

le port de DUNKERQUE

e-monthly port activities report

Dunkerque Port
will be present at
Transport & Logistics Anvers
from 20 to 22 October 2009
(stand 4403)

3 QUESTIONS PUT TO... STÉPHANE RAISON

Planning and Environment Director
of Dunkerque Port

Thursday 8 October saw the inauguration of the «Barreau de Saint-Georges» railway link. This 7.4-km line is the first to be built by the Grand Port Maritime de Dunkerque (GPMD), which has been responsible, since the order of 2 August 2005, for building and managing the railway lines on its territory.



• What are the goals of this project?

The Saint-Georges Link is a railway line owned by the Port of Dunkirk and hence reserved for freight. It was built with the twofold objective of increasing the capacity at departure from the Western Bulk Terminal and anticipating the excavation of the port's new docks. The line is connected to Calais-Dunkirk railway, only 5 km from France's main freight rail station (Grande-Synthe). It is im-

portant to stress the vital place of rail transport for Dunkerque Port: a total of 14 MT of goods are carried annually by rail in the industrial port area of Dunkirk, corresponding to 12% of national freight traffic.

• What was the cost to the Port of the Saint-Georges Link?

The project had three contracting authorities: the Réseau Ferré de France (French Railway Network) for the modernisation of the railway signals on the line between Dunkirk and Gravelines; the Northern General Council for the building of three bridges across the new railway line; and the Port for the construction of the railway line itself. The project, costing a total of 23.6 M€ excluding VAT, was funded by the State (3.5 M€), the Regional Council (7 M€), the European Union (European Regional Development Fund 7 M€), the Northern General Council (4.1 M€) and the GPMD (2 M€).

• What are the GPMD's other railway projects?

In the next few years, two factors will reinforce the strategic improvement of the port's rail links:

- the liberalisation of rail freight;
- the inclusion, in the 2007-2013 State-Regional Project Contract, of the electrification and modernisation of the Calais-Dunkirk line, which should promote the development of rail logistics between the ports of Dunkirk, Calais and the Channel Tunnel.

The position of Dunkerque port as the first national freight rail station, makes it an asset in the implementation of these strategic guidelines. This is why the GPMD has included in its strategic plan an investment programme to promote the development of the rail mode in an amount of 61.5 M€:

- 1 – Electrification of the Saint-Georges Link;
- 2 – Connection of the Western Port and the Maritime Dock;
- 3 – Extension and electrification of the Loon-Plage sidings;
- 4 – Re-establishment of the link between the Eastern Port and the Maritime Dock.



First call at Dunkirk for the Elbrus



The first call at Dunkirk of the multi-purpose «SE 3 OCEANS LINE» service of the company SE SHIPPING LINES which links Northern Europe with the South Pacific, Oceania, Australia and New Zealand (and returning to Europe via South Africa) took place on 6 October 2009.

First call of MS Princess

On Tuesday 22 September, in Dunkirk, a ceremony was held to mark the first call of the river cruise ship MS Princess. The 80-meter-long liner, which can accommodate

100 passengers, was beginning a series of six river cruises lasting four days in the Nord-Pas de Calais region, with tourist visits planned along the way.

Military transshipment in the Western Port

On 1 and 2 October 2009 some 150 twenty-foot containers and modular units, as well as 30 military vehicles, were loaded on board the RORO vessel MN Eider in Dunkirk's Western Port, bound for Solenzara in Corsica. This transshipment operation, carried out by 50 military personnel from

Douai and La Rochelle, was the first logistics phase of the «2009 National Command and Control Exercise» (C2 NATEX 2009*). Dunkirk was chosen as the loading port because of its geographic proximity to Douai, where the vehicles and equipment used in the exercise are stored.



*C2 NATEX 2009 is a major exercise for the French armed forces, conducted and implemented by the joint force and training headquarters, and bringing together 1,300 military personnel from the three armed forces from 16 November to 4 December 2009, in Corsica.