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Images from CCTV show the moment when the tank dropped, followed by the gas release

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Aqaba chlorine accident: tank 'too heavy' for crane

An overstressed crane cable is being blamed as the direct cause of the fatal chlorine gas accident in Jordan's Port of Aqaba.

The incident happened on Monday 27 June as tank containers charged with liquefied chlorine were being loaded onto the MV Forest 6. Thirteen people died and about 250 were injured.

Jordan's Minister of Interior Mazen Al-Faraya was quoted in local media saying that the direct cause of the accident was "an overburdened cable" being used on the crane that was loading the tank containers. The tank that fell when the cable failed was three times heavier than the carrying capacity of the cable, the minister said at a press conference.

The investigation into the incident has been referred to the Public Prosecutor.

At least 20 tonnes of chlorine escaped when the cable snapped. The force of the fall ruptured the pressurised container, enveloping the vessel in a bright yellow gas.

The minister said that an initial investigation had proved that safety measures for handling dangerous materials at Aqaba had been ignored.

Faraya said that the Cabinet had approved the firing of the directors general of the Jordanian Maritime Authority and the Aqaba Company for Ports Operation and Management, as well as a number of other officials at the company.

The Cabinet also dissolved the Aqaba Company for Ports Operation and Management's board of directors, which will be reconstituted at a later date.

"The investigation proved the responsibility of the general manager of the Aqaba Company for Ports Operation and Management, the director of the company's operations department, the head of the unloading and loading department, the head of the unloading and loading shift, and the captain of the ship at the time of the accident, among others," Faraya was quoted as saying.

Investigators also determined that certain tasks had been assigned to insufficiently trained staff.

Investigation goals

The investigation committee sought to achieve three goals, according to the minister. First, to establish the truth behind the events; second, identify any negligent parties and recommend appropriate punishments; and third, identify weaknesses in the system and present recommendations to address them, according to Faraya.

Additionally, the committee sought to reassure the public that the state was tackling the issue seriously to prevent similar incidents in the future, he said.

Furthermore, the Department of Criminal Evidence and Laboratories submitted a technical report on the incident.

CCTV images show the moment when the tank dropped, followed by the gas release. They also show the tank being lifted with a sling system under the crane hook, rather than a dedicated container spreader; the latter being considered as much safer for handling any type of ISO container.

A representative of the chemical and cosmetic industries sector in the Jordan Chamber of Industry, Engineer Ahmed Al-Biss, told the state-run Jordan News Agency (Petra) that chlorine gas is essential for various uses, especially for sterilisation of drinking water.

"Chlorine is used in the chemical, petrochemical and organic industries, mostly for health and sterilisation purposes for toilets, in cooling and heating towers, as well as in household cleaning materials," he was quoted as saying.

Chlorine is twice as heavy as air, so when tank ruptured the gas spread laterally staying close to the ground, creating a cloud with a fatal concentration of the gas. During the First World War chlorine gas was even used as a chemical weapon.

Safety concerns

The Union of Port Workers told *The New Arab* that the union had previously raised concerns about safety to the Aqaba Port Company (APC), but said their concerns went unaddressed.

These included better standards when dealing with hazardous materials, replacing old, worn-out equipment, and confining hazardous materials to a special section of the port.

In 2005, a similar incident occurred in Graniteville, South Carolina, when a freight train carrying three 90-ton rail tank wagons of chlorine collided with a parked locomotive in a marshalling yard. One of the tanks ruptured releasing more than 40 tons of chlorine. Seven people were killed and more than 70 were injured.

Hoyer brings Essen warehouse into operation

Chemicals company Evonik and Hoyer jointly celebrated the commissioning of an innovatively equipped logistics centre in Essen, Germany, with a symbolic handover of keys in June.

Conceptually planned in detail with the customer, the logistics warehouse represents the high demands of the logistics company specialising in liquid goods, in the areas of safety, customer orientation, quality and efficiency.

With its Supply Chain Solutions division, Hoyer has at its disposal a dedicated team of experts for on-site and off-site solutions to handle the products of the chemical and gas industries.

Operated by Hoyer, the new logistics centre is the result of intensive co-operation between the logistics provider and Evonik. The facility, with technologically state-of-the-art equipment, also meets the highest safety standards. Goods receipt, storage and order picking processes are semi- and fully-automatically implemented as far as possible.

For example, goods flow has been digitalised via the seamless tracking of SSCC18 pallet numbers. This increases efficiency in processing and personnel deployment, thus simplifying and speeding up the complex value-added chain of the chemical industry: a critical success factor in this sector.

Björn Schniederkötter, Hoyer's CEO, said: "We understand the challenges our customers face – and support them with customised solutions to meet these successfully. Safety and efficiency set the parameters in this respect. We welcome the fact that Evonik shares our concepts of value. In addition to a dedicated protection and prevention concept, the new location inspires confidence through efficient work lines, state-of-the-art equipment, intelligent software and energy-efficient plant."

The centre is Evonik's largest international finished product warehouse for palletised goods, and is also highly modern: it is the first time Hoyer has used driverless transport systems in a warehouse. In addition, there are semi-automatic storage and retrieval devices, with the option of driving forward full automation.

Hoyer also co-ordinated the approach routes and processes in detail with Evonik. The largest manufacturing industrial company in Essen transfers various raw materials and finished products from the adjacent site across plant boundaries to the Hoyer logistics centre, where containers are stored centrally and order-picked for onward transport. The ramp-up in volume terms to the target filling level will be achieved in the second half of 2022. The warehouse offers 27,000 pallet spaces on 19,000 sqm of floor space for 18,000 tonnes of products, which are stored there safely and properly with the help of software.

Operated by Hoyer, the new logistics centre is the result of intensive co-operation between the logistics provider and Evonik

Moreover, the precise planning and direct connection between production and storage facilities contribute to Evonik's climate targets: the location of the logistics centre alone saves the company around 3 million tonne-kilometres of road transport – equivalent to around 3,000 truck journeys. This saves a total of 210 tonnes of CO2 a year. In the warehouse itself, a modern electrified fleet of industrial trucks and the energy saved by equipping the site with the latest LED lighting contribute to sustainability.

Full hydrogen service

Since the beginning of the year, Hoyer has consolidated its full-service portfolio of service station logistics and specialised gas logistics. The provision of transport services to the European service station networks is now also available for alternative fuels such as hydrogen (H2). In doing so, Hoyer is supporting infrastructural changes for the energy transition.

The use of green hydrogen is internationally accepted as a key factor in successful decarbonisation. Environmental initiatives pay special attention to the CO2 emissions from industry and transport. The future use of green hydrogen is widely recognised as essential to drive decarbonisation, particularly for long-distance journeys. Accordingly, service station network owners are increasingly equipping their sites to include hydrogen refuelling facilities. Due to the characteristics of hydrogen, there is an increasing safety requirement for operators and suppliers.

Richard Thompson, commercial director, gas & petroleum logistics explained: "We have specialists with expertise both in supplying service stations and in gas logistics. We have operated both business areas safely and reliably for many decades."

By combining its know-how in handling gases with experience in digital, system-supported supplies to service stations, Hoyer now also offers automated, prediction-based product inventory management and supply logistics for H2 as well.

Thompson added: "We can now provide service station network owners with our management services both for fossil fuels and also for alternative fuels. We undertake prognostic planning and full implementation for both product types, all from a single source, and of course with product-specific expertise."

For its customers in Europe, Hoyer transports both hydrogen compressed under high pressure (compressed gaseous hydrogen, GH2) and cryogenically liquefied hydrogen (liquid hydrogen, LH2).

www.hoyer-group.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Roy Boneham, New Alchemy Training and Consultancy Organisation, United Kingdom

Fire Test for Fibre Reinforced Plastics Tank Containers – Are they Uninsurable?

I write as a former industry representative member of the United Nations Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods Portable Tank Working Group which took place in the mid-1990s.

It was responsible for producing what we see today as Chapters 4.2 and 6.7 in the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods Model Regulations (the so-called Orange Book) and the international and national modal regulations.

I write, too, as someone with nearly 54 years' experience in the transport of dangerous goods in one capacity or another and who saw his first ISO tank container in around 1972. I would also like to recall that for a period I served as the Safety Officer for a container shipping line.

At the behest of Russia, proposals were introduced at the United Nations Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods a few years ago for the removal of the prohibition on using other than metallic materials for the construction of portable tanks (typically in the form of ISO tank containers) intended for the transport of dangerous goods.

Discussions about these proposals have been ongoing for a number of years but we are now at a stage where, for example, the International Maritime Organization needs to face the challenge of whether the provisions adopted by the UN Subcommittee of Experts for inclusion in the Model Regulations should be also adopted into the IMDG Code.

This would make it possible for portable tanks with shells made of Fibre Reinforced Plastics (FRP) materials to be used in the maritime mode for the transport of dangerous goods as new chapter of the Code thereby overturn the longstanding restriction in the Code that tank shells should only be made of metallic materials.

In the text published in the Model Regulations it is recommended that a prototype external fire resistance test be performed of 30 minutes duration. I am not privy to the discussions going on at IMO level but it has long seemed to me that this fire test proposed for is wholly inadequate as a test representative of the conditions at sea on long haul voyages such as, for example, from Santos, Brazil to San Francisco, USA, and that a 48hr test or longer would be more appropriate to represent conditions at sea.

Would your readers support this point of view? I am aware of at least one international organisation representing seafarers which shares my concerns with observer status at the IMO...

It seems to me that nothing should be done to increase the risk of fires spreading on container ships which, sadly as I write, appear to be occurring at the rate of one a month or more, many of which also appear to have some roots in irregularities with the transport of dangerous goods. Moreover, is it not the case that cargo and freight container insurers when they realise that this minimal test could possibly soon become international law for maritime transport might start to refuse to insure them?

I was involved in the operation of a small fleet of such ISO tank containers in the late 1970s and early 1980s for the transport of non-dangerous goods in the sea mode. They worked well though they had to be withdrawn after about 10 years because of shell cracking. That was a long time ago now and I am sure the FRP materials available today will afford a longer life in sea transport? Nevertheless this experience of mine should not be overlooked. The conditions they will endure in maritime transport are far different to those they l endure in, road transport, for example. Should there be a limit on the lifetime of these tank containers used in the maritime transport mode?

400 bulkers for Den Hartogh

A large order of dry bulkers placed by Den Hartogh was recently completed by Italy-based Sicom.

The 400 30ft pallet wide tipping bulk containers represents the second such order in two years from Den Hartogh for the Italian container and swap body manufacturer.

Sicom previously delivered 200 bulkers in July 2020. The containers are used for a range of dry bulks, including plastic granules, foodstuffs and various minerals within Den Hartogh's European network. The fleet now totals around 6,100 dry bulk containers.

Den Hartogh's dry bulk business unit is based in Hull, UK, while its liquid bulk unit is in Chiasso, Switzerland, close to the Italian border.

The newbuild containers were dispatched by rail from Brà-Cherasco near the Sicom plant in Cuneo. The bulkers have a lower tare weight and higher internal cube than existing units on the market, said Silvio Alfero, Sicom's commercial manager.

www.denhartogh.com

First regs decisions on extra-large tanks

For decades UN regulations have covered pretty much all that needs to be covered for standard tank containers.

But a few years back, extra-large tank containers started to appear. These behemoths were first developed in 2015 by tank manufacturer Van Hool and German chemicals giant BASF. They were first used in 2017 at BASF's site in Ludwigshafen, Germany, to manage in-plant logistics.

Specifically, the giant tanks ferry raw materials between different parts of the chemical plant on automated guided vehicles replacing rail tank wagons that used to do the same job more slowly and more expensively.

The tanks range in size from 45ft to 52ft and can have a capacity of as much as 73,000 litres, compared with 21,000 to 26,000 litres in conventional tanks. Such a step change in size, capacity and weight necessitated a review of current regulations covering the ISO tank industry.

Thus, in March this year a UN working party on the transport of dangerous goods took its first decisions regarding the regulation of extra-large tank containers.

The decisions – on definition, shell thickness and pressure resistant closures –offer greater regulatory clarity for manufacturers and users.

The regulations for transport of dangerous goods by road (ADR) and rail (RID) were developed assuming a maximum capacity of around 36,000 litres, leading to questions over the need for additional legal provisions for them.

At the UN Economic Commission for Europe (Unece)'s Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (WP.15) in March, it was agreed the extra-large tanks would be defined as having a volume of more than 40,000 litres.

This definition was proposed by Cefic, which argued that it would offer clarity and legal certainty for investors, leasing companies, manufacturers and users to invest in or use extra-large tank containers.

A minimum thickness for the shell was also agreed at: 3mm for a conventional and 4.5mm for an extra-large tank. As a transition measure, extra-large tank containers constructed before 1 July 2023 that do not conform with this can still be used.

A requirement for pressure resistant closures was also agreed. This provision – requiring pressure resistance of manhole closures to be designed at a test pressure of 4 bar – is already in place for tank wagons to avoid leaks from surge movements of liquid. Extra-large tank containers that are divided into compartments of no more than 7,500 litres by partitions or surge plates are exempt.

Extra-large tanks could find a wider market as opportunities arise for shifting freight from road to rail. Although, Jochen Conrad, head of the dangerous goods department at the

Extra-large tanks could become more popular and regulations needed updating

Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), said that there are other safety issues that still need to be considered for the containers.

These include tank head shields and provisions to prevent overriding of crash buffers.

Cefic also pointed out that the current RID regulation does not specify a minimum filling degree for rail tank cars, while road tank containers (both standard and extra-large) do require a minimum filling degree. Cefic therefore proposes to remove the minimum filling degree in the RID for all small and extra-large tank containers that are transported only by rail.

The provisions mainly apply to the RID due to their size and mass, but also to the ADR because the containers can be transported by road when empty.

The regulations come into force on 1 January 2023.

Why it is crucial to have an agile implementation team

If the last couple of years have taught us anything, it's that being agile and resilient are fundamental to achieving success in such turbulent market conditions.

We've seen the impact of Covid-19 and Brexit on supply chains, the knock-on effect of the driver shortage, followed by sharp hikes in the cost of labour, materials and fuel, all in a very short space of time. There's no denying that these events have had a huge impact on the haulage industry.

At Suttons, there have been some notable changes in behaviour that we have seen recently from our customers. The first is that customers are less inclined to put their business out to tender when they usually would. It appears that unless their current incumbent is providing them with unacceptable levels of service or safety, staying with them is seen as taking less risk. The 'fear of the unknown' which has surrounded us by recent events has caused customers in the bulk logistics industry to be far more risk averse.

Secondly, we have seen customers being forced to find alternative logistics support at short notice when their incumbent has been unable to move products for them altogether. This has often been seen due to an inability to recruit and retain drivers or the lack of fleet capacity to support growing contracts.

Over the last 12 months, Suttons Tankers have been able to increase its fleet by 7.5 %, putting an additional 40 trucks on the road to support customers when they needed it most. Our implementation team have been able to get contracts up and running, and products moving across the UK, at a rapid rate, without compromising on safety and service.

We have proved that we are able to adapt in an agile market, and at a time where it has been a challenge to keep drivers. We have been able to recruit and retain drivers by providing them with opportunities for progression, a positive work environment, and arguably most importantly, an attractive salary and benefits package.

Having an excellent reputation in the industry for leading levels of service and safety was undoubtedly a contributing factor to our recent success, but it cannot be denied that there were three fundamental pillars that enabled us to win additional business. These include our fleet policy, which is centred around continuous investment, our ability to produce bespoke commercials for each customer, and finally our recruitment strategy. Each of these areas of the business have skilled functional heads who form part of our agile implementation team who have led us to success.

Achieving incremental new business wins over the last 12 months would not have been physically possible without a growing fleet. At Suttons Tankers, we have an enabling approach to growth which is backed up by our fleet policy and replacement programme.

"We have very good relationships with our suppliers which have enabled us to source and introduce additional units and trailers to our existing large fleet" says Steve Egglestone, Fleet Engineer. Having the capital investment to do so has been fundamental to our success in providing customers with the equipment they have needed, where others haven't been able to provide.

Our commercial team understand that each customer is unique and has their own individual operations and requirements. With a combined total of over 60 years' experience as a team and our ability to take the time to listen to each customer, we ensure that we can meet these requirements, tailoring the solution operationally, commercially, and financially.

Nigel Gilhooley, Commercial Manager, explains, "The past couple of years have been tough on all businesses, but with a strategic view and a personal approach, we have ensured our customers, both existing and new, are receiving the service we pride ourselves on and we are adding value through our bespoke propositions."

Tim Gibbons, Managing Director at Sparkford, praised Suttons for its ability to implement a contract at short notice which delivered real benefits to their business. "The contract [Suttons] came up with for us, back in September, was quite simply, a life-saver. We're indebted to [the team at Suttons] for that. Indeed, the flexibility and willing exhibited by the transport offices at Suttons has been nothing short of exemplary."

The driver shortage has dominated the news headlines recently. To address this, Suttons came up with a compelling recruitment package for new drivers, which included succession planning, the opportunity for training, as well as an attractive salary and work/home balance, which we know is so important.

With the incremental new business wins we have recently achieved our implementation team have had to work hard to ensure that we have drivers who are appropriately trained to work on specific contracts with specific products. Andy Miller, Driver Training Manager, tells us that "Suttons have always had a strong focus on cross training drivers to ensure that we can redeploy resource where it's needed most. This allows us to meet customer demand, especially when volumes are seasonal or has fluctuations."

From smaller contracts with a couple of trucks, to much larger contracts involving TUPE transfers and the procurement of fleet, our experienced implementation team understand that each customer and each contract is unique. This is why we follow such a rigorous process for implementation. It is crucial that each implementation is planned meticulously, with every detail thought out in a methodical way. The breadth of preparation prior to go-live can differ significantly, but for all contracts we follow the same process to ensure our implementation goes as smoothly as possible.

It is thanks to our cross functional team who put our customers at the forefront of every decision made that has enabled us to implement a significant number of new contracts during a turbulent time in the industry. Their agile nature and ability to come up with innovative solutions has led Suttons Tankers to success and ensured the continuous supply of product for its customers.

Electrification gets heavy

Collaboration between Scania and Wibax sees a 64t electric truck shipping chemicals across Northern Sweden

Using electric vehicles for freight traffic has largely focused on smaller trucks for use in urban areas. However, strides are being made in electrified heavy transport.

HGV manufacturer Scania recently delivered a 64-tonne electric truck to chemical supplier Wibax which is being operated on the roads of Northern Sweden.

The 3-axle electric tractor contributes to Wibax reaching its climate targets and Scania says it is another example of the vehicle maker innovating in close partnership with a customer.

The electric truck has a total weight of 64 tonnes, including load and trailer, and will run on the roads between the cities of Piteå and Skellefteå in Northern Sweden, a distance of 80km each way.

The vehicle's performance and load capacity are made possible by the development of a significantly stronger electric motor. As part of a long-term partnership, Scania and Wibax will work together to optimise the use of the vehicle over time – including charging, battery life length and route planning. This will also provide valuable insights to Wibax as the chemical supplier prepares to add additional electric vehicles to its fleet in the future.

For Wibax, the Scania electric truck is a way to reduce the climate impact from its operations. "We have done our utmost to be sustainable since the company was founded in 1986, and as we have identified transports as our biggest environmental impact, this electric truck is a step to ensure we can carry on with our operations with the climate in mind," said Jonas Wiklund, CEO of Wibax Group. "During the lifetime of this truck, Wibax will reduce CO2 emissions by up to 1,400 tonnes, making it a true game-changer."

Scania and Wibax have collaborated closely to enable this electrified solution. "This is the first fully electric 64-tonner that we have put on the road in customer operations," said Fredrik Allard, head of E-mobility at Scania. "Step by step, we are demonstrating that electric solutions are happening very fast and for basically all segments."

The development puts further focus on the need for infrastructure and green electricity outside urban areas. Steps are being taken, but more speed is needed, the two companies maintain. In this case, the power company Skellefteå Kraft has been involved and is delivering the charging infrastructure.


Wibax's Scania electric truck will run between the cities of Piteå and Skellefteå

"It is vital for us to be at the forefront in sustainability matters. It shouldn't just be something you read on a piece of paper; it should mean something for real," Wiklund continued. "Lighter electrified trucks have been available on the market for a while, but for us, it only really matters now when we are able to electrify our 64-tonne loads. Our values are 'great chemistry' and this investment is in line with that motto. These issues have been on the table for long, but now we see that the demand for sustainable solutions from the market increases. This is beginning to happen for real."


The development puts further focus on the need for infrastructure and green electricity outside urban areas

Charging station

The role of the Skellefteå region in the industrial development of northern Sweden, connected to climate transition efforts, has made Port of Skellefteå, 18km west of the eponymous city, a strategically suitable location for charging heavy, electric vehicles.

The charging infrastructure is thanks to collaboration between battery maker Northvolt, Scania as vehicle supplier, Wibax in the role of logistics provider, Skellefteå Council as both port operator and logistics purchaser, and Skellefteå Kraft as the provider of the charging equipment and renewable energy.

"What's unique about this investment in fast charging of heavy vehicles is that stakeholders throughout the entire value chain collaborate in a region very focused on electrification," explained Fredrik Jonsson, acting business unit manager for E-Mobility at Skellefteå Kraft.

The charging infrastructure is thanks to collaboration between Northvolt, Scania, Wibax, Skellefteå Council, and Skellefteå Kraft

All partners throughout the value chain depend on each other when making the electrification of heavy vehicles a reality. Vehicle manufacturers need to know that their customers wish to transition to electric vehicles. Logistics companies that invest in electric vehicles, wish to ensure that these can be charged in strategic locations without unnecessary delay, and energy suppliers need to know with some degree of certainty that there will be a demand for charging.

"We can ensure the presence of heavy, electric vehicles in the market. The challenge is to secure access to charging infrastructure and power supply when customers need it. With this collaboration, we will be able to overcome such challenges," added Jessica Björkquist, head of E-Mobility at Scania Sweden.

Electrification needs to happen quickly, and the expansion of charging opportunities is crucial in making this happen. Another important success factor for the transition is that charging is done efficiently. This can mean, for example, that vehicles are charged in connection with loading and unloading.

The establishment is part of Skellefteå Kraft's initiative to enable electrification of heavy logistics. A total of SEK9.5 million will be invested in a charging site for heavy logistics. Three trucks will be able to charge simultaneously, with a power of 300kW.

In order to fund the project, Skellefteå Kraft applied for and received a climate investment grant from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. The grant covers half the total investment, and requires the new charging site to be completed before the end of the year.

www.scania.com

Schmidt, Repono in Indian venture

German dry bulk logistics company Schmidt has signed an MOU with Indian petrochemical and oil terminalling firm Repono.

A vanguard, Repono provides Operations and Maintenance (O&M) services for warehouses and logistics platforms in India.

Repono handles over 3 million tonnes of polymers and chemicals every year, and is a leading player in bringing innovative solutions for packaging, logistics handling and storage in the Indian market.

Recognising the wide potential of the Indian market, Thomas Schmidt, CEO of Schmidt-Group, said: "It is exciting to see the Indian petrochemical growth story and it has been our desire to deliver our expertise in India as well. We see Repono as an ideal partner with good values and systems to join hands with in order to bring our engineering and design solutions to develop world class logistics platforms in India."

As the fastest-growing petrochemical market in the world, India is adding world-class capacity every year and attracts global petrochemical producers, traders, technology suppliers and logistics companies with viable, stable, cost-effective, technological solutions.

CEO of Repono, Dibyendu Deepak stated: "We are looking forward to work with Schmidt in the Indian market. We serve almost all petrochemical producers at some capacity or the other and strongly believe that new capacities in India will require unique design and logistics solutions for the industry. With Schmidt, we are confident of delivering the latest and tailor-made solutions for our customers."

www.schmidt-heilbronn.de

Stolt revenue up

Stolt Tank Containers reported second-quarter revenue of US$228 million, up from $195.3 million in the first quarter.

Transport revenue increased by 21.4 percent driven by an increase in shipments by 5.4 percent and an increase in transport revenue per shipment of 15.1 percent. In addition, demurrage revenue increased by 10.3 percent as supply chain disruptions continued to cause customers to hold on to tanks longer. Utilisation remained flat at 70.3 percent.

STC reported a second-quarter operating profit of $44.7 million, up from $40 million in the first quarter. The higher revenue was offset to a great extent by an increase in ocean freight rates of 41.5 percent, predominantly reflecting higher ocean liner contract rates, as well as the increase in shipments. During the quarter the fleet increased by 3 percent to 45,168 tanks.

STC also recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Saudi Railway Company, aiming to minimise CO2 emissions of CO2 and reduce the rates of consumption and pollution according to the Saudi Kingdom's vision of the Saudi Green Initiative.

www.stolt-nielsen.com

The tank market continues to be buoyant with demand for both depot and capex equipment remaining strong across all regions and all classes of tank type

John Bannister - We have had to look at creative methods to get our equipment moved

Seaco going strong

Tank leasing company Seaco says business is buoyant despite the numerous challenges facing the global economy

Even during the earliest days of the pandemic, demand for tank containers remained strong. Many of the products being shipped changed; there was, for example, a surge in demand for hand sanitiser, which required transporting vast amounts of raw materials. So, demand for the services of tank container operators, and by extension, those of tank leasing companies, held up well.

John Bannister, vice president of Tanks & Reefers at major leasing firm Seaco, confirms that the sector is still on a good footing.

"The tank market continues to be buoyant with demand for both depot and capex equipment remaining strong across all regions and all classes of tank type," he tells Bulk Distributor. "A steady rise in Capex OEC's (original equipment costs) from early 2021 has helped to push per diem rates up, drive demand for depot units and for the extension of existing leases."

Fleet utilisation has remained very positive this year, Bannister adds, and continues to improve. Seaco is finding increasing demand for depot stock across all regions. "We think this will continue throughout the year," he comments.

Slot squeeze

One much-reported downside to the rapid economic rebound from the pandemic is the squeeze on slot availability on container vessels and consequent upward pressure on ocean freight rates. This might impact much more on tank operators, but Bannister points out that, from a leasing perspective, limited space and higher freight rates have obviously made it "challenging" to preposition units to stock up cost effectively in demand locations.

"We have had to look at creative methods to get our equipment moved," he says. Nevertheless, "the fact that operators have not been able to move their empty equipment around as cost effectively has perhaps created more opportunities for leasing companies that had stock available in demand locations".

Seaco is, of course, the third largest global tank lessor. At 1 January 2022, the company's tank fleet stood at 42,000 units. The range available to customers is wide: standard tanks, baffle tanks, bulk powder, swapbodies, T20 & T22, specialised units, T50 gas and T75 cryogenic tanks.

But the company is not resting on its laurels. "We continue to invest across all tank asset classes from T11 to T75 as market demand dictates," says Bannister. Moreover, Seaco also has a "strong investment plan" for 2022. Specific customer requirements such as spill box lids, handrails or different valve set arrangements can be accommodated as needed. In consultation with customers Seaco can also assist in tank design, build and modification.

Middle East office

Further international expansion is also on the cards for Seaco. Most recently, the company opened a new Middle Eastern regional office in Dubai, UAE. Up until then, the Middle East region was covered from Seaco's office in Mumbai, India.

While the move entails the full asset range of the lessor, including dry freight and reefers, the significant regional importance of Seaco's tank container business was one of the drivers behind the relocation thanks to the hub's time zone and close proximity to customers.

"We see the Middle East as one of the key sectors for our tank leasing business and as such felt it important for us to strengthen our presence in this area by opening an office in Dubai," Bannister comments. "This should help us in terms of strengthening our customer support by responding quickly to their needs based on local knowledge."

Significant challenges remain for all sectors in the tank container value chain. But Seaco's large, diverse fleet and global presence looks set to continue prospering.

www.seacoglobal.com

Seaco continues to invest across all tank asset classes from T11 to T75 as market demand dictates

CS secures term loan

CS Leasing Holding recently completed its first term loan facility between a CS Leasing asset owning subsidiary and Bank of America, NA.

The new term loan increases the CS Leasing group's aggregate available lender commitments to US$375 million, which are expected to increase in the near future to fund ongoing growth.

Proceeds from the debt facilities are used to finance the company's owned fleet of intermodal containers with an aggregate value of $500 million, including over 25,000 tank containers.

The company's bank and lender group includes KeyBank NA, Bank of America NA, TIAA FSB, ING Belgium SA/NV and Zions Bancorporation NA, dba California Bank and Trust.

CS Leasing continues to build a diversified fleet of high-quality intermodal container assets, including standard dry boxes, dry freight specials and ISO tanks. Operating since 2016, the CS Leasing fleet is one of the youngest in the industry. This new term loan diversifies CS Leasing's funding facilities, adding to the company's already strong financial backing, and supports the company in its continued long-term growth and expansion plans.

Proceeds from the debt facilities are used to finance CS Leasing owned fleet

www.cslintermodal.com

GATX on the rise

GATX reported 2022 first-quarter net income of US$75.8 million or $2.10 per share.

This compares to 2021 first-quarter net income of $36.5 million or $1.02 per share.

The first quarter results included a net negative impact of $11.5 million, which represented GATX's share of a net impairment charge at the Rolls-Royce & Partners Finance affiliates associated with aircraft spare engines in Russia.

Also included in the quarter was a net positive impact of $3 million, related to an enacted tax rate reduction in Austria.

At Rail North America, fleet utilisation remained high at 99.3 percent, and the renewal success rate was 80 percent, implying seven consecutive quarters of sequential increases in absolute lease rates.

Furthermore, the pace of lease rate increases accelerated the second quarter. The renewal rate change of GATX's Lease Price Index was positive 9.3 percent, with an average renewal term of 30 months.

Eurotainer opens in Czech Republic

Eurotainer has established an office in the Czech Republic to serve clients in the countries of Eastern Europe.

The decision was made based on the heightened interest in intermodal tank containers and small portable tanks in the region. Eurotainer has experienced rapid growth in the demand for liquid, gas, and cryogenic tank containers in Eastern Europe in recent years and having a local representative was the next logical step to continue a high level of service in the area.

The development of the pharma, food & beverage, chemical, mining and energy industries in Eastern Europe is driving demand as businesses in these sectors look for new ways to expand their client bases and optimise their supply chains.

www.eurotainer.com

Raffles adds to fleet

Strong global demand for tank containers has encouraged Raffles Lease to place orders for new equipment and will take delivery of an additional 2,750 tanks from this summer.

The fleet additions are a combination of types and capacities, including swap bodies and 20ft T11 tanks with capacities varying between 25,000, 26,000 and 35,000 litres. Many of the newbuild units are fitted with specialised components including baffles and ground operated vapour return lines.

Raffles says it continues to follow its strategy continuously to build tank containers designed and constructed using the latest innovations in the industry.

Due to continuous reinvestment in the business, the average age of the fleet is 4.3 years, which Raffles says makes it one of the youngest tank fleets in the leasing industry.

www.raffleslease.com

Aldrees Bertschi offers a wide range of terminal and logistics services

Bertschi Saudi venture ready to weld

Bertschi's joint venture depot in Jubail, Saudi Arabia, announced recently that after carrying out special employee training, Aldrees Bertschi has officially acquired the needed certificates to weld tanks on site.

This means that the facility can now offer customers a full package of repairs, done internally. This allows for repair of tank containers, including minor and major damages, in the depot itself, so that they can rejoin the supply chain as soon as possible.

Covering an area of 100,000 sqm and able to store up to 8,000 TEU, the Aldrees Bertschi terminal was established in 2013 between Switzerland-based logistics group Bertschi and Riyadh-based Aldrees Petroleum & Transport Services.

The facility is located in close proximity to Jubail Industrial Area Two and is linked directly to the Abu Hadriya Highway, allowing short access routes to key customers from the chemical, petrochemical and allied industries.

Operating 24/7, the site offers a wide range of terminal and logistics services, from cross-docking and Customs clearance, to integration with Bertschi's global tank container network.

The terminal is fully certified to store a full range of loaded and empty box and tank containers, including units filled with UN Class 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 dangerous goods.

Since 2018 the site has also operated a Weidner tank cleaning station, with two wash lines over a total of four wash bays for tank containers, or two wash bays for road tankers.

Most hazardous goods can be cleaned and the site can also offer 2.5- and 5-year inspections as well as other repair and maintenance work.

www.aldreesbertschi.com

Dinges Logistics continues dynamic expansion

Dinges Logistics has been able to record a strong development since its foundation in 2000.

In recent months, especially, the growth strategy has been pushed even further, with extensions of the fleet, an additional site, and the expansion of the IT infrastructure setting the course for a promising future.

At the end of last year, Dinges Logistics took over an additional site in Grünstadt, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany, which is now officially in use following conversion and renovation work and represents the third site in total. Now the company has a total of 1,600 sqm of office space, 38,000 sqm of logistics space, an additional 9,000 sqm of outdoor storage space and 3,700 sqm of workshop space.

The new site offers numerous advantages. For example, the enlarged logistics area provides additional storage for the fleet, which is particularly advantageous in view of the expansions that the company has been able to realise and is also targeting for the future. Dinges currently has a total of some 120 tractor units, 130 tank container chassis, 220 chemical tanks, and more than 1,000 tank containers.

Since the start of 2022, Dinges has been operating a new Kalmar reachstacker. With a tare weight of approximately 105 tons, the model is the heaviest machine of the fleet and already the company's second Kalmar reachstacker.

Dubbed 'Super Gloria' the container handler has a Volvo Stage EU5 engine with ZF transmission. The lifting arm has a length of 13.2m and a wheelbase of 8.25m, making it one of the largest reachstackers available on the market.

By using Super Gloria, containers can be placed both lengthwise and crosswise with 1,000mm negative lift into the existing hazardous goods tubs. Furthermore, the machine enables a potential 5-high stacking of the tank containers and even in the fourth container row it still has a load capacity of 32 tons.

Investments are also being made by the company regarding digitalisation. Systems that enable more transparent and efficient processes are being gradually introduced across the company. Internal processes are being centralised and optimised. The increase in capacity and efficiency allows the management to be optimistic about the future.

"It's a great feeling to realise that hard work pays off and that we are on the right track," said Michael Klopp, chief operating officer.

https://dinges-logistics.de

Following investment in fleet expansion Dinges currently has a total of some 120 tractor units

LHN lists to finance new Sing depot

A new tank container depot is on the way in Singapore.

LHN Logistics Limited, the Singapore-based logistics services arm of LHN Limited has successfully placed nearly 25.25 million shares at S$0.20 each on the Catalist of the Singapore stock exchange.

LHN Logistics commenced trading at S$0.205, 2.5 percent higher than the IPO issue price.

On completion of the company's new ISO tank depot at 7 Gul Avenue, LHN Logistics will also offer chemical cleaning and repair services for ISO tanks, empty and laden tank storage services for hazardous substances, and petroleum and flammable materials.

Additionally, LHN Logistics provides container storage, container surveying, cleaning, and repair and maintenance services for general purposes and refrigerated containers under its container depot services segment.

The company plans to use its competitive strengths to achieve three main goals in 2022 and beyond, namely; to grow its transport fleet, position itself as an efficient one-stop solution and enhance its value-added services with the addition of its tank depot, continue its expansion to other countries in ASEAN to access new markets, customers and businesses.

It is expected that the recovery in global tank container fleet volumes as well as promising growth prospects for Singapore's chemical industry will create conducive conditions for further business growth.

With Singapore strongly positioned as one of the world's busiest container transhipment ports, demand for logistics services is expected to increase alongside further port developments. In line with this growth, LHN Logistics started the construction of the new tank depot in April 2022 and completion is expected within 12 months.

"We are confident that we are able to capitalise on the growing logistics and depot sectors with promising potential on the back of post-pandemic economic growth, Singapore's growing chemical industry, as well as policy support for making Singapore a logistics hub and the world's busiest container transhipment port," said executive chairman Kelvin Lim. "On top of these, witnessed growth in manufacturing activities in ASEAN will also benefit the company's further expansion plans in the region."

With access to public equity markets, the company will use around 90 percent of the funds raised for financing the construction of the depot, and the remaining 10 percent to finance the expansion of the transport fleet and acquisition of moving equipment. As a reward for shareholders in participating in the group's growth, the board intends to recommend and distribute dividends of not less than 40 percent of the group's profit for FY2022, FY2023 and FY2024 after adding back listing expenses and excluding non-recurring items.

www.lhnlogistics.com

LHN Logistics will offer chemical cleaning and repair services, empty and laden tank storage for hazardous substances, and petroleum and flammable materials

Phenomenal tank cleaning

Van Moer Logistics is said to be something of a phenomenon in Belgium and even beyond.

Within one generation, this company - founded by Jo van Moer - has grown from a single truck operator into a large, leading logistics company. Branches throughout Belgium and also Germany are managed from the head office at Antwerp Linkeroever.

The head office was built about 15 years ago. At this site adjacent to the port of Antwerp, a major cleaning facility was erected, consisting of numerous cleaning bays and technical buildings.

With the increasing professionalisation of the Van Moer group, the call for modernisation and upgrading of the 15-year-old cleaning facility grew louder. In Autumn 2020, Gröninger Cleaning Systems was awarded the project to bring the complete tank cleaning facility up to maximum operational standards. Together with Van Moer's technical team, a plan was made to modernise everything while guaranteeing productivity during the works.

The works were completed at the beginning of 2022 and the result is quite impressive. Eight cleaning bays have been built onsite. Two separately operating pump rooms ensure a system that works as a whole and at the same instance offers optimal redundancy.

Many 'sustainability' elements have been integrated in the design and an air purification system is placed as well. Products with odorous substances can be cleaned too. Latexes and resins are handled on a special track, and the system is operated with an ultra-modern, remotely supported control system. Both process and management data are made available via the cloud.

Gröninger Cleaning Systems was awarded the project to bring Van Moer's tank cleaning facility up to maximum operational standards

Van Loon acquisition

For its part Van Moer has completed the acquisition of tank container specialist Group Van Loon.

Van Loon runs depots on both banks of the River Scheldt specialising in transport, cleaning, repair and storage of tank containers. The company employs 130 people and turned over €20 million in 2021.

Van Moer says the acquisition fits with the firm's strategy to expand and refine its offer for the chemical sector. After adding the Van Loon installations, Van Moer will carry out an average of 300 cleanings and 275 repairs a day.

Van Moer says the acquisition of Van Loon fits with the firm's strategy to expand and refine its offer for the chemical sector

Jo Van Moer, founder and CEO, of Van Moer Logistics, said: "In recent years we have invested in the renewal and expansion of our SEVESO site in Zwijndrecht. With the arrival of the new filling lines and ADR halls, we are now expanding our services for the chemical sector. Thanks to the acquisition of Group Van Loon, we are also doubling our capacity in bulk and tank container logistics."

At Van Moer's Zwijndrecht location, the firm offers transport, storage, heating, filling, cleaning, checking and repair of tank containers. The group says this saves customers both transport costs and surcharges for traversing the Liefkenshoek tunnel.

Gunther Van Loon, CEO of Group Van Loon, added: "The family shareholders see Van Moer Logistics as a reliable party that also has the necessary credibility and resources to continue our work. Also for our employees there are now additional growth possibilities and opportunities.

"We have paid much attention to that 'cultural match' where Van Moer Logistics shares the same values and attaches great importance to a flat organisational structure, open culture, flexibility and lasting relationships with all stakeholders."

www.vanmoer.com
www.groninger.eu

Mauser wins UN-certification for Infinity IBC

Mauser Packaging Solutions paved the way for the use of post-consumer resin (PCR) in the industrial packaging industry more than seven years ago.

This was achieved with the introduction of one of the first UN-certified, monolayer, plastic drums made from 100 percent recycled resin.

Today, the company says it continues to set the standard and expand its line of monolayer and multilayer drums and IBCs that support the circular economy and conserve natural resources.

Now, Mauser has received UN-certification for its Infinity Series IBC, a composite unit with an inner receptacle made from PCR generated in-house called Recolene.

In collaboration with authorities, the International Confederation of Plastics Packaging Manufacturers (ICPP), and the International Confederation of Container Reconditioners (ICCR), Mauser helped to lobby successfully the UN-Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods to update UN Model Regulations to allow the use of PCR materials to produce the bottle in composite IBCs.

"We strive to be a positive example to our industry and are determined to increase awareness and adoption of sustainable products and services," said Mark Burgess, Mauser's president. "This certification is a significant step forward toward the expanded use of recycled materials in the industrial packaging industry."

Designed with sustainability in mind, the Infinity Series was the first non-UN composite IBC with an inner receptacle made from PCR materials. It demonstrates the advantages of Mauser's closed-loop recycling system and the benefits of cascading reuse and recycling concepts to an industrial packaging product.

The Infinity features a 2-layer bottle that contains a significant share of Recolene, generated from selected empty industrial packaging that has been collected via the Mauser collection programme, then shredded, washed, sorted by colour and extruded on-site at one of the company's six recycling centres.

This technology and closed loop process enables optimal recycling of PCR material resulting in a consistent, high quality PCR stream available in multiple colours including natural, blue and black. The Infinity Series IBC bottle boasts a 25 percent lower carbon footprint compared to a new bottle and supports the company's efforts to divert waste from landfills, decrease the consumption of raw materials and energy, and reduce emissions.

It offers the same benefits of reusability and recyclability as a standard composite IBC and is ideal for use in the chemical, paints and coatings, building products, petrochemical, and lubricant industries. The UN-certified Infinity is currently available in Central Europe only. However, the company continues to work towards approval and availability across its global network.

Mauser received UN-certification for its Infinity Series IBC, a composite unit with an inner receptacle made from post-consumer resin

The Infinity Series is also part of a broader product line that includes mono-and multilayer plastic drums (open head and L-Ring), medical waste containers, plastic pails, tight head containers, and lube oil cans made from recycled resin.

www.mauserpackaging.com

Greif offloads flexible JV stake

Greif is selling its 50 percent share in the flexible packaging joint venture FPS to Gulf Refined Packaging (GRP) for US$123 million.

The packaging group expects to use the proceeds for debt repayment.

"While we have worked closely with our joint venture partner, each held different views of the appropriate path forward for the FPS business," said Pete Watson, Greif's president and CEO. As a result, we entered into a process to determine a single owner and resulted in an agreement to sell our ownership stake to GRP."

In another part of the business, Greif Delta has invested in a new, state-of-the-art GCUBE IBC production line at its Ellesmere Port facility in the UK.

The new line will produce 1.6 and 1.9 UN-approved and non-UN GCUBE IBCs, including IBCs containing up to 40 percent PCR (non-UN only). IBCs will be available on wooden, hybrid and plastic pallets, with either 150mm or 225mm lids and 50mm or 80mm discharge valves. Bottles will be available in natural, white, black and AdBlue.

"Greif has vast experience in the production and supply of IBCs," commented David Khanna, UK sales director. "This investment allows our UK customers to tap into this expertise and access the very latest IBC technologies available to the market."

Greif has also appointed Geoffrey Westphal as director of sustainable technology.

Greif says it has one of the most comprehensive sustainability programmes in the industrial packaging sector and Westphal's role will focus on introducing innovations that support the company's continued commitment to creating shared value for customers, stakeholders and the environment.

Westphal moves into the new role following 10 years at Greif, having most recently held the position of senior environmental manager where he led environmental compliance across the firm's North American operations, as well as progressing zero waste to landfill initiatives.

www.greif.com

Powtech put back

Powtech 2022 will be held on 27-29 September 2022.

Nürnberg Messe decided to put back Powtech from its scheduled date earlier this year, and the event will now be held in parallel with Fachpack, the European Trade Fair for Packaging, Technology and Processing.

"That means we can offer the bulk solids sector an exhibition date outside the summer holidays, which is particularly convenient for our customers from southern Germany and the Mediterranean region," said Heike Slotta, executive director exhibitions, NürnbergMesse.

"It is extremely important for us to make this decision in conjunction with our customers – with the sector for the sector, you might say," Slotta added. "The result of the survey was clear: the majority opted to hold it on 27-29 September 2022. By holding Fachpack in September last year, we showed that we were able to run highly successful trade fairs even in the middle of a pandemic. That's why we're also really looking forward to holding a successful live event for the bulk solids sector."

Both events address users in the food and feed, chemical, pharmaceutical, plastics processing and mechanical engineering sectors. In terms of visitors, both fairs are strongly focused on the industrial and consumer goods sectors.

www.fachpack.de

Bayern-Fass headquarters in Aichach

Swap bodies at the Bayern-Fass company site: ideal for transporting the Schütz Recobulk

Schütz takes stake in Bayern-Fass

Schütz and Bayern-Fass have been collaborating successfully for decades in the reconditioning of industrial packaging.

Now the companies are again expanding their partnership, as Schütz is acquiring a minority stake in Bayern-Fass. The shared goal is to advance the closed loop economy model and increase the level of service and quality – all in line with the philosophy of sustainability.

"We are very pleased to be taking this logical next step, building on our many years of close co-operation," said Roland Strassburger, CEO at Schütz. "Acquiring this stake is another important building block in our long-term strategy of continually expanding the closed loop economy model."

Johann Eigner, owner of the Bayern-Fass Group, added: "We look back on a co-operation that has been exceptionally positive, and are proud that Schütz is now entering into an even closer relationship with Bayern-Fass. Our customers will benefit from this as we will be able to take our performance to the next level and support them with even more comprehensive solutions for the reconditioning and recycling of industrial packaging."

Reconditioning IBCs has been a key component of the Bayern-Fass service portfolio since 1992. The close partnership with Schütz started in 2015, when Bayern-Fass became the first independent specialist company to be accepted into the Recobulk partner programme set up by the globally operating manufacturer of industrial packaging. Within this framework, the company adopted Schütz's globally uniform process standards. As a result, the Schütz IBCs reconditioned by Bayern-Fass fully comply with Schütz Recobulk containers in terms of quality, safety and conformity.

With around 300 employees and four locations in Germany, the long-established company is now one of the leading reconditioners in Europe. Bayern-Fass has been certified both as a specialist waste management company and for its quality and environmental management system.

www.schuetz-packaging.net

Bayern-Fass manufactures the Schütz Recobulk in the same high quality according to uniform process standards

Transolve Global – bulk liquids to the world

Founded over 16 years ago by CEO Rachael Budd, PBLA member Transolve Global is one of Australia's most experienced niche freight forwarders.
Bulk Distributor asked the company about the services it provides in bulk liquids logistics, while also on this page Rachael Budd explores the current state of the freight forwarding industry and whether the global supply chain has finally reached a tipping-point in this post-pandemic world

Could you please provide a brief overview of transolve global's total activities?
A market leader in the areas of bulk liquids, wine, edible oils, FMCG, food & beverages, industrials, lubricant oils and mining, Transolve is passionate about exceeding our customers' expectations and continually finding new, efficient, and innovative ways to optimise performance across logistic networks.

With offices across USA, New Zealand and Australia, and a network and reach that span all continents, Transolve can set up and manage the global logistics functions for customers across an array of industries, working as their external global logistics manager.

We provide door-to-door import and export services including ocean freight, air freight, road transport and customs clearance services. We also provide a unique and innovative commercial documentation management service, taking care of all documentation from commercial invoices to certificates of origin preparation through to standard export declarations and PRAs for the receival advices into port terminals.

In relation to bulk liquid logistics, what services does the group offer to customers?
At Transolve Global we specialise in the transport of bulk liquids via sea, road and rail, moving large import and export volumes on a weekly basis across global markets.

The bulk liquids we transport are of a vast and varied nature, including but not limited to; edible oils, wines, lubricants, chemicals, fuel oils, oilfield chemicals, food grade ethanol, and more.

Our comprehensive knowledge of the bulk liquids industry, alongside our extensive experience across numerous industries, means we can develop a customised freight forwarding solution that is agile, efficient and adds value, without sacrificing any product integrity along the way.

With regards to bulk liquids, we provide the following:
- Flexitanks. Our flexitanks are available in a range of sizes, from 18,000 to 24,000 litres and we assist clients in choosing the correct size of flexitank required to ensure they receive the maximum payload per container.
- ISO Tanks. Our ISO tanks undergo our strict sanitation procedures to prevent cross-contamination from previous products. With the ability to be reused many times and varying options from 18,000 to 26,000 litres, ISO tanks are an efficient transport solution for many products and brands.
- Intermediate bulk containers (IBCs). With the ability to be reused multiple times, lower handling and storage space costs, and sizes that hold 200 to 1,250 litres, IBCs are an efficient option for a range of industries and products.

How is the company performing as the pandemic recedes?

Transolve's services include flexitanks, IBCs and its own fleet of tank containers

Transolve is performing well as the pandemic recedes. The early indicators show that conditions across the global supply chain might be easing, with more space availability in the spot market, and we are feeling this at Transolve.

We have noticed that as well as locking in long-term shipping contracts, operating in the spot market is also appearing to reap benefits for our customers. This enables us to acquire the best deals for our customers as we can move more freely to leverage situations when it comes to space and price.

Can you provide some detail of what bulk liquids you are shipping on behalf of customers? Eg, is bulk wine in flexis an important business segment? To which markets, import or export?
As one of Australia's most experienced specialty wine exporters, we have worked with numerous top 50 global wine brands, moving Aussie wine to key overseas markets including the UK, Germany,

China and the US.

Trusted by large international conglomerates, we have the reach and relationships required to establish and manage international supply chains and that move mass volumes out of and into origin and destination locations within the retail sector and beyond.

Other bulk liquids we have extensive experience with include edible oils. We export and import vegetable, olive and canola oils, palm oils, sunflower oils, coconut oils and other derivatives. For example, we ship canola oil throughout Asia, and into the USA and New Zealand, conversely we import palm oil into Australia.

Our expertise has also seen us transport automotive oils, industrial oils, greases, recycled base oils and other lubricants across global markets, with a predominant focus on Asia, which is where the majority of demand for these products emanates. From temperature controlled and hazardous ISO tanks through to flexitanks, we have the right supply solution for clients.

From where do you source your flexitanks?

We currently source our flexitanks from Malaysia and China, but are also in discussions with European suppliers for future business.

What network benefits do you perceive from being in the PBLA?

The quality of support and expertise that PBLA delivers is invaluable to each individual Transolve team member, as well as the business as a whole. The insights and camaraderie are priceless as the PBLA enables you to connect and liaise with colleagues who truly understand this operating space; where you can discuss the unique intricacies of bulk liquids logistics.

What is the group's approach to digitisation?

At Transolve, we use the market leading wisetech global platform: Cargowise. This technology enables us to optimise the supply chain and client experience across all modes and borders.

It is a single platform solution that provides real-time data visibility alongside comprehensive compliance without the need for manual data entry or excessive management. The duality of benefits it delivers is across the board; it increases our productivity, reduces costs and mitigates risks whilst giving clients confidence via real time tracking and true transparency of the freight forwarding process through its online portal.

www.transolve.com.au

Is there light at the end of the supply chain tunnel?

Transolve Global CEO Rachael Budd explores the current state of the freight forwarding industry and whether the global supply chain has finally reached a tipping-point in this post-pandemic world

Transolve Global CEO Rachael Budd

It's fair to say that only a few short years ago, no one gave much consideration to the supply chain. It was a background mechanism that kept the global economy turning, working as a silent partner to every business around the world.

However, over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of a highly disrupted supply chain became apparent. COVID-19 shutdowns, border closures, interrupted manufacturing capacity, unpredictable supply and increased shipping costs all inevitability impacted both businesses and consumers around the world.

Working in response to the narrative of consumer demand throughout the pandemic years to date (outlined below), in conjunction with managing the aforementioned challenging factors that the pandemic presented had a detrimental impact on the global supply chain. An impact that has been significant across the business and consumer landscape through rising prices, unpredictable supply and product shortages.

• *Stage 1: Onset of COVID.*
Consumer demand and spending rapidly shifted towards essential items such as medical supplies, groceries, and non-perishables.
• *Stage 2: COVID lockdowns.*
Consumer spending shifted to physical products such as home goods, electronics, and clothing.
• *Stage 3: Easing of COVID restrictions.*
This shifted consumer spending to travel and experiences such as dining out.
• *Stage 4: Rising inflation and cost of living.*
Cost pressures have seen consumer spending pivot to groceries and other nondiscretionary items.

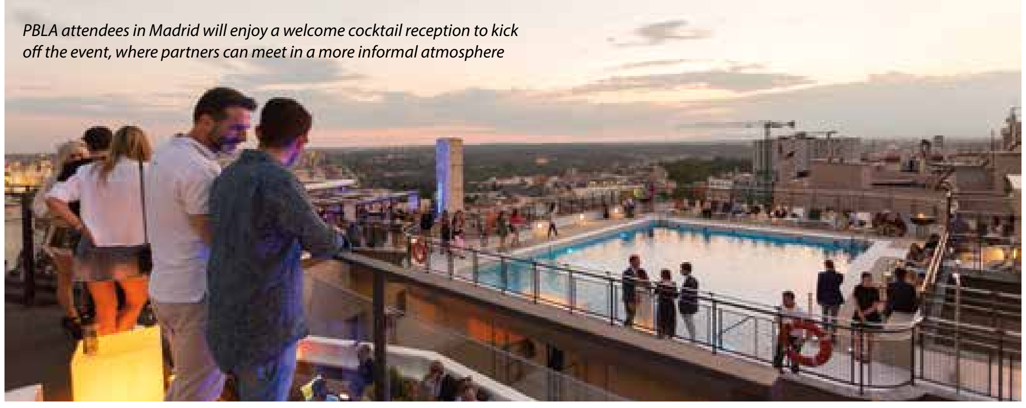
In response to the volatility of supply chains, companies moved from a 'just in time (JIT)' inventory management approach to a 'just in case' one. Businesses across the globe, regardless of location, size, sector or industry lost the once known and reliable ocean and air freight services, and ultimately struggled to move cargo as booked, as well as the ability to predict any sort of approximate transit time to destination.

This challenging environment effectively altered the way companies managed their supply chain, as they built up inventory just in case they couldn't receive their goods when needed. This has now created a situation of excess inventory and markdowns as the shift in consumer demand from stage 3 to 4 arrived much faster than the retail sector anticipated.

This pivot to a climate of reduced consumer demand for discretionary spending, excess inventory and the reduction of COVID-related consequences on the supply chain may be indicative of a light at the end of the tunnel. As the pressure of a challenging global landscape alleviates, it could mean the beginning of the end of the volatile supply chain landscape of the recent years.

Recent management outlooks from varied organisations such as Fastenal (industrial), Whirlpool (appliance), Johnson & Johnson (healthcare), Kimberly-Clark (FMCG) and others all indicate that supply chain constraints are easing and that the overall business environment is more predictable with the supply chain itself becoming more orderly due to numerous factors including improved labour availability and the easing of COVID restrictions.

Given these early indicators it appears that if all goes well, the global supply chain landscape will have the opportunity to recover slowly yet steadily as the worst fallout of the previous pandemic years is behind us. At a minimum a more predictable year will enable businesses to take the time to reflect on how best to optimise their supply chains moving forward.



PBLA attendees in Madrid will enjoy a welcome cocktail reception to kick off the event, where partners can meet in a more informal atmosphere

All aboard for PBLA Madrid

Premier Bulk Liquids Alliance (PBLA) is getting ready to host its next in-person event in Madrid in September, where an array of independent bulk liquid operators representing over 40 countries will gather.

PBLA president Jason Wright said: "We are thrilled to be able to have our long-awaited event in the heart of the Spanish capital. Spain is an important bulk liquid market for both ISO tanks and flexitanks.

"Our attendees will enjoy a welcome cocktail reception to kick off the event, where PBLA partners can meet in a more informal atmosphere. This will be followed by two days of one-to-one meetings and presentations by bulk liquid food and chemical industry speakers. A gala dinner will be hosted for all attendees at a location yet to be disclosed."

It will be three years since the first in-person event was held in Amsterdam. PBLA has since grown to one of the largest global alliances of independent bulk liquid logistics specialists covering 60 countries. Independent tank container and flexitank operators and related service companies will be able to come together to forge key partnerships so vital to keep their service offering truly global and competitive.

As bulk liquid shipments in ISO tanks and flexitanks continue to grow well above average, bulk operators reach out to PBLA to partner with similar companies to compete with the larger multinational operators

"PBLA says it has become a well-recognised force in the global bulk liquid industry to be reckoned with," Wright added. "Logistics companies, exporters, trading companies and other support companies in this space are most interested to engage and join the PBLA Network. Our business plan calls for us to increase our global coverage to 75 countries by 2023."

PBLA is a home to both flexitank and isotank operators, and many of its members offer both services in a bid to be a bulk liquid logistics hub for their customers.

Companies interested in joining PBLA can write to jason@pblalliance.com

DHL closes Hillebrand acquisition

DHL says the acquisition of Hillebrand will allow it to add a number of services to its ocean freight service portfolio

At the end of March this year Deutsche Post DHL Group closed its €1.5 billion acquisition of JF Hillebrand Group.

After obtaining all necessary regulatory approvals by the required antitrust authorities, the takeover was able to be finalised.

The companies had already signed the purchase agreement in August 2021. Accordingly, Hillebrand now belongs 100 percent to the DHL division Global Forwarding, Freight.

"Hillebrand's expertise in the logistics of beverages, beer, wine and spirits is an excellent addition to our portfolio. In line with our group strategy 2025, we can further strengthen our logistics core and benefit our shareholders with profitable, long-term growth," said Frank Appel, CEO of Deutsche Post DHL. "This bolt-on acquisition is a great opportunity for us to add a number of services to our high-quality ocean freight service portfolio, which will strengthen earnings and long-standing client relationships from the start."

As part of DHL Global Forwarding, Freight, Hillebrand is now under the leadership of Tim Scharwath, who will also head the combined businesses of Hillebrand and Gori as its CEO.

Former Hillebrand CEO Cees van Gent, who managed the company since 2017, decided to step down as its CEO and chairman of the board and will leave the group.

Hillebrand and Gori will work closely together, leveraging synergies from the experience of both providers, especially in the logistics of beverages, beer, wine and spirits. Gori, a wine and spirits sector specialist, has been part of DHL since 1998. The integrated business will operate under the new brand name 'Hillebrand Gori – a DHL company'.

"The merger is a perfect fit, as it combines the strengths of DHL Global Forwarding, Freight's global network with Hillebrand's and Goris' best-in-class solutions," said Scharwath. "This allows us to use fully (their combined) benefits for our customers. With Hillebrand and Gori running complementary business models, we expect a seamless integration. In combination with Gori we can leverage untapped synergies and develop even better transport solutions for our customers going forward."

Hillebrand's majority shareholder Cobepa will sell its entire stake after a 16-year ownership period. During its ownership, Hillebrand's management has significantly reinforced its position in the beverage freight forwarding and bulk liquids markets through organic and inorganic growth as well as through its focus on both superior service and customer-centricity.

Hillebrand has extensive expertise in liquid logistics with a global footprint in over 90 countries and more than 2,700 employees. It specialises in the ocean freight forwarding of beer, wine, spirits and non-alcoholic beverages as well as other bulk liquids.

www.dpdhl.com

New carrier flexi service draws fire from ITCO

Through its Liquid Cargo Solutions MSC is directly supplying and fitting flexitanks for customers

ITCO is questioning the accuracy of recent publicity relating to flexitank services, in particular a new service launched by Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC). representing over 40 countries will gather.

Switzerland-based container shipping giant MSC said in June it had become the first carrier to provide "in-house Liquid Cargo Solutions", directly supplying and fitting flexibags for customers. The carrier provides a single point of contact, offering end-to-end services for customers in the liquid cargo supply chain.

MSC employees fit selected flexibags at its depots prior to cargo pick-up, which removes the requirement for haulage to third-party fitting locations. MSC Liquid Cargo Solutions is already available at depot facilities in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas.

However, it is some of the sustainability claims in MSC's announcement that drew criticism from ITCO. On behalf of ITCO's members, the organisation's president Reg Lee states ITCO wants to correct a number of "misconceptions which could potentially arise from this publicity".

Flexibags – the term ITCO uses instead of flexitanks - are "neither eco-friendly nor sustainable", the statement maintains. "A flexibag is made of plastic films consisting of polyethylene and a polypropylene sleeve; it weighs more than 40kg and will probably end up in a landfill rubbish site. Each flexibag is equivalent to over 7,500 single-use shopping bags," Lee states.

This is in contrast to a tank container, which can transport cargo multiple times each year, over a life-cycle that can surpass a 20-year service life. At the end of its serviceable existence, approximately 90 percent of the tank can be recycled through long-standing metal recovery services, ITCO states.

Moreover, 'flexibags' are not fully recyclable, Lee goes on. "After use, the flexibag has limited possibility for recycling, because it is made of thin 0.25mm films of polyethylene - unlike rigid plastics items which are made into new plastics by established processes. Soft plastics films are not easily - or economically - recyclable, and the majority will end up dumped in landfill, most probably in a cargo contaminated state, which further endangers the environment."

One statement that seems to rile ITCO in particular is that there is "no need to clean the container after use, as with ISO tanks". Lee says this is misleading and incorrect. "While a flexibag which has carried wine might possibly be safe for shredding and re-processing in an empty-dirty state, any flexibag which had been carrying chemical or petroleum products must also need to be thoroughly drained and cleaned for safety of handling, prior to being sent to landfill or incineration. Conversely, the controlled and monitored cleaning of tank containers allows them to safely carry high quality goods repeatedly," he states.

Another statement, that flexibags comprise "less packaging than conventional ISOtanks" is false, ITCO says. Tank containers are, themselves, the packaging for transport and no additional materials are required. "Flexibags, on the other hand, must have liners made of varying materials for the dry box, bulkheads, and potentially heating pads - in addition to the single-use multi-layered flexibag itself."

The full cost of packaging and recycling a flexibag, Lee argues, is rarely taken into full consideration by shippers, as it is usually the full responsibility of the consignees or receivers to voluntarily recycle the flexibags or dispose of the dirty flexibags in landfills. "Few processes or laws are in effect to trace the flexibags from cradle to grave, and waste is not controlled as it is in tank containers," he states.

Supply chain

The responsibility for the environmental stewardship of the bag is lost along the supply chain, without traceability, ITCO asserts. "The shipper, who purchases and introduces the 40kg of plastic into the world, has no responsibility for what subsequently happens to it upon delivery. This is entirely different to a tank container shipment, where the tank container operator retains responsibility for the environmental stewardship of the tank container - and of its cargo residue and of its cleaning. The operator accepts full responsibility right through the supply chain, and welcomes auditing at every stage."

Other hazards with flexitanks include a confined space perspective as destination handlers all over the world need to remove contaminated flexibags from the container and place in a skip for disposal. Lack of procedures and controls globally could put workers at risk; "unlike tank containers, where audited safety procedures minimise and control the risk to workers".

ITCO also emphasises that the carriage of bulk liquid cargoes by road requires special driver training because of the risks associated with the surge movement of liquids inside the containers. Specialist tank container trucking companies carry out extensive training to educate their drivers about the danger of liquid surge inside the tank container and the effect this has on the stability of the vehicle. "There is generally no such training among conventional dry-box trucking companies used to transport flexibags, making the transport potentially unsafe," the statement continues.

Lee asserts that a tank container remains the safest and most environmentally acceptable method of containerised bulk liquid transport. Every 40kg plastic flexibag that is manufactured represents a needless addition to the burden of plastics in the global environment, because the same liquid cargo could be repeatedly carried instead by tank container.

www.itco.org
www.msc.com

SIA's three-in-one Trinity

Ireland-based SIA Flexitanks is rolling out its latest innovation which allows shippers to load multiple bulk liquids in the same container.

In 2021, the firm started trials of its 'Trinity Tank' - a three-pod reefer flexitank system available in sizes of up to 40ft. The firm expects the Trinity to prove popular with payloads up to 27 tonnes, and it can works in both reefer and non-reefer applications.

"Using the Trinity tank opens up the 40ft higher payload market, as well as the US domestic and refrigerated markets for our customers," SIA stated on its website, "and with the chronic shortages of 20ft containers offers customers a chance to ship in regular 40ft containers."

As a big supplier to major global wine importers, SIA says the feedback from clients in the wine industry has been "overwhelmingly positive". Our revolutionary Trinity Tank has now received a 100 percent customer approval rating," the company added.

The three-pod system allows shippers to load, for example, white, rosé and red wine in the same container.

For the highest end wines, the 40ft Trinity Tank is used in either standard containers or in temperature-controlled conditions in a refrigerated unit.

The Trinity also works well for domestic opportunities where a customer does not need or require large volumes of product. It also allows a customer to ship multiple products in smaller quantities on the same truck which is a benefit for wine companies that need blended products, oil field companies that are in remote areas where a heavier container couldn't get to them and the need for different products required to perform a particular job, the company says.

SIA has also expanded its footprint in Africa with offices in Cape Town and KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. With these additions, SIA is now loading flexitanks in more than 70 countries in line with its global expansion. South Africa will be the base to develop business throughout the continent with agencies planned for Senegal, The Gambia and Ghana.

https://siaflexitanks.com

SIA says using the Trinity tank opens up the 40ft higher payload market, as well as the US domestic and refrigerated markets

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NanoSUN, Reynolds in hydrogen fuel MoU

Engineering firm NanoSUN and Reynolds Logistics have announced a collaboration to bring practical hydrogen vehicle refuelling solutions to the UK and Ireland.

Reynolds Logistics is involved in the distribution of bulk fuels, lubricants, bitumen, specialist gases and hazardous goods

The two companies signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to collaborate on the delivery of hydrogen vehicle refuelling solutions for end users. The agreement will see Reynolds Logistics support NanoSUN in providing its customers with its Pioneer Mobile Hydrogen Refuelling Station (HRS).

There is currently a limited number of fixed hydrogen refuelling stations available, meaning fleets of vehicles may have to travel long distances to refuel. Under the new agreement, NanoSUN will work with Reynolds to move hydrogen fuel from the hydrogen source to customer's hydrogen vehicles in a single logistics operation, preventing end users from relying on a constant daily movement of their vehicle fleet to a hydrogen source.

NanoSUN's Pioneer HRS combines the features of volume gas storage, gas transport and end use vehicle dispensing in a single ISO container. Offering local distribution of hydrogen grade fuel directly to hydrogen vehicle fleets at any location and delivering a crucial requirement to kick start hydrogen vehicle take-up.

Incorporating NanoSUN's proprietary multi-stage cascade refuelling system, which requires no fixed utilities (power, water, etc), the Pioneer system is the ideal solution for in-field and mobile refuelling, with a simple and intuitive design, facilitating rapid deployment.

The new collaboration will see Reynolds Logistics offer the logistic service to all NanoSUN Pioneer HRS customers, who will be able to benefit from a fast and efficient delivery service with real time ePOD confirmation, using industry leading back office and in cab technology, and access to up-to-date information through a web portal.

Reynolds Logistics is one of the leading logistics companies involved in the distribution of bulk fuels, lubricants, bitumen, specialist gases and hazardous goods throughout Ireland, the UK and Europe. The transport company has a significant presence and history in aviation and ground fuels distribution including lower carbon fuels like LNG and more recently opportunities in energy transition to green hydrogen.

www.nanosun.co.uk
www.reynoldslogistics.com

NanoSUN's Pioneer HRS combines volume gas storage, transport and end use vehicle dispensing in a single ISO container

New majority owner for VTG

Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) and Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP) have agreed to acquire a joint 72.55 percent stake in railcar lessor VTG Aktiengesellschaft.

ADIA and GIP will hold an equal share of the majority stake in VTG.

The stake will be acquired from funds managed by Morgan Stanley Infrastructure Partners (MSIP) and Joachim Herz Stiftung, which held shareholdings of 57.55 percent and 15 percent in VTG, respectively.

Headquartered in Hamburg, Germany, VTG is an international wagon hire and rail logistics company with Europe's largest privately owned fleet of more than 88,500 railcars. VTG's diversified fleet and pan-European operations allow it to offer services to a wide range of customers across industrial, logistics and railway undertaking sectors. The VTG platform provides a differentiated offering to its customers through ancillary capabilities, including rail logistics and repair and maintenance.

Khadem Al Remeithi, executive director of the infrastructure department at ADIA, said: "The growth of Europe's rail freight market is backed by a modal shift to rail as a key enabler of the decarbonisation of supply chains. This investment in VTG aligns with our continued focus on pursuing infrastructure opportunities backed by strong energy transition-related tailwinds. For this transaction we have worked hand-in-hand with GIP, a long-standing partner, to invest in a market leading business with an established track record."

Adebayo Ogunlesi, chairman and CEO of GIP, commented: "We are excited by this investment and the opportunity to leverage GIP's deep industry expertise in the rail sector to build on a market leading European transport infrastructure platform. This acquisition is aligned with GIP's energy transition and decarbonisation strategy as the European rail sector is set to benefit from significant policy support as one of the most deliverable and cost effective near term decarbonisation levers available to governments for meeting net zero targets in transport. This transaction complements other recent high quality investments to place GIP in an excellent position in the current macroeconomic environment."

www.adia.ae