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NORD PORTS SHUTTLE: A CONTAINERISED WATERWAY SHUTTLE LINKING DUNKERQUE-PORT WITH LILLE AND DOURGES

Dunkerque-Port is continuing its drive to develop a regional waterway container transport service, directly linked to the maritime services calling at the port.

Nord Ports Shuttle is a local waterway service operated by a public/private partnership composed of Dunkerque-Port, Compagnie Fluviale de Transport (CFT), the Grand Lille Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIGL) and the Flanders Terminal.

Starting on 26 October 2013, the **Nord Ports Shuttle (NPS)** waterway container inland shuttle will provide a twice-weekly link between **the Flanders Terminal (TdF)** of Dunkerque-Port, **Lille Container Terminal (LCT)** and **Lille Dourges Container Terminal (LDCT)** by a service dedicated to the shippers of the Nord-Pas de Calais Region, Day A / Day B.

The aim of this service is to provide an offer that is both economical and environmentally-friendly, directly linked to the containerised shipping lines calling at Dunkirk, between the port terminals and the two main multimodal inland platforms of the Greater Lille area. It operates on a quay-to-quay basis, without road transport, and directly linked to marine traffic. The operating conditions of this waterway transport service have been designed to allow the emergence of a competitive multimodal transport offer without the return of empty containers to the port of origin, by creating depots for empty containers in the inland terminals of Lille and Dourges which are open to all logistics operators.

The service operates with a 78-TEU barge, the «**CARINA**», and the «**P'TIT MURENE**» push boat. It will run two rotations a week between Dunkirk (Saturday and Wednesday), Lille and Dourges (Monday and Thursday). NPS will initially offer an annual transport capacity of some 15,000 TEU, i.e. 7,500 TEU in each direction. The rotations are scheduled to synchronise with the calls of ocean-going mother ships at the Flanders Terminal.

As regards customs, a Waterway and Maritime Procedure («PFM») designed to simplify the procedures has been put in place with the Customs authorities to allow electronic registration of goods' customs status, via the port's AP+ computer system.

The launch of this innovative inter-regional transport service has also been made possible by the support of the institutional partners of Dunkirk Urban Community and the Nord-Pas de Calais Regional Council, as well as the Regional Customs Authorities, to reinforce the essentially regional character of this dedicated service.

For the partners of NPS, «*The aim of this new service is to provide a long-term offer of consolidated waterway transport between the port platforms of Dunkirk, Lille and Dourges and also to promote a local waterway service that will allow the region's industries and shippers to consolidate their container traffic through the Port of Dunkirk with a competitive, reliable service.*»

France's third-ranking port, Dunkirk is well known as a port handling heavy bulk cargoes for its numerous industrial installations. It has also built its reputation in other sectors such as cross-Channel RORO traffic to Great Britain, containers, fruit, etc. Classified as the seventh port of the North Europe Range which extends from Le Havre to Hamburg, Dunkirk is also the leading French port for ore and coal imports, France's leading port for containerised fruit imports, and the country's second-ranking port for trade with Great Britain.



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