with OAO Uralcryomash is participating in a project to develop a tank container made from composite materials.

Announced by RS during the TransRussia exhibition in Moscow, the project is part of a state programme of developing the composite materials production industry.

The plan is to design and manufacture a container from polymer composites which would be resistant to aggressive substances, chemicals and petrochemical products and would also comply with international standards for combined transport.

Among the intended advantages of the new tank containers is a 20 percent reduction in barrel weight compared with steel containers. The expected life of the container would be some 15 years depending on the type of cargoes carried.

Den Hartogh calls in the Samurai

In its on-going aim to improve its safety performance, Den Hartogh Logistics, together with safety specialist organisation Samurai@Work, has developed and launched a global multi-year safety culture programme.

The programme, which is called The Power of Safe, is "unique and innovative", claims Den Hartogh. It is based on the use of the physiological structure of the human brain as the basis for safety culture development.

The Power of Safe programme was first launched at sessions where all senior managers of Den Hartogh branch offices from 18 countries around the globe where gathered.

Pieter den Hartogh, group managing director, said: "It is the responsibility of everyone at Den Hartogh Logistics that we all return home safe after a day of work. Excellent safety performance cannot be reached only through systems, rules and procedures or safety equipment. Working safe is as much dependent on our behaviour and for that reason we need to be aware of our behaviour and understand our actions."

Den Hartogh Logistics has appointed the safety specialists of Samurai@work to manage and guide the programme. Samurai@work was choosen for its pragmetic and innovative approach and its strong resume of booked results. The consultant has already worked for companies, such as Vopak, Fluxys and Evonik.

EbroTank assets rolled into new outfit

Spanish tank manufacturer EbroTank has definitively closed its doors. However, all technology, machinery, customer base and order book, have been purchased by a new company Multitank, SL, which will continue the same activities as EbroTank, also with the former company's personnel.

Multitank itself is now part of Eurocontainer Group, another Spanish company that manufactures various kinds of special container, such as bitumen boxes, 45ft flatracks and open tops. However, the group did not until now have ISO tanks in its portfolio and so acquiring the assets of the former EbroTank, through Multitank, is seen as good fit for Eurocontainer.

EbroTank's owner and managing director Jon Echegaray is the new managing director of Mutlitank, SL, which is based on a new, larger site, but still in EbroTank home city of Zaragoza.

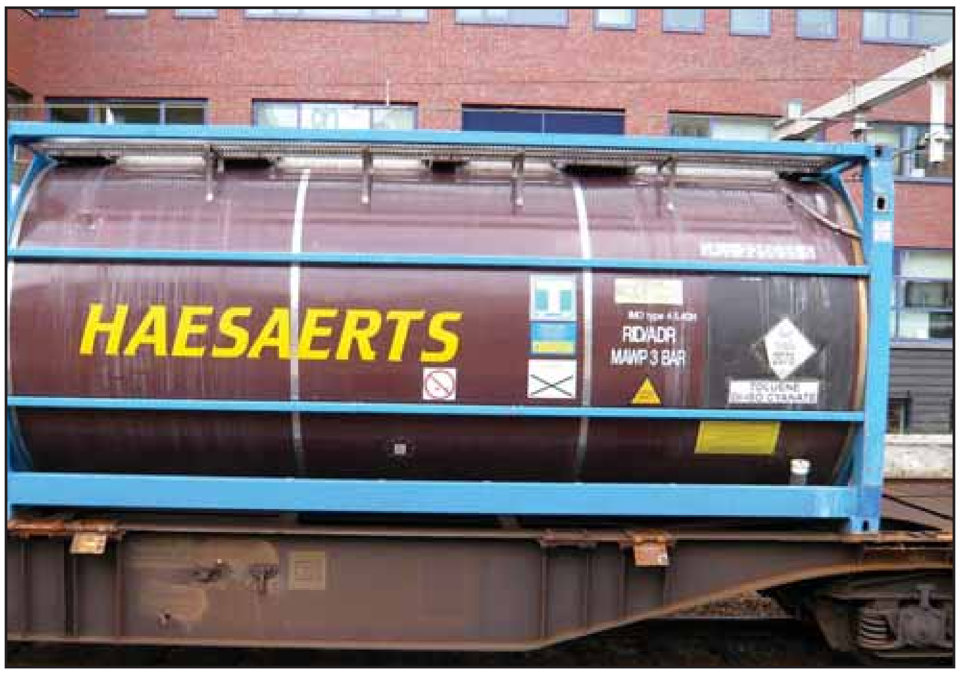
EbroTank filed for temporary insolvency under Spanish law in early 2012. At the time the company said the move was a preventive measure to give it sufficient breathing space in order to rebuild its liquidity. Such a filing under Spanish law is similar to America's Chapter 11. The company was hit particularly hard following the onset of the financial crisis, largely due to a drastic fall in demand in its home market of Spain.

Branding for the ME market

Belgium-based tank operator Haesaerts Intermodal has launched a new brand Haesaerts Intermodal Middle East.

"Recent developments and investments in chemicals production in the Middle East is a challenging opportunity. Haesaerts Middle East is co-operating with local agents and we believe to have solid partners with whom we can achieve a sustainable supply chain for the chemical industry," explained CEO Luc Haesaerts.

Working with partners and customers in the region Haesaerts sees significant potential for transporting of liquid chemicals in tank containers from the Middle East to Europe, CIS, Turkey and vice versa.



Eurotainer, Solvay battle with the wind

Eurotainer and Solvay Special Chemicals have joined forces for a pilot project that aims to reduce the carbon footprint in the chemical company's tank container logistics.

Due to adverse wind turbulences that result from the design of trucks carrying tank containers, transporting the units over the road can result in relatively high fuel consumption.

So, Solvay's operation in Hannover has been working with Eurotainer to design and manufacture a prototype air deflection system (pictured) that fits all container sizes and is attached to the front of the container. The design is currently undergoing testing for its effect on the environmental impact of road movements.

The two companies says the first results reveal a definite improvement in terms of fuel consumption and are promising as to further progress towards more sustainable supply chain operations.

Japanese JV for LNG tanks

Two Japanese companies plan to enter the North American market for LNG tank containers.

Hitachi High-Technologies Corporation and Air Water Plant & Engineering, a subsidiary of Air Water Inc, the biggest LNG tank lorry operator in Japan, have formed a joint venture to operate a manufacturing and sales business in North America for the tanks.

The JV is dubbed Hitachi High-Tech AW Cryo, Inc (HTAW).

The North American natural gas market has seen prices driven down by a massive increase in production volume triggered by the shale gas revolution. This in turn has stimulated growth in demand, not only for large volume demand at large-scale power stations and other facilities, but also small- and medium- volume demand.

As a result, natural gas is expected to find various applications, such as in small-scale power plants and LNG-powered locomotives. In line with this, the two companies see a growing need for small- and medium-volume natural gas transport by road and rail, rather than the conventional large-volume transport in pipelines.

HTAW will conduct a manufacture and sales operation for the LNG transport tank containers and related products, which the partners say offer high transport efficiency, to operate safe, efficient transport of small to medium volumes of natural gas.

Specifically, HTAW will use Hitachi High-Tech's sales expertise and network in the North American market to market the containers that use AWP's cryogenic thermal insulation technologies which are claimed to offer better performance against shock and vibration. HTAW will focus its operations mainly on regional energy supply companies and major logistics companies in the US and Canada, targeting net sales of 12 billion yen in fiscal 2020.

VTG shows with growth in core business

VTG showed a mixed picture in its business divisions in the first quarter. While revenue and operative profit (EBITDA) of the railcar division continue to contribute to the positive development of the company, rail logistics has been troubled by the Crimean crisis and the mild winter.

Group revenue remained almost constant at €199.6 million compared with the first quarter of 2013 (previous year: €202.1 million). Furthermore, at €44 million EBITDA was just slightly below the previous year's value of €45 million.

Revenue in tank container logistics division amounted to €37.2 million in the first three months of the new financial year. This was 6 percent lower than the previous year's €39.5 million. EBITDA decreased by 16.7 percent to €2.4 million compared to the previous year (€2.9 million). The EBITDA margin related to gross profit went down to 41.8 percent (previous year: 44.4 percent). The decrease in revenue compared with the first quarter of 2013 was mainly due to the decline in shipments in North America and Asia.

Overall, the first quarter of 2014 showed a brightened economic outlook after three quarters of falling revenue and earnings figures. In the first quarter of 2014, we have seen an increase in revenue and EBITDA compared to the previous quarter. Revenue increased by 9 percent compared with the previous quarter and the EBITDA has actually risen by more than two thirds.

"Our railcar division has started the year very successfully and is showing definite growth. We are also looking forward to an upward trend in the tank container logistics division," said Dr Heiko Fischer,

CEO of VTG. "Unfortunately, the political tensions in Russia and the Ukraine have hindered the current development of rail logistics. We are however confident that this situation will improve throughout the course of the year."

Revenue of the railcar division rose by 3 percent to €85.4 million (previous year: €83 million). Furthermore, EBITDA also developed positively and increased by 1.9 percent from €43.5 million to €44.4 million. EBITDA margin was at 51.9 percent just slightly under the previous year's value of 52.5 percent.

This positive development was essentially due to the delivery of many new build wagons for the steel and agricultural industries. In addition, the Russian fleet was further strengthened by the delivery of 100 cement wagons built in the Ukraine. As of 31 March the VTG fleet consisted of 52,900 wagons which signified a slight increase in comparison with the end of 2013 (52,700 wagons). Capacity utilisation was 90.1 percent in the first quarter (Q1/2013: 89.9 percent) which represents another increase from the previous quarter (Q4/2013: 89.8 percent).

In the first quarter, rail logistics achieved revenue of €77 million and was therefore 3.3 percent under the previous year (€79.6 million). EBITDA fell by 92.3 percent to €0.1 million (previous year: €1.7 million). EBITDA margin related to gross profit went down by 2 percent from last year's 28 percent.

Call in the specialists

In container manufacturing there are many designs labelled as 'special', but in recent years the ISO tank world has seen growing demand for 'highly specialised' units, including pressure tanks, for example. But there have also been new designs that under the specification of UN portable tanks.

Much of this development is being driven by the global offshore oil & gas industry, where relatively small consignments of hazardous and non-hazardous liquids need to be shipped to drilling platforms.

Ireland-based Suretank says it is a world leader in supplying this sort of specialised equipment. Most recently it has developed a new range of low profile tanks for the transport of oilfield chemicals and fuels. The multi-cargo Suretank Fluid: Low Profile Tank range comes in response to recent industry trends for increased safety awareness when working at heights and following close discussions with key customers.

Suretank's new low profile tank

The new design is said to optimise tank capacity within the offshore frame, while keeping the height below the international threshold for working at heights of 1.8m. The design includes several new features, including a "unique" top and bottom design which provides full drainage, a fully removable vessel for maintenance and a new stacking arrangement which is compliant with the latest industry requirements, including DNV 2.7-1, 2013).

Donal Duggan, Suretank's group research and development manager, explained: "We've spent time researching similar products in the market and have worked closely with our customers to understand the design features that are important to them in this type of product.

"Suretank is a pioneer in the design and manufacture of offshore chemical tanks and our Low Profile range is part of our ongoing continuous improvement programme and commitment to providing customers with world class engineered solutions for the offshore oil & gas industry."

The new design is easy to clean and allows clear access and visibility to all valves and fittings. The foot-print is ideal for shipping in a standard 40ft container, with 4-way fork pockets available depending on customer preference.

Other options available include CE approval to PED 97/23/EC, Suretank level gauge, T4/T7/T11/T14 rating and chemical/helifuel/acid designs.

In May, Suretank announced the official launch of Suretank Latin America, based in Caxias do Sul, Rio Grande do Sul State, in southern Brazil.

The new business will house design, engineering, quality, manufacturing and sales & marketing expertise.

Commenting on the announcement, John Fitzgerald, Suretank CEO, said: "The offshore market in Brazil continues to grow and expand with strong offshore activity predicted for the coming years. This new development positions us to gear up for the market's projected increase in demand for DNV accredited equipment. The Suretank philosophy is to deliver best in class customer solutions with a focus on safety from locally situated facilities. This venture allows us to provide exactly that to our customers in Brazil and Latin America."

Suretank has been active in Brazil for the past 24 months, designing and manufacturing offshore equipment for major international oil service and rental companies through a sub-contract agreement with an experienced Brazilian partner. This latest move sees Suretank take a majority ownership position in a newly formed business entity with its Brazilian partners.

The new venture will see the transfer of 70 existing employees into the new business. However, Suretank Latin America will continue to operate its Rio de Janeiro based sales and marketing office.

The group also recently secured its first major US order since launching its new manufacturing facility in Houma, Louisiana in March.

The $4 million order from Hoover Container Solutions Inc, based in Houston, comprises chemical transport tanks and containers for the safe transfer of chemicals and equipment for oil drilling to offshore deepwater rigs.

Continued on page 10

A $4 million order from Hoover Container Solutions means Suretank will supply chemical transport tanks and containers for the safe transfer of chemicals and equipment for oil drilling to offshore deepwater rigs. Pictured l-r: Paul Lewis, CEO Hoover Container Solutions; Patrick Joy, chairman Suretank; John Fitzgerald, CEO Suretank; Richard Bruton TD Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, and Julie Sinnamon CEO Enterprise Ireland

Hoover's mud skip/cutting box is designed for safe handling of hydrocarbon contaminated drill cuttings

Hoovering up

Given its base in America's oil capital it is no surprising that Hoover Container Solutions also sees potential in this sector.

In March, Hoover acquired Container Company Ltd, another supplier of cargo carrying units (CCUs) for the offshore oil and gas industry. The acquisition complements Hoover's recent acquisitions of Consult Supply AS and Dolphin Energy Equipment making Hoover now one of the largest worldwide suppliers of CCUs.

Headquartered in Aberdeen, Scotland, Container Company designs, supplies and services a full range of standard and custom-built CCUs including chemical tanks, baskets, skips, workshops, mini, half height, closed top and freezer containers.

Container Company maintains a wide range of CCU sizes with a large, readily-available inventory to meet customers' requirements while offering a full repair, maintenance and certification programme. Container Company conducts final product inspections through its in-house test engineers to ensure all units exceed required safety and industry standards including BS7072, BS EN 12079 and DNV 2.7-1.

"This acquisition enables us to serve better our global customers with expanded facilities, products and services," said Donald Young, Hoover's chairman and chief executive officer. "Hoover now has a meaningful footprint in substantially all major offshore energy hubs around the world including Houston; Scott, New Iberia and Port Fourchon, La; Aberdeen, Scotland; Stavanger, Norway; Abu Dhabi, UAE; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Perth and Melbourne, Australia; and Macae, Brazil. As we continue our international growth plan, it is imperative that we continue to provide quality products, services and solutions to our worldwide customers, and Container Company's presence and reputation in the Aberdeen market will be a key asset in this expansion programme."

Andy Drummond, Container Company's managing director, added: "We believe becoming part of Hoover Group presents Container Company with a great opportunity to work alongside a successful, worldwide organisation. This will enable us to provide our clients with a larger product range globally and assist them with products which we previously were unable to supply. The investment that Hoover brings to Container Company enables us to grow the business significantly for the future."

Hoover has added a new DOT/DNV certified mud skip/cutting box to its offshore product line. The mud skip/cutting box is designed for the transport and safe handling of hydrocarbon contaminated drill cuttings to and from offshore platforms.

The units have patented sliding doors and a removable crank handle, and the units provide a safe and efficient means for containment of drilling waste for transporting to treatment or disposal sites.

The units are designed and manufactured to DNV 2.7-1 / EN 12079 / DOT 49CFR176.340 standards and have certified slings complete with shackles in accordance with DNV 2.7-1 / EN 12079 standards. The design of its patented roll back lid prevents the need for individuals to climb on the units, eliminating the risk of accidents. It is equipped with 2ins, 4ins ports available for vacuum services and a pressure relief valve.

The Hoover DOT/DNV certified mud skip/cutting box stands at 111ins by 72.6ins by 64.2ins.

For lessors too

Naturally, if tank manufacturers see a market for highly specialised units in the oil & gas market, lessors can also benefit. In April this year Exsif Worldwide acquired OCS Limited, a tank rental and chemical supply company also based in Aberdeen.

OCS operates in the offshore sector, serving clients in the North Sea, and Exsif said the transaction fits its strategy of providing specialised intermodal equipment and solutions to a variety of industries.

"The acquisition of OCS furthers our overall commitment to the offshore industry," said Exsif president Jeremy Bergbaum. "We will align our expertise and leadership in the tank container industry with OCS's knowledge of the highly-specialised oil & gas offshore market. The addition of the OCS business will allow us to provide a full complement of intermodal equipment and services in the North Sea and beyond."

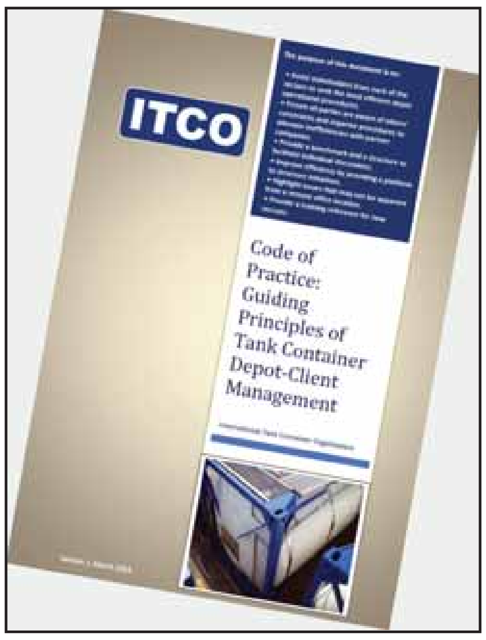
OCS managing director Karen Prise will continue with the business.

Meanwhile, Taylor Minster Leasing (TML) says it has been investigating for some time SBCs (small bulk containers) and their application.

In March TML and its French collaborative partner Socomat attended an inauguration ceremony at the NT Tank factory in Nantong China where the first batch of T14 SBCs were handed over.

The SBCs are available in a range of pressure ratings for the smaller volume transport of foodstuff and chemicals as well as liquefied gases. Fred Bras, CEO of TML, commented: "Within the past two years, TML has augmented its impressively diversified fleet with 40ft T75 LNG and 20ft T75 CO2 tanks, this latter now also being offered with a capacity of 22,000 litres against the norm of 19,500–20,000 litres. With regard to SBCs, TML intends to build a significant presence in this most interesting field that adds yet another string to its core business."

Guidelines for improved depot efficiency



ITCO has now published its 'Code of Practice: Guiding Principles of Tank Container Depot-Client Management'

ITCO, the International Tank Container Organisation, published in March the 'Code of Practice: Guiding Principles of Tank Container Depot-Client Management'. It is the first time that a multi-discipline expert group of ITCO members has formulated and formally published these comprehensive and practical guidelines.

The subject has been voiced frequently but because of the sensitivity of depot-client relationships not voiced formally or too loudly. The subject was, however, addressed in the ITCO work group and pursued as a result of the strong interest from members who wanted to dig into the depot management processes, provide more transparency, identify challenges and best practice solutions. They developed a document that can serve as basis for further discussion and eventually derives into some standards in the depot-client management.

The ITCO work group believes that the Code of Practice can result in smoother processes and improved depot-client relationships as well as better cost control and therefore increased competitiveness.

This article summarises some of the most important aspects of depot-client management, covering the underlying principles of Corporate Responsibility, booking-in the tank container, having it in the depot, and booking-out the tank container.

The business background

The tank container industry is a highly competitive, low margin business that is competing with multiple modes of transport, such as drums, IBCs, flexitanks, road and rail tanks that are similarly competitive. In such an environment costs need to be controlled.

Depot repairs and maintenance are significant cost factors in the tank container transport process. On the one hand, depot capacity is growing, controlled IT systems are being installed and health and safety regulations are becoming more rigid, along with formal quality processes. On the other hand, depots are also being asked by clients (such as tank container operators, lessors, shippers and surveyors; all with their own objectives) to handle non-standard requirements, that can be challenging and therefore might result in significant effort, workload, costs and therefore less efficiency.

Between these two poles, a fragmented approach towards the depot management processes has developed over the past, whereby in particular tank container operators and leasing companies have differing requirements - that in many cases depots are finding increasingly difficult to service economically.

Underlying principles and processes

First of all it is of significant importance to understand all processes followed in the depots in all detail. Therefore the 'Code of Practice' explains in a comprehensive, but easy-to-understand, way the processes and procedures in depots as well as the multiple requirements that are addressed in the depots. A joint understanding of all those details is the basis for further discussion towards standardized procedures in the depot-client management.

The starting point for this is the common understanding in the industry to comply with crucial aspects of corporate responsibility, such as being ethical/legally responsible (eg, following a code of business ethics and conduct as well as anti-trust compliance), being environmentally and locally responsible (eg, taking care of safety, health, environment, and quality) and recognising that training is key.

Companies have to make sure that employees get good guidance and clarity when it comes to the complex regulations in those areas. In particular workplace/depot safety is an issue that is not only critical to depot employees, but is also important for contractors, clients, visitors and the public. Also meeting environmental requirements (such as ISO 14000 Environmental Management) is in depot management not only up to the depot, but requires depots and clients assisting each other to meet the requirements of their environmental policy.

Those underlying principles are an absolute must in all steps of the depot management: from the booking-in (the delivery of the tank container into the depot), during the time in the depot (repair specification, gantry or handrails fitted to the tank container, quality assurance, replacement of parts, inspection, and storage), to the booking-out (transition of tank container from one party to the other).

Looking into booking-in, the key to an efficient operation and a smooth transition of the container from one party to the other is to provide all required information in good time and in the agreed format. Lack of information delays the booking-in process and can quickly develop into a backlog. This requires in particular:

- Efficient depot planning requires advance information
- Efficient operation requires documentation and instructions in place
- Peak depot activity times should be avoided where possible when arranging trucking in order to enable a smooth transition into depot

When reporting the tank container into the depot information, such as dates/deadlines, purpose of reporting-in, condition and status, last cargo, cleaning requirements or status, tank type and special client requests, etc, are required. In particular the information about the last cargo is crucial to a safe and efficient process. The truck driver should be properly informed of the last cargo. Without this information no action should take place.

While each client might have different requirements for the tank container, there are standard requirements, in the area of cleaning, inspection/estimate, storage, reporting, that should be specified in advance. In particular package agreements that cover remedial works and the automatic authorisation of necessary repair work up to an agreed limit increase the efficiency of the depot processes.

In-depot processes

Looking into the processes when the tank container is in the depot it is important that the quality of repairs has been specified as part of the depot agreement. It is recommended to reinstate the damage to "as new" and to verify the quality by the depot Quality Assurance (QA) system. Accordingly spare parts used in the course of the repair should be fitted "like for like". This means using materials of the same specification, grade and thickness. If repair standards are differing from client to client repair work might become inefficient and more difficult to control.

In order to work at the tank container, a suitable gantry should be provided or alternatively - and generally as a last resort - the container might be fitted with a temporary handrail.

In addition procedures and agreements should be in place for the renovation and inspection, storing and re-use of client owned spare parts.

In case of periodic and intermediate inspection of the tank container, planning ahead enables an efficient tank test programme to be in place. This includes for the client to maintain a record of the last and next test for each tank and arranging the test in good time prior to the expiry. Depots should ensure the tank is repaired and fit for test prior to the appointed surveyors visit. This should ensure an efficient test, eliminating the cost of a failed test and necessitating a return visit by the surveyor.

Storage space is a major capital cost to the depot, both in the cost of land, construction of the surface and security fencing.

Continued on page 12

Space is scarce in a depot so clients have to understand that a tank can't just be taken out of the stack at any time

Procedures are required such as block stacking of tanks, to ensure efficient use of the space. Clients therefore, for example, have to keep in mind that a tank container can't be taken out of the stack at any time. Clients should provide ample notice of requirements.

Booking-out

Just like with the booking-in process also for booking-out the tank container, the key to an efficient operation and smooth transition of the container is for all parties to provide all required information in good time and in the agreed format. This includes:

- Efficient depot planning requires advance information
- Efficient operation requires documentation and instructions in place
- Depots should inform clients of any delays
- Clients should try to avoid, where possible, arranging trucking schedules for pick up during depot peak activity periods
- Weather conditions is a major factor, clients consideration of inclement conditions is appreciated

Also in this phase of depot management, standard procedures enable the depot to plan in advance, allocate resources, and therefore work efficiently. Special requirements should be provided by the client in good times. Booking out instructions include the release reference and trucking company, tank serial number and tank type, cleaning certificate type, as well as any special requirements, survey requirements and pre-trip inspection requirements. Truck drivers, picking up the tank container, should carry release reference and supporting documentation, and safety equipment and safety documents. They should be trained and qualified according to applicable industry requirements to transport bulk liquids.

The way forward

In summary it can be said that the standardisation of multiple steps and elements of depot management would increase the efficiency of depots substantially by enabling smoother processes as well as better cost control. Therefore the 'Code of Practice for Depot-Client Management' recommends proven best practice procedures that could eventually become standards. Early planning, transparent information and communication processes, consistent and clear instructions and contracts as well as pre-agreements on possible irregularities, such as unexpected small repairs covered in repair-package deals, and an agreement on important standard clients' requirements to be fulfilled, are among the elements recommended in the guidelines.

*The 'Code of Practice: Guiding Principles of Tank Container Depot-Client Management' can be downloaded from the ITCO webpage under **http://itco.be/download/CodePractice-GuidingPrinciplesDepot-ClientManagement-v1-March14.pdf**. It includes detailed appendices, such as the 'Anti-Trust Compliance do's and don'ts', good examples of cleaning documents, booking-in and booking-out formats as well as an example of a typical risk assessment. Feedback and discussion are welcome. ITCO seeks to develop the guidelines in line with the feedback received.

EFTCO unveils food assessment reports

EFTCO has developed a Food Assessment for food tank cleaning stations which is added to the already existing SQAS Tank Cleaning.

The first assessments have already been completed and several others are in the pipeline. The assessment reports are published in the secure part of the EFTCO website (**www.eftco.org**) where they can be consulted by registered users after requesting the tank cleaning station access to their report. The system is fully comparable with the SQAS system which has existed for many years.

Users can make, save and use templates for the questionnaire on-line to judge more easily if the questions they find important are implemented by the tank cleaning station they want to use.

Each company interested in this tool can request an account on the EFTCO website and will receive a username and a password.

"EFTCO has made contact with major food companies to promote the Food Assessment because we are convinced this is a win/win situation for food companies, logistics service providers and tank cleaning stations," commented Erwig Seliaerts, chairman of EFTCO.

To get the confidence of the food sector for the system, EFTCO realised that the quality of the assessors was of utmost importance. And although food assessments can only be done by SQAS-accredited assessors, EFTCO found it necessary to develop an additional food training to make sure each assessor has knowledge of all important food requirements and legislations.

"We are proud we can announce that this initial training is ready and the first sessions have been organised (with others in) September of this year. EFTCO will further invest in the training by developing follow-up course which most probably will be done by e-learning," added Seliaerts.

EFTCO attached so much importance to these initial training sessions that it was decided to support them by making sufficient money available to organise the first training days free of charge for the assessors.

(See p15 **A Quick Word With… Erwig Seliaerts**)

Quala offers waste water treatment

Quala has added commercial waste water treatment and disposal as a new business division at many of its locations.

"Adding commercial waste water treatment and disposal is a strategic move for us as we continue to add and diversify our lines of business," said Mike Bauer, CEO of Quala. "Adding this service at many of our locations will help us maximise our value at both existing and prospective customers to satisfy our growing customer bases' expanding market needs. The company has experienced significant growth since 2009 and I expect to see that pattern continue. This new service will be well positioned to create value for our customers and stakeholders."

The waste water management programme encompasses a range of efforts that promote effective and responsible wastewater treatment and disposal, as well as encouraging the protection and restoration of watersheds. All waste water generated from an internal or external cleaning operation is pre-treated and discharged in accordance with the US Clean Water Act and in full compliance with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and local publicly owned treatment works. Additionally, any waste water collected or transported off-site is done so in full compliance with applicable regulations.

Quala currently offers commercial waste water treatment and disposal at its sites in Atlanta, GA; Baton Rouge, LA; Parker, PA; and Vancouver, WA. The company plans to open further commercial treatment and disposal locations in Charlotte, NC; Houston, TX; Neenah, WI; Saraland, AL; and Shreveport, LA.

"This is an exciting time for Quala," said president Terry O'Brien. "The addition of commercial waste water treatment and disposal at many of our locations nationwide allows us to continue to expand our service offerings to our customers while still maintaining our focus on safety, environmental stewardship and quality service. This addition offers our existing customers enhanced service capabilities at the most robust facility network in the industry."

Kerry opens in Tianjin

Further details have been released of the new Kerry-ITS depot in the Chinese port city of Tianjin, on which Bulk Distributor reported in the March/April issue.

Kerry-ITS Terminal (Tianjin) Co, Ltd is the group's 6th ISO tank depot and is located 10km from Tianjin port.

The depot has eight cleaning bays with capabilities including in-service repair (minor & major), off-hire repair, interior polishing/grinding/infill and reweld, structural repair, modification, refurbishment and steam heating.

The cleaning and treatment system comprises fully automated cleaning and bio-reactor waste treatment with touch-screen PLC for proper cleaning water residue disposal. Waste settlement is put into a filter press and the cake sludge is sent for incineration.

Lifting equipment comprises one 3-high single-lift empty stacker and one 3-ton forklift for IBCs. The depot covers an area of 10,000 sqm, with storage capacity for 400 TEU.

Miller adds tank cleaning

US-based Miller Transportation Services Inc, of Jackson, MS, is increasing its commercial tank cleaning capabilities with recent acquisitions in Richmond, VA.

Jackson has bought three companies - Commercial Power Cleaning, Tank Trailer Leasing, and Total Cleaning Power - all of which were started by Jerry and Pat Baltes, who owned and operated them for more than 30 years.

Commercial Power Cleaning specialises in the exterior cleaning of trucks and trailers. Tank Trailer Leasing has a fleet of stainless steel insulated DOT407 trailers that are available for short and long-term lease. Total Cleaning Power is an internal tank cleaning company, serving the bulk tank truck industry.

The new businesses will be operated under the Miller Total Clean banner in the current location in south Richmond. The manager is Scott Vestal, with eight years' experience in the bulk industry.

"The businesses will be operated separately from the other Miller-related holdings but they will each reflect the same attention to detail and quality that is expected of all Miller companies," said Lee Miller, president of Miller Transportation Services. "This acquisition is consistent with Miller's goal of increasing its non-driver revenue growth while providing excellent service to the transport industry."

A quick word with...

Erwig Seliaerts, EFTCO

Erwig Seliaerts, Chairman, EFTCO

Mr Seliaerts, please tell us about the new food assessment tool for food tank cleaning stations.

It is a standard that is based on the existing tank cleaning SQAS (Safety Quality Assessment System) questionnaire, but is tailored specifically for the assessment of the quality of food tank cleaning stations.

Why is it needed and who will use it?

The incentive for this EFTCO initiative was triggered by the increasing number of audits undertaken by food companies of tank cleaning stations. The food sector became aware that almost everything in the transport chain was controlled, except the important step of the tank cleaning before loading. A standard for this process did not exist, so we felt it crucial to develop one.

Our members saw the same trend in the past in the chemical industry, where companies conducted their own audits to approve tank cleaning stations before loading chemicals. We perceived that they gained confidence in Cefic's tank cleaning SQAS (Safety Quality Assessment System) by eventually accepting these assessment reports and stopping their own audits. I do not need to tell you that this saved them and the tank cleaning stations a lot of time and money.

This is exactly what we hope to achieve with our food assessment: we want it to be cost-effective, continuously improved, and performed by independent and capable assessors. Needless to say confidence amongst food companies can only be achieved when the credibility of the assessors is undisputable. We therefore decided it was important to use existing SQAS accredited assessors. Training of these assessors in food standards is currently underway.

How does it compare with the SQAS system?

The SQAS core and tank cleaning questionnaire is an integral component of the new EFTCO food assessment, and we are very grateful to cefic for allowing us to use it.

EFTCO has tailored cefic's SQAS by using a workgroup of food cleaning specialists to develop questions that are very specific to the cleaning of food tanks. We estimate that the extra assessment time required will be around half a day in comparison to the time required to complete a standard SQAS.

Just like in SQAS, assessors will use a 1 or 0 to indicate if an item has or has not been implemented, respectively. The assessor can also add comments or upload an improvement plan if desired.

What are the key features and benefits of the assessment?

This is the first standard of its kind. We felt that an assessment for food tank cleaners was needed so the obvious benefit is – there's now one out there. In addition, EFTCO represents 468 tank cleaning stations throughout Europe, so we hope it should be fairly easy to roll it out.

When this assessment is widely accepted by the food industry, we believe it will create a win/win situation for the tank cleaners, food industry and logistic service providers. EFTCO has started the ball rolling and is now liaising with food manufacturers to educate them on the benefits of it.

The food assessment is a very flexible system, integrating the demands of all involved parties. New EFTCO cleaning codes can also be added to cover the information needs on the European Cleaning Document (ECD), so only one document is needed for the documentation of the cleaning process, making it instantly understandable in 18 European languages.

EFTCO has also developed a protected EFTCO food logo, which is reserved for tank cleaning stations that have a valid food assessment. By printing this logo on the ECD, the user can see that the cleaning was undertaken in a station that has met high quality standards. Another advantage is that the same ECD can be used for food as well as for chemical cleanings. The food logo provides a clear differentiation between food and chemical cleanings.

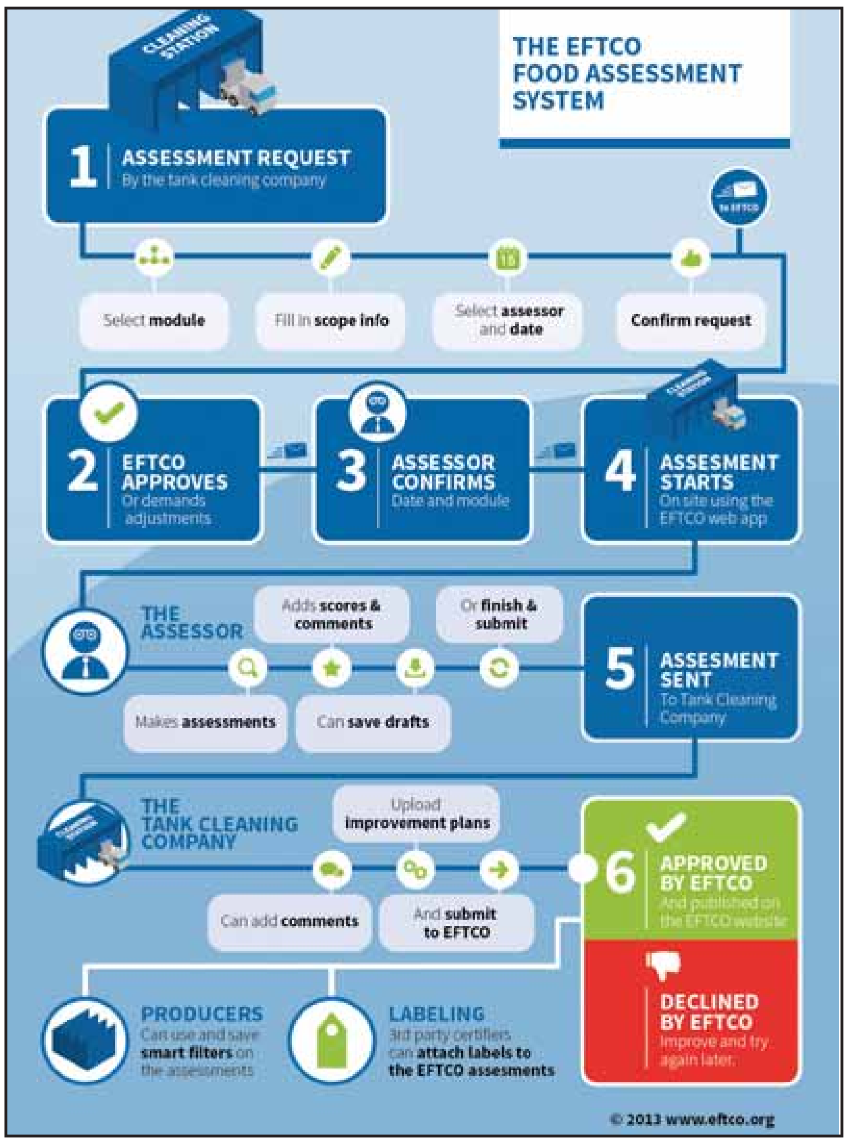
How will the new food assessment be implemented?

With the support of some very talented web developers, EFTCO has launched a new website for users of the food assessment system, which I believe is easily accessible, simple to use, attractive and secure.

The website has publicly accessible and password-protected sections. All member cleaning stations, assessors and users can use the system by requesting a username and password via the website **www.eftco.org** or by emailing **secretary@eftco.org**.

The public section will display a list of SQAS assessed companies or EFTCO food assessed companies. It will also allow interested parties to search for tank cleaning stations by area. The secure areas will host the food assessment reports, which users can request access to and tailor to their needs. This will, however, be carefully controlled by EFTCO.

The EFTCO food assessment process is illustrated in the infographic, and we welcome comments or improvements on the new system so please let us know what you think!



First for Pakistan

Founded in September 2013, Pakistan Terminal Operators (PTO) is claimed to be the first dedicated cleaning station for ISO tank containers in Pakistan.

Based in Port Qasim, Karachi PTO is a joint venture between two companies - E2ESCM & Freight Connection Group - that saw a huge potential for a professionally-run, tailor-made facility dedicated to cleaning, storage, repairs and support services for ISO tanks.

The project was initiated in collaboration with German high-pressure cleaning systems specialist Weidner. The depot is built to serve international tank operators as well as local bulk liquid road tanker operators in both the food and chemicals sector.

The depot area covers 8,000 sqm including wash bay, repair shop, office and storage. Cleaning and treatment is done with a fully automated cleaning system with touch-screen PLC. Waste settlement is put into a septic tank for further incineration by an EPA-certified sludge removal company at its own facility.

Hoover in Louisiana

Hoover Container Solutions recently opened a new distribution and service centre in Scott, LA. The facility will provide an increased ease of operation for Hoover products and services to the Gulf of Mexico and southeastern United States.

The site sits on nine acres and is comprised of 25,000 sq ft of warehouse and 3,000 sq ft of office. Overseen by Robbie Monlezun, Hoover's regional operations manager, the new facility currently employs 11 people but this headcount is expected at least to double within the next six months.

Hoover's new Louisiana facility allows the company to more than double the capacity of its cleaning facilities

Hoover said the site hosts "the most robust, state-of-the-art tank cleaning equipment in the Gulf Coast" and will handle operations such as tank wash, recertification, reconditioning and transport of IBCs, including the capability to perform NAS 6 & 8 cleaning of chemical tanks. In addition to the variety of services offered at this location, Hoover's new Louisiana facility will sell and rent stainless and poly IBCs, offshore chemical tanks, ISO tank containers, offshore baskets, cutting boxes and related products.

"Our new location allows us to more than double the capacity of our previous tank cleaning facilities and significantly increase the available inventory of our products," said Paul Lewis, Hoover's president and chief operating officer. "We value our customer base in Louisiana, and Hoover's expansion is a reflection of our desire to provide a convenient location to better meet their needs."

In October 31, Hoover acquires Tote Systems LLC, Liquid Division, a provider of stainless steel IBCs in the US.

Headquartered in Fairhope, Alabama, with offices in Nashville, TN, and Burleson, TX, Tote Systems' assets include a fleet of 350 and 550 gallon stainless steel IBCs as well as various custom designed stainless steel units.

Hoover said it will continue to provide an extensive product range and customer services to Tote Systems' customers across the region. Customers will now have access to Hoover's full range of products, including standard and customised IBCs, containment basins, stands, transport frames and bottle racks, offshore chemical tanks and ISO tanks, standard and specialised baskets, cutting boxes and waste skips, dry goods containers, slings, trash compactors and food disposal units.

Grundon family grows

Grundon Waste Management has acquired Arundelle, a specialist industrial services and cleaning company for an undisclosed amount.

The move, which took on 1 May, will enable the waste management solutions expert to expand its range of services into key areas such as tank and vessel cleaning, decontamination, site decommissioning, pollution control, scheduled inspection and maintenance, and a hazpack/hazmat spill response service.

Clayton Sullivan-Webb, managing director of Grundon, said he was delighted to welcome Arundelle into the Grundon family. "This acquisition is the culmination of a long-standing relationship between our two companies and I believe it is the beginning of an exciting new growth period for our business.

"The expertise and strength of Arundelle's specialist teams will enable us to widen our offering in industrial cleaning and pursue new opportunities in key sectors, such as hospitals, universities, laboratories and factories."

Arundelle managing director David Green, who will join Grundon in a new role as industrial services manager, added: "We have been a long-time admirer of the Grundon operation and have regularly worked alongside their teams on a variety of decontamination and cleaning projects.

"Joining the Grundon group enables us to take advantage of its extensive capabilities and reputation within the industry. This move will ensure our existing customers receive an even better service and level of support and we look forward to forging new relationships as we move forward together under the Grundon name."

Also making the move from Arundelle's current base in Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK to the nearby Grundon operation at Ewelme, will be its core team of five employees. Founded in 1970, Arundelle's teams handle tank and vessel cleaning, laboratory services, hazardous/toxic environment projects, legionella sterilisation and water treatment services.

Welcome to the family: Grundon technical manager Chris Edwards (left) is pictured with Arundelle's David Green at Grundon's Ewelme Hazardous Waste Transfer Station.

Pentalver at London Gateway

Pentalver has opened a container depot at the UK's newest deepsea terminal DP World London Gateway.

Empty storage, dry repair and reefer services are provided at the facility which was up and running to coincide with the arrival of the latest vessel calls at the terminal.

"We are extremely pleased to be able to offer these services at DP World London Gateway," said Chris Lawrenson, managing director of Pentalver. "This is an example of Pentalver understanding and investing in our customer requirements, and ensuring the services are available when required in the right location. Pentalver is very happy to develop a long-term relationship at the new London Gateway terminal, which will undoubtedly become one of the largest ports operating in the UK."

Peter Ward, commercial director of London Gateway, added: "We are very pleased to see Pentalver here. These services are a critical piece of a port like London Gateway, so it makes clear sense for them to be here."

The new facility complements Pentalver's services at the UK ports of Felixstowe, Southampton and Tilbury; as well as its inland depot at Cannock, near Birmingham.

Greater safety from FV

At ILTA, Fort Vale will be introducing a new safety feature on its 4ins Safeload semi-automatic API bottom loading coupler for road loading terminals.

The body housing now incorporates a rubber 'bumper ring' which affords added security of the interlock by limiting the severity of shock loads transmitted through the body casing while in service. Fort Vale believes that it will also contribute to the durability and longevity of the coupler.

The Safeload with bumper ring has undergone extensive in-house impact testing to ensure that a shock load was absorbed, leaving the interlock engaged and the coupler securely closed. The bumper ring itself is manufactured from a rubber compound. Independent tests confirm that it has a surface resistivity significantly less than the 1 G Ohm required by IEC 60079-0:2011 clause 7.4.2.

"Fort Vale works closely with leading tank farms and we believe that our Safeload coupler offers the terminals simple but effective design benefits, such as connection-improving extended triggers that also reduce wear on the adaptor, splined handles in place of handle pins and compression springs instead of wavy springs that are susceptible to breaking. Our coupler not only improves safety but gives time back to terminal maintenance staff in the form of equipment requiring minimal maintenance input. On top of that, this latest innovation comes at no extra cost to the customer," explained Jack Muellner, director of sales for USA.

The UK-based manufacturer says it is enjoying a growing share of the US market, currently supplying the Safeload coupler for a variety of fuel applications in Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, California, Texas and New Mexico. The company is also delighted to have recently won business from fuel giant Phillips 66 and, based on current figures, sales of the Safeload in 2014 are already up 200 percent on last year.

www.fortvale.com

Fort Vale's 4ins Safeload API coupler with 'bumper ring'

Mouvex upgrades compressor range

Mouvex has launched its E140 and E170 models of its Enterprise Series Vane Compressors. Specifically designed to increase the range of flow rates currently being offered by Mouvex Enterprise Series compressors, the E140 and E170 models also incorporate a variety of upgrades that are claimed to make them ideal for a variety of high-pressure applications.

The major technological advancement is the incorporation of an upgraded suction hose, which includes new ends that have been engineered from ultra-resistant material to prevent perforation, are adjustable to multiple configurations and have been secured by a heat shrinkable sleeve preventing waterproof deft. Other improvements in the E140 and E170 compressors includes a stainless steel discharge flange, check relief valve coated (black), and new orange colour and Mouvex label for easy identification.

The series compressors are workhorses for oil-free high-pressure discharge of fluids that can cause problems for typical cargo pumps. The compressors are constructed from corrosion-resistant, hard-coated cast iron to withstand harsh environments and operating conditions. In addition, Enterprise Series compressors also feature a patented clamping device that allows for easy disassembly and assembly.

They are available in PTO or hydraulic-motor-drive versions, and available accessories include an inlet air-filter kit, a discharge pressure check/relief valve, PTO drive flange, hydraulic motor drive adaptor and hydraulic drive cooler.

www.mouvex.com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Pelican director for ATCA


Regina Lau (left) was presented with a commemorative plaque to welcome her into her new role as first chairwoman of ATCA

Regina Lau, director of Pelican Worldwide Asia, has been appointed as the first chairwoman of the Singapore-based ATCA (Asia Tank Container Association).

In her new role she will spearhead developments of the Asia ISO tank spares and parts subcommittee, to help the Asian tank industry to achieve higher levels in terms of safety and quality, according to a statement.

Lau was presented with a commemorative plaque and welcomed into her new role on 7 April 2014. "This role will be crucial to group discussion and planning initiatives to make sure only good, quality tank spares and parts are sold in the industry. Recent infestation of inferior parts is of great concern; we believe her involvement will assist in eradicating this behaviour," the statement continued.

Pelican Worldwide Asia is part of Netherlands-based Pelican Worldwide. The group manufactures and supplies valves, gaskets and ancillary products for the liquid and dry bulk transport industries. Pelican says its products meet stringent manufacturing requirements and the EN14432, EN14433 and EN14025 standards.

www.pelicanworldwide.com

B200 Black Edition

Meller Flow Trans has introduced a new version its B200 screw compressor, the Black Edition with Flow Control.

The B200 screw compressor is designed for discharge of liquids from road tankers. It can be driven via hydraulic motor or even close coupled to the truck gearbox PTO.

The company says durability has been enhanced by using special carbon-based protectants. A full three-year warranty still comes as standard.

The B200 is friction, oil and particle free, making it ideal for foodstuffs as well as the discharge of aggressive chemical products. All units are supplied with the new Flow Control check & relief valve.

Flexibility and design

SAFI Valves, which was founded in 1963 in south-east France, has gained a reputation as a leading manufacturer of thermoplastic valves.

For more than 50 years it has supplied solutions for highly demanding and hazardous industries, such as water treatment, chemical, nuclear, agriculture, marine and logistics.

SAFI focuses on designing and manufacturing thermoplastic valves dedicated to specific applications, always considering the careful selection of plastic materials to meet the needs of customers, often with corrosive and abrasive fluids in very arduous environments.

One of the key segments of SAFI's activity is the supply of flexitank valves. For over a decade SAFI has brought its knowledge and experience to the industry, offering reliable and robust solutions that work hand-in-hand with each customer's specific flexitank design.

For this reason SAFI has recently been invited onto the steering committee for the creation of PAS 1008 - Specification For The Manufacture And Testing Of Single-Use Flexitanks.

The company has several different solutions for this sector, including a mono-block designed valve with a unique concept of offset butterfly position that minimizes disruption to the fluid flow, even when the media is very viscous. Furthermore, SAFI's flexitank valve offers added security with a lockable handle, and both a functional and leak test prior to dispatch, following strict industry standards. The company combines the selection of materials for FDA and EU food grade compliance with the enhancement of a design that has no cavities or metal parts, often a concern for many food related businesses with the added value of easy recycling.

According to Stéphane Moison, CEO of SAFI group, the company's philosophy as a leading industrial valve manufacturer is: "It is important not just to look at business from a perspective of sales, but to demonstrate our added value of customer support and solutions. Our competitive edge is working closely with our valued customers, developing strong relationships and better understanding of their needs. SAFI continually works on product improvements, developments, and co-developments and new products are not far away"

www.safi-valves.com

Loading arms deal for Emco

Emco Wheaton is set to complete the design, manufacture and delivery of 11 marine loading arms (MLAs) for a major US based oil company.

An engineering firm that was hired by the oil company to design a barge loading facility has closely worked with Emco Wheaton for the MLA portion of the project. The arms will be installed at sites in Virginia, Pennsylvania and Illinois and will see barge throughput double compared with current levels.

The order is part of an ongoing story for Emco Wheaton which has seen other large product wins confirmed with Suncor, Invista and Crosstex energy. The company has seen the manufacture of MLAs return to its Houston facility which has reduced lead times, shipping costs and ensuring that a local team is always on hand to offer advice or help with products.

This order was confirmed following a presentation to the engineering firm by Emco Wheaton marine sales manager Ronald LaLonde and as a result the company is now its main supplier to manufacture, install and maintain MLA installations at terminals across the US.

"I have personally worked with this oil company for more than 20 years and Emco Wheaton has been working with the company for a similar length of time," said Ronald LaLonde. "When it opted to upgrade its facilities we were able to demonstrate that our MLAs met the highest standards and as a company we could further provide world class service and technical support."

Emco Wheaton designs and manufactures a wide range of highly engineered MLAs to load and unload almost any liquid and compressed gas product from river barges, ships and ocean going super tankers.

"Emco Wheaton had not been producing marine loading arms in Houston, for a number of years now," LaLonde added. "But with the continual improvements to our selling and distribution processes, and the correct staff in place, it makes sense for our plant in Houston to produce hydraulically operated arms in the future."

www.emcowheaton.com

Schneider ups the stake in driver pay

Schneider, one of the largest US truckload carriers, is raising pay for its company tanker drivers. Most drivers will earn an additional 8-10 percent per mile (both loaded and unloaded) for an average increase of US$4,000 a year. The company driver pay increase comes on the heels of Schneider's recent $0.10.5 per mile compensation increase for tanker owner-operators.

In addition to providing consistent pay of up to $81,000 per year for tanker drivers, Schneider says it also offers flexibility and some of the best benefits in the trucking industry. One differentiator is that, unlike other tanker carriers, two-thirds of Schneider's loads are non-hazardous while the industry average is 80 percent hazardous loads.

Schneider's tanker division is aggressively growing its chemical transport business, adding company drivers and owner-operators to keep up with customer demand. The chemical industry plays an important role in American manufacturing. From paper chemicals and latex to water treatment polymers and lubricants, the demand for chemicals is stronger than most other commodities as manufacturing continues its rebound.

"More chemical shippers use Schneider because of our drivers' industry-leading performance," noted George Grossardt, vice president and general manager of Schneider's Bulk division. "They deliver a superior experience for our customers and drive their success, and we believe it's important to reward that level of expertise."

Clugston has expansion plans

Clugston Distribution has announced a £2.15 million fleet expansion and renewal plan for 2014. The investment is part of the company's strategy to develop its customer base across the UK by growing services in the fuels, bulk powdered food, intermodal and bulk ash movement markets and follows 20 percent growth in revenue in 2013.

Parent company Clugston Group is also making funds available to buy 18 new Euro6 Renault tractor units and fourteen new trailers. Clugston Distribution is also looking to employ up to 13 new employees to support the company's UK growth.

The Euro6 Renault tractor units, which have already been ordered, will be split between fleet replacement and additional fleet capacity. The nine additional vehicles are being split across different areas of the business to strengthen the overall operations. Clugston's first two Euro6 Renaults are already on the road delivering flour and other bulk food products.

Four of the additional vehicles are being added to the bulk food powders operations and two to the industrial powder fleet, to support the company's work with cement manufacturers and ash producers. The remaining three will become part of the fuels fleet taking the fleet strength of this operation up to 16 vehicles on the Humber and Tees.

David Heath head of logistics at Clugston Distribution said of the investment: "We are delighted that the Clugston Board has chosen to support us by backing our ambitious growth plans. 2013 was a great year for us and we are looking forward to continuing our success in 2014 and beyond. We are forecasting double digit revenue growth again in 2014."

Over the course of the past two years Clugston Distribution's workforce has grown by 40 people and the company has invested a total of £4 million on new vehicle assets. By the end of 2014 overall fleet numbers will be approaching 100 vehicles on the road.

New tractors for Gheys

Belgian logistics operator Gheys Transport & Logistiek has taken delivery of 25 new Volvo FH420 tractors.

The group, based in Mol, ordered tractors that were developed and built specifically to make them as light as possible and so maximise payload.

The new tractors are part of Gheys's modernisation of its 200 vehicle fleet. "We are also active in the petrochemical industry, where every kilo counts. This is why our dealer Paesen Trucks Peer was given carte blanche for the tractors to be as light as possible so we could have a higher maximum payload," said Luc Gheys, technical manager of the group.

He added that the transition to Euro 6 has had an influence on truck payload, but with additional modifications the operator was able to maintain an acceptable tonnage, despite the increase in weight due to Euro 6.

In order to limit the weight of the tractor, different components were modified, such as the front suspension, battery casing, fuel tank, compressed air tanks and some chassis components.

Gheys recently bought 34ha of additional industrial land in Tessenderlo from Dow Belgium. The industrial park is located next to an exit on the E313 motorway (Antwerp-Hasselt-Liège). It features a quay at the inlet dock of the Albert Canal and is equipped with its own railway. In addition to the trimodal connections, the site is also connected to a number of commodity pipelines (ethylene, nitrogen, hydrogen and natural gas). For Gheys the acquisition is seen as strategic in connects to its existing 22 acre site in Beringen directly next to the Albert Canal.

Cutting combustibility in biomass handling

Despite recent hikes in gas and electricity prices, fuelling the growing debate over the cost of green energy, the drive towards environmentally-friendly power stations seems set to continue, with biomass-fired plants playing a key role in the switch from coal.

Energy companies see biomass as an alternative source of clean fuel that will help meet carbon reduction targets. However, the movement of biomass within power stations and factory environments requires high-quality conveying systems that meet statutory requirements for the safe and dust-free distribution of potentially hazardous materials.

Wood chip, sawdust, pellets and shavings are not easy to handle, they do not all flow freely and can be combustible. As with any potentially combustible component, stringent safety regulations are in place to eliminate or control the risks from explosive atmospheres in the workplace.

Spiroflow is a manufacturer of ATEX approved conveying and bulk handling systems that meet regulatory requirements for distributing potentially combustible materials using safe, dust-free and cost-effective methods.

Although ultimately it is the responsibility of biomass processors and power plants to ensure that the workplace is safe, Spiroflow is well aware of the potential dangers that can arise due to dusty atmospheres, and is quick to point out that the key safety ethos for all conveying, handling and weighing equipment should be explosion prevention.

Materials such as wood pellets and wood chips are also quite fragile and need totally secure handling as they can easily degrade over long distances and complicated factory routes. Spiroflow's ATEX compliant conveyors, bulk bag dischargers and fillers incorporate flow promotion devices to aid the movement of difficult materials with almost negligible degradation.

The company's tubular drag conveyor, for example, offers dust free handling and movement of products over distances of three to 60m at rates of up to 120tph - depending on material and density - efficiently, cleanly and without the need for an air filtration system. Over the years this system has proven to be the most cost-effective method for conveying difficult and temperature-sensitive materials.

It provides complete batch transfer of bulk products from single or multiple in-feed points to single or multiple discharge points, making it ideal for a wide range of materials.

Steve Taylor, senior applications engineer at Spiroflow explained: "Our ATEX compliant tubular drag conveyor meets the strict regulatory demands for conveying biomass materials. Our knowledge of all the hazards associated with conveying potentially combustible materials is second to none."

Spiroflow's ATEX compliant conveyors, bulk bag dischargers and fillers incorporate flow promotion devices to aid the movement of difficult materials with negligible degradation

Spiroflow has also launched a new bin activator in the UK market that will help manufacturers in process industries, such as food, beverage, chemicals, plastic and oil and gas to eliminate material flow problems that can lead to potentially dangerous blockages in factory piping or tubing applications.

Incorporating the latest technology, Spiroflow's bin activator has integral vibrating blades to maintain a steady momentum and minimise bridging. It is claimed to be well suited to ensuring the steady flow of materials that are hazardous, toxic, require sanitary handling or are simply challenging, such as titanium dioxide.

The blades are fully adjustable for accurate control of solids, while energy is imparted directly into the materials by the vibrating blades to ensure continuous flow. Effective shut–off is managed with close tolerance blades by the discharger control valve and these can be customised by Spiroflow to fit customers' own specifications.

Manufactured in carbon or stainless steel, making the equipment easy to wash down for applications like food processing and beverage bottling, the bin activator is designed to minimise risk in potentially hazardous or explosive environments.

Shifting millions of tonnes of potentially dangerous ingredients is part and parcel of many production processes for manufacturing companies, which must have systems and equipment in place that adhere to ATEX directive 1999/92/E - implemented by the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmosphere Regulations 2002 (DSEAR) act in the UK.

The bin activator has integral vibrating blades to maintain a steady momentum and minimise bridging

Clariant's sustainability achievements

Swiss speciality chemicals major Clariant has published its sustainability report for the past financial year. The report focuses on long-term value creation for internal and external stakeholders and the progress made over the year in the sustainable development of the company.

"The strategic importance of sustainability is undisputed," said CEO Hariolf Kottmann. "As part of the global economy, society and environment, we want to generate long-term value and provide benefits for all our stakeholders." says.

The fact that the company was last year included in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI Europe) was one indicator of the continuous improvements made in the field of sustainability, the report points out.

Another milestone was the signing of the UN Global Compact. This United Nations Initiative commits signatories to bringing their business activities in line with recognised principles covering human rights, employment standards, environmental protection and fighting corruption.

By continuing to cut energy consumption (26 percent lower since 2005), CO2 emissions (-53 percent), water consumption (-28 percent), waste water (-38 percent), waste (-40 percent) and direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions (-23 percent since 2007), Clariant says it has made great progress towards its environmental goals.

The sustainability report was written in line with the recently published global standard of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI 4). The new standard shifts the focus even further towards the major sustainability issues, which helps to improve the transparency of sustainability reporting.

Numerous examples included in the report highlight the diversity of Clariant's solutions. The group offers products at all levels of sustainability – economic, ecological and social – which create "long-term value and help achieve sustainable growth". In 2013, for example, 29 products, displaying particularly sustainable characteristics over their entire life cycles, were labelled as EcoTain.

Last year Clariant introduced its Portfolio Value Programme to define measures that further improve the sustainability of the company. The programme will contribute towards even more products being developed for global megatrends such as environmental protection, urbanisation, resources and energy.

New EPCA president

Tom Crotty is to be the new president of the European Petrochemical Association (EPCA) effective from 1 June. Crotty is currently EPCA's Vice-President, a member of the Board of CEFIC and of PlasticsEurope, as well as a director of Ineos Group.

He succeeds Jan Van den Bergh, president of the Business Unit Advanced Intermediates of Evonik Industries who is resigning from the presidency and the EPCA Board due to a change of function within Evonik.

New EPCA president Tom Crotty

Control tower view

Supply chain systems provider Elemica has launched a Business Process Control Tower application as the latest component in its SmartLink IT system.

Control Tower offers a consolidated view of transactional data across business partners for greater visibility and deeper insights into supply chain activities, said Elemica.

Today's market demands companies equip themselves to make better decisions faster in order to compete effectively, and many see data as fundamental to their ability to execute. The promise of a big data panacea, along with general data overload, can overwhelm a company's ability to glean actionable information efficiently. Elemica's says its Process Control Tower brings "order from the chaos", eliminating the 'noise' of data overload so supply chain managers are able to filter out unnecessary information and view analytics that really matter.

"While Big Data is growing in popularity, manufacturers in the process industry need significant data for their supply chain analytics," said Gary Neights, director of product management. "The new Business Process Control Tower transforms and filters multiple data sources into information and decision support, improving supply chain performance and the bottom line. Rather than sifting through countless data sets, this 'Lean Data' approach starts with questions relevant to your business and finds ways to answer them using the right data sources. That's the beauty of the Control Tower – you have the right information in front of you to make the right decisions faster for your business."

The control tower consolidates transactional data from suppliers to carriers to customers. This includes order, invoice, payment, and delivery information, into a single, unified view of enterprise-wide information. Typically supply chain information from trading partners comes in a variety of formats and forms, from Excel spreadsheets, EDI messaging, emails, XML messages, and more, that are difficult to quickly interpret.

Chris Chadwick, Sales Director, Airedale Chemical

A quick word with...

Chris Chadwick, Airedale Chemical www.airedalechemical.com

Please give a brief insight into Airedale Chemical.

Our business was established in 1973 and has enjoyed over 40 years of growth and success within the UK chemical industry.

Something of a cliché but we have come a long way since our humble beginnings. Airedale Chemical was established in Bradford, West Yorkshire by my grandfather, founder & late chairman, Brian Chadwick. He began making and selling his own range of dyestuff solutions, selling them into local textile companies and delivering each order by hand.

Over the past four decades, the owners and directors have focused solely on the growth of this business; it is this unrelenting motivation that we feel has led to our success. In eight years Airedale Chemical has grown by £25 million to £39 million turnover in 2013 as a result of our focus on high volume/high value product lines.

We believe our story is one of true diversification. We still proudly maintain our rich heritage in dyestuff, however now, in 2014, over 90 percent of our product portfolio consists of industrial chemicals, phosphates, phosphonates and surfactants that we both manufacture and distribute to some of the world's leading brands.

We now move towards 2015 with a turnover target exceeding £40 million, something we are confident of securing through site expansion, investment plans and key strategic business acquisitions in new and developing areas of the chemical industry.

How do you think your customers' demands will evolve over the next few years?

Every business unit within the company will be divided on this question; however we envisage that delivery reactivity will be more important for many of our customers over the coming years. Time is money in this industry and it's our belief that next day and same day order acknowledgement will become a statutory requirement for many of our customers. It is this reason that we now provide this service for many of our customers now (where possible) in readiness for increased demands.

Awareness of the product supply chain may evolve into a stronger requirement as customers seek reassurance and evidence that both cost and quality are the best they can be. We do, however, envisage the greatest shift being in product diversity: new markets, new applications and innovative manufacturing techniques will bring with them a new demand for evolved chemical solutions. Managing this diversity in new product development will be key to ensuring that as a business we not to spread ourselves too thin. This will be a key focus.

Which geographic areas do you operate in?

Airedale Chemical currently operates on a global scale with the majority of our trade based within the UK and Europe. Other global regions that we now sell within include Asia, Middle East, Africa and Australia.

We are continually growing our global customer base and now operate over 9 percent of our business outside of the UK and Europe within new growing economies like India and Australia.

Which geographies do you expect to offer the most interesting market development in the next few years?

Undeniably Airedale Chemicals' largest market share and therefore greatest focus is within the UK and Europe where we continue to experience our healthiest sale uplifts. Our belief is that within these geographic regions the customers we supply are currently buoyant financially and are therefore in viable positions whereby new product development can be explored. These markets are also some of the more demanding globally, both for price and quality. By default this puts a great deal of pressure on manufacturers to refine and augment products and services so that they are quicker, better, but cheaper.

What are the main challenges facing your key markets both today and in the future?

The greatest challenges as we see them will come from environmental stakeholders. As a chemical distributor we completely endorse every requirement to produce and handle products safely and in-line with ISO standards, so it is our responsibility to uphold this. As we have experienced with new growth products, such as peracetic acid (that we are currently registering under the Biocidal Directive), products will increasingly be challenged for their environmental form; however this is a challenge that our technical teams fully embrace.

Our technical and marketing teams also monitor market growths and declines year on year and as such allow this data to shape both our sales and product development strategies. Recognisable challenges to certain industries we service are constantly identified – current challenges facing the textile and agricultural industries for instance. These include influxes of foreign, lower cost textile production putting increased pressure on UK textile production. This is also coupled with the reduction of the UK dyestuff market used primarily in the textile industries. In agriculture we also identify the challenges present in the UK farming industry, as a result of increased cost saving by supermarkets

By monitoring these effects on certain markets it allow us to orientate our product development focusses on an annual basis.

Certain products remain static over a 12-month period in some markets; however seasonal products have maybe suffered more than in previous years due to the erratic weather climates. We've found that agricultural chemicals especially have been affected more than others in terms of their annual regularity. This is only to be expected given the unpredictable UK winter and summers.

Do you expect any significant shifts in revenues generated from the various market segments that you serve as a result?

Not as such, but this is difficult to predict. What we must ensure is that we counter any potential challenges and risks to our key markets. We believe this can be achieved by focusing and refining the products that we manufacture, controlling and managing peak/trough periods throughout the year, standardising formulae and increasing minimum order quantities. Careful management in this manner will avoid significant revenue shifts.

What are Airedale's plans for the future and where do you believe key growth opportunities exist for the company?

Our future plans are very much our blueprint. Generally our plan is for continued growth, which we realise is not unique for any business. Our means of achieving this, however, will be different to anything that we have done before. We have always believed very much in getting what we do best, done better. Therefore further expansion of our main manufacturing site in Cross Hills (West Yorkshire, UK) will be continued over the coming years. This will involve investment in new manufacturing technology, additional large scale storage tanks, multiple internal warehousing and extra transport. All of these elements will be key to ensuring the business can continue to service an ever growing customer portfolio.

Diversification is inherent in Airedale's DNA from the time we started under my grandfather as a dyestuff business to today, where we are proud to be one of the UK's fastest growing chemical distributors/manufacturers; something we are passionate to continue. Food grade chemicals and new phosphate products are all planned additions to our product portfolio and will provide large growth opportunities in opportunistic markets.

Log4Chem relocates

4PL provider Log4Chem has re-located 10 miles down the road from Dormagen to Pulheim, Cologne. The team moved into one of a number of studios in a converted steelworks, giving the company a total office space of just over 3,000 sq ft.

"This re-location heralds a coming of age for our young organisation," explained Kirry Mukherji, managing director of Log4Chem. "We are already in commercial dialogue with a few chemicals producers and it is my responsibility to shape our organisation so that we can accommodate this growth."

Log4Chem is actively recruiting additional staff for their transport planning and project management departments. Until now Log4Chem was located on one of the sites of the Hoyer Group. "As an autonomous organisation we are commercially, operationally and now also physically independent from our three shareholders," added Mukherji.

Log4Chem's business model is to bring together chemicals shippers and equipment owners to create opportunities for take total costs out of the supply chain.

The new postal address is:
Log4Chem GmbH, Walzwerk/Atelier 52
Rommerskirchener Straße 21, 50259 Pulheim, Germany.

Sabic entrusts warehouse management to Dentressangle

Pictured (l-r): Alan Reed, regional contracts specialist, and Nick Gilpin, warehouse and stores specialist, from SABIC; and Julian Gallier, general manager tankers, and David Simpson, warehouse manager, from Norbert Dentressangle.

Norbert Dentressangle has won a new five-year contract with long-term customer SABIC UK Petrochemicals to provide a maintenance, repair and operational (MRO) engineering spares warehousing and stores service.

SABIC, based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, is one of the world's top six petrochemical companies. In Europe, SABIC is a major producer of polyethylene and polypropylene plastics; chemicals, including olefins and industrial gases; and innovative plastics, such as speciality film and sheet; and employs nearly 6,000 people.

The two companies have worked together for 15 years, with Norbert Dentressangle Tankers providing warehousing, packing, repacking and transport services at its Wilton International site, near Redcar, UK. Within the shared-user complex there is room for further storage space that can accommodate expected future growth.

In the additional contract, a dedicated 18,500 sq ft (1,700 sq m) store facility is being provided at the site, which will feature new racking, a mezzanine floor and conveyor system. This will incorporate racked pallet locations, a lay down area for heavy goods and 6,000 bin locations for smaller items.

The flexible solution will meet a range of key performance indicators (KPIs) covering environmental health and safety compliance, stock inventory accuracy, delivery times to site, product handling, and stored product management.

Further value will be achieved by providing an integrated IT system through SAP, and although the Norbert Dentressangle team will manage the inventory, the current stock position will always be visible to SABIC employees.

The new contract becomes fully operational at the end of July; meanwhile detailed planning is currently underway to ensure the controlled transfer of services from the existing supplier and the seamless relocation of materials to the new Norbert Dentressangle premises at the southwest corner of the Wilton site.

Nick Gilpin, warehouse and stores specialist at SABIC UK Petrochemicals, said: "We look forward to working with Norbert Dentressangle to create a first class engineering spares warehousing and stores service to support our Teesside operations. There is a great deal of work to be done before the service is fully operational but we have the right people in place to ensure we meet the 31 July target."

Ann Dawson, managing director at Norbert Dentressangle Tankers, added: "We have worked with SABIC UK Petrochemicals for 15 years and the increased scope of the supply chain service we provide to include MRO warehousing with agreed KPIs, demonstrates our commitment to meeting the evolving needs of our customers by delivering fully integrated solutions."

Vers Valenciennes

A regular barge service operated by Contargo Container Escaut Services (CCES) has started between Valenciennes and Dunkirk, in Northern France.

The rotation of the DV1 (Dunkirk–Valenciennes 1) service will initially involve one barge a week and will supplement Dunkirk's waterway links in the region following the start-up of the Nord Port Shuttle (NPS) serving Lille and Dourges at the end of 2013.

The first rotations were carried out by the barge Enaxor which can carry 28 TEU, although the capacity of the barges can be altered to suit requirements. The service offers a transit time of Day A-Day B with schedules set to synchronise with the Asia/Europe container services calling at Port of Dunkirk: MSC's Lion service and the FAL 7 service of CMA CGM.

Higher turnover for Vos

European logistics operator Vos Logistics reported an increase in turnover for 2013. Following a weak first half, the company achieved a strong recovery in the second half of the year and there was a further improvement in sustainability performance. Overall, Vos foresees higher turnover and an improvement in the result in 2014.

Turnover increased by 2 percent in 2013 to €248.4 million and volumes by 2.7 percent. The growth was driven by new customers and an increase in activities for existing customers. Volumes were higher at both cargo and logistic services. In bulk, volumes were lower on account of weaker demand from the petrochemical industry.

Persistent overcapacity in the market meant freight rates lagged cost increases in 2013. This had a negative impact on the quality of turnover, the company said. Furthermore, operating costs were increased by an expansion of warehousing activities. As a result, EBIT came to €3.2 million (2012: €4.9 million). The pre-tax results were slightly positive. Due to a non-cash revaluation of the tax position in particular, a limited net loss of €0.8 million was achieved.

To control costs, the location in Italy was closed in 2013 and the transport operation in Slovakia was terminated. Transport operations in Poland and Romania, in contrast, were strengthened. International transport capacity was increased in both countries and significant investments were made in training and coaching in particular of the east European drivers regarding safety, driving behaviour and technical skills. In this way, Vos says it can supply high quality transport services at a competitive cost level.

In 2013 Vos invested €32 million in trucks, trailers, on-board computers and other equipment. The fleet was strengthened with 155 Euro 5 and 35 Euro 6 trucks, 110 EEV and 10 LNG trucks. With an average age of 2.4 years, the group has one of the youngest fleets in Western Europe. As part of the trailer replacement programme, 180 mega trailers and silo trailers were added to the fleet in 2013.

On balance, Vos continued its investment in staff development in 2013. The total number of training hours came to 25,000. The benefits of safety and driving behaviour courses were seen in lower damage rates and a reduction in fuel consumption.

Together with the further modernisation of the fleet and the use of telematics in the vehicles, this led to a 4.4 percent reduction in the CO_2 emission per ton/km transported to 0.0387 kg per ton/km. The CO_2 emission per sqm of the buildings was reduced by more than 11 percent to 8.8 kg CO_2 per sqm thanks to more sustainable buildings and more efficient layout and design. Vos Logistics has set itself the goal of a 20 percent reduction in its overall carbon footprint by 2015 relative to 2009.

"Vos Logistics has shown that it can respond promptly to the recovery of the market," said CEO Frank Verhoeven. The company's strategy is targeted at growth in existing and complementary new markets. "We want to strengthen our position in international transport with a high quality and cost efficient proposition and achieve further growth in customer-specific added value services, especially in Western Europe. The construction of a new logistics centre in Oss fits seamlessly with these ambitions. We will also strengthen our facilities in Poland and Romania. We have consistently invested in the quality of our people and sustainability in recent years and we are gradually beginning to reap the benefits."

CFO Ben Vos added: "We had a good first quarter in 2014 and continued the upward line seen in the closing months of 2013. The effects of the cost savings and efficiency measures we launched last year are now emerging and feeding through into the improved operating profit. We will continue down this path and are supported in this by our financial stakeholders. For example, the duration of the existing bank financing arrangements has been extended to the end of 2018."

The sustainable distribution centre being built at De Geer industrial estate in Oss will have access by road, water (Maas port) and rail. The expansion will significantly increase Vos Logistics' logistics operations, raising its total warehousing capacity in Benelux and Germany to 170,000 sqm.

The building will consist of 24,300 sqm of storage space with 33 loading docks and facilities to load and unload Ecocombis, 680 sqm of office space and an 800 sqm mezzanine. The facility will be built to the strict environmental standards of BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method). The new centre will come into operation on 1 October 2014 and Vos has an option for a further expansion of 2ha.

Rotterdam on the Danube

WienCont, the trimodal container terminal in Vienna, is the first Austrian terminal in Port of Rotterdam's InlandLinks network. InlandLinks now comprises almost 70 terminals in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Italy, Austria and Hungary.

WienCont handles at its 7-track rail terminal some 200,000 rail cars a year to and from German cities, Rotterdam and Central Europe. Via the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal there are inland shipping connections with the ARA (Amsterdam-Rotterdam-Antwerp) ports and Black Sea ports. The terminal loads and unloads approximately 200,000 trucks a year.

Allard Castelein, CEO of the Port of Rotterdam Authority, noted that the major shipping lines, as well as the big three Rotterdam container terminals, ECT, RWG and APMT, "are clearly intensifying their marketing operations in the hinterland". In some cases, this has already resulted in a rise in carrier haulage share from 25 percent to 40 percent. "Efficient and keen management of empty containers plays a vital role in this development. The empty container tool of InlandLinks is a valuable instrument to support the hinterland marketing of the shipping lines," he said. "Most of the top 20 lines are now using the system. Especially in regions with a high demand for 'empties', such as Austria and Southern Germany, the tool is expected to prove its usefulness."

InlandLinks is an online platform for container terminals in the hinterland, offering intermodal services to and from Rotterdam. The terminals are presented on the basis of objective and comparable criteria. This enables participants in the logistics chain to identify the general and specific advantages better. It is also claimed to contribute to a rise in intermodal transport by train and barge of the flow of containers that is expected to triple in the next 25 years.

Vietnam award

DB Schenker has received the award for Good Performance on Social Security & Community Development given by the Vietnam Ministry of Planning and Investment Affairs.

The award aims to recognise corporations who have exemplified commitment to improving social security and community development in the country. The criteria include ratings on taxpayer responsibility, implementation of Customs procedures, environmental consciousness, social insurance for workers, and certified quality management according to international standards.

Carriers miss the logistics boat

Container carriers seem to have missed the trend to integrated logistics chains, according to a senior logistics analyst.

On the eve of his departure from Drewry to pursue academic research, senior advisor David Charlesworth published a final briefing giving his personal reflections on the current status of the shipping industry in supply chains.

In the briefing Charlesworth stated that as shippers' supply chains have grown more sophisticated, carriers "have gone backwards". Even those shipping lines that once boasted supply chain logistics operations have since morphed them into forwarder look-alike business units separated from the shipping operation, he believed.

"Many carriers are increasingly content to leave the landside operation to forwarders and shippers. It appears to me that carriers struggle with the concept of creating value for their customers; they find cost reduction a much easier target," he commented.

"The culture of container carriers has been to talk more strongly between each other than with their customers," he stated. "The end result is that carriers have been good at operational innovation to lower cost (big ships, joint services), but poor at commercial innovation to increase value for shippers. If lack of commercial innovation means carriers cannot create a comparative advantage for themselves, then they are fated to slug it out on price for increasingly uniform operations in the alliances."

For much of the market, Charlesworth says the larger forwarders have taken on the role of value creator, or sometimes shippers bolt together their own solutions using multiple providers. At a time when some carriers are under EU investigation for price signalling through public announcement of general rate increases, evidence also suggests that GRIs are in any case an inefficient tool for increasing rates in an over-supplied market. "It would be nice to think that carriers and their customers might take a serious look beyond the headline low freight price and work to creating real supply chain value that can be shared by longer term contractual commitment to each other," he stated.

"Regrettably, I'm not optimistic. Strategically, the carriers' minds are focused on collectively introducing big ships with bigger alliances. Developing the carriers' resolve to unlock the opportunities of integrating shipping more closely into the supply chain process seems some way off."

Carriers – 'good at operational innovation to lower cost, but poor at commercial innovation to increase value for shippers'

Duisport connection

As of early February 2014, three direct weekly rail roundtrips began connecting the deep sea terminal Antwerp Gateway and the intermodal hub at duisport, Duisburg.

In the past, these trains were routed via the Main Hub and the Narcon system which is the provider of cargo train services in Belgium. The new service is said to provide faster and more efficient cargo handling in both directions.

The service, processed by duisport agency and operated by IFB, departs from Quay 1700 in Antwerp to Duisburg, from where more than 80 direct destinations in Europe and Asia can be reached via 360 trains scheduled each week. With support from Port of Antwerp, the new service can also benefit other terminals by using short barge services provided within the port.

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Authorisation for Jordan Cove LNG

The US Energy Department gave conditional authorisation in March for LNG to be exported from a proposed terminal in Coos Bay, on the Oregon coast.

Jordan Cove LNG terminal is the seventh project to get such authorisation, although it may be years before exports begin. The project still has to go through an environmental review and final regulatory approval.

The terminal would prepare gas for shipment and export it to countries that do not have free trade agreement (FTA) status with the United States. Typically referred to as non-FTA countries, this includes numerous LNG consuming markets throughout Asia Pacific and South America. Among significant LNG importing countries, only South Korea, Singapore and Chile have FTA status with the US.

In late 2011, Jordan Cove LNG received DOE authorisation to export up to 9 million tpa of LNG to those countries that currently have such FTA status. The facility would be able to export up to 800 million cb ft of natural gas a day for 20 years.

The $7 billion project, led by Calgary, Alberta-based Veresen Inc, includes a 230-mile pipeline and a plant that would liquefy the gas for shipment. It would move natural gas from the Rocky Mountains and Canada to Asia, primarily Japan and India.

"Receipt of DOE approval to export to US non-FTA countries completes a key development milestone for Jordan Cove and brings us one step closer to making a final investment decision," said Don Althoff, president and CEO of Veresen. "The next critical item from a regulatory perspective is authorisation from the U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to commence construction."

Althoff added, "The Jordan Cove LNG project will provide significant job creation, economic stimulus and tax benefits to the State of Oregon and we look forward to delivering these benefits."

Various non-binding, non-exclusive arrangements set out the indicative commercial terms of the subsequent, binding, liquefaction tolling services agreement (LTSA) with Jordan Cove, and the transportation service precedent agreement (TSPA) with the Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline that will transport natural gas supplies to the terminal.

The total volume of LNG capacity requested under the various heads of agreement (HOAs) exceeds the 6 million tpa capacity of the proposed terminal. Veresen is now pursuing the negotiation of binding LTSA and TSPA agreements with prospective HOA customers. "The target objective, within 2014, is to execute binding agreements with an optimal subset of the HOA prospects, with binding commercial agreements being in place for all of Jordan Cove's initial capacity of 6 million tpa," the company stated.

Vopak in Canada purchase

Vopak has bought Canterm Canadian Terminals Inc which owns two refined product terminals in Montreal and Quebec City. With the acquisition, Vopak Canada's storage capacity increases by more than 500,000 cbm to 712,000 cbm, while strengthening the Dutch company's presence in all strategic distribution markets in eastern Canada.

Canterm was previously owned and operated by TransMontaigne Inc. The company and its assets were acquired by Vopak through a tender process.

The Montreal terminal has a storage capacity of 339,000 cbm and that of Quebec City 170,000 cbm. Following the completion of an expansion project under construction of 72,000 cbm in Montreal, expected to be commissioned in Q1 2015, the acquired terminals will have a combined capacity of 581,000 cbm (3.74 million barrels). Both ports are located on the banks of one of the St Lawrence River, the main shipping route to and from the Great Lakes. Montreal offers the best location for imports of refined products resulting from recent refinery closures in the region, while Port of Quebec City offers deep water access.

Vopak Canada has existing terminals in Hamilton, Ontario, and Montreal.

Vopak has bought two Canterm refined product terminals – in Montreal and Port of Quebec City (pictured)

Building more at Botlek

Construction consortium De Vries en van der Wiel and Geka have handed over the extension of the Botlek Tank Terminal BV (BTT) site to Port of Rotterdam.

The extension of approximately 5ha doubles the area occupied by the existing terminal and allows the total storage capacity to be expanded from 200,000 to approximately 750,000 cbm.

The extension was made possible by land reclamation. The reclaimed land will enable BTT to build a further 550,000 cbm of capacity for transport fuels and edible oils, possibly in phases. Talks are in progress with potential customers. The environmental permit for the expansion has already been issued by the regional environmental authority DCMR.

The existing Phase I comprises 34 tanks, with a combined storage capacity of 200,000 cbm, of which 130,000 cbm is earmarked for transport fuels and 70,000 cbm for edible oils and biodiesel. Capacity utilisation is reportedly high.

The terminal has ample deepwater berths and facilities for transhipment and storage of a wide range of products. The 420m sea jetty is capable of handling two seagoing vessels of up to 115,000 dwt and two tank barges simultaneously.

Safety and environmental protection are a high priority at BTT and the company's management system has ISO 9001, ISO 14000, OSHAS 18000, AEO and ISCC certification.

Events

Transport Logistic China, Shanghai
17-19 Jun 2014
Shanghai, China
www.transportlogistic-china.com

Powtech
Nuremberg, Germany
30 Sep - 2 Oct 2014
www.powtech.de

EPCA Annual Meeting
4-8 October 2014
Vienna, Austria
www.epca.eu

ITCO General Meeting
20-21 October 2014
Vienna, Austria
www.itco.be

Intermodal Europe
11-13 November
Rotterdam Netherlands
www.intermodal-events.com

Emballage
Paris, France
17-20 Nov 2014
www.all4pack.com

ICTSI to invest in Umm Qasr

Philippines-based container terminal operator ICTSI is entering a long-term partnership with the Iraqi Port Authority to expand Umm Qasr Port's cargo handling capacity and promote Iraq's international trade

ICTSI says the move will help facilitate "the unlocking of Iraq's enormous economic potential by building the country's port facilities of the future". The operator will run and expand container and general cargo facilities in the port.

Phase 1 of the Umm Qasr expansion will include a new 200m quay wall and storage yard, with a capacity of 300,000 TEU. At full build, the facility will have 600m of quay and a 900,000 TEU capacity. Furthermore, ICTSI will operate and manage the existing container terminal on Umm Qasr's Berth 20.

Initial investments are expected to exceed US$130 million.

"This is by far the largest ever private investment in Iraqi ports. We are excited about this opportunity, and we would like to thank the Government of Iraq for the continued support in this endeavour," commented Enrique K Razon Jr, ICTSI chairman and president.

Located on Iraq's Gulf coast, Umm Qasr is the largest port in the country and the main gateway to the Iraqi market. The port handles liquid and dry bulk, general cargo and containers. It has 21 berths, with total berth length of 5,000m. Container throughput totalled 500,000 TEU in 2013.

As noted by Hans-Ole Madsen, ICTSI senior vice president for Europe and Middle East Region: "The port has seen impressive growth over the past decade ago, and this is testimony to the spirit and skills of Umm Qasr Port's management team. But current cargo volumes are still only a fraction of what is expected in the future. The Iraqi economy is being transformed as Iraq develops its industrial potential and catches up with its neighbouring economies. ICTSI will provide the world-class port infrastructure and cargo handling skills required to support Iraq's economic transformation."


Photo: US Defense Dept.

Exporting ethane

Enterprise Products Partners plans to build a fully refrigerated ethane export facility on the Texas Gulf Coast. Enterprise has executed long-term contracts to support the development of the facility, which is designed to have an aggregate loading rate of approximately 10,000 barrels per hour, or up to 240,000 bpd. The export facility is expected to begin operations in the third quarter of 2016.

"We are pleased to announce the successful development of our fully refrigerated ethane export facility, which will be the largest in the world," said Michael A Creel, CEO of Enterprise's general partner. "We continue to receive strong interest from the international community for this project and are having ongoing discussions with other potential customers that could result in our contracting the remaining capacity of the facility.

"This facility is another example of Enterprise serving incremental market demand for growing supplies of US energy. This is particularly important for ethane, which is a by-product of natural gas and crude oil production and has limited uses. We estimate US ethane production capacity currently exceeds US demand by 300,000 bpd and could exceed demand by up to 700,000 bpd by 2020, after considering the estimated incremental demand from new ethylene facilities that have been announced. By providing new markets access to ethane, we are assisting US producers to increase their production, which assures the US will have access to abundant supplies of domestically produced natural gas and crude oil," added Creel.

The facility will be integrated with Enterprise's Mont Belvieu complex, which includes over 650,000 bpd of natural gas liquid (NGL) fractionation capacity and 100 million barrels of NGL storage capacity. The partnership's Mont Belvieu facility receives NGL supplies from the major producing basins across the US. Mont Belvieu is connected to growing supplies of ethane from the Marcellus and Utica shale regions through Enterprise's recently completed ATEX ethane pipeline. Enterprise's integrated NGL system will offer supply assurance and diversification for the export facility.

Transferring bulk

Rail operator Norfolk Southern has opened a new bulk transfer terminal in Chesapeake, Va.

NS's 'Thoroughbred Bulk Transfer' (TBT) terminals are specialised facilities that allow customers to transfer a large array of commodities between rail cars and trucks. TBT terminals are owned by Norfolk Southern and operated by independent contractors that are "industry experts in facilitating safe and efficient bulk transfer and distribution". The facilities allow customers without rail sidings to receive the benefits of rail economics and service quality.

Less than three miles from downtown Norfolk, Va., with convenient access to local interstate motorways, the Chesapeake TBT also enjoys close proximity to rail-serving yards on Norfolk Southern's high-density main line. The terminal can handle dry and liquid bulk food-grade commodities such as flour, sugar, grains, and plastic pellets, as well as aggregates, sand, and cement. It is located on 40 acres with seven acres of laydown area, with expansion capability to handle lumber, dimensional products and accommodate container stuffing. The facility features 104 car spots, a certified truck scale, and is fully paved, fenced, and lighted. The Chesapeake TBT is strategically positioned to serve Hampton Roads-served markets as well as markets overseas with its close proximity to nearby container terminals.

Norfolk Southern has a network of 32 TBT facilities in 17 states. The new Chesapeake terminal is operated under license by RSI Leasing Inc.

Koole snaps up Westway terminals

Westway Group has completed the sale of the company's four remaining European terminals to Koole Tanktransport BV, a terminal company headquartered in the Netherlands.

The four terminals are located in Liverpool, UK; Avonmouth, UK; Gdynia, Poland; and, Amsterdam, Netherlands; and, comprised approximately 15 percent of Westway's total capacity at the end of 2013.

"During this past year," stated Gene McClain, CEO of Westway, "Management and the board engaged in a total assessment of the company's potential opportunities for future growth in the markets it serves. This process led to the development of Westway's five year strategic plan. After much discussion and evaluation, a decision was made that the platform for our future growth should be in North America and an expansion of (our) presence there."

Westway currently has 15 terminals in North America, including one in Canada, with a total capacity of 6.7 million barrels.