

PortNews



North Sea Port stays ahead in a changing playing field

Rail – On track for further growth

Scanfor brings cross-dock to North Sea Port





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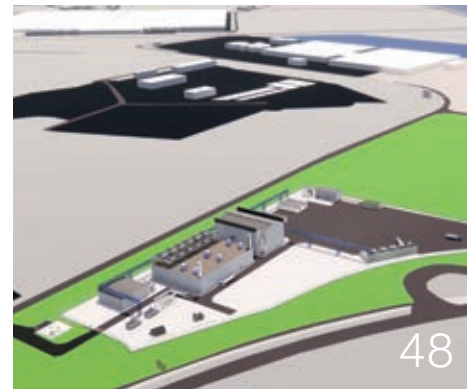
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ON THE COVER

North Sea Port has been well known as a first-class offshore port for many years now. A lot of operators and contractors in the oil & gas, offshore wind, and decommissioning industry have met with the many facilities the port has to offer. Read more in page 8. Photo courtesy of Verbrugge Terminals.

EVENTS

North Sea Port and Promotion Council North Sea Port will be in attendance at various events and trade shows.

Below you'll find a snapshot of the upcoming events that might be of interest to you. The events mentioned are subject to possible COVID-19 measures.

7-8 OCTOBER 2021	European Commodities Exchange Copenhagen		19-20 OCTOBER 2021	Cool Logistics Global Rotterdam		19-21 OCTOBER 2021	Transport & Logistics Antwerp	
26-27 OCTOBER 2021	Offshore Energy Amsterdam		26-28 OCTOBER 2021	Intermodal Europe Amsterdam		2-5 NOVEMBER 2021	Europort Rotterdam	
23-25 NOVEMBER 2021	Wind Europe Electric City 2021 Copenhagen		2 DECEMBER 2021	Havencongres North Sea Port Gent		7-9 DECEMBER 2021	Antwerp XL Antwerp	
9-11 FEBRUARY 2022	Fruit Logistica Berlin		8-10 MARCH 2022	StocExpo Rotterdam		23-24 MARCH 2022	Maintenance Antwerp	
5-7 APRIL 2022	Wind Europe Bilbao		17-19 MAY 2022	BreakBulk Europe Rotterdam		9-12 MAY 2023	Transport Logistic Munich	

“ Positive developments

Welcome

For many companies at North Sea Port, offshore has been, and still is, one of the growth markets and some companies are even fully dedicated to this industry, that forms the basis of the global energy supply and many production processes. Oil & Gas, and the current transition towards offshore wind, all pay a considerable contribution to the track record of our port.

Design and engineering, assembly, construction, transport, installation and decommissioning of offshore assets require many disciplines that all require relevant know-how and expertise. One of today's challenges in this matter lies in finding skilled and trained technicians to adhere to the expected growth of this sector. Adjusting training and education to the industry's demands is a hot topic in our region and it is good to know that our educational institutes are working hard to meet the requests from the industry. In addition, a strong cluster of recruiting companies helps to fulfil the industry's need for trained employees.

As Promotion Council North Sea Port, we want to offer all parties involved in the port area a platform to meet, to exchange information and to do business. We are a networking and business club that aims to bring everyone involved in North Sea Port together and facilitate stronger connections. We also contribute to the promotion of all port activities on a regional, national, and international level. That is why our credo is 'Meet, Connect, Promote'. However meeting this credo has been challenging in the past eighteen months. We really look forward to the upcoming possibilities, after so many months, in which we can meet face to face again at our events and at several international trade fairs. Together with North Sea Port and some of our participants, we will be attending at the European Commodity Exchange in Copenhagen, WindEurope Electric City Copenhagen and, closer



to home, Antwerp XL Antwerp and Offshore Energy Exhibition and Conference in Amsterdam.

I am really pleased with these positive developments and I am looking forward to meeting you at one of our events, or at an exhibition floor.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henk de Haas'.

Henk de Haas,
Chairman of Promotion Council North Sea Port

Strong ambitions



In the next five years, the port authority will continue to perform its three core roles.

North Sea Port Authority has presented its strategic plan 'Connect 2025' to its shareholders. With eight strategic programmes, the cross-border port authority continues to build its position as a European port.

The port authority has been set a clear assignment by its eight public shareholders: to draw up a strategic plan with a 2025 horizon based on the shareholders' strategy. Central to this are balanced value creation within the framework of economic development and employment, sustainability and climate, and a solid financial foundation.

Relationships are key

The port authority is now submitting a plan to the shareholders to put this assignment into practice. The strategy is aimed at developing business premises and infrastructure, nautical services and the role of director in the port area. Relationships with companies, public authorities, and the environment are key. There is also a focus on chemicals, steel, building materials, energy, automotive and trucking, food and feed, and value-added logistics sectors. The port authority aims to deliver



The port aims to reduce the share of road transport in the modal split.

“As a top ten European port, North Sea Port faces considerable challenges and opportunities.”

the plan through eight strategic programmes. Daan Schalck, CEO of North Sea Port, says, “As a top ten European port, North Sea Port faces considerable challenges and opportunities in terms of energy transition, the circular economy, climate, the logistics chain, port infrastructure, and digitisation. The port authority is addressing those challenges and explicitly wants to be the linking factor, the connector. This strategic plan makes clear choices to achieve that, giving shareholders and local residents confidence in the direction taken by North Sea Port and providing assurance for the large investments made by companies.”

Three tasks

The shareholders will deliberate on the strategic plan until mid-October. The port authority is asking for a clear mandate from the province of Zeeland, the municipalities of Vlissingen, Borsele, and Terneuzen as the Dutch shareholders and the city of Ghent, the province of East Flanders and the municipalities of Evergem and Zelzate as the Flemish shareholders. In the coming months, the port authority will discuss this with the shareholders, after which the plan will be finalised. The port authority has been instructed by its shareholders to pursue three tasks so that they remain in balance with one another: economic development and employment, sustainability and climate, and a solid financial foundation.

1. The first task is to create employment within a larger, high-value and future-proof network of companies. It is the companies that create the jobs and invest in sustainability, so it is crucial to attract the right companies to the cross-border region, to keep them there, and enable them



It is the companies that create the jobs and invest in sustainability, so it is crucial to attract the right companies to the cross-border region, to keep them there, and enable them to grow.



EUR 50 million will be invested in infrastructure.

to grow. That means looking forward, innovating, and diversifying.

2. The second task is sustainability and climate: less CO₂, more nature, more circularity and efficient use of space. The companies in North Sea Port are sensitive to the pressure to become more sustainable. The port authority wants to differentiate itself by helping them achieve their sustainability goals while also setting a good example.
3. The third task is to be financially healthy. The shareholders do not participate in North Sea Port to make money. North Sea Port therefore does not have a dividend target, but instead seeks a financial result that will allow it to remain financially healthy.

In order to fulfil the briefing it has been given by its shareholders, the port authority will perform three core tasks; place the customer first, focus on seven priority sectors, and roll out eight programmes to achieve the plan. “With targeted choices, support and ambitious goals”, Mr Schalck explains, “we want to play a connecting role in order to achieve concrete results with social added value by 2025. We are providing 150ha for the circular economy, further increasing the reuse of CO₂, continuing to grow as Western Europe’s leading hydrogen cluster, working to enhance electrification, increasing the sustainability of the logistics chain, building infrastructure in consultation with businesses and public authorities, and boosting digitisation.”

Connecting role

In the next five years, the port authority will continue to perform its three core roles. The provision of available business premises and port infrastructure is the first. The port authority also provides nautical services such as shipping assistance. A third – special – role is that of ‘conductor’, bringing everything together in the port area. Expanding and further fleshing out this role is the silver lining in the strategic plan and one of the eight programmes for delivering it.

The port authority wants to set itself apart in terms of customer partnership. This is a different approach to that of most seaports, which aim to deliver the lowest possible cost for the customer or to be the leader in a particular market segment. Through this customer partnership, the port authority wants to play a connecting role, establishing a relationship of trust and looking towards the future. In doing so, it aims to meet the specific needs of the companies and offer them customised services. This is why the port authority is seeking growth in

Eight programmes to deliver the strategic plan

With the following eight strategic programmes, North Sea Port continues to build its position as a European port.

- **Investing in circular value chains.** The port authority wants to attract at least ten innovative circular activities by 2025 and have a cluster space of 150ha available for circular projects.
- **Investing in energy projects.** Companies currently still consume lot of energy, but they will have to operate in a climate-neutral way in the future. The port authority wants to help them get there. In the short and medium term, the focus will be on hydrogen, green electricity and heat exchange.
- **Investing in climate.** Total CO₂ emissions in the port amount to 21.5t million per year. The target is to capture at least 3t million of CO₂ per year by 2025. To this end, EUR 50 million will be invested in infrastructure.
- **Strong logistics chains.** The port aims to reduce the share of road transport in the modal split. This is being achieved – supported by digitalisation – by bundling cargo flows, increasing cooperation and tackling missing or unreliable links in the logistics chains.
- **Future-proof infrastructure.** Future-proof port infrastructure not only needs to be safe, reliable, and efficient, it is also important that it is properly utilised. When investing in infrastructure (such as sites, quays and roads), the port authority listens carefully to the companies. By 2025, New Panamax ships with a draught of up to 15m will be able to pass through the New Terneuzen lock and ships up to 45m wide will be able to sail on to Rodenhuisdok without any nautical delays. Work is also continuing on better rail access (Rail Ghent-Terneuzen) and the Seine-Scheldt connection is being further improved so that ships of 4,500t can sail as far as Paris. The R4 West and East ring road around Ghent will also be further upgraded to allow safer and more efficient traffic.
- **Data community.** Together with the companies, the port authority will develop the ‘North Sea Portal’ by 2023. Fast and secure exchange of data – including port authority data – will contribute to increased efficiency and synergy. Here, too, the port authority is primarily playing a connecting role, facilitating cooperation with Antwerp and Rotterdam. By 2025, the port management system will also be fully digitised.
- **Together with society.** In order to assure its ‘license to operate’, the port authority maintains a continuous dialogue with its neighbours: companies, public authorities and local residents.
- **Connecting cooperating parties.** By 2025, it will be abundantly clear that the port authority has taken on a connecting role and is appreciated for doing so. It is no coincidence that North Sea Port’s tagline is ‘Together Smarter’. With its central role, the port authority is very well placed to put the challenges on the agenda and to make the necessary connections between parties in order to identify solutions.

seven priority sectors: chemicals, steel, building materials, energy, automotive and trucking, food and feed, and value-added logistics.

The way in which the port authority aims to interact with local residents and those living in the wider region also fits within the philosophy of customer partnership; maintaining contact, with an awareness of each other’s interests and seeking consensus. Customer partnership also means building powerful alliances in which each partner does what it does best.

Connect 2025

North Sea Port organises second Port Week

The first North Sea Port Port Week, which the port authority organised for the first time last year, was a great success, not in the least considering the fact that it all took place online. Therefore, a sequel is inevitable.

This year the event will take place from 29 November until 2 December. This time the Port Week will be a hybrid event, containing both online and offline elements. The event will be concluded with the annual port congress, which will this year be organised in the Ghent Opera.

The overall theme of the Port Week is Connect 2025. During the event, an extensive range of speakers and panelists will talk about various topics based on North Sea Port's new strategic plan. Below, the provisional programme gives an impression of the many topics that will be discussed. Please note that this is subject to change, as at the time of writing the programme was not yet finalised.

Monday, 29 November, 19.00h - 20.30h:
Webinar Port and Residents

North Sea Port enters into a dialogue with its close surroundings on diverse themes building on the port authority's new strategic masterplan Connect 2025. What are the port's plans, and how will it take care of proper neighbourliness?

Tuesday, 30 November, 10.00h - 11.30h:

Webinar Nature and Economic Development, Hand in Hand.

North Sea Port takes care of its environment. As a connector, North Sea Port takes care of the connections with other ecosystems in its region such as cities, villages, agriculture, landscapes, and bio-diversity.

Wednesday, 1 December, 10.00h - 11.30h:

Webinar Investing in European Corridors

An important cornerstone in North Sea Port's strategic masterplan is growth with sustainability. Companies are facing the challenge of operating more sustainably, whilst maintaining competitiveness. Many investments are required for this task. In this webinar, North Sea Port wants to inform about the opportunities and challenges both nationally and in the port itself, in order to adapt to the shared ambitions and to support them.

Thursday, 2 December, 10.00h - 17.00h:

Port Congress North Sea Port, Opera Ghent

The Port Congress North Sea Port will focus on 'Infrastructure & New partners', in the port area and with regard to the energy transition. No energy transition is possible without the necessary infrastructure and collaboration between the parties involved in this. During the congress, and looking back at the prior webinars, the port authority will discuss how (cross-border) collaboration can help to realise the transition towards a climate-neutral cluster. During the congress, discussions will take place between market parties, port authority, and utility network providers, in order to inform stakeholders about the challenges and opportunities of realising the required infrastructure.

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Daan Schalck, CEO of North Sea Port, at the last North Sea Port Congress that was held live in 2019.



Photo: courtesy of Opera Gent.

The Port Congress North Sea Port will be a live event this year, at the Ghent Opera.

North Sea Port stays ahead in a changing playing field



North Sea Port has been well known as a first-class offshore port for many years now. A lot of operators and contractors in the oil & gas, offshore wind, and decommissioning industry have met with the many facilities the port has to offer.

As long as oil & gas is produced at sea, the industry is looking for the most economic location, so this will definitely generate business at North Sea Port.

Photo courtesy of Limit Fotografie.

With its strategic location, open access without hardly any tidal restrictions, a multimodal congestion-free connection to the hinterland, and a skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced cluster of offshore-oriented companies, the cross-border port sets the standard. As a leading offshore port, North Sea Port cannot be missed at the Offshore Energy Exhibition & Conference that will take place in Amsterdam on 27 and 28 October. The North Sea Port pavilion will as usual be one of the main eye catchers. In the run-up to this event, PortNews speaks with Commercial Manager at North Sea Port, Marcel Pater.

Question mark

“Lots of companies in our port engage in business in the offshore industry in the area of logistics, construction, maintenance and repair, mobilisation, decommissioning, recruiting, et cetera”, Mr Pater says. “For decades, oil & gas have formed the basis here, and in the last decade we have also built an impressive track record in offshore wind.” With the energy transition and many governments and industries working towards carbon neutrality, the playing field for the various sources of energy will change and this will no doubt have its influence on the activities at North Sea Port. “One of the big question marks today,” Mr Pater states, “is what will become the new energy standard in the next 20 years. Looking

at the North Sea, there is still ample space available for the exploitation of oil & gas, as well as offshore wind. The same counts for other regions.”

A challenge

He continues, “Today we are all talking about the energy transition that is taking place, which is not going fast enough for many people. Despite this, we all know that oil & gas will remain important sources of energy and a main raw material and adjuvant in many industries. So no matter how, on a worldwide scale we will still be depending on oil & gas in the upcoming decades, as long as we are not capable of generating alternatives at equal volumes. As a matter of fact, I personally think it will be quite a challenge to replace the entire demand for fossile by green energy within 20 years.” He continues, “Take for example wind and solar energy, as a large amount of turbines and panels would be necessary to equal the current amount of energy provided by oil & gas. Of course, every green megawatt that is produced as soon as possible is valuable, but it will take decades to reach a sustainable and balanced mix of energy sources alternative to the existing fossil sources such as coal, oil & gas. Especially with the given fact that the demand for energy will not drop, but even rise, according to the predictions. As long as oil & gas is produced at sea, the industry is looking for the most economic location, so this will definitely generate



With a number of well-known and trusted yards, North Sea Port has also built up an impressive track record in decommissioning.

Photo courtesy of Sagro Decom.

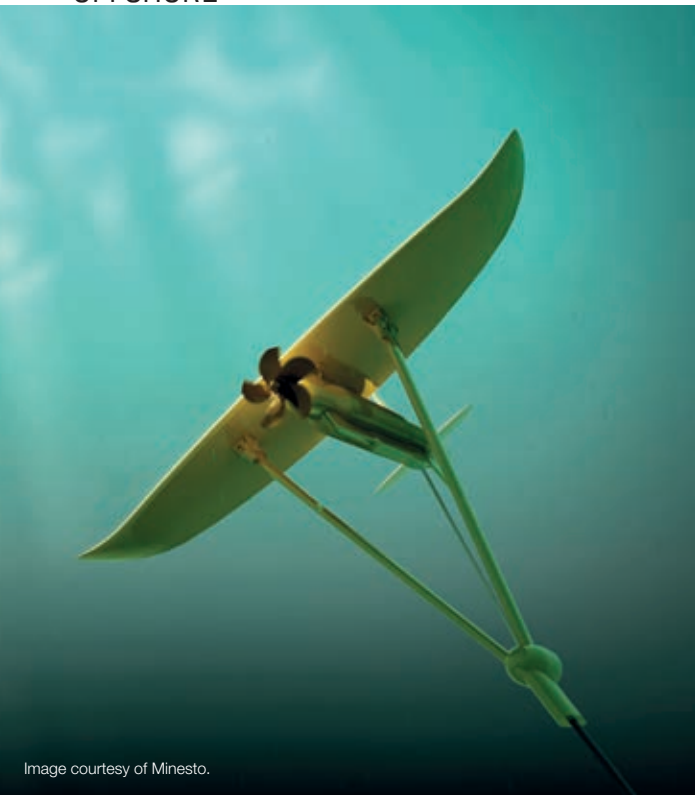


Image courtesy of Minesto.

With regard to sustainable energy, marine energy and even solar energy have a lot of potential in the offshore sector.

business at North Sea Port. And to go in to bat for the oil & gas industry, we should not forget that operators and their suppliers are constantly looking for ways to make the entire oil & gas supply chain more sustainable to contribute to a reduction of carbon emissions.”

Offshore wind

Despite the remaining demand for oil & gas, offshore wind is also growing in importance all over the world as a source for renewable energy. Mr Pater continues, “Offshore wind has now reached a more or less mature status in the North Sea region, although there are still many plans for constructing new offshore farms. In other regions such as the US and Asia, offshore wind is still in its infancy but with a tendency to expand. For the upcoming years, this means a lot of opportunities in many ways. Both on the development and construction side, as well as for the operation and maintenance part, many companies in our port that are active in this industry should be able to play their role in this.” The availability of offshore wind is also considered an important criteria for the production of green hydrogen. In its new strategic masterplan, North Sea Port expressed its ambition to grow into a leading green hydrogen hub. “In our port,” Mr Pater voices, “we have large hydrogen intense facilities that currently make use of grey hydrogen in the production process. Replacing this grey hydrogen by green hydrogen will contribute to a more sustainable port. There are several plans for the realisation of electrolyzers for the production of this green hydrogen at North Sea Port. Part of the produced green hydrogen could be used by those industries, and part could also be used as fuel for hydrogen-powered vessels and trucks. Green electricity is necessary for the production of sustainable hydrogen, and offshore wind plays an important role in this. So more offshore windfarms will be necessary to meet the future demand from the electrolyzers. Luckily we have the Borssele offshore windfarms nearby, and one of the 2GW export cables of the IJmuiden Ver offshore windfarm will land in our province.”



Photo courtesy of Limit Fotografie.

Decommissioning

With a number of well-known and trusted yards, North Sea Port has also built up an impressive track record in decommissioning. For many decades, operators have found the port for dismantling vessels and offshore assets. “When looking at decommissioning, our port has many strengths and dedicated yards in our port have hence become valued partners in this matter”, Mr Pater elaborates. “An interesting development here is the rising demand from steel manufacturers for clean steel scrap. Steel manufacturers are heavily investing in a more sustainable production of steel. In terms of CO₂ output, recycling steel has a much better score than producing steel from ore and coal, so I think the export volumes of scrap to outside Europe will drop in favour to local steel producers in Europe. This way, the supply chain can also be kept short, which also reflects our sustainability goals.”



For the upcoming years, offshore wind is growing in importance all over the world. Many companies in North Sea Port that are active in this industry should be able to play their role in this.

Other opportunities

The sea also offers other opportunities, according to Mr Pater. "With regard to sustainable energy, marine energy and even solar energy have a lot of potential in the offshore sector. The integration process of these sustainable energies is going quite slowly at the moment. However, just look at how fast offshore wind has developed in the past years. This could also happen with marine energy and probably solar energy as well. Apart from this, the sea has a lot more to offer such as ocean mining, and when thinking out of the box, there are even ongoing investigations for the possibility of, for example, establishing data centres at the bottom of the sea. For developments like this, the sea offers space, cooling capacity, and electricity at the shortest distance. All these developments will also need design and engineering, construction and installation, logistics services, servicing, and so on. In all of these disciplines, lots of

companies in our port area have ample knowledge and expertise. So in my opinion, those companies should keep a keen eye on all those developments and try to be ready for business when the time is right."

MORE INFORMATION

North Sea Port

Marcel Pater
Commercial Manager

T. +31 6 3034 6342

E. marcel.pater@northseaport.com

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North Sea Port companies present themselves

Offshore Energy Exhibition & Conference, and WindEurope Electric City



Impression of activities at the North Sea Port stand at WindEurope Copenhagen 2019.

After almost two years, North Sea Port will again be present at two important offshore shows presenting itself as Europe's number one offshore port.

Offshore Energy Exhibition & Conference

Offshore Energy Exhibition & Conference (OEEC) is one of Europe's leading events for the entire offshore energy industry and is an excellent opportunity to reach everyone involved in this industry.

OEEC takes place on 26 and 27 October at Amsterdam RAI in the Netherlands with a physical exhibition floor and content programme combined with an online event environment to attend the content programme online, for matchmaking and to get in touch with exhibitors.

Like many years before, North Sea Port will be present at this show with the North Sea Port stand where a broad range of companies representing the port's offshore cluster will be present. Other companies will have their own stand at the event.

Participants at OEEC, located in and around North Sea Port*

	stand number
North Sea Port Pavilion	1.509
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barsan Global Logistics from Willebroek • Hillebrand/ASK Romein • IGL • North Sea Port • North Sea Port Promotion Council • Overlasko • Sagro • Shipyard Reimerswaal • Supermaritime Nederland • Verbrugge Terminals • Zeeland Bunkering 	
BOW Terminal	1.214
Damen Shipyards	1.311
Draftec	1.519
Holland Shipyards Group	1.423
Hoondert Services and Decommissioning	1.521
Liftal	1.319
Mammoet	1.211
Oceanwide	1.200

WindEurope Electric City

WindEurope Electric City is a new onshore and offshore wind event. Heavy industry, mobility, district and domestic heating, storage, hybrids, hydrogen, and many more will be participating and will join the conversation on how to build a sustainable economy. This means new voices at the conference, and new business partners and customers on the exhibition floor.

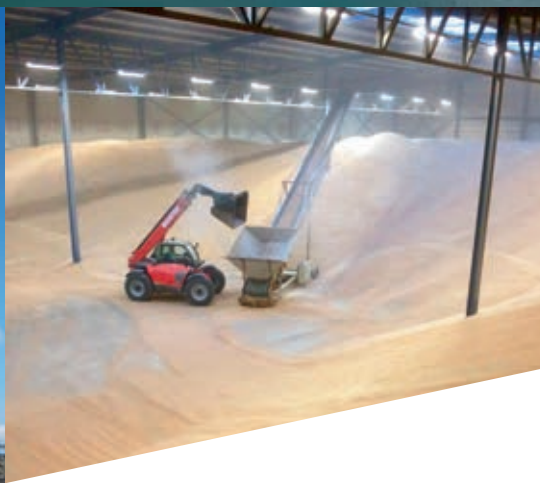
WindEurope Electric City will be the first event in Copenhagen's Bella Center's brand-new exhibition hall. More than 250 exhibitors from across the energy supply chain will be present spread across six exhibition halls.

Participants at Electric City, located in and around North Sea Port*

	stand number
North Sea Port Pavilion	C2-46
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gould Services • IGL • North Sea Port • North Sea Port Promotion Council • Verbrugge Terminals 	
Sarens	C4-A12

* Information, as known at printing date, and subject to change.

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Sustainability is theme for Holland Shipyard Group's growth



All photos courtesy of Holland Shipyards.



Both outside and inside facilities are fully up and running.

In 2019, Holland Shipyards Group started new business at the Westhofhaven in Vlissingen. With the Vlissingen terminal, the shipyard is aiming at the market for mobilising and refurbishing offshore oil & gas rigs. With partner and launching customer Perenco, the yard has seen a flying start.

Now, two years later, PortNews talks again with Commercial Director of Holland Shipyards Group, Marco Hoogendoorn, for an update. “In 2019,” he says, “we started our Vlissingen yard with a lot of work for Perenco and its affiliate Dixstone Shipyard. Today, Perenco still is a valuable partner for us, however, other customers have found us as well, and our yard has been constantly occupied by several rigs and other projects. People riding along the A58 highway will agree to this as the rigs cannot be missed from there, with their jacks clearly visible from a long distance, rising above the flat country of Zeeland.

Life-extensions

According to Mr Hoogendoorn, business at the Vlissingen yard is going well. “Both our outside and inside facilities are fully up and running”, he states. “In the last three years, we have seen the turnover of the entire Holland Shipyard Group doubled, and Vlissingen certainly played an important role in this. A main theme in our growth seems to be sustainability. Looking at our shipbuilding activities, we hardly construct any conventionally-powered vessels anymore. Our recent new building activities are mainly focused on the construction of hybrid and fully electric vessels. When looking at offshore, the largest part of our work in Vlissingen lies in the life-extension of oil & gas rigs. Rigs that reach a certain age are often no longer profitable for their original use, although technically speaking it may be worth giving them a second life. This reuse contributes to sustainability as it saves materials compared to constructing a new asset and furthermore, many of the materials collected during the stripping of the rig are recycled or, when possible, reused.”

Offshore and shipbuilding

The rig life extensions are usually very large projects, entailing lots of various jobs. “We usually start with the improvement of the existing steel structure”, Mr Hoogendoorn explains. “After so many years at sea, most rigs have suffered from tear and wear, despite the usual maintenance. Once the steel structure is up to date again, the entire equipment on board of the rig will be renewed for the new purpose of the asset. We have, for example, recently turned a drilling rig into a decommissioning support rig, meaning we completely converted the rig for its new purpose, resulting in a lot of work in various disciplines, from steel construction to installation of packages and the renewal of the entire wiring. Although many parts and packages were supplied by others, we took care of the entire installation and interfacing.” Mr Hoogendoorn continues, “Around 50 to 75% is covered today by assignments from the offshore



Aerial view of the Holland Shipyards in Vlissingen. Vlissingen is a perfect location because of the wide, lock-free, and deep-sea entrance.



Once the steel structure is up to date again, the entire equipment on board of the rig is renewed for the new purpose of the asset.

“ This reuse contributes to sustainability as it saves materials compared to constructing a new asset and furthermore, many of the materials collected during the stripping of the rig are recycled or, when possible, reused.

industry. Apart from this, we also receive ample incompany assignments from other companies within the Group. As we have a lot of room at our yard, both outside and in our halls, we can offer our sister companies space, hands, and tools for the construction of large steel components. Their valuable space can hence be used more efficiently. For example, we construct sections of hulls and even complete ones in Vlissingen. They are afterwards transported for completion to our yards elsewhere such as the one in Hardinxveld-Giessendam.”

Various strengths

The success of the Vlissingen yard has its basis in the location's various strengths, as Mr Hoogendoorn elaborates. “Over here, we have sufficient room for construction works, with ample lifting capacity inside with a variety of overhead traveling cranes, and a mobile crane on our quay. Apart from this, we have plenty of space available for storage of all kinds of offshore equipment and parts. We furthermore have our in-house blasting and painting facilities. Our dedicated

quay has a length of 250m and with a draught of 10m, it can accommodate almost any oil or gas rig.”

He continues, “It is also good to mention that Vlissingen is a perfect location for us because of the wide, lock-free, and deep-sea entrance, and not in the least because of the collaborative attitude of North Sea Port’s port authority. They are always open to our questions and try to help us as much as possible. Another important factor is the good relationship with our neighbours. When considering one of our recent projects, a rig underwent a decom drop-off at the quay of our neighbour Sagro first, before it moved over to our quay for conversion. When necessary, we make use of each others quay and mooring facilities. I think this kind of cooperation, helping each other instead of being in each other’s way, also makes North Sea Port a unique location for international business.”

Strong position

When looking at the future, Mr Hoogendoorn sees many opportunities. “Despite COVID-19, our market currently operates in overdrive, so it is hard to know whether or not we have missed opportunities because of the pandemic”, he voices. “Oil & gas will remain important energy sources. The opportunity for us lies in the fact that sometimes these sources are not profitable for large operators, as they are too small, almost empty, or too challenging to exploit. For small niche players, these fields can be interesting and for the exploiting they could make use of rigs converted by us. Perenco, for example, is specialised in this complex oil & gas exploitation such as end of life and marginal fields. Apart from this, the company is also active in decommissioning and with the amount of oil & gas fields going offline, this market also looks promising, although I expect that this work will be executed by large contractors.” When looking at shipbuilding, Mr Hoogendoorn is more cautious in his predictions. “Shipbuilding is still a difficult market, as things rapidly change.



Marco Hoogendoorn, Commercial Director of Holland Shipyards Group:
“Our yard has been constantly occupied by several rigs and other projects.”

However, with our knowledge and expertise, especially in carbon-low powered vessels, our position in this market will remain strong, giving our Vlissingen yard ample additional work on top of our activities for the offshore industry”, he concludes.

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The Vlissingen yard also receives ample incompany assignments from other companies within the Group. For example for the construction of sections of hulls and even complete ones.



Modern workhorses for ports and logistics

Terberg Tractors Belgium



The RT283 terminal tractor in full throttle at the DFDS RoRo terminal.

All photos courtesy of Jean-Louis Vandevoorde.

Terberg's tractors are the workhorses that keep many port terminals, logistical platforms, and industrial yards humming and running. "Wherever a trailer or cargo on wheels has to be moved, there is a big chance you will find a Terberg on standby", says Dominik Thielman, Service Manager at Terberg Tractors Belgium. The Dutch group is expanding its presence within North Sea Port by building a brand-new service centre.

Founded in 1869 as a blacksmith in Benschop, near Utrecht, the Dutch family-owned company has become a world-class player in specialist markets with a turnover of more than USD 1 billion, 3,000 employees, international subsidiaries in twelve countries, a global network of distributors, and a presence in more than hundred countries. A decisive development came in 1973, when Terberg delivered its very first terminal tractor to a Rotterdam port company. Even if they are complemented with environmental equipment, modification of trucks, cars and vans, truck-mounted forklifts of the Kinglifter brand, loading, weighing, and identification systems for professional use, and a separate car leasing company, special vehicles became the main line of activity. Terberg Special Vehicles' logo clearly – and proudly – heralds the message: Terberg is "where special comes as standard".

Leading position in RoRo tractors

The company holds a leading position in the market of tractors for RoRo port terminals, logistical platforms, and industrial yards. "We have machines running in almost every port or steel factory and in numerous plants and distribution centres, moving anything from an empty trailer or a full container to heavy loads



Dominik Thielman, Service Manager at Terberg Tractors Belgium.



Electrically-driven tractors are already available. Hydrogen-powered prototypes are being tested.

of up to 375 tonnes”, says Mr Thielman.. “Our customers come from very different horizons, which helped us when the corona pandemic struck, because the boom in e-commerce and food made up for the initial slowdown in ports and industry.” A fine example of the expertise developed by Terberg is provided by the RT283 terminal tractor that shipping company DFDS uses for the rapid loading and unloading of the large RoRo ships that call at the Mercatordock in North Sea Port. These machines have powerful engines and robust drivelines, 4x4 traction, strong brakes and reinforced axles to cope with the heavy loads they need to drag on and off the ships, and with the steep ramps inside. With their 180° swivelling seats for the drivers, they have been specially conceived for manoeuvring in the small alleys on the decks. They have also been adapted to be able to work in combination with the trestles with hydraulic twist locks used by the shortsea operator to secure trailers during their maritime journey. DFDS has twenty of these tractors running on its terminal.

Maximal uptime, minimal TCO

When Terberg needed to expand its presence in Belgium to better serve its clients, it chose Ghent as the best location for that purpose. With its own strong port activity and excellent connections to all the seaports in an area ranging from Dunkirk and Zeebrugge to Terneuzen, Vlissingen and Antwerp, up to inland ports in Wallonia and Northern France, Ghent, now part of North Sea Port, offered a perfect mix. “Within one hour of driving time we can reach about 80% of our customers.” It is part of Terberg’s philosophy, explains Mr Thielman. “Our tractors are manufactured in the Netherlands, but when it comes to after sale services, maintenance, and repair, we want to be as close as possible to our customers. The main aim is always to improve the fleet efficiency and reliability by



Terberg deploys mobile workshops for urgent maintenance or repair on location.

maximising ‘uptime’ and minimising the total cost of ownership for our customers.”

Connected vehicles

Nowadays, the smart way of being close is being connected. Each new Terberg machine is equipped with telematics software allowing for a follow up in real time of the performances of the whole machine, from fuel consumption, oil temperature, and tyre pressure to running hours, driving time, routes followed, and so on. “The client can monitor all of this himself if he wants to and he will then receive a message in his service box telling

“The main aim is always to improve the fleet efficiency and reliability by maximising ‘uptime’ and minimising the total cost of ownership for our customers.

him what needs to be done if a problem arises. But he can also leave that task up to us and focus on his core business.”

About half of the 400 special vehicles the Belgian subsidiary services are already connected to this system. It makes a big difference, as Mr Thielman explains, “In the past the client used to call us when his machine or engine had a problem. Now we call the client telling him his machine needs a review, a repair or a proactive maintenance before a breakdown can occur that could severely disrupt his operations and lead to a waste of time and money.”

If an unforeseen problem still arises or a rapid intervention is needed, clients can rely on Terberg’s mobile repair and maintenance units. Spread out over the country and driven by local technicians who can rely on nightly delivery in safe boxes of the spare parts needed, Terberg Tractors Belgium deploys eleven of these mobile units, which means it only needs one big workshop for more serious repairs or interventions requiring to take the vehicle out of service for a while. “We usually provide our client with a replacement if the intervention will last longer than a day.”

Energy transition and automation

Connectivity is not the only road to the future followed by Terberg. Energy transition and sustainability also rank high on the agenda. Electrically-powered tractors are already operating in numerous warehouses and distribution centres and the group is testing hydrogen power machines in certain ports and logistical settings. Terberg collaborates with Flanders Institute for Logistics (VIL) in this ‘Hydrolog’ project.

Automation is another hot item where North Sea Port is in the picture. Together with the French company EasyMile, a specialist in driverless technology, Terberg is developing an autonomous terminal tractor. Next year it will be deployed in a real-life autonomous operation pilot at the Kloosterboer terminal in Vlissingen, as part of the Living Lab Autonomous Transport Zeeland Project. The tractor will drive between Kloosterboer’s terminal and the container stack of a logistics service provider. The next step will be to operate on the public road, crossing a 3.3 km route between the terminal and a leading exporter of onions and potatoes. Tests like these are essential to identify risks and improve technology, as well as to investigate safety measures.

New compound

Just seven years after its creation, Terberg Tractors Belgium is making its next big move. A new building is being built in the centre of the Ghent port area within North Sea Port. On a 10,000m² concession in the immediate vicinity of the Skaldenpark logistics zone and the Mercatordock, the new premises will extend over 2,000m², with a two story office building next to separate workshops for repair and maintenance, transformation of vehicles, welding, a roller brake testing unit, a spray painting shop, and a state-of-the-art spare parts storage.

It will allow the group to enhance its services using the ‘one-stop-shop’ principle, bringing almost all activities for terminal tractors, truck-mounted forklifts and refuse collection vehicles operating in Belgium together in one spot. Solar panels will be installed on the roof of the workshops, a green roof on top of the offices.

The new facility offers ample room for growth. “We currently employ 23 people, but we can house about sixty employees in our new complex. That will of course not happen overnight, but it shows how confident we are about the future”, Mr Thielman concludes. Terberg is investing about EUR 3 million in its new platform.

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The new offices and workshops are nearing completion. Terberg will move to its new location in December.





The Kombiverkehr train standing ready to depart to Mortara from the Interface Terminal Gent.

Here to stay and grow

Kombiverkehr

Photo courtesy of Jean-Louis Vandevoorde.

Kombiverkehr has made a marked entry in North Sea Port. Building on the Ghent-Mortara route, the intermodal operator is focused on developing its business in the port by attracting new volumes and opening new liner services. “Together with the terminals and freight forwarders, we are on the right track”, says Andrea de Ambrogi, Product Manager Benelux.

Kombiverkehr is a major power in European intermodal transport (see box). Offering its customers ‘one of the most comprehensive networks’ connecting more than 200 inland gateways, industrial hubs and seaports all over the European continent, the German company founded in 1969 with the aim to shift traffic from road to rail is active on seven out of nine TEN-T European rail freight corridors.

After the slight decline in transported consignments (-3%) registered by the group last year due to the combined effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and factors such as a two-week weather-related closure of the Brenner line, traffic is gearing up again. In the first half of 2021, volumes even

exceeded pre-coronavirus levels. One of the reasons was the contribution made by new routes between the Benelux and Italy, which allowed the intermodal operator to make a marked entry in North Sea Port.

Ghent-Mortara

Kombiverkehr integrated the service between the Interface Terminal Gent (ITG) at the Kluizendok in Ghent and the terminal of Mortara, offered by Dutch operator Shuttlewise for several years, into its network in February.

Kombiverkehr had at least three good reasons to take that step, voices Mr de Ambrogi. “We had been looking at Ghent before as an interesting location. North Sea Port is a niche port focusing on activities that generate intermodal flows inside and outside the port area. Apart from ensuring continuity on this existing route, we are keen to enable existing and new customers to grow with us. And North Sea Port clearly shares this vision. They are actively promoting the use of alternative transport modes, so we are confident that this is the right place for us.”

“Secondly, it allowed us to open a new route through Lötschberg via Switzerland, parallel on the one hand to the Gotthard route and the other hand to the Brenner route which we already use intensively. This is extremely relevant for us since rail, as recent incidents have demonstrated, can sometimes be vulnerable to disruptions. This widens our transport options. We

“ North Sea Port focusses on activities that generate a lot of intermodal flows. There is a clear – and often underestimated – potential for more, both inside and outside the port area.

are now able to offer an alternative for the Brenner, Gotthard, and the Tauern routes. The Swiss corridor is bound to become increasingly important for our customers.”

“Thirdly, Mortara, which is only 70 kilometres away from Milan, offers an excellent intermodal platform in an important economic region. Although it is still confronted with some capacity limitations in terms of maximum length of trains (up to 510 meters), Mortara opens another door to and from the north of Italy, with flexibility and space for growth as added benefits.”

More round-trips

“Intermodal transport is a very competitive market. Our first target was to keep guaranteeing customers and suppliers of the Ghent-Mortara route the continuity, reliability, and service quality they require. The frequency was kept at five round-trips per week to start with. BLS Cargo and their subsidiary Crossrail Benelux continued to provide the locomotives required for traction. This enabled us to retain our clients, who are active in very diverse sectors such as chemicals, food, apparel, and even tiles”, says Mr de Ambrogi.

Kombiverkehr soon decided to expand the line. At the start of September, the number of weekly departures in both directions increased to six. “The volume of consignments has trended upwards. Many existing customers as well as new customers have ensured high train capacity utilisation”, or so Peter Dannewitz, Head of Sales, declared in an announcement

Kombiverkehr key figures

Facts & figures

Direct trains per week	
in Germany (national)	170
international routes	480
Total truck consignments transported	858,079
of which international	693,021
national	165,058
Total volume in TEU equivalent	1.72 mln
Total volume in tonnes	20.3 mln
Total volume in ton-kilometres	16.75 bln
Average transport distance	825 km
Savings in CO ₂ emissions in tonnes (vs end-to-end road transport)	1.005 mln
Trucks taken off the roads (average)	2,350/day
Sales in euro	396.8 mln
Employees (FTE)	114
Owned wagons	360
Rented wagons (per day)	Approx. 4,000

2021 (first six months)

470,000 semitrailers, swap bodies and containers
+2.8% compared to 2019
+11.5% compared to 2020

made by the company at the time. In the past few months, the company has already had six trains running in certain weeks, but this was on an ad hoc basis. Now six departures are included in Kombiverkehr’s weekly regular timetable. There is more to come. Kombiverkehr has stated its intention to offer eight to nine weekly round-trips from next year onwards. “The main driver is the quite amazing and reliable growth in demand we have seen from our clients”, Mr de Ambrogi adds.



So far, swap bodies and containers have been the mainstay of business in and out of Ghent.

Photo courtesy of Jean-Louis Vandevoorde.



Photo courtesy of Kombiverkehr

Andrea de Ambrogi,
Product Manager Benelux
at Kombiverkehr.

“Enhancing frequency is also a way around the capacity limits we experience on the Italian leg of the journey. It is always a challenge, of course, but we feel confident that the expected growth will materialise and that we will be able to get a reasonable rate of utilisation. A lot of cargo that now transits through Antwerp, for instance, would be glad to use Ghent. We are willing to take the risk, because it has always been our mission to shift cargo from road to rail.”

Improving the ecological footprint

In this respect, one factor is gaining importance. “Intermodal transport cuts emissions with 80% in comparison with end-to-end road haulage. Using our trains, companies can substantially reduce the ecological footprint of their logistics operations and meet national and international climate targets in the transport sector, but without having to pay more. We see a mental shift in favour of the modal shift happening that goes beyond the window dressing that has often prevailed so far. There is a lot of pressure on industry and logistics to switch to green transport. Needless to say, we can only welcome this.”

Broadening the cargo base

One avenue Kombiverkehr is exploring to keep the utilisation rate on a high footing is to broaden the cargo base and optimise the splitting of loading units. The operator is looking into the possibility of adding trailers to the containers and swap bodies that so far have been the mainstay of business in and out Ghent.

“The trailer market is increasing year on year, and this is one way to expand activities in North Sea Port. We are talking to a number of interested parties. This is part of the study work we do in relation to the increase in frequency. But issues such as putting new craneable equipment into place, training staff, and so on need to be resolved by new clients.”

Connecting to barges and ships

ITG is a fully multimodal terminal, where the train not only meets the truck, but also the inland vessel and the sea-going ship. Barge services connect ITG to the big container ports of Rotterdam and Antwerp and to their hinterland. A twice weekly service to Hull carries containers to the UK.

Making a connection with waterborne transport and synchronising its services with ferry and ship crossings is something Kombiverkehr already does in other ports. This is not yet the case on a regular basis in North Sea Port though, except for some customers. But Kombiverkehr stands ready for this kind of development, states the Product Manager Benelux. “It would give an added dimension to our products and solutions and strengthen our ability to attract new business. And it fits



Photo courtesy of I-Motion Shipping

The Marus links Ghent to Hull at least twice a week.

ITG, a quadrimodal turning table

The Interface Terminal Ghent (ITG) is a fully quadrimodal facility with extensive capacities to link trucks, trains, barges, and sea-going vessels. The 50/50 joint venture between stevedoring company Stukwerkers and road haulier Masterbulk has a total quay length of 1,100 metres for ships with a draught of up to 12.5m, a total surface of 25 hectares, part of which is still available for development, and three rail tracks with a full length of 750 metres.

Regular barge container services link the terminal to the ports of Antwerp, Rotterdam, and Zeebrugge and to destinations in the hinterland like the multimodal terminal of Dourges in Northern France. Shortsea operator I-Motion Shipping runs a container line to Hull at a frequency of at least two departures per week in both directions, which functions as a bypass around the busy Channel routes and London area for cargo moving between the continent and the United Kingdom. The terminal is connected on a daily basis to the Europe-wide Green Xpress Network of rail operator Lineas.

“We are constantly looking at opportunities to extend our interaction with other terminals, be it by rail or water. The increase in frequency Kombiverkehr is implementing is one more step in that direction. We expect to be able to offer daily rail departures in 2022 to other destinations alongside Mortara and Segrate”, says Stukwerkers Managing Director Johan De Raeve.

“We also continue to develop our facility and services. We have installed an up-to-date speedgate system with automated QR codes to access the terminal. It helps to keep the turn-around time for road hauliers at a very low level. We are further integrating the IT systems for the different transport modes. A second mobile harbour crane has given us added capacity and flexibility. If trailers would come into the picture for intermodal transport, we still have ample space to provide for their storage. And if need be, the foundations and electrical network are ready for the installation of a rail mounted gantry crane.”

perfectly well with our own strategy and that of North Sea Port.”

Making the link with the regular shortsea service DFDS runs between Ghent and Scandinavia is another aim. “Even if they are sitting on the other side of the sea canal, whenever a supplementary shunt is needed in intermodal transport, it is very difficult to remain competitive.”

New services

Kombiverkehr does not intend to stop at one service in North Sea Port. “We are looking into other routes, so we already have some things in mind on this issue. And we know that we can count on the full support of the port, the terminal, and rail infrastructure manager Infrabel. They all cooperate extremely well with us.”

“Setting up new services will require some time and growth comes with its own challenges in terms of assets, at a time when the capacities in train drivers, rolling stock, infrastructure and terminals are far from limitless. But hopefully, we might see new routes opening up in 2022.”



Photo courtesy of Jean-Louis Vandevorde

Trains are an integral – and essential – part of the scenery, activity, and mobility at North Sea Port.

On track for further growth

Rail freight traffic is growing in North Sea Port, which is eager to increase the share of rail in its modal split. To allow for further expansion, the port infrastructural bottlenecks will be tackled in cooperation with rail network managers Infrabel and ProRail.

As an industrial platform and multimodal hub, North Sea Port has always relied on rail for a sizable part of its hinterland traffic. It is not sitting on three rail freight corridors (North Sea-Med, Rhine-Alpine, and North Sea-Baltic) by chance and many companies make intensive use of rail in their supply chains.

Growing volumes

They do so increasingly, statistics show. The volumes have gone up over the past decade. From 5.9 million tonnes in 2011, they have reached 7,4 million tonnes in 2019, a steep climb of 25%. Even the COVID-19 pandemic did not dent that number in 2020.

Industrial flows remain very important but intermodal transport is one of the engines of this growth, says Kate Verslype, Advisor Multimodality & Rail at North Sea Port. “We have seen the number of intermodal operators, liner services, and destinations increase quite steadily, Kombiverkehr being the latest to join the list. Our intermodal connections now stretch from Sweden to Italy and from Spain to Romania, Poland, and even China. And

North Sea Port has three intermodal terminals offering those ‘open access’ rail connections.”

Eliminating bottlenecks

North Sea Port has set its eyes on raising the share of rail in its hinterland traffic from 10% to 15% in the coming years. Ms Verslype continues, “This is fully in line with our ambitions in terms of sustainability, one of which is to reduce the share of road transportation to 25%.”

But to achieve that goal, the capacity of the railway network within the port area will have to be enhanced by expanding existing bundles and eliminating infrastructural bottlenecks that put a brake on the potential of rail transportation.

Shared vision

North Sea Port has entered into a close dialogue with network manager Infrabel to work out a shared vision and investment programme for rail infrastructure. Reconfiguring existing bundles with longer tracks and better access to intermodal terminals are on North Sea Port’s wish list.

“We focus on mature projects for the coming years, but we look forward to developments like completing the missing link between Zelzate and Terneuzen on the right bank of the sea canal, which will make the infrastructure more robust. North Sea Port, Infrabel and ProRail share the same goal: to foster the use of rail by making it more attractive, so we are bound to find common ground”, Ms Verslype concludes.

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Enjoying the sun

Artist impression courtesy of Gutami.

At North Sea Port, wind and solar energy together currently produce around 450MW of sustainable energy. Part of this is used by the companies in the port area and part is added to the national grid for use by others. This amount will increase as new initiatives are taken for gaining power from wind and sun.

The construction of a new 60MW solar park covering 30ha at the Mosselbanken recently started. The park will generate more than 56KWh million per year, which equates to 22,600t of CO₂ saved annually.

Geerten van Dijk, Managing Director of Valuepark Terneuzen, and Gerben Pek, CEO of Gutami, tell us about the project that will be the largest solar park at North Sea Port and Zeeland so far.

Plenty of space

Valuepark Terneuzen (VT) is a joint venture of North Sea Port and DOW Benelux to develop the area around the Dow Terneuzen Industry Park consisting of the areas Mosselbanken, Logipark, and Maintenance Valuepark. “Despite the attractive location of Valuepark Terneuzen, it appeared quite difficult to attract new chemical industry to this location”, Mr Van Dijk explains. “That is why we started to look for other options for our greenfield area Mosselbanken that has a size of around 65ha.” One idea that came to mind was the realisation of a

solar park. Mr Van Dijk continues, “The idea of a solar park was not without a reason. With the industry moving more towards CO₂ neutrality and circularity, we believed that a solar park could give a boost to developing the Mosselbanken further with industry that has synergies with Dow. Space was available and we would also be supporting green energy. Like Dow Benelux, more and more companies in the process industry are looking for ways to reduce their ecological footprint, and being able to make use of green energy provided by a solar park nearby can help to put Valuepark Terneuzen on a company’s shortlist.”

Positive response

For the realisation of the solar park, VT first had a market consultancy conducted. “Through a market consultancy,” Mr Van Dijk explains, “we tried to find out if and how many companies would be interested in establishing a solar park at VT. This gave us a positive feeling about the project and that is why we decided to ask a number of interested parties derived from this consultancy to take part in a tender procedure.” The tender was won by Gutami, which since its establishment in 2009 has already developed several solar parks worldwide. When looking at the project, Mr Pek was surprised by the positive response from the environment. “In general terms,” he says, “every time we develop a solar park, there are always people and companies that respond negatively. In the Netherlands, where land is scarce, many solar parks are constructed on farmland, raising discussions about the use of valuable farmland for other purposes. With our plans at VT, we literally received no complaint whatsoever, which was quite unusual for us. By the way, when looking at solar parks on farmland, we are now also developing so-called ‘Agri PV’



The solar park will cover 30ha at the Mosselbanken.



Photo courtesy of Dow Benelux.

Aerial photo of Dow Benelux. The Mosselbanken at Valuepark Terneuzen is situated at the forefront of the image.

Official opening

When everything goes according to plan, the solar park will start delivering its first green electricity in November. This milestone will be celebrated with an official opening ceremony, followed by a festive event.



Photo courtesy of Scherpl Fotografie.

Geerten van Dijk, Managing Director of Valuepark Terneuzen (left), and Gerben Pek, CEO of Gutami (right) at the solar park under construction.

parcs. Some crops thrive very well in shady surroundings, and we can establish the right amount of shade with our Agri PV parks. Combining agriculture and solarpower can thus be very successful.”

Interest in sustainability

Gutami was founded in 2009 by Mr Pek with the aim to provide sustainable energy. Along with two other partners, he is still shareholder in the company. These two partners were also involved in the foundation of sustainable energy provider Greenchoice. Greenchoice is now one of the main purchasers of Gutami’s green energy. Gutami focusses on solar panels for rooftops and solar parks. Since its origin, the company has already installed PV panels on over 70,000 rooftops in Belgium and the Netherlands. “For the employees of Dow Benelux and North Sea Port, we have made a special arrangement with Gutami”, says Mr Van Dijk. “This will enable them to enjoy the sun by buying solar panels for their homes at a special rate.” Apart from rooftop panels, Gutami has realised large scale solar parks in various countries. The largest solar park constructed to date is a 100MW solar park in Astana, Kazakhstan. “The park at the Mosselbanken will be our largest park so far in the Netherlands”, states Mr Pek. “We hope the park will result in a lot of positive response. We have noticed ample interest in sustainability from the North Sea Port region, take for example Smart Delta Resources, and we would be very pleased to look further, for example in the field of hydrogen and ammonia production, and lithium and flow batteries”, Mr Pek concludes.

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New at the helm

Hans Pfauth steps back to make room for his son Robbert

All photos courtesy of Pfauth Logistics.

Logistics play a crucial role in the supply chain. Many logistics service providers like Pfauth Logistics help the world turning. The family-owned company recently had a management change, with Robbert Pfauth taking over the helm from his father Hans.

Pfauth Logistics has been operating from the Vlissingen port area since 1975, when the company was founded as a logistics service provider for the process industry which in those days was rapidly developing in the port area. Since then, the company steadily expanded, capitalising on the occurring opportunities. Now, 46 years later it is time for the third generation of the family to take over. We meet with Hans and Robbert Pfauth who represent the second and third generation of the family company.

Dangerous goods

“I have been working for more than 40 years at our company now, and gradually the idea of retiring was born”, Hans says. “Luckily my son Robbert joined the company eleven years ago with the intention to someday take over my role.” Pfauth Logistics was founded by Jan Pfauth, the father of Hans. With his experience as freight forwarder, he recognised the



Since 1975, the company steadily expanded, capitalising on the occurring opportunities.



Hans (l) and Robbert (r) Pfauth, Directors of Pfauth Logistics, represent the second and third generation of Pfauth Logistics.

opportunities in serving the newly-founded process industry in Vlissingen. He also expected a growth in sea trade that would require storage and transport facilities. “With our services, the large industrial companies saw the advantage of one company that could take care of their entire logistical process”, Hans explains. “In the beginning, our focus was on the petrochemical industry but throughout the years we found business in other markets as well. We have specialised ourselves in the handling, storage, and transport of dangerous goods. The Netherlands has a good reputation when it comes to logistics in general and of course, the handling of dangerous goods, not in the least because of the stringent rules and regulations. This reputation has surely helped us to gain our position in the market.”

Ins and outs

Eleven years ago, Robbert entered the company. “It was always our intention that at some point I would take over my father’s role. But we didn’t want to this overnight. Throughout the years I have had a chance to learn all the ins and outs of our organisation, and I took over some of his managerial roles over the last few years”, he explains. “In dividing our roles, it was clear to our team where to go to with their questions. For our customers, it was also good to know which one of us they should contact for a particular issue.” “Dividing the several managerial roles was also a good thing to avoid any possible risk of being in each other’s way”, Hans adds. “Of course, a lot of choices are made together and sometimes we may even have a different vision, but in general we always find our way towards a joint understanding.”

Now, in the last months before his retirement, his remaining roles have gradually been taken over by his son. “Although I am not yet retired, I do have the desire to let go of things”, Hans says. “This is good for me, but for Robbert as well.”

Adapting to chance

Over the years, Pfauth Logistics has always kept a keen eye on market developments and adapted to changes in a profitable way. “Many of our industrial customers in and around North Sea Port had to close down or were reorganised into smaller companies with new activities. This forced us to keep on looking for other markets”, Robbert voices. “So we changed from locally oriented towards more regional, and today we are an internationally operating company. “Of course, providing services to international customers requires a different approach that what we are used to,” Hans adds. “Doing business locally is much more personal, as it is easier to meet face to face. Contact with foreign customers mainly takes place by phone and mail. However, Robbert’s efforts to expand business abroad has been a good decision, as nowadays the largest part of goods that we take care of is imported, with the port of Antwerp as main hub.” “Local business is definitely more personal”, Robbert admits. “Though on the other hand, international customers really rely on the service and advice that we provide, and as long as we do our utmost best to help them, they will remain loyal to us.”

Chain director

Most goods handled by Pfauth Logistics arrive by vessel and road, and they usually leave by road, rail and



As the natural successor of his father and grandfather, Robbert hopes to be able to continue what his predecessors have left behind.

air transport. Handling dangerous goods requires a good knowledge of the entire logistical process. “We want to act as a true chain director for the dangerous goods that our customers want to import into Europe. We therefore take care of the entire logistics chain, including customs, and we have built up a dedicated international network of loyal specialists that each know all of the relevant aspects of the regions in which they are located.” The world around Pfauth Logistics is rapidly changing, and one of the strengths of this family company has always been the ability to anticipate swiftly and flexibly. “I sometimes describe ourselves as a chameleon, albeit one that only changes when it is absolutely necessary”, states Hans. “From a small service provider for the industry in Vlissingen, we have now become a global player”, adds Robbert. “We carefully listen to our customers. Where can we help? How can we add value? How can we help to realise cost reductions? In fact, for our international customers we are more or less integrated into their business processes. Just look at time differences. A customer on the other side of the world might be asleep while we are still taking care of their business. Of course we are not unique in this, yet we do things right for our customers.”

Family DNA

As the natural successor of his father and grandfather, Robbert hopes to be able to continue what his predecessors have left behind. “Entrepreneurship is in our family’s DNA, which will help to continue business as we are used too. Nevertheless, things do change, no matter how”, he says. “We always try to stay up to date with changing circumstances. As said before, we always focus on new opportunities, and organisationally seen, we have always taken the necessary steps to keep our position in the market. We have, for example, put ample efforts into further automating and digitalising our processes. In addition, and perhaps one of the few changes we made from a managerial point of view, decision-making and taking responsibility has become a joint effort for the entire team. Just like Hans and his father, it is my goal to be in, and not above, the team. In my opinion, our team is highly capable of taking care of lots of things themselves, without consulting me for every single



Pfauth Logistics specialises in the handling, storage, and transport of dangerous goods.



Many logistics service providers like Pfauth Logistics help the world turning.



We want to act as a true chain director for the dangerous goods that our customers want to import into Europe.

issue. This is why I decided to place more responsibility in their hands. This raises involvement and can be very motivating for the team. It helps that I have been working in and with the team for a while now, as this results in a healthy level of mutual trust and respect.”

24/7 job

Hans explains how the expertise of a business consultancy firm was used for the business succession process. “We started the succession project about three years ago, together with a region consultant”, he elaborates. “They advised us on the proper steps to take, and they also helped Robbert to learn about his strengths and weaknesses.” Robbert adds, “I have learned a lot over the past eleven years, and was advised about my personal skills and competences during the succession course. This surely helped me to prepare for my new role.” “The process took longer than expected due to COVID-19, but we

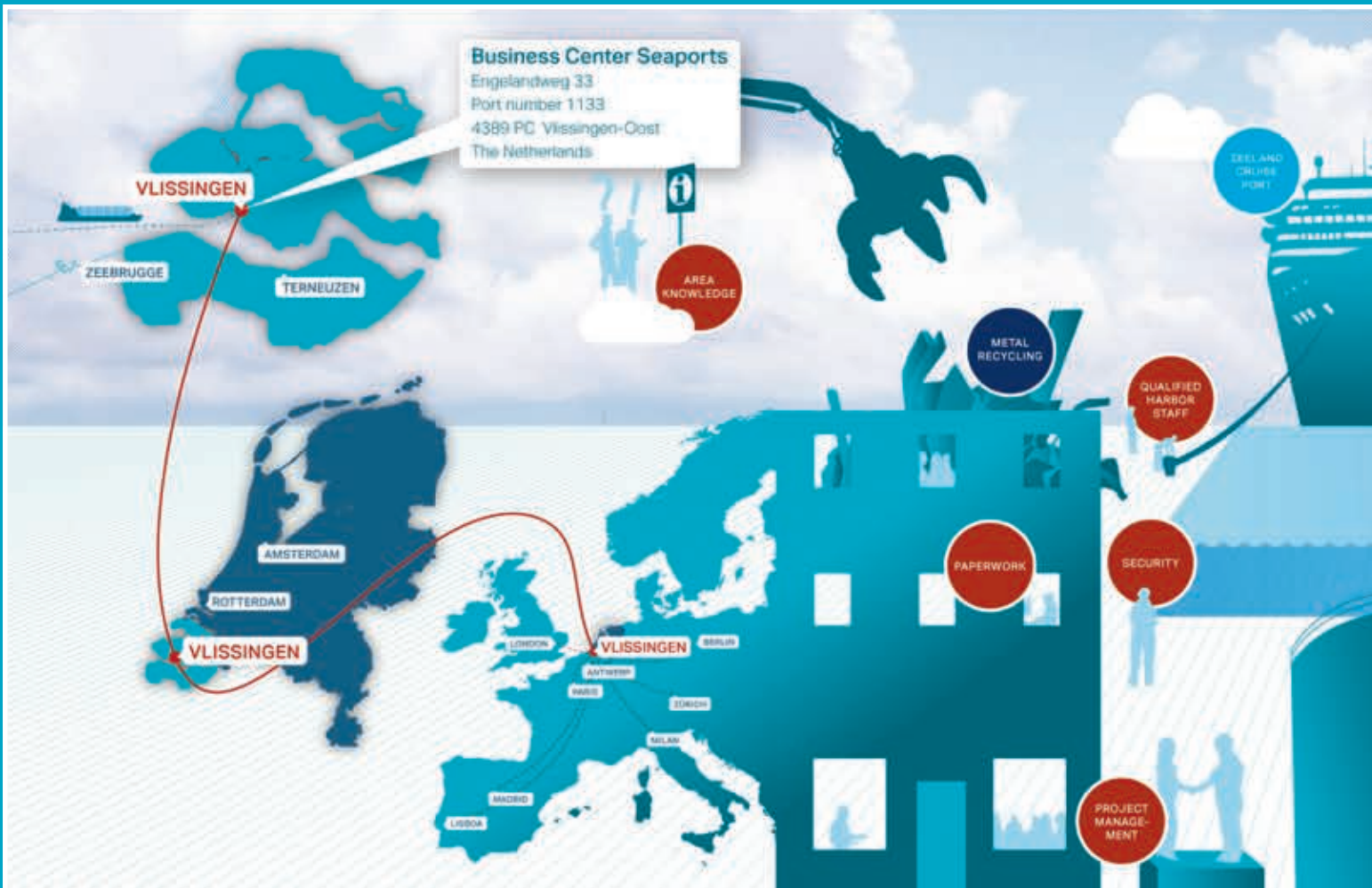
Hans: “I am really looking forward to my ‘after Pfauth Logistics’ time.”



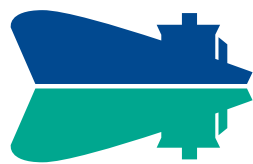
know that the way we have taken care of matters has helped our organisation to smoothly adapt to the new situation”, Hans states.

He concludes, “I already stepped back for a while, and now only work one day a week at the office, acting as a sounding board for my son. And after my retirement, which will officially take place on 24 September, I hope to be able to help my son whenever he asks for this. I see many examples of people that didn’t get the chance to truly enjoy their years after retiring, so I am really looking forward to my ‘after Pfauth Logistics’ time. Being an entrepreneur is a 24/7 job, seven days per week, all year round. Now it is time to relax, travel, and to enjoy quality time with our grandchildren.”

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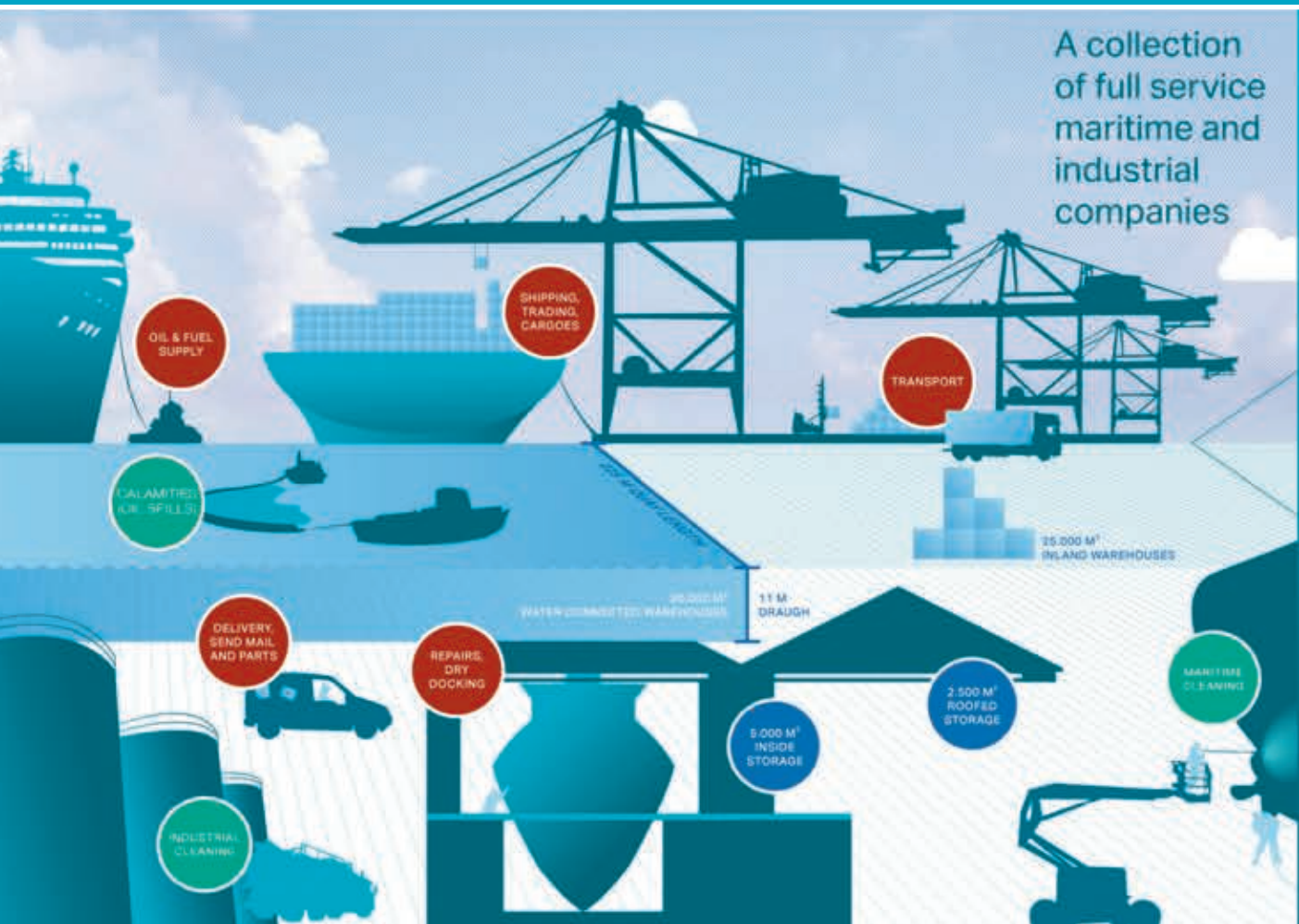
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Leander Naessens, CEO of Peripass, Michel Nierinck, member of the board of directors of Transuniverse Forwarding, and Bart De Smedt, Chief Innovation Officer at Quares, standing on the grounds of the future facilitation hub.

A gate with a hub function

Yard and traffic management, secure parking, and compliance check

The logistics activity in the Kluizendok area is booming, with newcomers building or planning additional warehouses. As a consequence, the number of trucks that come to deliver or collect goods will multiply. Transuniverse, Quares, and Peripass want to set up a multifunctional gate to streamline these flows, offer much needed parking space and amenities to drivers, and perform added value services to all parties concerned.

The logistical zone at the Kluizendok is turning into an ever busier place. Next to the DistriLog, Mainfreight, and H. Essers warehouses already opened and which can still expand, new developments are about to happen. Logistics property company WDP is building a large distribution centre for the three retail brands of the Legio Group. Even if rail and water will play a role, it means road traffic to and from this zone will rapidly intensify. “We are talking about hundreds of trucks a day”, says Michel Nierinck, member of the board of directors of groupage specialist Transuniverse Forwarding. “We need to find ways to avoid roads becoming clogged up, ensure that incoming and outgoing flows can be handled as smoothly as possible, and that drivers find the services and infrastructure they require. It is a concern that North Sea Port shares, if only

to avoid dangerous situations and nuisances to neighbouring communities caused by truck drivers often forced to camp in very unsatisfactory conditions due to a lack of proper locations. But it is not their core business to set up such a facility.”

Facilitation and compliance hub

Transuniverse joined forces with real estate specialist Quares and yard management software vendor Peripass to work out an automated gate platform that promises much more than just secure parking for the truck and a restaurant and shower for the driver by acting as a facilitation hub integrating traffic management and delivering additional services.

“What we are aiming at is similar to the concept of Compliance Cluster Access Towers or CCAT, the Flemish institute for logistics VIL already examined in one of its projects. The study showed that companies in the same geographical or sectorial cluster are usually confronted with similar issues that do not relate to their core activity, but that they usually do not make the most out of the opportunities deriving from their proximity for dealing with these challenges”, explains Bart De Smedt, Chief Innovation Officer at Quares, which is involved in managing about 3,500 hectares of business parks in Flanders.

“Clustering services for different companies opens larger



With new distribution centres in the building or planning phase, truck traffic in the logistical zone at the Kluizendok will increase at a rapid pace.

secured parking – in line with European standards – for about 250 trucks with its fences, cameras, and access control. A shop, showers, and a restaurant for the drivers, a trailer service, a truck or tank cleaning, a weighing bridge, and a fuel station for the vehicles are options that can, and will, be explored.

“Experience shows it is very hard to make such a secure parking profitable by itself. Many secure parkings do not reach the occupancy rate they hoped for. The only way to achieve a return is by integrating this aspect into a larger approach that allows the companies served to optimise their own operations and make better use of their own space – e.g. by avoiding a line-up at their own gate of trucks waiting to be loaded or unloaded – and to cut personnel costs by pooling certain activities such as compliance checks. A truck would only be sent through when the basic paperwork has been done, the vehicle has been checked, the loading dock at the warehouse is available, the cargo is ready, and so on”, Mr De Smedt points out.

“For this, we hope to involve the other stakeholders, with whom we will start up talks in the coming weeks and months”, indicates Mr Nierinck. “The project is still on the drawing table. The legal, financial, and operational contours are not yet fully fixed. The door is still open to additional partners who might be interested to join us.”

More to come?

For the technical integration of the parking and the compliance part, the project has received an R&D subsidy of EUR 500,000 from Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO). The partners can count on VIL's active support.

“Before the end of this year, we should be able to see whether we can make this project work, what it costs, and who is willing to invest together with us. We are also hoping Europe will help us bridge part of the cost with subsidies. We should then be able to start up procedures and aim to be up and running in 2023”, the Transuniverse man looks ahead.

“Both commercially and technologically, this can become a model that could be duplicated at other locations. The combination of a secure parking, traffic management, and compliance management and the integration of innovative solutions constitute a formula that can easily prove its value elsewhere. We have to get going before we start running though”, concludes Mr De Smedt.

“Clustering services for different companies opens larger opportunities for automating and digitising yard and traffic management and logistical processes for the driver, truck, and cargo.

opportunities for automating and digitising yard and traffic management and logistical check-in or check-out processes for the driver, truck, and cargo”, adds Leander Naessens, CEO of Peripass, which calls itself ‘the yard enabler’. “We can consolidate these processes into an automated solution tailored to the requirements of the specific cluster that can interact with the different systems of our users.”

“The main objective is to make sure every person or vehicle entering or leaving the zone is fully compliant with legislation and the requirements and rules of the company they visit. These physical and documentary controls are translated into seamless digital procedures”, Mr Nierinck emphasises. “For shippers too, compliance is of increasing importance. To name just one example: as a shipper, your liability can be engaged when the cargo has not been properly stowed on the truck. And your reputation could be severely damaged if your company uses a vehicle unfit for transport that causes a serious accident.”

Stakeholders and partners

The platform would be installed at the entrance of the zone for logistics activities at the Kluizendok, where a concession of 6 hectares is available that due to its irregular shape does not easily lend itself for building a warehouse.

The most visible part of the gate hub would be the fully



All photos courtesy of DNM.

DNM was founded in 2011 by Claudia de Nooijer (l) and Jan Montijn (r), both with a background in temporary employment agencies.

Long-term relationships

People play an important role in the success of North Sea Port where, with over 500 companies operating in various sectors, almost 100,000 people are either directly or indirectly employed.

Industrial and logistical companies often have to deal with ups and downs in their activities. Alongside their employees, this also requires a flexible workforce. One of the agencies helping the industry to meet this need for skilled flex workers is DNM, which this year celebrates its tenth anniversary.

Background

DNM was founded in 2011 by Claudia de Nooijer and Jan Montijn, both with a background in temporary employment agencies. “Claudia and I had both been working for temporary employment agencies for quite some time, when we realised

that the way in which many of those companies were working did not meet our own ideas of doing business”, Mr Montijn says. He continues, “This is why we decided to quit our jobs and start an agency of our own, first as a franchiser, but pretty soon as an independent agency. Many employment agencies are driven by figures. For them, the main objective is to employ as many people as possible, without looking at the longer term. Of course, it is for our financial health also important to have people employed at our customers, but the quality of this matchmaking is more important for us. Posting people is not so difficult. The challenge lies in making these postings long-term relationships between us, our workers, and the companies. A successful match will lead to satisfied workers and customers.”

Expansion

Although DNM started its activities from an office in Goes (Zeeland), its focus originally lied on the Rotterdam port area. “Because of our knowledge and the large network in the Rotterdam area,” Mr Montijn explains, “it was obvious for us to commence business in that region. Throughout the

“ Our way of working differs from others for both the people and companies that we offer our services to.

years, we have been able to build up a track record in and around the port of Rotterdam in employing mid and high-level educated technicians in many industries. However, today we offer our services in a larger region covering South-West of the Netherlands from Rotterdam up to Antwerp in Belgium.” “Living in Zeeland myself,” Ms De Nooijer adds, “I have a network over here as well, which gradually gave us the opportunity to post people in Zeeland. This province, not in the least because of the North Sea Port cross-border port, has a lot of potential, which is why we decided to extend our efforts on expanding in the Zeeland area.” According to Ms De Nooijer, the company’s expertise lies in the technical part of the producing and logistical industry. “In the past one and a half years,” she says, “we have noticed a widening of the market. First we only operated in the petrochemical industry, but our people are now working in a much wider field, for example in the food industry which is well represented over here.”

Excellent and honest

Both Ms De Nooijer and Mr Montijn admit that DNM is not the only temporary employment agency in the region, making competition fierce, not in the least because of the shortage of technicians. “It is true that we are not the only player in the field,” Mr Montijn acknowledges, “though our way of working differs from others for both the people and companies that we offer our services to.” He continues, “People really like to work for DNM, as we are an excellent and honest employer with quality as a high value. First of all, we aim at long-term contracts for our people. This helps them to become accepted as full-fledged technicians at our customers’ projects. Apart from this, we have excellent labour conditions such as competitive salaries, a good pension plan, and training facilities. In order to create the right binding team spirit, we often organise all kinds



People really like to work for DNM, as we are an excellent and honest employer with quality as a high value.



Business entails more than just making money. DNM has therefore decided to support projects aimed at animal welfare such as the Sea Turtle Conservation on Bonaire.

of activities for our employers and their partners.” According to Ms De Nooijer, this way of working appears to be successful. “Some of our workers have already been with us for many years, some even from the start of our company”, she says. “This also has a positive effect on our customers, as a lot of our employers have been working at the same customer for many years, too.”

The best match

When looking at the other side of the scope, the customer companies, DNM also puts ample effort into meeting demand. Mr Montijn voices, “A job vacancy often does not exactly match with the individuals available on the market, as it can be difficult for companies to exactly describe what kind of technician they need. Our goal is to find the best possible match between vacancy and technician. What kind of person is the company looking for? Not only with respect to skills and expertise, but also regarding personal characteristics. Sometimes a company is looking for a higher educated person, whereas a person with a mid-level education and the right technical or personal skills could be an excellent match too. As we have thorough conversations with customers and possible candidates before we make our definite selection, this takes more time, and we are certainly not the cheapest solution. Nevertheless, all of this will ultimately lead to the best match, with a satisfied customer and a satisfied employer.”

New office

As an employment agency, DNM helps companies with their additional workforce desire. Yet DNM wants to contribute to society in other ways as well. “As a company,” Ms De Nooijer elaborates, “we are aware of the fact that business entails more than just making money. We have therefore decided to support projects aimed at animal welfare such as the Sea Turtle Conservation on Bonaire. This support comes straight from our heart, and it is good to see that our employers are also willing to contribute to our efforts here.” A lot has happened in the past ten years, and a new milestone is already approaching. “Next year we will be moving to our new office just a few metres from the current location. This new office will be on street level, with an open and welcoming appearance that truly matches our own values. It will be an inviting place for everyone to meet our office team and colleagues, and we are thoroughly looking forward to moving to this new location”, Mr Montijn concludes.



A new momentum

Photo courtesy of Scherpl Fotografie.

Back in the late sixties and early seventies of the past century, North Sea Port's Vlissingen-Oost port area was founded with the establishment of a cluster of production facilities. One of the companies was Hoechst that, on a terrain close to the port entrance, realised a large production facility.

Throughout the following years, Hoechst faced many ups and downs that, in the end, resulted in the sales or closing down of all Vlissingen assets. One of those assets, the petrochemical production facility for dimethyl terephthalate (DMT) and polyol, was given new life. Early this year, the US-based Stepan Company acquired this Vlissingen facility, marking a new phase in its existence. Site Manager of Stepan Vlissingen, Jolyn de Zwart, talks to PortNews about the site, the past, the acquisition, and the future.

A trip to the past

"This interview cannot start without a short trip to the past", Ms De Zwart says. "This Vlissingen production facility has been through a lot since its establishment in 1971. Back then, Hoechst started the plant to produce, among other things,

One of Stepan's our challenges lies in stock management with its current storage tank infrastructure.

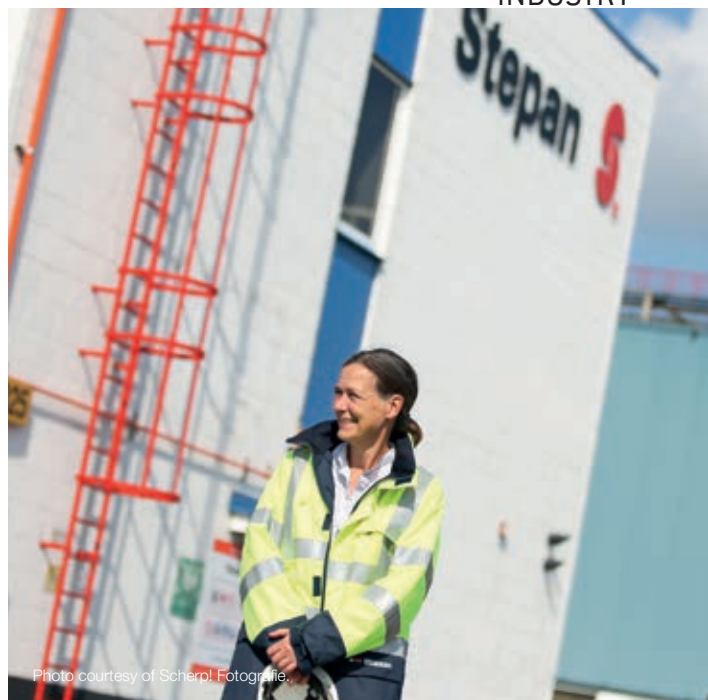


Photo courtesy of Scherol Fotografie.

Jolyn de Zwart, Site Manager at Stepan Company, is looking towards the future with confidence and pleasure.

to KoSa, a joint venture between Koch Industries and Grupo Saba. Koch bought out Saba two years later and integrated the site into their subsidiary Invista. Ms De Zwart continues, "In 1999, a reactor for the production of polyols became operational and since then, capacity was further expanded with multiple reactors. In 2007, the production of DMT came to a halt and the company focused on just the production of aromatic polyester polyols."

Core business

When the DMT production stopped, a small team of 25 employees, once from a larger team of more than 80 people, remained. "Once our DMT production came to a halt," Ms De Zwart explains, "we started to buy the necessary base materials for our process on the market. We also have been gradually decommissioning the DMT facilities." Earlier this year, Stepan Company acquired the Vlissingen site from Invista. "For Stepan," Ms De Zwart continues, "the production of polyols is a core business that the company wants to expand and has invested in to achieve this goal. By acquiring the Vlissingen facility, Stepan is better positioned to ensure the supply of polyol material and meet the ongoing needs of their customers. Stepan is expanding their worldwide coverage and now has three facilities producing polyols in Europe, with the other two in Wesseling, Germany, and Brzeg Dolny, Poland. The long-term prospects for rigid polyol use in insulation remains strong as energy conservation efforts and more stringent building codes continue to drive market growth."

Strengthening market position

Stepan is one of the world's largest producers of surfactants and specialty ingredients used in consumer and industrial applications, ranging from foaming additives for shampoo, to emulsifiers for agricultural insecticides, to agents used in oil recovery. The company was founded in 1932 by Alfred C. Stepan Jr., and is run today by Chairman and CEO, F. Quinn Stepan Jr. Vlissingen is expected to contribute to Stepan's growth in the polyol market and the company has promising plans for the future of the Vlissingen location. Stepan sees



By acquiring the Vlissingen facility, Stepan is better positioned to ensure the supply of polyol material and meet the ongoing needs of their customers.

DMT that is used in the production of aromatic polyester polyols. These polyols are used as an ingredient to produce polyurethane/polyisocyanurate rigid foams. This is an important product used as insulation material in houses and other buildings to improve energy efficiency."

In 1999, Hoechst sold the petrochemical activities in Vlissingen



In Vlissingen, Stepan is located close to the port entrance on the former Hoechst site.

the acquisition of this plant as an opportunity to strengthen its position in the market. The organisational transition went well according to Ms De Zwart. “The acquisition was announced in January and the site transitioned ownership in February. From the first day, all went very well despite the fact that several administrative processes needed to be integrated into those of Stepan. Still, this did not stop production at all, showing the knowledge and skill level of our team.”

Stock jigsaw

Ms De Zwart elaborates, “It goes without saying that our quality and safety standards are very high, as we have to meet all Dutch and European rules and regulations, and Stepan’s own safety requirements. The production of polyols is an inherently safe chemical process compared to many other processes. In case of an emergency, it can be easily stopped and without any danger by simply taking away heat from the process. One of our challenges lies in stock management with our current storage tank infrastructure. We supply a broad range of polyols to many customers that all have their own demands and requirements. Also fluctuations on the supply side contribute to a sometimes true stock jigsaw. Therefore, with our small and hands-on team, we are constantly aiming at the highest level of efficient production and stock management in order to realise the best quality and volume at the right production cost.”

Multi-tasking

Stepan Vlissingen is a flat organisation with a multi-deployable team that is highly valued by Ms De Zwart and Stepan

Company. Her vision for any production process is that it is based on safety, quality and three essential wheels for production: people, equipment and technology. “If one of these elements is not adequate, the goals of the site – delivering quality product on time, for the right cost and in a safe manner – cannot be realised.” Ms De Zwart goes further by saying she is a strong believer in ownership of a process and not of a task. “From my past experience in the chemical industry, I learned that often, processes are executed by persons who are only responsible for a single step. This results in a chain of activities by different people based on a single goal. And as we all know, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Plus, when someone unexpectedly leaves the chain, the chain will break. This is why I believe in teams of people who can perform several roles within a process. Whenever needed, people can take over someone else’s role to keep things running smoothly. We are lucky that we have an enthusiastic and flexible staff that thrives by being part of a multi-task team.”

Optimising and expanding

Today, production volumes are growing. This requires a lot of attention from manufacturing and logistics at the site. “With the current and expected growth, we are looking into optimising and expanding the production process”, Ms De Zwart states. “Sustainability is a core value for Stepan and all future expansion will take into account our sustainability goals. We can see this value in action through the choice of raw materials used and investigations into recycling for example, by potentially retaining base materials from insulation products to use again



We are proud to be part of Stepan, but we feel and act as a Zeeland company.

in our process. The Stepan R&D department keeps an eager eye on these new developmental opportunities. There are many ways to reduce our ecological footprint from the reduction of waste in our process to the use of more sustainable products in our daily routine in our offices and manufacturing facility.”

Positive vibe

“This new phase in our existence marks a new momentum. It acknowledges and consolidates our Vlissingen operation. So far, being part of the Stepan Company has resulted in a positive and enthusiastic vibe at our plant. For our customers, too, backed-up by Stepan’s goal to guarantee security of supply, it creates confidence that we will be able to supply them with our products for many years to come. Stepan is outward-looking, which gives us the opportunity to be more visible to the market and our stakeholders, and find ways to share our expertise and work together in our region. This enhanced collaboration, along with the science and technical expertise we provide, will empower our customers’ success and ensure we grow with them. Most of our employees, including myself, come from this province which is quite unique given the current labour market. We are proud to be part of Stepan, but we feel and act as a Zeeland company. It is good to see that our Zeeland character fits perfectly within Stepan’s core values of People First, Integrity, Customer Focused, Continuous Improvement, and Growth, Innovation & Sustainability.” Ms De Zwart concludes, “For me, since I started at this company two years ago, things have been like a roller coaster with the pandemic and acquisition. However, I really feel at home in my new job and I’m looking towards the future with confidence and pleasure.”

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Image courtesy of Stepan.

Stepan is expanding their worldwide coverage and now has three facilities producing polyols in Europe, with the other two in Wesseling, Germany, and Brzeg Dolny, Poland.



Photo courtesy of Scherpl Fotografie.

“With the current and expected growth, we are looking into optimising and expanding the production process”, Ms De Zwart states.



Photo courtesy of Stepan.

Rigid polyols are used as an ingredient to produce polyurethane/polyisocyanurate rigid foams. This is an important product used as insulation material in houses and other buildings to improve energy efficiency.

Adding Germany to their roadmap

Lalemant Trucking



Photo courtesy of Lalemant Trucking

Lalemant Trucking are extending their international network by opening a new subsidiary in Germany. It will be centrally located near Hannover, where the road haulage division of the Ghent shipping and transport group will team up with a local logistics player offering added coverage of the German market and warehousing capacity.

Germany is not a new market for Lalemant Trucking, but the flows to and from this country are mainly managed by the Ghent headquarters of the group. Plans to set up a new subsidiary in Germany were on Lalemant Trucking's roadmap for about two years now, but the COVID-19 pandemic forced the company to put them on hold for a while.

The delay allowed Lalemant Trucking to give their project a new twist, explains General Manager Pierre Thielemans. "We were originally looking at the Ruhr area, the economic heartland of Germany. But we did not find the right location, nor the right match or personnel.

Furthermore, the Ruhr is close enough to be served directly from Ghent. So we widened the scope of our search and we landed in Wedemark, near Hannover, and allied ourselves with Ebeling Logistik, a local logistics services provider with a strong presence, large client portfolio, and extensive distribution network in Germany. The commercial and operational interaction between our two family-owned companies promises to be very fruitful for both parties and their clients. We are in fact very complementary to each other."

Hub function

Hannover comes with several advantages, Mr Thielemans says. "It is very centrally located, sitting between centres like Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen, and the Ruhr, and we are not yet very active in this region, so the potential for developing new business is high. Everyone knows how powerful the German economy is and some of our clients are looking at how they can expand there. Add to all this that Hannover is known as the biggest Messestadt in the country, which will also generate some activity, and that it still has plenty of room for logistics activities."

The emphasis will mainly be on cargoes like chemicals, steel, food, and automotive, more than on the dry bulk which remains the company's main specialty. "ADR transport, for instance, is on the rise. It strengthens the diversification of our activities."



Photo courtesy of Jean-Louis Vandevoorde

Pierre Thielemans, General Manager of Lalemant Trucking.

With the new office in Germany, the emphasis will mainly be on conventional cargo.

“ The commercial and operational interaction with Ebeling Logistik promises to be very fruitful for both parties and their clients.

With their new office, Lalemant Trucking also bridge the geographical gap with their strong network of subsidiaries in Eastern Europe. “Our traffic between East and West is growing. Having Hannover as a hub for consolidating partial loads between the different markets on which we operate, and being able to rely on the support and the 80,000m² warehousing capacity of Ebeling, will come in handy for that purpose.”

Local personnel

The new subsidiary will officially come out of the starting blocks in October, even if the first runs and contacts are already taking place. Four people will man the Lalemant desk in the first phase. As they always do, Lalemant Trucking has attracted management and

personnel that is very familiar with the local market. “This is what we did in the other countries where we have our own offices. In our experience, it is the formula that delivers the best results because it gives the best leverage to grow our business, not only to and from Belgium but also between the different foreign countries themselves. Today our Eastern European subsidiaries in Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, Russia, and Ukraine, together with our booming French branch office in Lyon, account for 35 to 40% of Lalemant Trucking’s yearly turnover.”

Offices in additional countries could follow. As far as Germany is concerned, Mr Thielemans does not exclude the possibility of a second office in due time. “But let us first make sure Hannover gets up and running and evaluate the results in a year or two.”

Investments in new trucks could be a step nearer. “We keep evaluating our needs in terms of fleet, amongst others things in the light of the strong economic recovery which came after the initial shock provoked by the COVID-19 crisis and of the opportunities this creates for us. The Lalemant group notices an upward trend in all its divisions, chartering, barging, agency, forwarding, and trucking. But buying new equipment is not the hardest thing to do. Finding the drivers we need is a much harder nut to crack. “

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North Sea Port

the 60 kilometres long cross-border port area stretching from Vlissingen over Terneuzen in the Netherlands to Ghent in Belgium



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All photos courtesy of Jean-Louis Vandevoorde.

At its new location, Scanfor will have parking spaces for a hundred trailers.

Scanfor brings cross-dock to North Sea Port

By June next year, Scanfor will shift all its cross-dock operations to its new location within North Sea Port. It will allow the Ro-Ro trailer operator to enhance efficiencies and reduce costs by taking advantage of the port's central geographical position.

“A pure Ro-Ro trailer operator.” That is how CEO Gino Van Leuven describes the business founded in 1993 by his partner Marc Mertens and himself. They built on their experience working for Scandinavian customers to set up a company that links the Nordic countries to the Continent on a north-south axis ranging from Finland to Spain, using the Ro-Ro services to and from Ghent, Zeebrugge, and Antwerp to bridge the water divide.

700 trailers, and counting

The ‘100% Belgian’ family-run forwarding company soon flourished. “Today we offer daily departures for full and partial loads and groupage to almost all our destinations. Our fleet numbers 700 trailers, half of which is owned, and consists of a wide array of specialised equipment, from megatrailers and tautliners for automotive flows, coil trailers for steel products, curtainsiders for paper, wood and other general cargo, flatbeds for special loads, and more. This reflects the diversity of our clients, none of whom represent more than 5% of our turnover. This year we ordered fifty new coil trailers to reinforce our fleet. Deliveries will begin in October.”

“Haulage itself is outsourced – we hold a licence for transport, but we only have one truck and one driver for local moves. Likewise, we are not active in logistical services like warehousing, picking, packaging and so on.”

“We very much stick to our main line of work”, Mr Van Leuven declares. “Even if we serve certain markets by road like Denmark and East European countries that our clients ask us



Gino Van Leuven, CEO of Scanfor.

to cover too, the bulk of our trailers is placed on Ro-Ro vessels to reach their destination. Ro-Ro is part of more than 90% of all the transports we perform. Using Ro-Ro, which is a form of green mobility, we take about 18,000 trailers off the road each year. In today's global context, it is nice to be able to say you use an environmentally-friendly mode of transportation."

Strong growth

In 2002 Scanfor moved to Wommelgem, where it acquired a building large enough to house the growing number of employees. On this location it could also develop a 3,500m² large platform for the many cross-dock operations resulting from its partial loads and groupage activities, which account for about half of all flows.

It provided Scanfor with a solid base to further grow its business. In the past 20 years, the number of people on the payroll increased from 10 to more than 100, while the turnover climbed from EUR 10 to 70 million a year. From 2005 on, Scanfor also developed an international network of branch offices, starting in Finland, which was then the company's biggest market, and extended it to Estonia, Sweden, France, Russia, and Spain (where the group now has offices in Bilbao and Barcelona).

Having the capacity to unload, consolidate, and reload cargo in its own cross-dock proved very useful to Scanfor, but for a company working through the three Belgian seaports and generating about 19,000 trailer transports per year, a location east of Antwerp has become a handicap. "Ghent, Zeebrugge, and Antwerp each account for about one third of our Ro-Ro shipments. Over the years the congestion on the roads around Antwerp has grown into a very serious hurdle. Even getting to the Left Bank area of the port of Antwerp, from where ships depart to Finland e.g., is getting harder and harder. Imagine how time-consuming it can be to drive to Zeebrugge to fetch a trailer and bring it back."

New location

So Scanfor started looking for a location west of Antwerp. "Our search was a difficult one, but we finally found the right spot in North Sea Port. It will give us a tremendous operational



The new cross-dock platform will be operational by June.

advantage, shortening distances we have to cover and transport times, thus enhancing reliability and reducing costs. Ghent is very accessible and sits perfectly between Zeebrugge and Antwerp. The DFDS terminal at the Mercatordok, one of our main shipping lines with its daily sailings to and from Gothenburg, is only four kilometres away. And we will be sitting in the port area without having to use dock labour."

Scanfor signed a concession for a 30,000m² plot of land in the industrial and logistics zone of Hulsdonk, in the Ghent port area on the right bank of the sea canal to Terneuzen. There it is building a new cross-dock of 4,000m² equipped with six loading docks and three gates at floor level, allowing the side-loading of trucks inside. The rest of the compound will mainly serve to park trailers. The capacity of the parking lot will reach about hundred units.

The construction works began before the summer and will be completed by next June. "We will then shift all our cross-dock operations to Ghent. We will also be hiring new people to join our team there. Our head office will remain in Wommelgem, but the offices in Ghent will be able to accommodate up to fifty people in due time. The whole investment represents EUR 6 to 7 million. But it will undoubtedly give a new boost to our business."

SCANFOR.BE



Scanfor's cross-dock operations will move from Wommelgem to Ghent next year.

VoltH2 and Virya set foot in Terneuzen

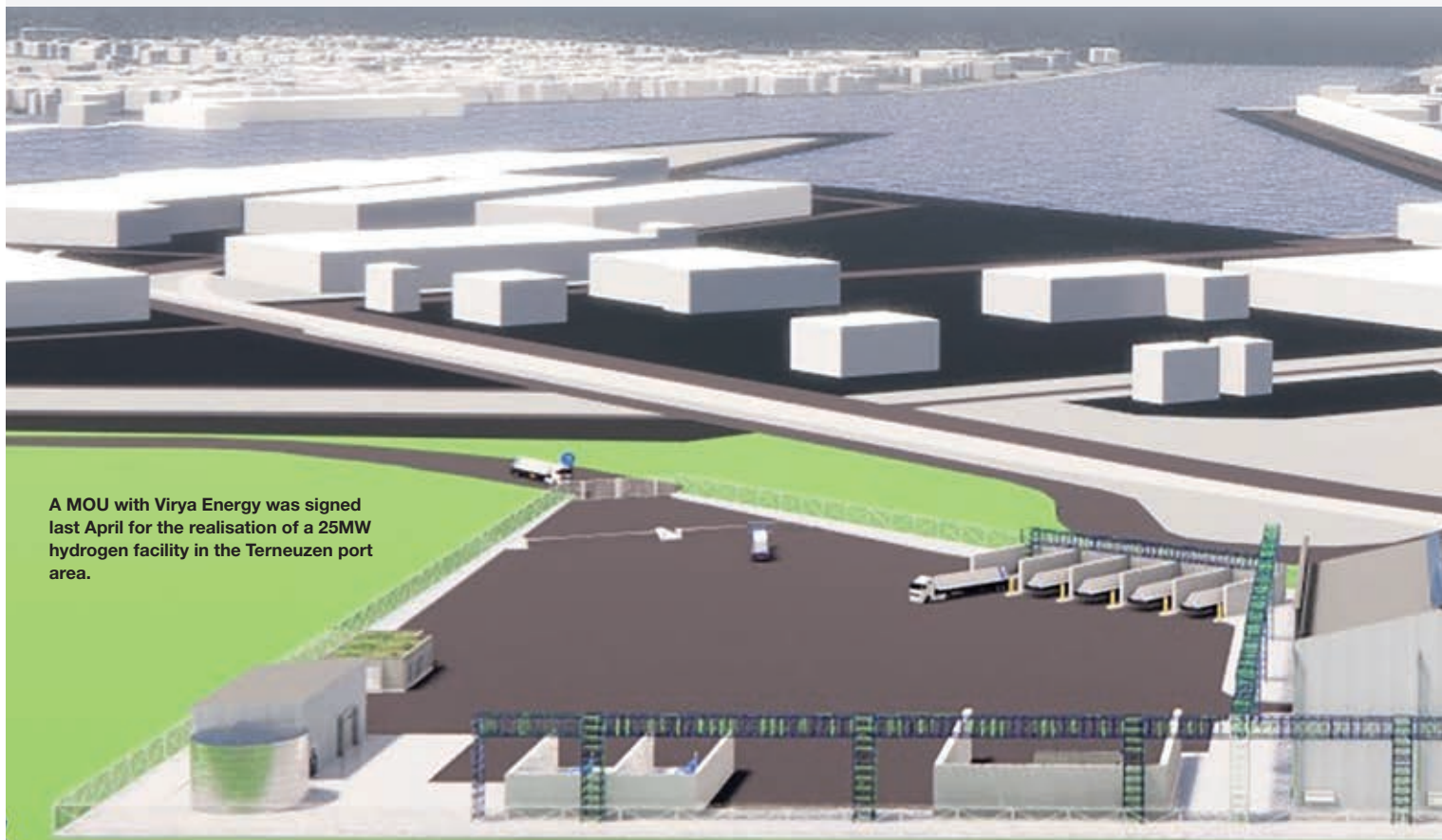
Second 25MW hydrogen facility planned at Axelse Vlakte

North Sea Port has big hydrogen ambitions. The port authority aims at becoming one of the largest hydrogen hubs in Western Europe. They see their plans supported by initiatives of various companies to realise green hydrogen facilities in the port area.

VoltH2 announced plans last year for the construction of a green hydrogen production, storage, and distribution facility at North Sea Port (see also last year's September issue, PortNews 15.3, page 16: VoltH2 plans green hydrogen facility). For this, the company signed a Memorandum of Understanding with North Sea Port in advance of a Long Lease Agreement for the exclusive use of 27,950m² of industrial land in the Vlissingen port area. However, VoltH2's plans for North Sea Port do not stop at the Vlissingen project, as a MOU with Virya Energy was signed last April for the realisation of a 25MW hydrogen facility in the Terneuzen port area.

Significant synergies

For the Terneuzen plans, VoltH2 wants to sign a Long Lease Agreement with North Sea Port's port authority to secure a



A MOU with Virya Energy was signed last April for the realisation of a 25MW hydrogen facility in the Terneuzen port area.

Image courtesy of Sweco.

suitable industrial plot of 30,000m² at the Axelse Vlakte. Apart from the hydrogen plant, the project also entails tube-trailer loading and distribution facilities. Strategically located at the Axelse Vlakte, the project location is accessible by road, rail, and waterway to support the supply and distribution of green hydrogen to regional customers. There are also nearby heat offtake opportunities, as the production of green H₂ will leave useful amounts of residual heat. The project site synergies include close proximity to an existing bio LNG producer, two bio steam and bio ethanol production related projects that are being considered for development. This would create one of the first advanced fuels production clusters in the Netherlands, generating significant synergies between these diverse forms of fuel production and the use of green H₂ as feedstock and as a fuel. The required investment amount is estimated around EUR 40 million for the first phase of the project. Once operational, the plant will annually produce up to 3,600t of green hydrogen, thus contributing to the sustainability goals in the North Sea Ports area.

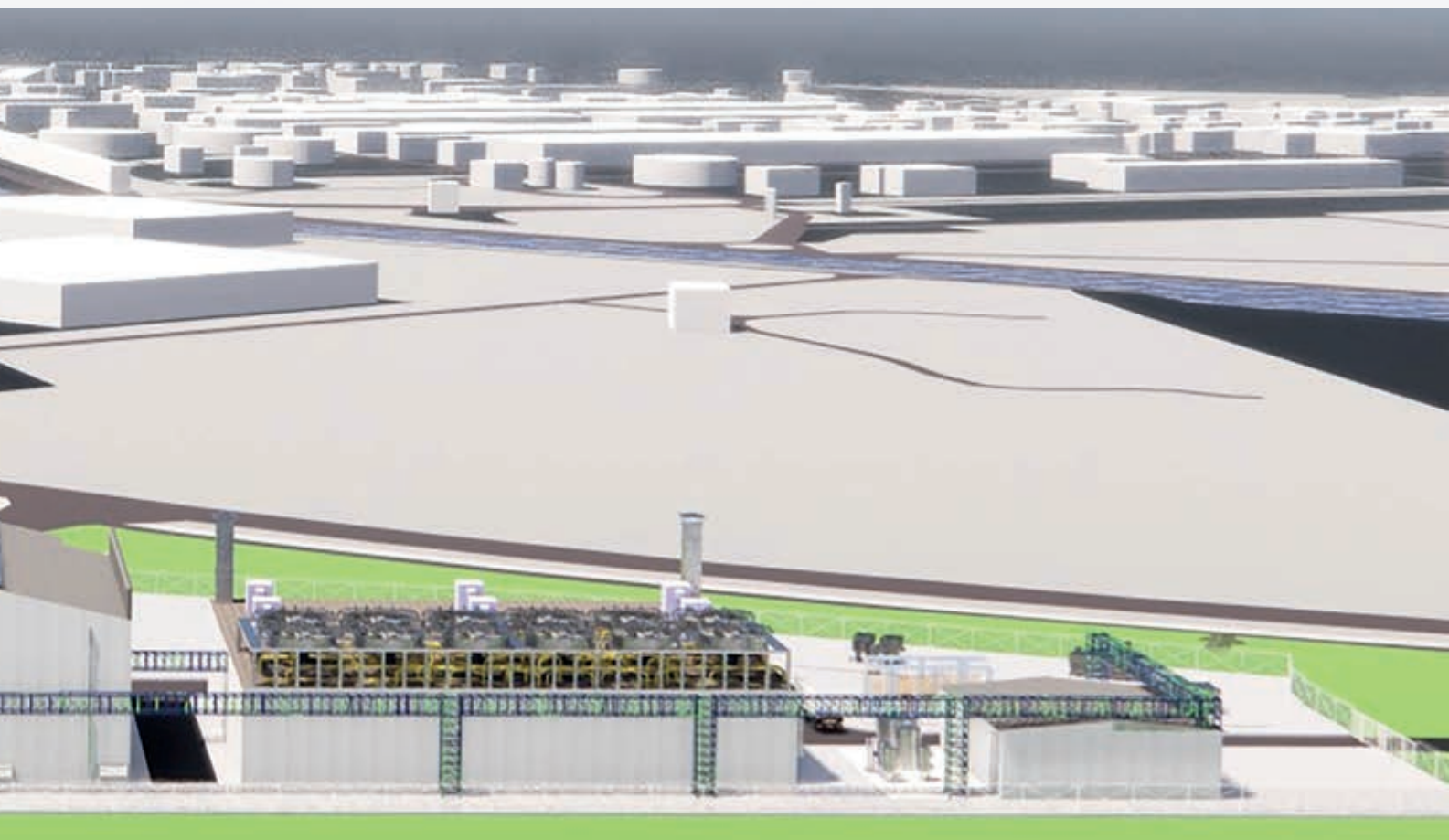
Looking for collaboration

Announcing two projects within one year at North Sea Port is no coincidence, according to Andre Jurres, Managing Director of VoltH2. “As a company that wants to contribute to sustainable hydrogen projects,” he says, “we are constantly looking for collaboration with parties that share these goals. When we, together with our Belgian partner Virya Energy, made plans to realise a second 25MW electroliser, Terneuzen was

the obvious choice for us. North Sea Port has the right climate for investing in green hydrogen as it has secured its goals to become a hydrogen hub in a recent strategic masterplan, and it is willing to support new initiatives. Also, the port area has the right conditions, not only in Vlissingen with plenty of space, high demand for hydrogen from various companies, and a strategic location towards other hydrogen clusters. Virya Energy is a green energy provider and part of the well-known Colruyt Group. It brings with them a vast amount of knowledge gained in developing practical green hydrogen applications, and stands at the forefront of innovation with regards to developing and adopting renewable and sustainable energy practices.” “We have been active in the production of hydrogen since 2010 when we stepped into the development of a green hydrogen demoplant”, says Virya Energy’s Stephan Windels. “This experience resulted in our first green hydrogen project in Belgium. Together with Fluxys, we last year announced the construction of a 25MW facility in Zeebrugge. Contrary to VoltH2’s projects, this plant will not have storage facilities. This is one of the reasons why we decided to join the Terneuzen project, as proper storage facilities can contribute to the necessary scale for making green hydrogen a competitive to grey hydrogen.”

Many positive effects

VoltH2 plans to use proven, commercially available technology, for which the company contracted engineering company Sweco to take care of the design. “As an engineering company, we





Aerial view of the Axelse Vlakte. Strategically located at the Axelse Vlakte, the project location is accessible by road, rail, and waterway to support the supply and distribution of green hydrogen to regional customers.

are active in the entire energy chain,” explains Tom Van Den Noortgaete, Director Division Energy at Sweco. “In the energy market we want to differentiate ourselves in all elements of energy transition, and the ambitious green hydrogen plans of VoltH2 and Virya Energy really triggered us. For decades we have been designing all kinds of hydrogen installations, which gives us a lot of know-how and expertise to help them realise their green hydrogen project. We not only take care of the design of the plant, but of the entire permitting procedure as well.” According to Mr Van Den Noortgaete, permitting is one of the challenges Sweco has to face. He says, “In general terms, licensing permitting procedures for the construction of plants are more or less standard. However, the production, processing, and storage of hydrogen is a new development, meaning that local authorities are rightly careful in their decisions, and are asking us a lot of questions. Yet they are collaborative, as green hydrogen will have many positive effects, both economically as well as sustainably, on the region. According to several studies, our current hydrogen consumption in the Belgian market is, for example, around 15TWh or almost half a million tonnes of hydrogen annually. This demand will grow significantly by factor five or even more if several sectors such as industry and transportation (maritime, aviation, heavy duty) use hydrogen (or a derivative) as a fuel or as a raw material as an alternative for fossil fuels. The VoltH2 projects will also offer green hydrogen as fuel and feedstock for the nearby industry by offering fuelling facilities for low carbon transport.”

Backbone

According to Mr Jurres, the project indeed meets ample positive response from the region. “Hydrogen will play an



North Sea Port has the right climate for investing in green hydrogen as it has secured its goals to become a hydrogen hub in a recent Strategic Masterplan, and it is willing to support new initiatives.

important role in the energy transition,” he says, “and this surely helps us to gain support from our environment. This does not mean that we are not facing any obstacles. One way or another we will need transporting facilities for enabling the supply of the hydrogen to our future customers. Tube-trucks are an option but are not always efficient, not to customers nearby or in long distance transportation. A proper pipeline infrastructure is hence necessary. For regional transport, consultation with local and national gas utility providers is important to learn about the options of dedicately using their pipelines for hydrogen or mixed in certain amounts with natural gas, as this is possible, too. There are also several privately owned pipelines that could be used for transport of hydrogen.

Governmental support

For interregional, or even better, international transport, a dedicated public backbone infrastructure is required. Our hydrogen production facilities are designed so that they are scalable up to 100MW for potential annual output of up to 14,400t of green hydrogen. This high amount of green hydrogen



Photo courtesy of Virya Energy.

Virya Energy's Stephan Windels.



Photo courtesy of VoltH2

Andre Jurras, Managing Director of VoltH2.



Photo courtesy of Sweco.

Tom Van Den Noortgaete, Director Division Energy at Sweco.

will be more than the port area will need. This means that for this upscaling, we have to be able to supply our hydrogen to customers outside of the region, which makes an international pipeline network inevitable. This requires support in many ways from all authorities and governments involved. It is good to see that the Dutch, Belgian, and Flemish governments are all aware of the role green hydrogen plays in reaching their carbon neutrality goals, so hopefully they will extend a helping hand in realising our plans." Mr Windels adds, "When looking at this backbone, it will be very important to have a regulated network. This will give better control over transport costs and the availability of the network for everyone, on both the demand and supply side, wanting to connect its facility to this backbone."

Ground-breaking in 2022

Mr Jurras believes that several years will pass before such a backbone will be realised. "We don't expect the upscaling

before 2027", he elaborates. He concludes, "When everything goes according to plans, we hope to have received the necessary permit for both projects in Q4 of this year. Once we have received the permits, it will still take some time before things really take off. The FID depends on the necessary financial support from governmental subsidies, the availability of sufficient electric power infrastructure, and the outcome of our talks with potential customers. What we certainly should not forget is the supply side, as we also depend on the companies that will actually construct the powerplants. When will they be available to start constructing, and what about the current lack in building materials, how will this influence our efforts? Nevertheless, we are confident and are aiming at the start of construction works sometime next year."

VOLTH2.COM



Image courtesy of Sweco.



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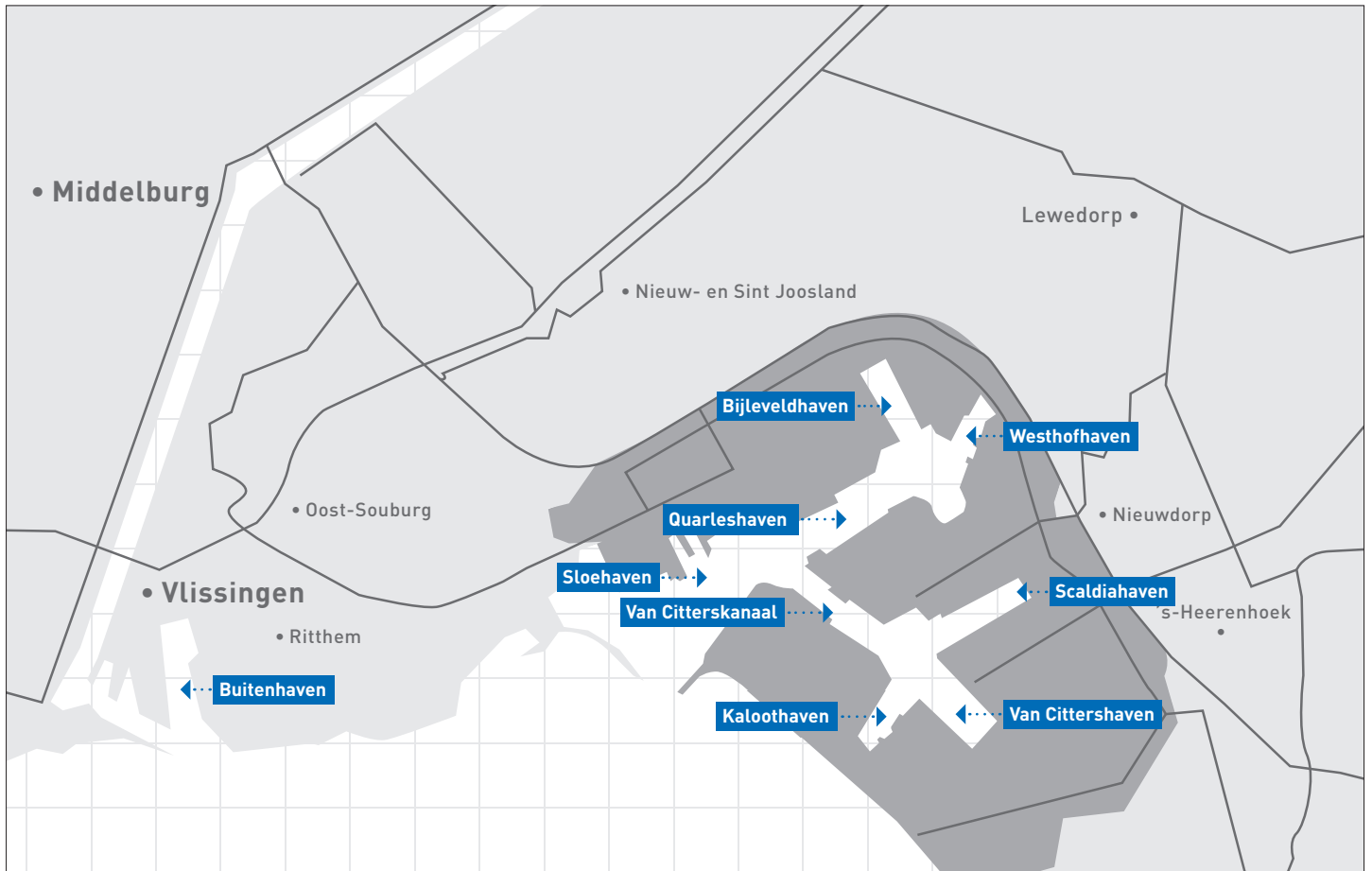
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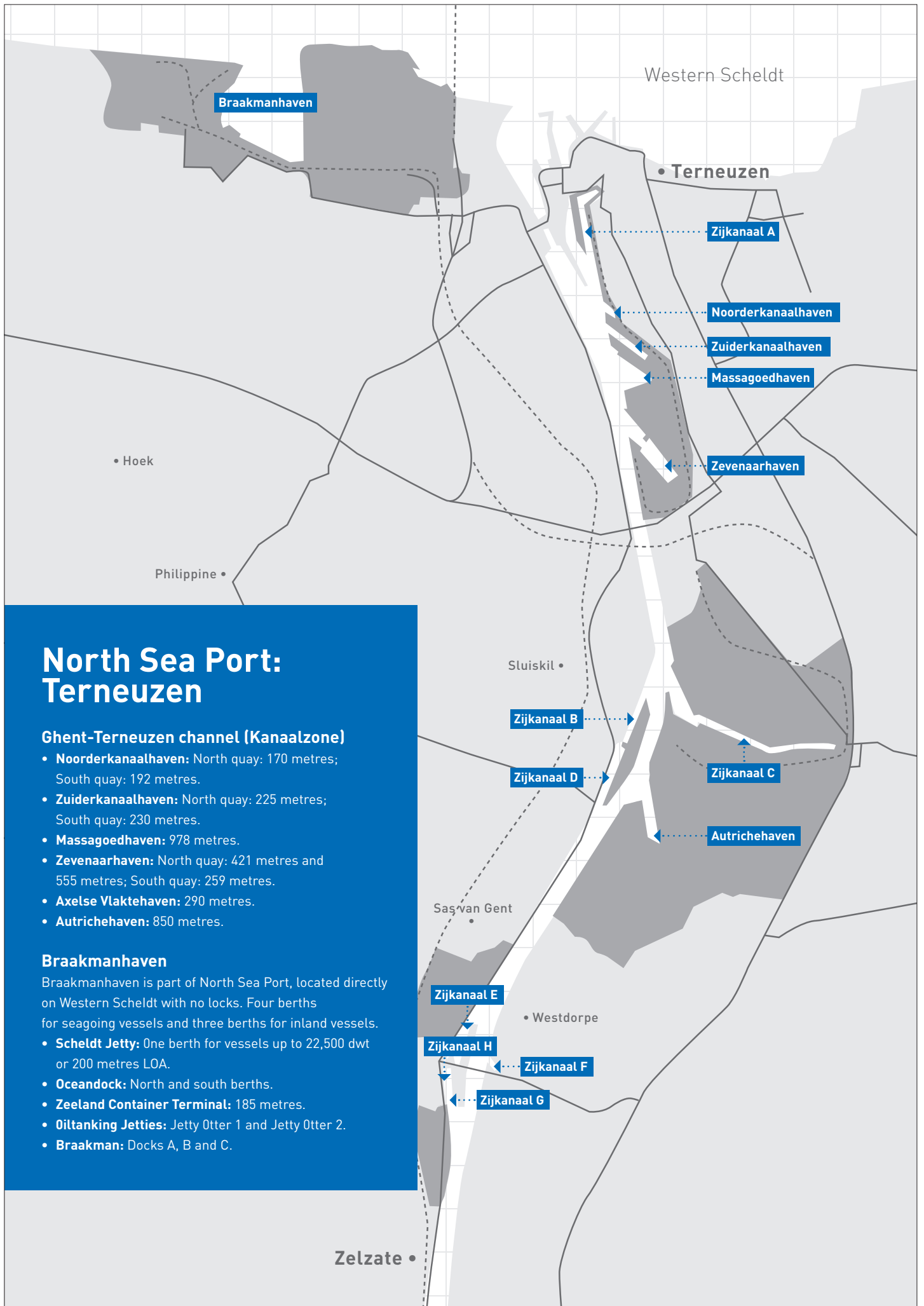
www.dnm.nl



North Sea Port: Vlissingen

- **Sloehaven:** Suitable for all kinds of transshipment including LPG and chemical bulk 920 metres of quay. Cobelfret RoRo jetties: Four berths.
- **Bijleveldhaven:** 1,980 metres of quay. North bank is 300 metres long.
- **Westhofhaven:** 475 metres of quay. Can accommodate largest reefer vessels. East side jetty for discharging peat and general cargo quay.
- **Kaloothaven:** 1,130 metres of quay. Two jetties on south bank, one for inland barges.
- **Scaldiahaven:** Over 1,700 metres of quay. South side used by Verbrugge for handling and storage of cellulose and metals. Transverse quay is 250 metres long.
- **Van Citterskanaal/haven:** Six jetties for inland vessels and coasters. On south bank, 275 metres. On north bank, 200 metres. Heerema quay: 230 metres and 220 metres.
- **Quarleshaven:** Extension of Sloehaven to NNE, 315 metres of quay. Set of two mooring buoys on east bank with a span of 320 metres. Zalco quay: East bank, length of 150 metres. Vopak Terminal Vlissingen: Four LPG jetties.
- **Zeeland Refinery Pier:** Located on Western Scheldt. Accommodates tankers up to 100,000 dwt with maximum LOA of 280 metres.
- **Buitenhaven:** Located outside lock system with direct access to sea, 300 metres of quay. Northern basin has area for coasters and lighters. Vesta also operates an oil jetty for tankers.

Zeeland Refinery Pier



North Sea Port: Terneuzen

Ghent-Terneuzen channel (Kanaalzone)

- **Noorderkanaalhaven:** North quay: 170 metres; South quay: 192 metres.
- **Zuiderkanaalhaven:** North quay: 225 metres; South quay: 230 metres.
- **Massagoedhaven:** 978 metres.
- **Zevenaarhaven:** North quay: 421 metres and 555 metres; South quay: 259 metres.
- **Axelse Vlaktehaven:** 290 metres.
- **Autrichehaven:** 850 metres.

Braakmanhaven

Braakmanhaven is part of North Sea Port, located directly on Western Scheldt with no locks. Four berths for seagoing vessels and three berths for inland vessels.

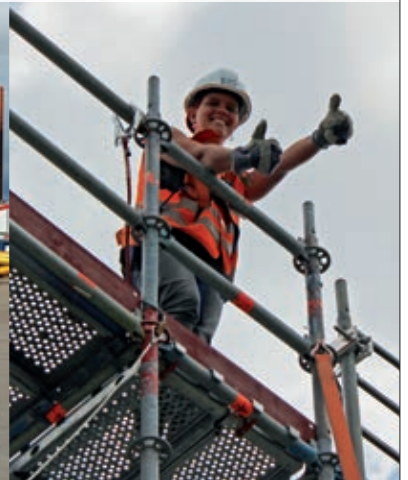
- **Scheldt Jetty:** One berth for vessels up to 22,500 dwt or 200 metres LOA.
- **Oceandock:** North and south berths.
- **Zeeland Container Terminal:** 185 metres.
- **Oil tanking Jetties:** Jetty Otter 1 and Jetty Otter 2.
- **Braakman:** Docks A, B and C.

North Sea Port: Ghent

Zeekanaal Ghent - Terneuzen: The depth of water in the canal is 13.5 m and there are no currents or tides. Inside the port there are five large docks and three smaller docks, offering a total quay length of 31 kilometres for vessels up to 92,000 DWT. 22 kilometers with a depth of water of at least 12.5 metres. All the docks have direct access to the canal.

- **Kluizendok:** Is a brand-new dock. Has a total quay length of 4,300 metres with a depth of water of 13.5 metres and a width of 350 metres.
- **Rodenhuedok:** Quay on the southern side is 790 metres long with 13.5 metres of depth. Width of 270 metres.
- **Mercatordok:** Quay is 1,800 metres long with 13.5 metres of depth. Width of 250 metres.
- **Alphonse Sifferdok:** Quay is 4,800 metres long, with 12.5 – 13.5 metres depth. Width of 300 metres.
- **Grootdok, Noorddok, Middendok and Zuiddok:**
Total quay length of 6,855 metres. 6,575 metres with 13 metres depth of water, and 280 metres with 8.5 metres depth of water.
Width: Grootdok: 150 metres
Noorddok: 200 metres
Middendok: 250 metres
Zuiddok: 220 metres





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	A.C. Rijnberg transportservice B.V.	www.rijnberg.com			■			
	Adriaanse & van der Weel Advocaten	www.avdw.nl					■	
	Aerssens & Partners	www.aenpmakelaars.nl					■	
	ALLNRG	www.allnrg.com			■			
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	Aquadrant B.V.	www.aquadrant.com					■	
	Atlas Professionals	www.atlasprofessionals.com					■	
B	Baker Tilly N.V.	www.bakertilly.nl					■	
	Brandtie	www.brandtie.nl					■	
	Boluda Towage Europe	www.boluda.eu		■				
	Bouwgroep Peters B.V.	www.bouwgroep-peters.nl					■	
	BOW Terminal	www.bowterminal.nl			■	■		
C	Bulk Terminal Zeeland Services B.V.	www.btzeeland.nl		■	■	■		
	Cordeel Nederland B.V.	www.cordeel.nl	■			■		
	C-Port B.V.	www.c-port.nl					■	
	C.Ro Ports Nederland B.V.	www.croports.com				■		
	C.T.O.B. Transport & Logistics	www.ctob-logistics.com				■		
	Customs Support Terneuzen	www.customssupport.com				■	■	
	Damen Shiprepair Vlissingen	www.damen.com	■	■	■			
D	Danser Group	www.danser.nl		■	■			
	DB Cargo Nederland N.V.	www.nl-db.cargo.com				■		
	De Baerdemaecker NV	www.stukwerkers.com				■		
	De Pooter Personeelsdiensten	www.depooter.nl					■	
	De Ruyter Training & Consultancy	www.drte.nl						■
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	Delta Safe Security Services B.V.	www.delta-safe.nl					■	
	Dex Premium Lubricants	www.dex-oil.com	■			■	■	
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	dNM	www.dnm.nl					■	
	DOC Logistics B.V.	www.dutchcontractors.com		■	■	■		
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	DRV Accountants & Adviseurs	www.driv.nl					■	
	Dutch Marine B.V.	www.dutchmarinebv.com		■			■	
	E	Elloro	www.elloro.nl					■
Embedded Coaching & Consultancy		www.ecc-coach.nl					■	
Energy Port Zeeland		www.energyportzeeland.com			■	■		
Epesi B.V.		www.epesi.nl					■	
Euro-Mit Staal B.V.		www.euro-mit-staal.com	■					
F	Feyter Group	www.feyter.com	■				■	
	Firma Klouwers Terneuzen	www.klouwers.nl				■		
	Fletcher Hotel-Restaurant Arion-Vlissingen	www.fletcherhotelvlissingen.nl					■	
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G H	FMJ E & I Zeeland B.V.	www.fmj.nl					■	
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I	Huis van de Techniek	www.huisvandetechniek.nl						■
	IBS Staalbouw B.V.	www.ibs-hallenbouw.nl	■				■	
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	ING Business Banking	www.ing.nl/zakelijk					■	
	Interface Terminal Gent (ITG)	www.stukwerkers.com				■	■	
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K	Kamps Straal- en Industriële Spuitwerken	www.kampsstraatbedrijf.nl	■	■	■	■	■	
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	Lalemant N.V., Lalemant Trucking N.V.	www.lalemant.com		■	■	■	■	
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L	Liftal Hijstechniek	www.liftal.com					■	
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	Mammoet Nederland B.V.	www.mammoet.com	■	■	■	■	■	
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	MMPS	www.mmps.nl		■	■	■		
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M	Municipality of Borsele	www.borsele.nl						■
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	Municipality of Terneuzen	www.terneuzen.nl						■
	Municipality of Vlissingen	www.vlissingen.nl						■
	MVH Group	www.mvh-group.com					■	
	North Sea Port	www.northseaport.com	■	■	■		■	
	N.V. Economische Impuls Zeeland	www.impulszeeland.nl					■	
	N.V. Westerscheldetunnel	www.westerscheldetunnel.nl				■	■	
	N.V. Westerscheldetunnel	www.westerscheldetunnel.nl				■	■	
N	Oceanwide Personnel Services B.V.	www.oceanwidecrew.com					■	
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	Ørsted Nederland	www.orsted.nl	■	■	■	■		
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	Ovet Shipping B.V.	www.ovetshipping.com		■	■			
P	Pfauth Logistics B.V.	www.pfauth.nl			■		■	
	PMI Polaris Marine Inspections B.V.	www.polarismarineinspections.nl			■		■	
	Prior Group	www.priorgroup.nl		■			■	
	PTC B.A.	www.ptcba.nl		■	■			
R	Rabobank Oosterschelde	www.rabobank.nl/oosterschelde					■	
	Rabobank Walcheren-Noord Beveland	www.rabobank.nl/wnb					■	
	Rabobank Zeeuws-Vlaanderen	www.rabobank.nl					■	
	Royal HaskoningDHV Nederland B.V.	www.royalhaskoningdhv.com					■	
S	Sagro Aannemingsmij. Zeeland B.V.	www.sagro.nl		■	■	■		
	Sarens Nederland	www.sarens.com					■	
	Saybolt Nederland B.V.	www.corelab.com/rd/saybolt			■		■	
	Schipper Groep	www.schippergroep.nl					■	
	Seatrade Rotterdam B.V.	www.seatraderotterdam.nl		■	■			
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The content of PortNews is the responsibility of the Editorial Committee. Contact:

- Henk de Haas, Chairman, Promotion Council North Sea Port
- Johan Bresseleers, Communication Manager, North Sea Port
- Charles van den Oosterkamp, Director, OMC Services BV

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Find out more about contributing to future issues of PortNews by contacting Charles van den Oosterkamp, info@omc-services.com, tel. +31 (0)6 10 979 655.

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P.O. Box 132
4530 AC Terneuzen, The Netherlands
T +31 (0)115 647 400

John Kennedylaan 32,
Harbour 3000A, 9042 Ghent, Belgium
T +32 (0)9 251 0550
E contacteer@northseaport.com
I www.northseaport.com

Follow us on:



P.O. Box 5130
4380 KC Vlissingen
The Netherlands

T +31 (0)118 491 320
E info@pc-nsp.com
I www.pc-nsp.com

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PRODUCTION

OMC SERVICES BV
Management
Charles van den Oosterkamp

Contributing Editors
Arno Dirkzwager
Jean-Louis Vandevoorde

Contact
E info@omc-services.com
T +31 (0)6 10 979 655





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Vlissingen-Oost (NL)
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NL - 4450 AB Heinkenszand
Groenlandweg 4, Harbor nr. 4056
4455 SN Vlissingen-Oost - NL

Phone: +31 (0)118 488 450
E-mail: vlissingen@liftal.com

Rilland (NL)
De Poort 15
NL - 4411 PB Rilland

Phone: +31 (0)113 571 523
E-mail: rilland@liftal.com





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