

## Riga introduces bulk container technology



Riga Universal Terminals Ltd (RUT) has introduced new containerized dry bulk handling technology, and is the first port in Europe to do so. RUT uses this for the movement of wood pellets on large dry bulk ships.

In effect, pellets are moved from the warehouse to the quay in special-purpose open-top 20-foot containers. Using portal-frame container lift equipped with a revolver system, the entire contents of a container are delivered onto the ship by turning the container over, thereby tipping the contents into the hold.

Atis Šulte, RUT Trade and Business Development Director, says, "The main benefit from introducing the new technology is a significant optimization of terminal expenses and an increase in performance. Now, we can perform dry bulk handling operations involving a significantly smaller number of machines and human resources." Savings on resources amount to almost 50%, he added.

"By introducing containerized cargo handling, we have become more competitive and can better adjust to customer requirements. Following the general tendency in cargo carriage, dry bulk ships handled at our terminal are becoming even larger. By means of the new technology, we are able to ensure fast and effective loading of these large ships."

By applying the new technology, RUT is able to load dry bulk and containers at the same pier, using one portal-frame lift. It allows it to quickly organize its work at the terminal and quickly handle any type of ship. Because consignments are poured into the holds, rather than above them, the amount of dust that ends up in the air is reduced. Similarly, the spread of dust and cargo losses are reduced by handling a great amount of cargo within one lifting operation.

This containerized dry bulk handling technology is already used in ports across Australia and South America, where it is used mainly with iron ore and coal, as well as with grain. By using closed standardized containers, dry bulk can be transported from a remote loading point, then stored at the terminal without having to unload the container and then move to the ship using the same container. This means that no investment is needed in warehouses and the entire logistics chain from extraction to ship loading can be optimized, using standardized container technology.

For more information on the technologies involved, please see 'Port of Riga moves towards containerized bulk handling solutions, on p91 of the November issue of *Dry Cargo International*. *Barry Cross*

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