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Hillebrand entered the flexitank sector in 2007 with the acquisition of Trans Ocean Distribution

## Hillebrand buys Braid to form food grade giant

**The world of flexitanks looks set for a major shake-up with the news that specialist bulk liquids operator Hillebrand has bought one of its biggest rivals, Braid Logistics.**

Historically, they have been the biggest two flexitank operators in the world. In addition, Scotland-based Braid has one of the world's largest food-grade ISO tank container fleets.

Founded 175 years ago in Germany, Hillebrand is one of the biggest wine and beverage logistics operators in the world. It entered the flexitank sector in 2007 with the acquisition of Trans Ocean Distribution (TOD).

Reliable figures for the number of flexitank shipments are notoriously difficult to obtain. Nearly all manufacturers and

operators are family-owned companies or SMEs, and often operate in jurisdictions where they are not required to declare details of business operations and performance.

However, in the first decade of the 21st century industry veteran Bruce Williams compiled accurate statistics on the sector which he shared with Bulk Distributor.

In 2010, it was thought that Braid and TOD/Hillebrand accounted for two-thirds of global shipments which were then around the 300,000 mark.

Since then, of course, the market has not only grown significantly but several new players have entered the sector to provide a highly competitive market structure. However, the integration of two

companies that have dominated the business for the past few decades is big news.

The fact that Braid is also a significant ISO tank operator will boost that part of Hillebrand's service offering. In the past couple of years, Braid has added a couple of hundred 26,000 litre tank containers to its fleet. As of 1 January this year the total fleet stood at 2,750, according to the ITCO Global Fleet Survey.

Braid's new tanks are used for bulk liquid distribution for food and drink industries in New Zealand, Australia, and South East Asia. Hillebrand also operates a fleet of about 1,000 tanks.

Braid's latest financial filing was made in June this year covering the period to 30 June 2019. The firm posted a pre-tax profit of £277,645 on a turnover of £47.8 million. The prior year saw a profit of £477,013 on turnover of £46.8 million.

The company said both the ISO tank and flexitank operations had performed relatively strongly, but tough competition for its freight forwarding and project forwarding operations had made life challenging for the overall business.

In many ways Braid is dwarfed by Hillebrand which currently turns over some €1.4 billion across the whole group, and ships 625,000 TEU a year. Its main business comprises shipments of cased and kegged beers, wines and spirits. In 2018 this accounted for €972 million in sales, compared with €126 million for the bulk (flexitank and ISO tank) division.

Hillebrand's flexitank and 'vinliner' manufacturing is now concentrated in South Africa and China. Two years ago the group closed its flexitank factory in Malaysia.

Hillebrand CEO and chairman Cees van Gent commented: "With its global reach, wide range of customised logistics solutions in bulk liquids transport, as well as its manufacturing and technology know-how, the acquisition of Braid supports Hillebrand's strategy not only to lead the market in logistics services for alcoholic beverages but also for non-hazardous bulk liquids."

Allan Leddra, CEO of Braid, added: "Hillebrand's acquisition of Braid provides a major growth opportunity for both businesses. The two companies will achieve more as a unit, increasing value for customers, given both companies' high reputations in bulk liquids logistics".

Leddra and the Braid management team will join Hillebrand to drive through the integration, although the two companies' services will, for the time being, be run separately. Bringing both businesses together will unfold over the next 12 months

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Spot container rates on the transpacific managed to exceed previous historical highs by 40 percent



# Container lines making hay

**I**t might seem galling to some economic sectors, like hospitality, but one industry is set to do very well in the teeth of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sure, the world knows how well on-line service providers such as Zoom are doing. But old-fashioned container shipping looks like reporting bumper profits when 2020 winds down.

Alphaliner, an analyst outfit, said 2020 would be remembered as “one of the strangest years” for container shipping, with carriers issuing profit warnings at the start of the second quarter as the pandemic forced most countries into lockdown, severely hitting world trade.

But going into the third quarter reporting season, many analysts expected carriers to post exceptionally strong results. Maersk even upgraded its full-year EBITDA guidance by almost 20 percent after reporting a staggering 45 percent increase in its unaudited revenue at US\$9.9 billion, despite a 3 percent year-on-year decline in the number of containers carried.

True, CEO Soren Skou cautioned that the outlook remained uncertain, due to the pandemic. “The positive impact from stimulus packages may be less strong in 2021,” he said. “Potential new lockdowns will impact demand and the timing and effectiveness of a potential vaccine will impact 2021.”

Nevertheless, shippers - the container lines’ customers - must be wondering how this situation has come about when so much of world industry is still reeling from pandemic-induced lockdowns, slowdowns and other plain ‘downs’.

One particular trade lane that has stood out in recent months is

the transpacific. Unprecedented spot freight rates signalled that a transformation of the container shipping sector might be underway and that shippers need to adapt. Consultancy Drewry reported late September that eastbound spot container freight rates increased not just a lot since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak; they managed to exceed previous historical highs by an eye-watering 40 percent.

One reading for the Drewry Hong Kong-Los Angeles spot freight rate benchmark (\$/40ft container), the first spot rate index tracked in the container shipping industry, topped the previous record (\$2,880 in 2012) by \$1,201/40ft box, broke the \$4,000 threshold and reached a 15-year high of \$4,081 - more than double the long-term average price.

Port of Long Beach in California reported its busiest August ever, while Los Angeles saw business that month up by 12 percent year on year.

And, rate strength is not limited to Asia-US lanes. According to Alphaliner, the evolution is even more spectacular between Shanghai and Santos (Brazil). Unexpectedly high cargo demand has also pushed up spot rates on other north-south routes including Shanghai to Durban (South Africa), and to Lagos (Nigeria).

It is the case that Asian container shipments to the US might be very strong, shippers are replenishing their inventories, there is a shortage of empty boxes in China and some shipping capacity has been taken out by carriers through cancelled (so-called ‘blank’) sailings. However, Drewry believes the market is witnessing

something beyond the usual dynamics of supply and demand at work.

Following nearly a decade of dire performance resulting from a rush to order larger and larger vessels, recent years have seen significant concentration in the container shipping industry, such that the biggest seven carriers now control three-quarters of the global fleet, up from 55 percent in 2016.

This was compounded in 2017 with the birth of three global alliances that now control 85 percent of capacity across the Pacific and almost all capacity between Asia and Europe.

Drewry says this higher level of concentration, combined with new, tighter capacity management discipline among carriers, is behind the exceptional freight rate levels seen in the third quarter. “Ocean carriers seem to have come to realise the opportunity presented by the COVID-19 crisis and that by managing capacity closely, they can manage prices with potency,” Drewry stated.

These developments are concentrating not just the minds of shippers. Regulators in China and the US are already watching the market closely.

And, because spot rates tend to be leading indicators of contract rates, Drewry advises contract shippers/beneficial cargo owners to start budgeting for higher contract rates on most routes in 2021.

“With Asia-US West Coast spot rates currently at \$4,000 vs 2020 contract rates typically closer to \$1,500, is it possible that ocean carriers could set their 2021 contract rates at \$2,000 or \$2,500 or even \$3,000 per 40ft container in their next tenders,” the consultancy concluded.

# IMDG changes urged in Honam report

**D**angerous goods might have caused the deadly fire aboard the Maersk Honam.

In October, Singapore’s Transport Safety Investigation Bureau concluded its inquiry into the fire which happened in 2018, causing the deaths of five crew members.

The bureau was not able to determine conclusively the cause, although forensic investigators ruled out electrical faults, fuel tank heating, misdeclared goods and non-IMDG cargo ignition sources. That left one possibility: a block stow of sodium dichloroisocyanurate dihydrate (SDID), an oxidising compound.

SDID is a chlorinating agent classified as an IMDG Class 9 miscellaneous dangerous good - not a more dangerous Class 5.1 oxidiser. However, like a Class 5.1 chemical, it is highly oxidising and has the potential for self-decomposition when stowed in bulk - much like the notorious self-heating compound calcium hypochlorite, which is used for identical purposes.

Maersk Honam set sail with a total of 1,000 tonnes of SDID likely packed into 1 tonne FIBCs, according to the bureau, and stowed in a cube-shaped stack of 54 standard containers in the number-three cargo hold, the location where the fire broke out. The stow was fully compliant, and Maersk’s cargo-loading programme detected no issues with the arrangement when it was placed on board.

But at 19:45 hours on 6 March 2018, while she was under way off the coast of Oman, a smoke alarm went off in the number three

hold. The master headed for the bridge, and on the way up he smelled chlorine, though he saw no smoke. At 19:51 hours, he instructed the chief mate to sound the fire alarm, and the crew mustered for a response. The two designated firefighting teams managed to shut off most of the vents around the hatch for the number three hold, but they could not seal off 16 natural ventilation flaps on the port side. Even though the vents were not fully closed, the master ordered the use of the CO2 flooding system in an attempt to extinguish the blaze.

At 20:35 hours, with the smoke worsening, the master ordered all crew to muster on the bridge. He ordered two more rounds of CO2 flooding, including a full discharge on the final round. The last discharge was followed by several explosions and a large plume of smoke, which engulfed the accommodations block and led most of the crew to flee the bridge in panic.

The report noted that as chlorine-smell smoke was noticed at the onset of the event, it is possible that one or more containers in the number three hold containing SDID were compromised by self-decomposition of the SDID. The block stowage exacerbated the rate of reaction and heat production which resulted in an uncontrollable spread of the fire.

The actual temperature at which exothermic decomposition of SDID is initiated is much lower than the values typically declared by the shipper, the bureau declared, and the presence of free water



Singapore investigators concluded that the fire likely started in a block stow of SDID

and/or stowage in large consignments leads to further substantial depression of the onset temperature.

“Given the susceptibility of SDID to exothermic decomposition in the presence of free water or impurities, serious consideration must be given to the prospect that the decomposition could be initiated as a direct result of the inherent properties of the cargo itself,” the report states.

The special provisions (SP135) within the IMDG Code allows for the classification and carriage of SDID under Class 9, thus not recognising the potential thermal instability of the material. As a result, despite these secondary hazards, SDID was stowed under-deck on Maersk Honam where the main fixed firefighting equipment in this area was CO2, which is ineffective to tackle fires associated with such materials.

Noting the secondary hazards presented by SDID, which are not captured in the current provisions of the IMDG Code, the bureau said provisions in the Code would need to be reviewed. In the interim, appropriate measures, similar to those for calcium hypochlorite as identified by CINS could be considered for adoption.

## Den Hartogh enters China domestic trucking market

Den Hartogh Holding has acquired a majority stake in Shanghai Xintao Dangerous Cargo Transportation Co, Ltd (XT Logistics), significantly increasing Den Hartogh's ability to provide end-to-end chemical logistics in China.

"The majority acquisition of XT Logistics will enhance our domestic footprint in China," said group managing director Pieter den Hartogh. "Our integration with an established trucking partner reflects Den Hartogh China's ambition to offer one stop logistics services for our existing and also prospective customers."

The joint venture will own and operate an initial domestic fleet of 13 trucks and 20 chassis. XT Logistics also has the necessary dangerous goods (DG) trucking license and permits to transport a wide variety of chemicals.

Den Hartogh has identified the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region as a key engine of growth. Since 2019, the company has significantly expanded its commercial operations and fleet presence in APAC to facilitate customer demands for intermodal chemical logistics.

[www.denhartogh.com](http://www.denhartogh.com)



Den Hartogh's joint venture will own and operate an initial domestic fleet of 13 trucks and 20 chassis in China

## OPW buys Girard ISO tank line

Fluid-handling equipment manufacturer OPW has bought Girard Equipment's tank container product line.

OPW said it will now manufacture the tank container products at its facility in Lianyungang City, Jiangsu Province, China, with an emphasis on increasing the company's presence and product portfolio in the Asia-Pacific, Latin American and European regions.

"We have great respect for the Girard brand and believe that it represents a great opportunity for us to grow our presence in the ISO market," said Azam Owaisi, VP & GM of OPW Fluid Transfer Solutions. "This new product range also fits seamlessly into our ongoing efforts to improve the range of products we can offer our customers."

Specifically, the new product family includes manlids, pressure/vacuum relief vents, airline ball valves, composite footvalves and top discharge butterfly valves.

OPW, which is a subsidiary of Dover Corporation, also supplies loading arms, valves and dry-break couplings, tank-truck equipment, railcar valves and equipment, and car wash systems.

[www.opwglobal.com](http://www.opwglobal.com)

Van den Bosch wants to expand its network by investing in smart equipment, an ambitious sustainability approach and a knowledge lab for innovation



## Van den Bosch repositions as 'Supply Changer in Bulk'

Netherlands-based bulk logistics firm Van den Bosch recently unveiled a new growth strategy and market positioning through which the firm wants to ensure sustainable change in its sector.

According to Van den Bosch, data analysis, digitisation, innovations and a more wide-ranging approach to the supply chain all contribute to smarter bulk logistics. An extensive intermodal network remains essential in this respect. In fact, the logistics service provider wants to expand its network even more in the coming years by investing in smart equipment, an ambitious sustainability approach and a knowledge lab for open innovation.

Under the banner theme 'The Supply Changer in Bulk', Van Den Bosch is dropping the word 'transport' from its official name (Van den Bosch Transporten) and introducing a new communication style.

CEO Rico Daandels explained: "Market demand is changing and we are responding to that. We want to strengthen our leading position in order to make smart bulk logistics and more efficient supply chains a reality together with customers. Intermodal transport is of course an essential part of this, but fundamentally it's about accumulating fewer kilometres. Bulk logistics is about more than just quantity. Quality through insights, knowledge and data is essential to perform as optimally and sustainably as possible."

The company reasons that there is an increasing need for insights in bulk logistics, insights that lead to efficient solutions with a positive impact on quality, sustainability, safety and costs.

To this end data is the key. Van den Bosch combines logistics knowledge and experience with the possibilities that data, technology and automation offer. The insights obtained in this way provide the company with much more control over the logistics chain. That means greater delivery reliability, more transparency in the supply chain, fewer empty kilometres and a lower CO2 footprint for clients.

So, for example, customers can receive integrated CO2 advice based on an emissions calculator. New insights like these also offer far-reaching possibilities for developing new concepts and evaluating scenarios for optimising supply chains.

In line with its digital revolution, Van den Bosch is a forerunner in the field of smart load units: smart tank and silo containers that are



Rico Daandels - Market demand is changing and we are responding to that

not only tracked in real time, but which provide clear temperature, weight, seal status and cleaning quality indicators using smart sensors.

Combining all the data available along with specific customer requirements using advanced planning software, the most appropriate equipment and optimal intermodal route can be selected. Based on this, the customer then receives comprehensive information enabling them to make a well-considered choice balancing

impacts on costs, time, CO2 emissions and performance.

Van den Bosch also wants to be an industry leader in sustainability by 2025. The sustainable transition has already been set in motion. Eighty percent of transport is now carried out intermodally. Moreover, payloads have increased which means that the number of transport movements has decreased. This results in significant CO2 savings.

Van den Bosch's ambition is to reduce emissions further for both customers and within its own organisation. Consequently, all locations will be completely climate neutral by 2025.

Van den Bosch has built up a reliable and proven network in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. In addition to the traditional aspects of the network, the logistics firm wants to develop its network through innovative, sustainable and future-oriented networks and partnerships. In light of this, its knowledge lab will become available from 2021, where students, researchers, knowledge institutions, customers, partners and its own organisation will come together. This hotbed for open innovation aims to boost meaningful change within the supply chain of bulk.

[www.thesupplychangerinbulk.com](http://www.thesupplychangerinbulk.com)

## India wants tanks to transport oxygen for COVID victims

The Indian government is turning to tank containers to help ship supplies of oxygen in the country's battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.

In October, the government in New Delhi granted permission to the Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO) to use ISO tank containers to move liquid oxygen around the country.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a release there was an urgent need to move oxygen in sufficient quantities, at short notice, from surplus to deficit areas and hence it was felt necessary to give permission to use cryogenic tank containers to help.

"Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the movement of oxygen within the country through the (use of) ISO containers shall greatly enhance the translocation of safe and fast movement of oxygen through the road network," the Ministry said.

The proposal followed a consultation meeting with cryogenic oxygen manufacturers. The permission has been granted for one year initially.

About 90,000 COVID-19 cases have been reported daily in India in recent months, with many patients on ventilators. Thus, there is a high demand of oxygen cylinders.

While asserting that the country has no oxygen shortage overall, the Health Ministry has been taking steps to deal with regional disparities in availability. On 11 September, it advised states to refrain from posing restrictions on inter-state movement of liquid oxygen, setting up a virtual control room to co-ordinate with state governments on supplies.

Maharashtra and other badly affected states have faced shortages of oxygen cylinders.



# Container loss catalysts

**E**stablished less than 70 years ago, the container industry is perceived by many as the modern face of shipping. Yet despite the sector being well regulated and highly regarded, containers are still lost overboard.

Transport mutual The Swedish Club has looked at the statistics, and published an insight into specific cases complete with hands-on advice for preventing such losses.

Launching *Container focus: Preventing the loss of containers at sea*, even a small number of containers lost overboard can pose a serious danger to shipping and the environment, said Lars A Malm, director, strategic business development & client relations at the Club. "We have used case studies to highlight common and avoidable errors and provided simple to follow advice to prevent them. However, unlike other of the Club's loss prevention guides, in the case of container loss, the statistics that we have analysed fail to tell the whole story."

One catalyst for such losses is known to be misdeclared cargo. Unfortunately, the nature of these losses makes it difficult to translate incidents into data, and more importantly, identify the parties that cause such damage to the industry.

"A second catalyst we have seen is heavy weather," added Malm.

"The excessive forces that are applied to the structure of a vessel in extreme conditions can lay bare errors that have been made when loading the cargo on board. The immediate cause may seem to be poor navigation, but in fact often the root cause lay in port."

The Club's statistics show heavy weather to be the major immediate cause of container losses, responsible for half the claims and more than 80 percent of the costs - despite the widespread availability of sophisticated weather routing systems.

Many of the issues raised in *Container focus* occur time and time again, despite the fact that lost containers can be costly. While just over 4 percent of the Club's claims are for containers lost overboard, these account for over 10 percent of costs. Claims caused by containers being lost overboard generate an average cost of US\$135,000 which is more than two and a half times higher than the average cost of claims from other causes.

*Container focus* explores planning, loading and stability, lashings, and provides advice on dealing with heavy weather. Case studies show the extent of the problems that can be revealed by heavy weather.

"When we look at many cases, we must question the quality of training received by all involved in the logistics chain," Malm



Claims caused by containers being lost overboard generate an average cost of US\$135,000, the Swedish Club says

continued. "Reluctance by crews to reduce speed or alter course to avoid heavy weather; poorly stuffed containers; containers not secured in accordance with the Cargo Securing Manual (CSM); lashing strengths not checked against the loading computer's lashing module; excessive metacentric height (GM – a measure of a vessel's stability); all these factors can be avoided with good seamanship and proper training."

[www.swedishclub.com](http://www.swedishclub.com)



The BoxInBox system comprises a special open top bulk container for carrying coal and ore that can also carry a conventional 20ft dry container inside

## BoxInBox test successful

**T**o help minimise empty runs Austrian container logistics company innoFreight has successfully tested its 'BoxInBox' concept for containerised dry bulks using standard ISO containers.

The prototype was tested extensively at Port of Koper, Slovenia.

Developed for voestalpine Linz, the system comprises a special open top bulk container for carrying coal and ore that can be loaded on a standard container rail chassis. But the key initiative is that it can also carry a conventional 20ft dry container inside.

In this way, containers do not run empty on the return journey, but rather transport standard sea containers loaded with other goods.

innoFreight said further developed was needed to overcome some challenges, notably cleaning the BoxInBox after discharging the bulk material.

In another innovation, innoFreight has incorporated a sensor system from Switzerland's Savy Telematics into special wood containers developed for building products manufacturer Knauf. The sensors automatically detect whether the containers are empty or loaded, and the data is then sent via the telematics system.

[www.innofreight.com](http://www.innofreight.com)

## Stolt profits up

**S**tolt Tank Containers reported third-quarter revenue of US\$125.4 million, down from \$135.2 million in the second quarter.

Transport revenue decreased by 10 percent due to a reduction in shipments. Total shipments for the quarter were down 7.6 percent from a strong second quarter reflecting the seasonal summer slowdown. Utilisation consequently decreased from 69.7 percent to 65.4 percent.

However, STC reported a third-quarter operating profit of \$17.5 million, up from \$13 million in the second quarter. The decrease in revenue was more than offset by lower ocean freight and trucking expenses. Repositioning costs for empty tanks also decreased in line with the reduction in shipments. In addition, actions by STC to reduce operating costs and administrative and general expenses had a positive impact.

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# Batteries could power big rigs sooner than you think

*Auke Hoekstra debunks the myth that large trucks cannot become battery-electric*

**S**ince I wrote my first book on electric cars in 2008, I have been saying they are the future. Back then I was the outlier but now it is becoming increasingly clear that I got it right.

So now I feel it is time to point to the next step: electric trucks, because there is a myth in the road transport industry that needs to die. This myth is that large trucks - especially ones that are heavily used - will be the last road vehicles to become battery electric.

Based on my research at the Eindhoven University of Technology and the Port of Rotterdam, I conclude that soon the opposite will be true. My prediction is that within five years, electric trucks will become the logical choice for many bulk transporters and that within 10 years they will dominate new sales.

The main source of the myth seems to stem from outdated ideas about battery weight. Let's take an example: the 40-tonne semi-truck that dominates road transport. Exceptions aside, these trucks drive up to 800km a day and to electrify such a truck you would need a one-megawatt hour battery. Only 20 years ago that battery would have been lead-acid and would have weighed 25 tons: more than the entire payload of the truck!

But when I wrote my first book about electric vehicles for the Dutch Ministry of Road Transport 13 years ago, lithium-iron batteries had entered the scene. They already reduced the weight to around 10 tons. And in 2020, a modern car battery including pack weights around 5kg per kilowatt hour or 5 tons per megawatt hour. I expect that within five years that weight will be down to 3.5 tons. And it doesn't stop there.

In a recent publication we outlined that redesigning a conventional



truck from the ground up using an electric drivetrain - something that for example the Tesla Semi has done - would result in 2.5-3 tons of weight reduction. The electric motor is lighter, and you can get rid of the diesel tank and exhaust treatment. Then you place the electric motors between the wheels and lose the differential, driveshaft, and a host of other components.

On battery day Tesla went even further, promising 'structural batteries' where the battery partly displaces the steel beams that give a vehicle its rigidity. I estimate this approach could save another ton. And then there are new EU rules that zero emission trucks are allowed to carry two tons more of weight. The end result that within five years, you can expect 40-tonne semis with 800km of range that can carry more cargo than conventional diesel trucks. So battery weight will soon be a problem of the past.

Now let's talk money. Per kilometre a conventional truck burns around one third of a litre of diesel at one dollar per litre. That's 30 cents per kilometre in fuel costs. An electric truck engine is two to three times more efficient and uses around 1.25 kWh per kilometre.

Let's assume a bulk electricity consumer pays eight cents per kilowatt hour. That brings the cost to 10 cents per kilometre in electricity costs. That's a profit of 20 cents per kilometre.

The battery used to be prohibitively expensive. When I wrote that first book in 2008, that one-megawatt hour battery would have cost €1.5 million! But in 2020 the cost of such a battery is down to €150,000 and most experts expect it to get below €100,000 within a few years. Just as important is how long that battery will last. In 2008 you would have had to accept less than a thousand charging cycles which would have meant scrapping the truck before it reached 800,000km or so.

But now 2,000 cycles is the minimum and research by Prof Jeff Dahn and many others indicates that we are heading for batteries that last 10,000 cycles and would basically outlast any truck, even if it drove more than 2 million km. If we assume 1 million km and assume the residual value of the battery is equal to its financing costs, the cost per kilometre of the battery would be 10 cents. That means going electric leaves us with a profit of 10 cents per kilometre!

Of course, there are more things to consider than weight and cost. On the positive side there are things like lower maintenance costs and higher acceleration (which drivers probably like). On the negative side you must arrange for overnight chargers. And you probably need to keep a couple of diesel trucks for really long or multi-day trips. But just imagine: you could dazzle your clients with how sustainable you are, make drivers happy, increase uptime and you could increase profits by 10 cents per kilometre. Can you see why I became convinced electric trucks have a sunny future?

*Auke Hoekstra is a researcher at Eindhoven University of Technology, programme director NEON research, and founder Zenmo simulations*

SPECIAL EDITION

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Held under the theme '**Leadership in the new reality – Catalyzing sustainable growth in the chemical industry**', the agenda will focus on building back a better and more resilient chemical industry, through a committed leadership that puts sustainability at the forefront. It will bring together stalwarts from around the globe to share their inspirational stories and innovative strategies that helped them emerge stronger and chart a future pathway for the chemical industry that is both resilient and sustainable.

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LAG's new aluminium tipping chassis is 400kg lighter than its steel counterpart



# LAG goes light with alu chassis

**T**railer manufacturer LAG Trailers is expanding its range with an aluminium 30ft tipping container chassis.

The new design is 400kg lighter providing greater added value to transporters. It also showcases an improved weight distribution that results in a higher load capacity without overloading the axles at any point.

The first haulier to make use of the new design is Dutch firm InterLogistics. Explaining the choice, CEO Van Erp said: "InterLogistics is always trying to lead the way in the market. The empty weight is 400kg lighter than a steel chassis, which means that 400kg more payload can be transported. The fact that LAG is a stone's throw from our headquarters in Born is a bonus."

The update is not limited to the 30ft tipping chassis. The 40ft tipping chassis has also been overhauled. From now on, LAG is equipping both chassis with a galvanised tipping frame and a more maintenance-friendly tipping hinge in the standard model.

Also interesting is the improved user-friendliness. Thanks to wider axles, the chassis has a much more stable driveability. At the same time, the new design also offers more working space for the transporter to operate the containers and the accompanying equipment.

To make the transition to the aluminium version easier for transporters, LAG ensured that all parts are fully interchangeable with its steel chassis counterpart.

As for the 40ft tipping chassis the design has gone one step further with modular construction. In addition to the compatibility with the steel chassis, it is also compatible with the chassis of the tipping silo trailers.

Engineering manager Jacky Segers explained: "The construction method of the new chassis guarantees clear efficiency gains for both production and service of these vehicles. Companies that make use of LAG products across different ranges will benefit greatly from this evolution."

In addition, equipment leasing company TIP is making strides in the tanker rental market. Together with LAG Trailers as long-term partner, TIP is expanding its tanker fleet.

With a fleet comprising 113,000 trailers of varying functions, TIP is a behemoth in the transport market. In recent years, the company has invested heavily in its tanker fleet, which now numbers over 2,500 tankers.

As usual, the fleet consists of a wide range of models. TIP offers stainless steel tankers as well as aluminium silo trailers for transporting ADR products, foodstuff and bulk goods.

During the past five years LAG has supplied TIP with 330 vehicles. Currently, the trailer manufacturer is working on an order for 30 tankers for the rental company.

The most recent order consists of a range of stainless steel tankers, tipping silo trailers as well as non-tipping silo tankers. The vehicles need to be operated in a variety of situations.

[www.lag.eu](http://www.lag.eu)



Currently, LAG is working on an order for 30 tankers for rental firm TIP



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# Abbey adds 11 vehicles to British Sugar fleet

**Eleven latest generation trucks are being added to Abbey Logistics' core British Sugar fleet, providing bulk sugar movements throughout the UK and Ireland.**

The new CF trucks from DAF feature latest generation aerodynamics, engines and gearboxes together with dynamic intelligent driving modes designed for maximum transport efficiency and minimum emissions.

The vehicles will produce up to 20 percent less nitrogen oxide and fewer particulates than previous generation vehicles being replaced

in the fleet, as British Sugar maximises the environmental benefits of homegrown sugar.

As the sole processor of the UK's beet sugar crop, British Sugar is the leading producer of sugar for the British and Irish food and beverage markets, processing some 8 million tonnes of beet that produces around 1.4 million tonnes of sugar each year.

British-grown beet sugar fulfils 50 percent of the UK's demand and the industry supports up to 9,500 jobs, with sugar going into food processing and on supermarket shelves under the Silver Spoon

brand.

British Sugar has made significant pledges to achieve environmental and efficiency goals in its 2030 sustainability commitments, and the company's supply chains will play a crucial role in achieving these.

Stewart Dickson, British Sugar's logistics contracts manager, said: "We want to reduce the impact on the environment across all our supply chains and transport our homegrown sugar as efficiently as possible. We are delighted that Abbey Logistics understands and shares our commitment to ensure our transport fleet continues to reduce emissions through intelligent management of deliveries and having the latest generation of vehicles in operation.

"Working side by side, Abbey's engineers and our own sustainability experts have procured the very best and most appropriate vehicles for our operation, that will help achieve our sustainability goals, support our customers and the long-term competitiveness of homegrown sugar."

Matthew Parsons, Abbey's general manager for the British Sugar contract added: "Continued investment in our fleet is essential to ensure all operations under our control are efficient and have the lowest impact on the environment.

"This most recent investment will remove less efficient vehicles from the fleet and further reduces the emissions generated from homegrown sugar transport."

The Abbey and British Sugar team also recently Team of the Year at this year's Motor Transport Awards.

Formed in 2016, the team produces initiatives and development on a rolling basis, with each side inspiring the other. Working as team resulted in 99 percent on-time delivery in 2018/19, transport costs per tonne reduced by 13 percent and an 80 percent reduction in personal injuries.

Motor Transport judges were impressed with the seamless integration of the joint team. "Abbey Logistics is completely embedded into the team at British Sugar," said one. "Abbey and British Sugar are a great example of mutually beneficial and successful open-book collaboration."

[www.abbeylogisticsgroup.com](http://www.abbeylogisticsgroup.com)



Abbey's new British Sugar vehicles will produce up to 20 percent less nitrogen oxide and fewer particulates than previous generation units

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15. Emergency Response Team.

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The Sahreej team

# Quality is Kanoo's key

**S**audi Arabia-based Kanoo Tank Services operating under the Sahreej brand has a very simple philosophy, quality, quality, quality.

Sahreej provides professional full-service ISO tank services across the Kingdom with full depot and technical support in Jubail, Dammam and Jeddah.

General manager Mike Tunstall explains how Sahreej has put quality at the centre of its working philosophy, with the belief that concentrating on quality at all stages will drive up customer satisfaction and drive down costs, turn-around times, environmental impact and increase staff safety and job satisfaction.

Technical manger Sarfaraz Salani and HSE manager Faris Al-Shali have both been instrumental in driving Sahreej forward with its quality and systems goals. Achieving ISO9001:2015 in March 2018, the company achieves Gulf SQAS Tank Cleaning Attestation in September 2019. Sahreej has now followed that up with ISO14001 Environmental Management and ISO45001 Occupational Health and Safety certifications in July and August of this year.

To complement these achievements Sahreej has all major safety aspects, such as 'confirmed space', 'working at height', 'container handling' and 'confined space rescue' training conducted by third party specialists who also conduct 'train the trainer' with key team leaders.

Sahreej uses the Intalex Safely platform to ensure all staff have comprehensive up to date skills and safety knowledge across all aspects of ISO tank services, with weekly toolbox theory and practical sessions. Near miss reports are logged each month at each depot and these drive route cause analysis and preventative actions. Sahreej's management, team leaders and specialists have completed the ITCO eLearning program, which is also available to all staff members.

The company has a quarterly continuous improvement dinner where key staff, team leaders and specialists get together to discuss

in an open and relaxed style any problems and potential improvements. As well as enhancing team bonding, staff members find that these working dinners provide areas where they can improve to make the working environment safer, more efficient and more rewarding.

## Environmental goals

Sahreej aims continually to reduce its environmental impact. Each MSDS on receipt is reviewed, has a product specific risk assessment plan issued and is then assessed for the correct cleaning process. Sahreej has over 10 unique cleaning programmes that cover easy clean through, lub-oils, difficult cleans such as naphthaline and on to MDI/TDI, latex and resins. Each cleaning process is continually assessed to enable efficient cleaning, reduced water and cleaning additive consumption.

The aim is to complete the clean in a single cycle without need for any manual secondary cleaning. The recently introduced wastewater treatment plants (WWTP) have reduced water usage by 30 percent. In addition, Sahreej recycles rags for reuse and separates all waste products for efficient disposal.

The company supports and encourages the ITCO initiative of 'Reduce, Re-use, Re-cycle with an ISO Tank' and is promoting the use of ISO tanks as a sustainable means of transporting liquids.

## COVID-19 response

Sahreej was a fast and pro-active adopter as COVID-19 appeared; all staff travel was reviewed from mid-February and by the end of February HSE manager Faris Al-Shali had put the Sahreej business continuity plan (BCP) into operation. Temperature checks, masks, hand sanitiser stations, social distancing were all in place by end-February.

Al-Shali then set in motion home working for all non-operational staff and implemented additional COVID-19 training for all



L-r: Faris Al-Shali, Mike Tunstall, Sarfaraz Selani

operational staff and core on-site management. During local and national curfews, Sahreej obtained permits to continue operations to ensure customer requirements were met. Although some staff have been separated from their families now for more than eight months, the team spirit has shone through these troubled times and general manager Mike Tunstall feels that the pandemic has brought the team even closer together.

Asking Tunstall what lies ahead, he points to a hope for a quick resolution to COVID-19 that will enable staff to return to their loved ones and for Sahreej to push forward with more quality objectives.

The annual management review meeting will be held shortly, were each department gives a presentation of this year's KPIs and recommends goals for the coming year. Some of the main goals for 2021 will be upgrading the Jeddah Facility to increase efficiency and volumes, attaining Responsible Care (RC14001), completing Faris Al-Shali's accreditation as a dangerous goods adviser (DGA) that has been delayed by COVID-19 and to embrace further behaviour based safety (BBS). But most of all Tunstall hopes that all staff remain safe and well.

[www.sahreej.com](http://www.sahreej.com)



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# LFTS, Albatross in yard service agreement

**C**IMC Enric subsidiary Lindenau Full Tank Services (LFTS) recently signed a yard service agreement with Albatross Tank Leasing, part of the Junzheng Group.

Under to the agreement, Albatross designated CIMC LFTS Yard to provide comprehensive services and maintenance for its cryogenic and other tank containers operating in Europe.

Albatross is the first global mainstream leasing company customer to enter the LFTS storage yard since CIMC acquired the Germany-based LFTS company at the beginning of this year.

The tank lessor manages more than 17,000 tank containers in Europe, the United States, China and other countries. In order to ensure that customers can enjoy local services with a timely response, Albatross tends to co-operate with leading tank yards.

LFTS, headquartered in Oberhausen, has among its main businesses the renovation of chemical tanks, the renewal of cryogenic tanks, renovation of gas storage tanks and chemical tankers, and the sale of spare parts. It has factories in Oberhausen and Mesburg, also in Germany.

Established nearly 40 years ago the depot company has long provided services to companies such as Linde, Air Liquid, Hoyer and TWS, and specialises particularly in cryogenic product maintenance and customisation of tanks.

"Albatross attaches great importance to the strong comprehensive strength of LFTS," said Mr Ji, president of the chemical and environmental business centre of CIMC Enric. "After all, CIMC



CIMC Enric completed the acquisition of LFTS in January this year

LFTS has a rich global operation network, market resources, technical capabilities and remanufacturing capabilities, which are highly consistent with the needs of Albatross."

CIMC Enric completed the acquisition of LFTS in January this year, and formally took over its operation. It formed part of a strategic move by CIMC to extend after-sales service to high-end customers in Europe exploiting numerous synergies, especially in natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, hydrogen, chemical goods, and

other energy and chemical logistics equipment.

"LFTS joining with CIMC Enric is also an effective combination of European technology and Chinese manufacturing," Mr Ji added. "It will become the fulcrum of CIMC Enric's after-sales service network in Europe. In fact, after joining CIMC Enric, the synergy between the company and LFTS has gradually become prominent."

[www.lfts.de](http://www.lfts.de)



LFTS has a particular competence in repairing cryogenic tanks



With acquisition of Siloclean, Tankclean now has six sites in Sweden

## Tankclean buys Siloclean

**T**ankclean Sweden has acquired fellow depot service company Siloclean in Stenungsund.

In the past year, Tankclean has expanded its one-stop-shop concept by adding workshop and haulage services to its traditional cleaning of liquid products and heating activities.

Siloclean, which has one site in Stenungsund, has been the main operator for dry bulk cleaning in the Gothenburg/Stenungsund region, while Tankclean has focused on liquid cleaning. With the acquisition, Tankclean says it will strengthen its position as a major cleaning operator in Northern Europe.

CEO Patrik Fagerström commented: "We have for a long time desired to expand further into dry bulk interior cleaning and it's very positive that we have

been able to agree this deal with Siloclean.

"Given that Stenungsund is the main petrochemical centre in Sweden, Tankclean is a key part of the petrochemical infrastructure."

All operational details such as opening hours and contact information for both Siloclean and Tankclean remain unchanged. Following the acquisition, Tankclean now has six sites in Sweden and claims to be the largest tank cleaning group in northern Europe.

Tankclean also performs workshop jobs, terminal handling, heating and haulage services. All facilities are SQAS certified. The company is also represented on the board of the European Federation of Tank Cleaning Organisations (EFTCO).

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Israel's Gold Bond is the first cleaning station outside Europe to obtain EFTCO Global Member status

## EFTCO welcomes first global member

**E**arlier this year, EFTCO welcomed its first global member.

Israeli logistics company Gold Bond is the first cleaning station outside Europe to obtain EFTCO Global Member status and the permission to use EFTCO's Global Membership logo and the organisation's cleaning document (ECD).

The ECD is a support document for every tank cleaning in the supply chain process, detailing that the cleaning process has been carried out.

In 2019, EFTCO members decided to implement global membership to cover the increasing demand for structured quality control and a consistent documentation method of tank cleaning services.

According to the organisation, Gold Bond proved to have high technical quality and environmental protection standards during cleaning and waste treatment.

Gold Bond purchased a 'plug-and-play' rinsing facility from Gröninger. The facility includes a system using a scrubber and activated charcoal filter for handling toxic gases emitted from the container during rinsing. The gases are cleaned inside the system, and the air quality is tested, before any gas is released.

The depot company also signed a service agreement with a European company specialising in rinsing containers and tanks, and that company is providing knowhow for each type of material in the containers. The facility can handle and rinse most materials, including hazmats of all categories.

Other services include steam heating, periodic testing, repairs to the container and frame, furnishing of spare parts, and a set of complementary handling services for flexitank units.

[www.eftco.org](http://www.eftco.org)

# Gröninger systems in Neuss, Dublin

**A**t CoTaLo in the German city of Neuss Gröninger installed a new cleaning system.

CoTaLo is the latest addition to the Filzhut Logistics group, which provides transport for liquid chemicals as well as storage facilities. Now the cleaning station helps Filzhut meet the special requirements of its customers in the region.

Completed in November 2019 the station is equipped with five bays, including three special chemical bays and two special food bays. It can clean tank trailers, tank containers and silo trucks, as two of the chemical bays and two of the food bays are each equipped with five rotor jets. The third chemical bay is equipped with a special 200 bar system for cleaning difficult chemicals from a tank container.

In order to be up to speed with the latest standards in the food industry, both food bays are equipped with the Gröninger Cleaning Guard system. This system monitors and stores the data from each cleaning in order to create a cleaning certificate with the cleaning parameters.

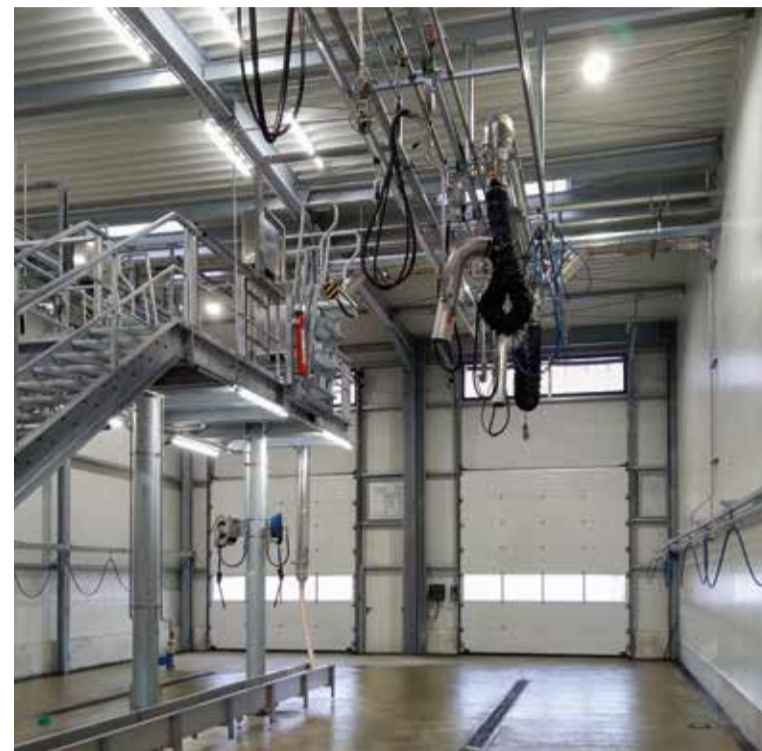
In order to guarantee and maintain a high standard, the depot is equipped with its own waste water treatment system supplied by Gröninger partner Aaqua consisting of an influent buffer, a dissolved air flotation system, a biology tank and an effluent buffer.

At CoTaLo's request, the waste water flow from the food bays can be routed either to the in-house treatment system or to the communal sewer system. As a proof for qualified work various certifications are included, such as SQAS, Kosher and EFTCO Food. The company uses sustainable energy and is environmentally conscious. Use is made of an on-site power plant based on biogas.

In addition to tank cleaning, the CoTaLo depot offers storage of empty tank containers (to comply with all food safety requirements of food products), tank repair including periodic tests, and transport of loaded and empty tanks.

Another recent installation for Gröninger was Tankcleaning Services in Port of Dublin. The company is owned by JP Ryan.

In January 2020, Tankcleaning Services commissioned a 12-position



The Gröninger cleaning station helps Filzhut meet the special requirements of its customers in the region

automatic heating system from Gröninger. Each position is equipped with a temperature controlled steam heating system that continuously monitors the temperature while the product is heated in the ISO tank in a safe, efficient and controlled way.

The steam heating system is available 24 hours a day/seven days a week.

<https://groninger.eu>

## Product expansion for Depot Software

**W**ith automation being key for many this year, due to reduced staff and remote working, 2020 has seen great successes for Depot Software.

Releasing the latest software version 20.09 this summer, the company could offer customers additional workflow templates, dynamic rest-load pricing, environmental surcharge features, multi-entry centralised pricing features and much more.

The expansion of features also extends to the mobile application. DEPOT for Mobile now offers the Heating Measurement Registration module, allowing heating measurement to be calculated through the app, skipping tedious paper registration.

Staff can track working hour and finished items with the mobile M&R Work

Registration module, meaning that time available and time spent can be monitored with the data captured in real-time.

Alongside product updates, Depot Software also gained customers, including Calumet Container Company, a container depot based in the port area of Chicago.

With the end of the year drawing near, the company's newsletter highlighted upcoming initiatives that are currently being worked on, including providing improved menus, views and management overviews to its tank container service software, as well as a collaboration with SYNDA, a value added network service to allow EDI file-exchange between various parties in the transport supply chain.










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# From Russia with flexis

**Shipping bulk liquids in flexitanks between Russia and China has until recently been inordinately complicated.**

Chinese Railways had previously forbidden the movement of containers carrying flexitanks via inland border-crossing points, and so they had to be shipped by sea. This was a big headache for many exporters in Russia often located thousands of kilometres from maritime ports, as they were effectively precluded from using a modern network of rail lines criss-crossing the Sino-Russian border.

With the growth in long-distance container-by-rail transport between Western China and Europe this looked to be a lost opportunity.

Among the particularities of railway transport in China, the country's Ministry of Railways stipulates that a railway container flexitank has to pass specific railway transport product certification before it can be shipped by rail. There is not much difference between a railway flexitank and a standard one, but the baffle and frame are different with the baffle having to be stronger. The Chinese authorities determined that this is necessary because of the long-distance and time-consuming nature of the transport.

However, discussions between Russian rail operators and China Railways have now seen an easing of restrictions which make flexitank shipments by rail more attractive.

A service that began in March illustrates the labyrinthine process of the former regime.

Russian shipping line FESCO Transport Group and logistics operator Rail Cargo Logistics-RUS organised the first shipment of rapeseed oil in containers equipped with flexitanks from Krasnoyarsk to Port of Nantong, Jiangsu Province, China.

The first batch, comprising 10 containers with 216 tons of cargo, arrived in China on 17 March 2020, after a transit time of 35 days.

But that tells only half the story. The logistics chain looked like this. It started with road haulage of the oil from businesses in the Krasnoyarsk Territory to the BLTK terminal in Krasnoyarsk. Containers equipped with flexitanks were then railed to Port of Vladivostok in Russia's Far East as part of the regular FESCO Yenisei Shuttle train. Then, the FESCO China Express regular sea line shipped the containers to Port of Shanghai, where they were loaded onto a barge and transported along the Yangtze River to Nantong.

The result: a journey of 3,500km as the crow flies turns into one of some 6,000km.

The transport project was organised as part of an agreement signed by FESCO, Rail Cargo Logistics-RUS and the Russian Export Centre at the Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum in 2019, and aimed at the development of goods exports using containers from Siberian regions to China. Rail Cargo Logistics-RUS is ultimately a subsidiary Austrian state-owned rail operator OBB.

"In partnership with Rail Cargo Logistics, we plan to develop export transport of bulk cargo in flexitanks from other regions of

Russia, using our services through Vladivostok, as well as land routes through Mongolia and Kazakhstan," said FESCO president Maxim Sakharov at the time.

"The Chinese market is one of the most promising for Russian exporters, especially food cargoes. Therefore, I am sure that the demand for transport in flexitanks will grow as regular shipments are established," said Alexander Baskakov, director of Rail Cargo Logistics-RUS.

But at the end of the summer, another Russian operator, TransContainer, started trial shipments of flexitanks to China via an inland border-crossing point, obviating the need to add a sea-leg to the journey.

Following negotiations between Russian and Chinese Railways, the parties agreed to launch test runs via the Zabaikalsk crossing.

The first four units of 20ft containers loaded with vegetable oil in flexitanks were dispatched from TransContainer's terminal at Penza-2 station late August. If the trials are successful, regular shipments might begin over this route.

TransContainer manages one of the largest fleets of containers and flatcars in Russia over the entire 1520 gauge network. Operations are supported by a nationwide network of rail-side container terminals located at 38 stations, the largest such network in Russia by TEU throughput.

Zabaikalsk sits on the border between Russia and China opposite the Chinese town of Manzhouli. It is one of three direct connections between Russian and Chinese Railways, but importantly is by far the most westerly, with the other two running south from Vladivostok.

Separately, TransContainer, together with fellow Delo Group company Ruscon, recently launched a service transporting mineral oils in flexitanks along the Sarepta-Novorossiysk route and on to ports in Turkey. The first shipment of 12 flexitanks took place on 9 April. If all goes well, up to 80 flexitanks a month will be sent regularly along the route.

"Using flexitanks is a cheaper alternative to specialised containers," commented Boris Borisov, director of the Privolzhsky branch of TransContainer. "This is a promising service of interest to our customers."

Direct containerisation at the site allows the carrier to maintain the quality of mineral oils, avoiding additional transloading at Novorossiysk.

## And tank containers?

Interestingly, TransContainer is also supporting a project to use tank containers for shipping rapeseed oil to China. In March a container train left Barnaul station, south of Novosibirsk in the heart of Russia's Altai region, for China with 80 tank containers filled with rapeseed oil, according to Ffprom22, a state body supporting the food and pharmaceutical industries in the Altai territory.

The total volume of cargo amounted to almost 2,000 tons shipped from the Barnaul oil extraction plant owned by the Blago group, one of the largest producers of vegetable oil in Russia.

The pilot project was launched by logistics firm AllianstransTorg in partnership with TransContainer. The partners said the advantage of



Following negotiations between Russian and Chinese Railways, the parties agreed to launch test runs via the Zabaikalsk crossing

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In the summer TransContainer trial shipments of flexitanks to China via the inland border-crossing point, obviating the need to add a sea-leg

using tank containers lies in its intermodality enabling the transport of bulk cargo by rail, sea or road, and so eliminating the need for transloading of products to other container types.

At a ceremony marking the first train's departure, Alexander Kondykov, deputy chief of the Altai Food Industry trade body said: "Today's event is of great importance for the Altai Territory. Our regional project 'Export of agricultural products' is tasked with gradually increasing the export volume of products, including oils and fats."

He added that using tank containers could halve cargo delivery time, "an essential condition" for food processing companies.

The train departed Barnaul at night on 18 March, and reached the border with China in three days.

Blago Group marketing director Kirill Melnikov added: "In 2019, we exported more than 39,000 tons of oils and meal from the Altai region, up from 15,000 tons in 2018. The introduction of new logistics technologies will help us continue to increase the supply of our products."

Total exports of oil and fat products from the Altai in 2019 amounted to 49,400 tons with a total value of US\$36.7 million.

# PBLA goes virtual

**The Premier Bulk Liquids Alliance (PBLA) held its first virtual network conference on 19-22 October.**

Welcoming PBLA members and sponsors from 36 countries, the organisers said the response was overwhelming.

Enabling new and existing members to connect and continue ongoing dialogue, strengthening their global presence, PBLA members and sponsors had the chance to attend over 500 individual pre-booked meetings with each other.

In addition to these meetings, attendees had the privilege of viewing four live presentations, watched across 16 time zones followed by Q&A. These were:

- A Bulk Liquid Logistics Marine Cargo Insurance solution, by NACORA
- Automating Freight & Supply Chain with Stanford AI & RPA, by EXPEDOCK
- The Container for an Efficient and Safe Flexitank Transport, by AELER Technologies
- Flexitanks & Sustainability by Henri Van der Sluis, lecturer at STC Rotterdam

FlexitankFinder.com, which operates the first B2B global digital platform exclusively serving the bulk container packaging industry, was also represented with suppliers in a virtual booth throughout the event.

In order to reflect the atmosphere of a live physical event, online social networking sessions were organised daily for members and sponsors for a more informal gathering.

PBLA president Jason Wright said: "We really did our utmost to encourage and keep alive the team spirit kindled in the Amsterdam event last year, and make sure all the new members that have joined since, felt welcomed into the PBLA family."



PBLA president Jason Wright – We were delighted with the feedback from the event

He added: "We have been absolutely delighted with the feedback from the event. Every single participant came away feeling it had been well worth their while and that they had quality meetings with other bulk liquid logistics partners in a very user-friendly platform. The whole PBLA team has come away very satisfied with the response received."

The PBLA has come a long way since it started two years ago with the aim of uniting local and regional companies in the bulk liquid logistics industry empowering them to become bigger and better players in international flexitank industry. By supporting each other under the PBLA umbrella, members are able to approach larger corporate accounts and participate in global tenders while offering bulk liquid logistics solutions.

Due to the success of this event, PBLA is planning to host another virtual event in the early second quarter of 2021.

In the interim, PBLA plans to host regular workshops centred around global marketing, global procurement of services and products, sustainability and recycling processes.

The PBLA now covers 42 countries and plans to be in 60 countries by the end of 2021.

[www.pblalliance.com](http://www.pblalliance.com)  
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→Continued from page 1

## Finger on the pulse

A couple of weeks prior to the Braid announcement Hillebrand launched a new flexitank which it claims can solve the challenge of transporting high-density products.

The Pulse flexitank comprises patented technology which ensures that any product that separates or solidifies during transport reaches its destination in its original consistency.

During transport, high-density products, or those that tend to solidify, leave sediment at the bottom of the container in which they are being carried, while the liquid element remains on top. These products include, among other, paint slurry, drilling muds, vegetable oils or any type of oleochemical.

Mixing such transported goods back to their original state, in order to recover their full properties before discharging, used to be a challenging task. But, Hillebrand says the Pulse flexitank can mix the content on destination, allowing for products that undergo this natural separation of particles to recover their original consistency before being delivered.

This state-of-the-art technology consists of introducing either air or the actual product being transported to circulate within two internal channels and agitating the separated particles, bringing them back to their original density in less than one hour.

The Pulse flexitank's distinct design prevents solid deposits from remaining adhered to the corners while providing an ultimate pumpable viscosity. An appropriate steel bulkhead is adapted to the Pulse in order to protect it from putting too much pressure on the container doors, while allowing both doors to be open during the agitation process.

Suitable for road and sea transport, the efficiency of the new flexitank has been extensively trialled and tested for months and successfully implemented on a global scale.

Hillebrand says this takes transporting non-hazardous liquids to a new efficiency level, avoiding the need for any external equipment and controlling every aspect of the process from the doors of the container. "Flexibility and complete product retrieval when developing the Pulse flexitank were key," said Kevin Fry, bulk liquids technical development director. "Our customers have the ability to choose the preferred method of aeration or agitation without having to enter the container."

According to a live trial report, the Pulse produces 10 times less

residue than standard tanks after being agitated, "managing to discharge such challenging products without leaving a trace in the flexitank has given us the satisfaction of bringing a solution to an extended dilemma for both customers and logistics providers," Fry added.

The flexitanks are supplied with a variety of venting options tailored to specific commodities and needs.

All Hillebrand's flexitanks are single use but also 100 percent recyclable, a process carried out in the company's own facilities. Bulkheads also are collected and refurbished for reuse.

## Rebrand

Last year, Hillebrand announced a major rebranding exercise by dropping the 'JF' initials from its name. As important, it completed the streamlining and full integration of its affiliated companies bringing the Trans Ocean operation and keg management outfit Satellite Logistics Group (SLG) into the core brand for a stronger identity. The group said the unification would enable Hillebrand to present its specialised logistics solutions under one name.

In June this year, Hillebrand partnered with Carbon Footprint to present a carbon life cycle assessment of its 24,000 litre flexitank, which concluded that they are an environmentally friendly option when properly recycled.

The assessment focused on the effect of emissions of the complete cycle of a flexitank, from the embodied raw material emissions to its disposal and recovery, taking into account eight different route scenarios, showing the average emissions in the final calculation.

Four types of Hillebrand's 24,000 litre units were used in the report and compared against an ISO tank, using the same weight of



Braid and TOD/Hillebrand have historically dominated flexitank shipments

product and considering the same pickup and drop-off locations, and taking into account that an ISO tank has a useful life of 82.5 trips. When averaging every route scenario and completing the same delivery, Hillebrand's flexitanks were responsible for causing around 6,061kg CO2 emissions, whereas ISO tanks caused around 6,702kg CO2 emissions. The data were determined using the weighted average basis.

The research concluded that the main differences in the emissions' variations between both transport types are primarily due to product distribution. The difference is explained by the fact that an ISO tank is heavier than the combined weight of Hillebrand's flexitank and an ISO 20ft dry container. Additionally, tank containers are often required to be transported from a greater distance to the depot for loading and returned after unloading, Carbon Footprint noted in the report, whereas dry freight containers are not.

Hillebrand says it is fully committed to recycling its flexitanks, last year 52 percent of them were recycled mainly mechanically, which generated only 6.75kg CO2 emissions, less than the 7.27kg CO2 associated with cleaning an ISO tank, which requires 2,500 litres of water and 2.5kg of detergent per cleaning, the report stated.

Hillebrand's goal is to recycle 75 percent of all flexitanks globally by 2022 and recover 75 percent of bulkheads in 2021. Today, 95 percent of the group's wine flexitanks arriving in the UK or Australia are already mechanically recycled and reused.

[www.hillebrand.com](http://www.hillebrand.com)

[www.braidco.com](http://www.braidco.com)

Hillebrand's new Pulse flexitank can mix content on destination allowing products to recover their original consistency before being delivered



Well-known - World Class manufacturer of FIBC for Food and Pharma Grade now manufactures...

## CONTAINER LINERS

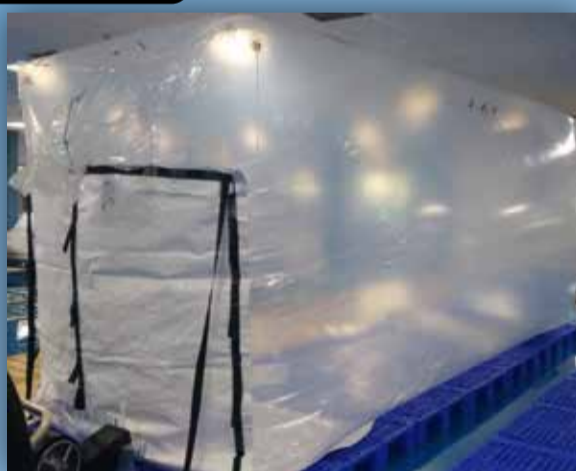
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Actual photograph taken during testing by American Rail Road Association

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# Plastic pallets protecting FIBCs

Introduced in the 1950s, FIBCs (bulk bags) were heavily adopted in the US during the 1980s.

While most often used for cement and hazardous materials early on, bulk bags are now used for a range of industrial, agricultural, pharmaceutical, and other products. However, packaging company Trienda believes there hasn't been an effective solution for international and domestic bulk bag shipments.

The company says it is one of the first in the market to devote engineering and manufacturing capabilities to develop a plastic material handling solution for bulk bags.

Trienda is now offering a new FIBC bulk bag pallet that safely transports goods at a price competitive to wood.

The impetus for the new pallet stemmed from an astonishing increase in consumer demand. More and more of Trienda's customers were asking for better solutions than wood and cardboard, so looked at the issue and found a gaping hole in the market. First, it discovered that organisations throughout the world use about 100 million bulk bags annually, and a 12 percent growth is expected each year as demand increases.

It was clear that international shipments were particularly problematic for companies using wood bulk bag pallets because they require fumigation. This added step means that plants must oversee and manage two stock keeping units (SKUs): one for fumigated pallets and another for non-fumigated ones. Not only was this hassle, it was also costly. Some companies work around the fumigation requirement by using cardboard instead of wood, but many are disappointed when they learn that it goes limp quickly in any humid environment.

Even when shipping non-fumigated wood pallets domestically, they can easily break and splinter. Any damage to the wood pallet also has the potential to cause secondary damage to the FIBC's



Trienda's customers were asking for better solutions to FIBC pallets than wood and cardboard

contents. Just one piercing to the bag can make cargo seep out, causing product loss and damage.

When a plastics and resins client asked Trienda to create a plastic pallet that works with bulk bags, the firm heeded the call; and so the bulk bag pallet was born.

The plastic pallets do not splinter and are not prone to breakage, the company says. Likewise, there are no nail heads, wood shards, or other potential hazards that could pose damage to the cargo and working environment. In addition, for international shipments – whether one- or multi-way – the plastic pallet does not need to be fumigated.

Being easy to clean, they also do not harbour bacteria, which is useful for contaminant-free cargo.

Each pallet weighs less than 14 pounds, which is about 10 pounds less than traditional fumigated wooden pallets. And while a forklift can crack a traditional wooden pallet and pierce the bulk bag, the plastic pallets have an internal tunnel, so the fork tines only touch the pallet and not the FIBC.

Finally, the pallets can be double or even triple-stacked for product storage.

[www.trienda.com](http://www.trienda.com)

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## Events

The following event dates were correct at time of going to press

**World Bulk Wine Connect**  
23 November - 4 December 2020  
VIRTUAL EVENT  
[www.worldbulkwine.com](http://www.worldbulkwine.com)

**Annual GPCA Forum**  
10-11 February 2021  
Dubai, UAE  
<https://gpcaforum.net/>

**Interpack**  
25 February - 3 March 2021  
Messe Düsseldorf, Germany  
[www.interpack.com](http://www.interpack.com)

**Intermodal Connect**  
March 2021  
VIRTUAL EVENT  
[www.intermodal-events.com](http://www.intermodal-events.com)

**StocExpo**  
16-18 March 2021  
Antwerp, Belgium  
[www.stocexpo.com](http://www.stocexpo.com)

**Intermodal Asia**  
16-18 March 2021  
Shanghai, China  
[www.intermodal-asia.com](http://www.intermodal-asia.com)

**Multimodal**  
23-25 March 2021  
NEC, Birmingham, UK  
[www.multimodal.org.uk](http://www.multimodal.org.uk)

**Transport Logistic**  
4-7 May 2021  
Munich, Germany  
[www.transportlogistic.de](http://www.transportlogistic.de)

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## Greif, Delta form JV

Greif has ventured into a partnership with Delta Containers and formed a new joint venture company, Greif Delta Plastics UK.

Delta is a UK independent supplier of reconditioned IBCs. Based in Manchester, Delta operates two IBC washing lines, an IBC rebottling & remanufacturing facility plus a complete plastic recycling and pelletising extrusion line.

The joint venture business will manufacture new blow-moulded 1,000 litre inner bottles for use in various models of IBC with plans to expand into the manufacture of Greif brand GCUBE IBCs. The blow moulder is installed at Greif's EP site.

With the formation of the JV, Greif says it is strengthening its footprint in the IBC market in northwest Europe.

Greif posted a third quarter fall in net sales in its rigid industrial packaging by US\$93.6 million to \$548.5 million. Gross profit fell by \$12.1 million to \$114.4 million. Adjusted EBITDA was down \$5.3 million to \$77.5 million.

In flexible packaging, net sales decreased by \$5.2 million to \$69.3 million. Gross profit fell by \$1.7 million to \$14.3 million, while adjusted EBITDA decreased \$0.2 million to \$7 million.

[www.greif.com](http://www.greif.com)



The Greif, Delta JV plans to expand into the manufacture of GCUBE IBCs

# Wascosa's safer tank wagon

**W**ascosa has developed a new tank wagon for acrylonitrile, a dangerous good.

Developed in conjunction with specialist chemical producer AnQore and wagon builder Tatravagonka Poprad, the most notable features are the self-supporting tank construction as well as the special headshield, the 'PS02 Protection Shield' from system supplier EST Eisenbahn-Systemtechnik. This was specially developed for this wagon.

The PS02 protects the tank in the event of a collision with the wagon next to it or with other vehicles and obstacles. Because it is located far forward at the front of the wagon, it repels dangers to the



The most notable features of the new safe tank are the self-supporting construction and the special headshield

tank as early as possible, rather like the lateral anti-climb protection above the buffers.

Apart from safety advantages, the new design allows for an increase in productivity through weight savings. This is made possible by a more efficient use of materials, which was determined by means of calculations using the finite element method and verified in practical tests. Despite the additional, modern safety features, the wagon has an enlarged tank for acrylonitrile with an optimised volume of 93cbm.

Further features are the derailment detectors, the crash buffers with a particularly long deformation path, the anti-climbing protection in accordance with RID TE 25 as well as telematics.

The delivery start was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, but Wascosa said some 100 new wagons will be delivered by the end of this year.

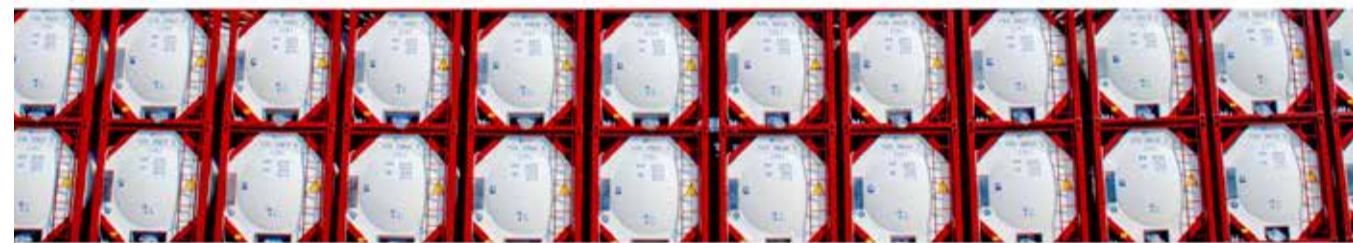
The design is a development of the Wascosa safe tank car which was launched in 2010.

"Constant progress and the determination to provide the greatest possible safety for dangerous goods tank wagons are part of our DNA and are what continuously drive us to break new ground," said Wascosa CEO Peter Balzer.

[www.wascosa.ch](http://www.wascosa.ch)  
[www.anqore.com](http://www.anqore.com)



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NETWORKING



Since mid-August, modern railcars have been transporting steel coils and pre-products twice a day between two of Schütz's production plants

# Schütz on the rails

**S**chütz is, of course, best known as a giant in the world of industrial packaging.

But in addition to providing equipment packaging systems to help customers optimise their logistics processes, managing the intake of raw materials into the company's main production plant also requires modern and efficient internal logistics.

To this end, Schütz has been steadily transferring its logistics processes from road to rail, wherever that is possible. Since mid-August, 24 modern railcars in the company's blue and silver livery have been transporting steel coils and pre-products twice a day on weekdays between the company's two plants in the Westerwald region of Germany, which are connected via their own rail sidings.

Since the company was founded, Schütz has been processing steel in its own plant and manufacturing steel components for products in its packaging systems and energy systems divisions.

To keep pace with the company's needs, the steel service centre in Siershahn, about 6km south of Schütz's headquarters in Selters, has been substantially expanded and equipped with the latest generation of machinery for slitting and cutting flat steel.

As a result, inter-company transport is set to increase significantly. The company's own rail logistics system is said to be the ideal solution, ensuring the efficient internal supply of raw materials. Coils processed in Siershahn are delivered just-in-time directly by railcar to the production facility in Selters.

[www.schuetz.net](http://www.schuetz.net)

# DB's new port links

**F**rom December, DB Cargo is to offer new connections to and from Europe's two largest ports, Rotterdam and Antwerp.

The new daily connections will link the western ports with the most important economic hubs in Germany. From next year, the transport volume on these connections is set to grow by around 100,000 containers a year, the rail freight operator said.

"We are constructing the same kind of connections for our customers in Antwerp and Rotterdam that have proven so successful for many years in other ports like Hamburg. The new departures from the western ports alone will take 70,000 lorries off the roads, relieving both infrastructure and the environment," said Dr Sigrid Nikutta, CEO of DB Cargo.

With daily connections to all major terminals in the two ports, goods can be transported onwards using both combined transport and single wagon freight. Even sectors with fluctuating volumes, such as the chemicals industry, can take advantage of the new connections.

Volumes are transported from the ports and bundled at Kijfhoek. The Netherlands' largest shunting yard is located between Antwerp and Rotterdam. From there, the cargo is carried to destinations overnight by fast direct trains.

Antwerp and Rotterdam handle 27 million containers each year. But only 8-11 percent of the freight processed arrives by rail. It is a different story at Europe's third-largest port, Hamburg, where trains bring over half of the cargo handled.



DB Cargo's new departures from Antwerp and Rotterdam will take 70,000 lorries off the roads