



CONFERENCE CALL

We have all recently returned from Bulk Terminals 2019 in Amsterdam, the ABTO Annual Conference.

Will Frey's bullish opening market predictions were encouraging for our industry. Similarly *Bulk Terminals International* contributor Basil Karatzas saw strong demand by financiers for ports and terminals infrastructure projects.

The upbeat note continued with Garry O'Malley from Redcar Bulk Terminal. Garry described the ongoing transformation of a former pure bulk import terminal for iron ore and coal into a multi-user, multi-products bulk import and export port facility, together with the complex challenges faced during this journey.

Operators face increasing bottom-line pressures and day one continued with presentations that addressed these difficulties, managers face additional costs when dealing with the pressing safety, sustainability and environmental improvements bulk terminals need to make. How to achieve these improvements was fully aired on day two.

ABTO is committed to being in the vanguard of efforts to drive through improvements to our record. In this, ABTO will be assisted by the MoU that I signed at the conference with Captain Richard Brough OBE, Head of ICHCA International. Richard is a valued contributor to our conferences. He was joined by Javier Saavedra, ICHCA's Dry Bulk Cargoes Working Group Chairman, presenting in the Biosecurity session.

New this year was the Marketing and Branding Bulk Terminals Workshop run by Ian Mills and Paul Sowden, helping delegates to develop their competitive edge.

My thanks to all our speakers, especially the support we continue to receive from Professor Mike Bradley, Director of The Wolfson Centre for Bulk Solids Handling Technology.

Finally, thank you to our sponsors: igus, Buttimer Engineering and BRUKS Siwertell, who make it possible to run our Bulk Terminals conferences.

FIRE HAZARDS

IMO 2020 is fast approaching and it is estimated that nearly 3,000 vessels will have scrubbers installed by 2020. For the majority of owners and their crew members, scrubber systems are new technology and, as with any new system, teething problems can be expected, P&I Club Gard warns. Compliant fuels, too, would bring about their own challenges.

Scrubber installation requires extensive hot work to facilitate the extension of the funnel area and attaching the scrubber tower to the vessel's structure.

Gard says it has seen a few fire incidents where sparks from welding, metal cutting and other hot work activities fell into the inner chamber of the scrubber through uncovered openings, and in one case the fire also spread to the engine room through glass reinforced epoxy piping. Heat generated from the steel cutting for the supporting brackets, also contributed to the build-up of heat inside the scrubber. In all these cases the yard firefighting team responded and extinguished the fire with vital assistance from crew.

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AMSTERDAM PULLS THE PLUG ON COAL

Femke Brenninkneijer, director of energy, cargo and offshore at the Port of Amsterdam, gave delegates at the recent ABTO conference in Amsterdam a rundown of the current state of play at the port following the announcement that it was banning coal handling in the next few years.

The port has had record volumes in the past five years, with particular growth in the transshipment of bulk products, including liquid bulk, coal and agri products and scrap. It has decided to phase out coal – a difficult decision to make, Brenninkneijer said, because it was major bulk stream in the port.

The port covers an area about one sixth of the size of the city, totaling 1,600 hectares. There is a lot of investment in the port, with the expansion of existing companies and new companies investing, so space is at a premium.

Once the decision on coal was made, the port worked very closely with dry-bulk-handling terminal Overslagbedrijf Amsterdam (OBA) to work out what

changes needed to be made and how its business could be transformed, as well as that of the port.

With coal power plants already closing this year, OBA is turning its focus on developing business in minerals, scrap, biomass and agri bulk. For example, it is handling scrap collected locally from Germany, which it exports to Turkey and supplies to Tata.

The terminal has made great strides in showing stakeholders how issues are being tackled and business is being developed, Brenninkneijer explained. “As a port, we have to explain to stakeholders that it is not just bulk, but part of a bigger picture,” she said.

When it came to the issue of having terminals close to urban centres, Brenninkneijer said that it was a question of how to position bulk in the bigger supply chain and that logistics would always have a big part to play.

“Four years ago, the port was concentrating on raising volumes and less on the city, but this has now changed,” said Brenninkneijer. “We have a lot of work to do to make the city part of the beautiful world of the port.”

GREECE LOOKS AT POWER LIMITS

The Union of Greek Shipowners is backing a proposal by Greece to limit the main engine power of ships as a means of reducing GHG emissions from ships.

Greece has come forward with a concrete proposal for a short-term, prescriptive measure to improve the operational energy efficiency of existing ships, to be considered at the forthcoming meeting of the UN IMO’s intersessional technical group in November.

Greece’s submission, building on an existing proposal backed by the International Chamber of Shipping and IMO Member States, supplements the strengthened Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (super SEEMP) in a way that the accomplishment of the UN IMO 2030 Target is ensured.

The proposed measure prescribes the limit of the main engine power that ships over 5,000 GT can use under normal circumstances to maintain the level of CO₂ emissions from ships at a historical low (2012) over a three-year phase-in period, commencing before 2023. The sectoral prescriptive approach it takes prescribes that bulk carriers and tankers reduce their main engine power by 50% and containerships by 66%. The measure includes a review clause to allow for rectifying action by the UN IMO, if necessary.

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HOPPER ADDS TO ROSYTH'S AGRI-BULK OFFERING

A new ecological hopper to help with the new agri-bulk facility at the Port of Rosyth was recently delivered to the UK port.

The Samson ecological hopper is the first of its kind in the UK and will be a key component of the port's new agri-bulk hub facility for Cefetra.

Forth Ports' port at Rosyth is currently making substantial investments to provide a dedicated agri-bulk facility for Cefetra. The new terminal and improved storage facilities will deliver increased annual throughput and storage capacity positioning Rosyth as the main agri-hub for Scotland.

In developing this new agri-hub, the safety of staff and protection of the environment is evidently paramount. Dust control is a key part of the process and the Samson Eco Hopper was chosen to receive dry bulk materials as it offers a high and reliable import capacity while minimising the escape of dust and it is equipped with a host of safety measures to ensure effective and safe performance.

Commenting on the hopper, Derek Knox, senior port manager said: "We are investing in our port to ensure the most efficient, dust free agri-hub for Cefetra as well as other bulk customers."

Operation of the Samson Eco Hopper is straightforward. As dry bulk materials such as grain arrive by sea they are offloaded into the hoppers using mobile harbour cranes. At a little over 18m in height and made of reinforced steel, the Eco Hopper provides a sturdy and solid reception unit. It is topped by a tapered inlet shroud, which minimises any dust generation caused by cross winds. As the crane grab discharges the load, dust filter units situated on three sides of the hopper will keep any fugitive dust from spreading. Material passes through the Samson Eco Hopper at a peak rate of 1200 tph.

SWIFT ACTION REQUIRED ON SHIPPER REQUESTS

International Transport Intermediaries Club (ITIC) is warning agents to respond to shippers' requests in good time, or face the possibility of financial penalties.

The insurer cites a recent case where a container of frozen beef was being carried on a liner service from Australia to China. Seven days after the vessel had departed, the shipper noticed that it had failed to obtain the necessary health declaration from the Australian authorities. The shipper immediately contacted its agent and instructed them to return the container to Australia upon its arrival in China and without clearing Chinese customs.

Unfortunately, the ship agent failed to act immediately and when it did, the container was already in the hands of the Chinese authorities, who had broken the seal. The container was returned to Australia. However, the broken seal led the Australian customs team to treat the container as a new import (as opposed to a return of goods) meaning it was fully inspected by the quarantine authorities and shipped back to China.



CONFIDENCE FALLS – BUT CHARTERERS AND MANAGERS REMAIN BUOYANT

Confidence in the shipping industry fell in the past three months to its lowest level for two and half years, according to the latest Shipping Confidence Survey from leading shipping adviser and accountant BDO. Yet owners, charterers and managers were more confident than they were at the time of the previous survey in May 2019.

The average confidence level recorded by the survey in the three months to end-August 2019 was 5.8 out of a possible maximum of 10.0. This compares to the figure of 6.1 recorded for the quarter ended May 2019.

In the dry bulk sector, expectations of rate increases were down from 48% to 39%, with charterers again recording the most marked decrease, from 80% to 25%. The numbers expecting higher container ship rates, meanwhile, fell from 35% to 19%. Net rate sentiment was positive in the tanker and dry bulk sectors, but negative in the container ship market.

Richard Greiner, Partner, Shipping & Transport at BDO, says: “Geopolitical uncertainty contributed significantly to the decline in confidence recorded in our latest survey, with a number of respondents expressing concern about burgeoning trade wars and political tension in various parts of the world. Ongoing indecision surrounding Brexit was also a salient factor.

“But it was not all bad news. Confidence on the part of owners, charterers and managers was up in the last three months, as was the likelihood of imminent major investment – in the case of owners, to an all-time survey high.

“Indications from the freight markets were less encouraging, with a fall in expectations of higher rates in all three main tonnage categories. Indeed, net rate sentiment was negative in the container ship sector for the first time in almost four years. But shipping confidence must be weighed against the highly cyclical nature of the industry. Not every reversal in fortunes is a portent of significant decline”.

SOYA BEANS CONTINUE TO SLIDE

Combined soya bean exports from Brazil and the US were down 7.8% in the first eight months of this year, as the main Brazilian soya bean export season disappointed, according to BIMCO.

The fall in volumes from the two countries has also led to an 8.5% drop from last year in the tonne mile demand generated by the two dominant soya bean exporters.

In particular, falling exports from Brazil have hurt the shipping industry, with accumulated soya bean exports from Brazil in the first eight months of this year 7.8 million tonnes lower than the first eight months of 2018. This has resulted in tonne mile demand from Brazilian exports falling by 12.9% or 83.7 billion tonne miles.

“The coming months will determine the outcome of the year for seaborne US soya bean exports, with early signs that exports since 1st September seem to be following the usual pattern of increasing through September ahead of a peak in late October and November. This would be good news for the shipping industry, but it is currently too early to call the season a success,” says Peter Sand, BIMCO’s Chief Shipping Analyst.

“During the course of this trade war, an easing of tensions has often been rumoured, each time bringing with it hope that the situation would soon be resolved, only to end up with a further deterioration of the relationship between the US and China.

“The higher levels of offseason exports to China are good news for the shipping industry, but should not be taken to mean that things are back to the status quo, there may still be many twists and turns ahead.

“Once relations between two trading partners have become this bad, it takes a long time to restore business as usual,” says Peter Sand.

The trade war isn’t the only factor influencing Chinese soya bean imports and “lower Chinese demand as a result of the African Swine Flu mean that even without the effects of tariffs, seaborne volumes of soya beans imported by the Chinese may not return to levels seen in 2017 for some years”, says Sand.

“What matters most to the global shipping industry is the tonne mile demand generated by the trades and although volumes were lower in the second half of 2018 than 2017, increased exports from Brazil managed to limit some of the damage that could otherwise have been inflicted on the dry bulk shipping industry,” he adds.

Port and Terminal Operations for Bulk Cargoes 2020

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Optional Practical Workshop: 12 March 2020

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- » Ship unloading technologies
- » Conveying technologies
- » Storage and discharge technologies
- » Loading and unloading control
- » Rail and road out loading equipment and control
- » Explosion and fire risks and management
- » Mobile plant and safety
- » Developments in automation and autonomous vehicles
- » Dust control and environmental protection
- » Controlling cargo damage
- » Wear protection and maintenance
- » Cargo characterisation for handleability and other issues
- » Practical Workshop: our first course earlier this year included a visit to The Wolfson Centre's pilot plant. Interest was such that in 2020 we will be offering an optional Practical Workshop, to be held in its on-site industrial-scale pilot plant.

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of Greenwich Medway
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For anyone concerned about or responsible for the safe handling and storage of bulk materials in ports and on the sea

Course Leader: Mike Bradley, Professor of Bulk and Particulate Technologies and Director of The Wolfson Centre

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To register an interest in attending and further course details, please contact
Simon Gutteridge at events@bulkterminals.org or call **+33 (0)321 47 72 19**

PORT AND TERMINAL OPERATIONS FOR BULK CARGOES
Tuesday 10 and Wednesday 11 March 2020 – plus –
Optional Practical Workshop, Thursday 12 March 2020

The Wolfson Centre for Bulk Solids Handling
University of Greenwich Medway Campus, Chatham Maritime, Kent, UK



Course Overview

The Association of Bulk Terminal Operators (ABTO) is delighted to be partnering with the **The Wolfson Centre for Bulk Solids Handling** – part of the University of Greenwich School of Engineering – to deliver this course, hosted by them at their Medway Campus.

The course will examine the issues surrounding the safe handling and storage of bulk materials in ports and on the sea. It is designed to be interactive so delegates are given the chance to discuss real life issues and to determine best practice for future developments.

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