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PRESS RELEASE: BARGE SERVICE CENTRE BUNDLES TOGETHER TO SAVE

Bundling of small-scale container flows on a barge service centre (BSC) provides clear benefits for inland and seaport terminals in the port of Rotterdam. This was shown in a recent study by Mercator Novus, commissioned the Central Bureau for Rhine and Inland Shipping (CBRB) and the Kramer Group.

Two new seaport terminals will become operational at Maasvlakte 2 in 2015: APMT2 and RWG. The number of port terminals and the number of departing points for inland navigation will nearly double. This will provide additional logistical issues, however, as barges will then have to stop at multiple terminals, which can quickly result in delays. Seaport Terminals will also have to deal with smaller shipments of containers. When processing small numbers of containers costs substantially increase per container for both barges and seaport terminals.

A barge service centre will allow barges to unload containers from inland vessels that are destined for various seaport terminals in one go, after which containers are taken to the surrounding seaport terminals. This will allow barges to prepare more efficient departure schedules with fewer delays, while the Seaport Terminals will not have to deal with unfavourably small cargo volumes per barge.

The study, which was conducted by Mercator Novus, analysed the cost of increasing fragmentation and the savings that a barge service centre can provide. It was shown that bundling is favourable: savings in the chain outweigh additional operating costs. A barge service centre (BSC) will also make barging more attractive to shippers as daily services at all seaport terminals become possible in principle through the BSC. It is also a neutral solution as it does not require any cooperation between competitors.

Finally, a barge service centre can also be established within a short period of time and it can be integrated with other activities such as central scheduling for inland shipping. Parties are currently working at the Rotterdam port on the Nextlogic project, which deals with more efficient handling of inland container shipping. If a barge service centre can participate in Nextlogic that will further contribute to optimisation.

The study identified the Rotterdam Container Terminal (RCT) of the Kramer Group as a promising location to operate the barge service centre from. RCT has extensive experience in handling of barges and inter-terminal transport, which is located between Hartelhaven and Amazonehaven, which is conveniently close to the seaport terminals at Maasvlakte 1 and 2.

Since the two new seaport terminals will soon become operational, the aim of CBRB and the Kramer Group is to reach an agreement about establishing and operating a BSC in the near future with all stakeholders (the Port Authority, seaport terminals and inland shipping).

ABOUT THE KRAMER GROUP

The Kramer Group is a real Rotterdam family business, which was founded more than forty years ago by Marcel Kramer senior. The company is active in virtually all sections of container services. With the expansion of throughput capacity at the current Maasvlakte 1 and at Maasvlakte 2, the Kramer Group aims to provide high quality services by contributing to optimum container logistics.

ABOUT CBRB

CBRB is a trade association for inland navigation that represents the majority of inland container shipping operators. Approximately 90% of the container shipping volume on the Rhine and on the Rotterdam-Antwerp route is handled by barge operators that are members of CBRB. CBRB and VITO, to which most inland container shipping operators in the Netherlands belong, together form the LINC partnership. LINC therefore represents about 90% of total inland container shipping across North West Europe.

+++++Note for editors, not for publication+++++

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