

## Swiss call for box terminal strategy

SBB Cargo and Swiss Rhine container terminal operators are calling for a national strategy for container terminals.

The concept is based on two new facilities, one in Basel (Basel-Nord) and the other in Dietikon (Gateway Limmattal). The latter has been planned for some time as a turntable for containers transported by rail.

Swiss o/d container traffic via the ARA presently amounts to an average of 2000 TEU per day and is expected to continue to grow rapidly, with a forecast of 2500 TEU/day by 2015, 4000 TEU by 2025 and 6000 TEU by 2030. However, existing capacity will be reached by 2014-15.

"To enable us to handle the forecast growth, we need a new approach," said Hans-Peter Hadorn, director of Schweizerische Rheinhäfen. "The new terminals should complement

each other rather than compete."

SBB Cargo's CEO Nicolas Perrin explained that the main hub for Swiss import/export containers moving to or from the seaports by rail would be Gateway Limmattal, where containers would be switched to/from SBB Cargo's network. The public planning process should commence in 2012 and it is hoped that the terminal will be operational by 2015.

The Basel-Nord terminal, located close by the Basel-Kleinhüningen port area and the Rotterdam-Genoa rail corridor (EU 24), would be geared for barge and rail operations. The site has been reserved for logistic facilities since 2009.

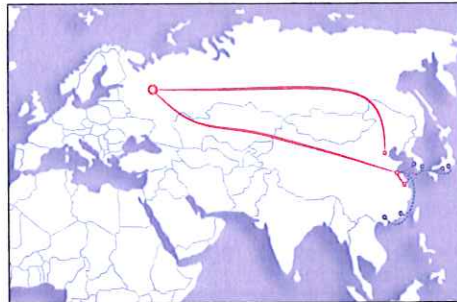
Between them SBB Cargo and the Swiss Rhine ports handled 4.8 mt in 2010. The ports accounted for around 10% of SBB Cargo's overall volume.

## TETS to cut China-Moscow transit...

Trans Eurasia Transport Solutions (TETS), a leading provider of multimodal transport services in China, Russia and Central Asia, will launch the test phase of a planned new, regular container block train service between China and Moscow at the end of this month.

"By introducing further improvements to the established "Moscow Premium Rail" service, the transit time on the Lianyungang to Moscow route can be cut to just 20 days, the company said.

"We have enjoyed uninterrupted demand for our China-Russia service during the past few months. We now want to further enhance the quality by offering faster services and this will increase our competitiveness over sea freight and even air freight," said Wanxu Dong, managing director of TETS China Ltd. "Compared to air freight, the rail transport service provided by TETS is about 16 times cheaper and in future it will be almost



The new service will cut the Lianyungang-Moscow transit time to 20 days

three times as fast as shipments sent by sea."

Apart from exceptions caused by poor weather, single wagon freight traffic takes 25-32 days to complete the journey between China and Moscow. The transit time for block train traffic will now be about one week less as a result of higher average speeds and time savings in completing formalities at borders, TETS said.

operators and freight forwarders.

The trains will operate on the new Eurasian Landbridge and link important business centres in southern, eastern and northern China with Moscow. Consignments from southern and eastern China will be aggregated at the hub in Lianyungang in north-east China. TETS and CSCL guarantee that they will process bookings and make the necessary equipment available within five working days.

TETS and CSCL will process the rail traffic in conjunction with national rail companies in China and Kazakhstan. TETS, CSCL and Kazakhstan State Railways (KTS) recently signed a cooperation agreement covering regular block train services.

If the test phase proves successful, it will be provided on a regular basis every 7-10 days.

## ...as Schenker plans China-Europe service

Forwarder DB Schenker is planning to launch a regular block train service by the summer of this year to move containers from China to Europe.

Steve Dearnley, CEO of DB Schenker Asia-Pacific, said the company is expecting to move up to 100 TEU per train with a transit time of around 21 days to Hamburg.

The announcement comes after Schenker parent Deutsche Bahn and China's Railway Ministry formally said they would cooperate more closely on rail freight transport and on expanding China's rail infrastructure. In December last year, they released a joint declaration affirming their commitment to strengthening rail freight transport and to developing new links between Asia and Europe.

"The more Chinese production sites that move inland from the coast, the more interesting rail transport to Europe becomes for many manufacturers. We want to meet this demand," said Karl-Friedrich Rausch, a member of

DB Mobility Logistics' management board.

Dearnley said DB Schenker had been poised to launch the rail service much earlier. "If it had not been for the global financial crisis, we would have started rail to Europe two years ago.

"We had already done some pilots with block trains, but when the downturn hit, our priorities shifted and the project was shelved. We're now ready to move forward with it," he said.

Last year, another division of DB won a contract worth around US\$40M to supervise five construction projects involving nine high-speed routes in China.

A number of freight forwarders have been striving to develop offerings involving surface transportation from China to Europe over the past few years. In the autumn of 2007, Panalpina launched a rail-air service under which it moved cargo from points in China by rail to Urumqi for onward transportation to Europe by air. Others have also used rail-air via the railhead in Xinjiang.

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## Fargo launches new TOPS suite

UK-based software developer Fargo Systems is launching a new, enhanced version of its TOPS transport management system. This is aimed at achieving reductions in GHG emissions, as well as further improvements in efficiency and profit maximisation.

The "Multimodal Profit Optimiser" suite of tools includes a planning wizard to identify container "twinning" and "reload" possibilities, a route optimiser for multi-drop trips, a simple alternative transport determinant, and a profitability optimiser that compares standard default tariffs, subcontractor-specific ones, own fleet running costs and any ad hoc quotes that may have been received.

The user-friendly wizard, says Fargo, helps reduce empty running miles for container road transport and allows the operator to optimise routing based on customer requirements, equipment type, location, etc. It also offers the best matches within the trans-

port management system itself.

Quotation requirements can be requested and then submitted by transport suppliers via the independent containercentral.com online transaction exchange. If accepted the jobs can be electronically transferred directly to the supplier's transport management system, with a return flow of job status and information update, including electronic proof of delivery all possible.

The ability to auto-determine jobs best suited for rail and other alternative means of transport is also possible, with different rules available for imports and exports. In addition, a train planning module provides a sophisticated way of managing contracted or self-operated rail services with equipment checks and a wagon space optimiser.

CO<sub>2</sub>/kg emissions can be entered for different transport modes (road, rail, barge) and reported back to the customer on a regular basis.

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