



POLAND SPECIAL

Gateway between Western and Eastern Europe

DB Schenker Rail Polska sets new standards in rail freight transport in Poland and Eastern Europe. Page 26



Rolling pipeline

DB Schenker Rail organises interplant transports between Ludwigshafen and Antwerp on behalf of BASF. Page 08

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CIM/SMGS document enables shorter border stops. Page 24



LOADING COAL

Monster on the coal tip

Every year, the DB Schenker Rail subsidiary RBH Logistics GmbH transports several million tonnes of coal by train and barge. This picture was entered for a students' photography competition: several shots of a crane on an RBH coal tip were put together to create a bizarre object.



Breaking down boundaries

Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Europe has changed more markedly than only a few bold people back then could have imagined. The European Union now comprises 27 members – turning countries which just a generation ago confronted one another in irreconcilable systems into close partners.

The economy is now truly international. Companies are playing a key role in helping countries and regions to grow together. BASF, one of our biggest customers, operates chemical plants worldwide according to the principle of integrated production under which various production sites are interlinked and coordinate their output. DB Schenker Rail organises the international tank wagon transport operations between the Group's locations in Ludwigshafen and Antwerp. This is particularly dependent on high reliability. In this issue of *railways* you will find out just how BASF's transport system works.

Ever greater distances need to be covered in international rail freight transport. Poland has become the focus of increasing attention in recent years. In this issue, which is being published in English and Polish, we are devoting special attention to the country between the Oder and Bug rivers. Poland not only boasts a huge domestic market and major industrial regions, it is also the EU's gateway to Eastern Europe, Russia and Asia. Our "Poland Special" sheds light on this dynamic market and describes the new products and services with which our subsidiary DB Schenker Rail Polska is bringing East and West closer together and overcoming boundaries.

With kind regards,

Karsten Sachsenröder
Member of the Management Board
DB Schenker Rail

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Poland Special: Pivot between Western and Eastern Europe

DB Schenker Rail Polska is setting new standards in rail freight transport in Poland and Eastern Europe.

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BRUSSELS/BELGIUM

German-Belgian cooperation

DB Schenker Rail and the freight rail arm of the Belgian state railway SNCB have signed contracts to establish a joint venture. Following approval by the responsible competition authority, trains operated by DB Schenker Rail Deutschland, DB Schenker Rail Nederland and SNCB will be operating non-stop cross-border services, thus cutting journey times and costs. The aim is also to strengthen generally the competitiveness of cross-border rail freight transport in relation to road haulage and inland waterways. The new company to be based in Brussels will trade under the name Cobra, which stands for Corridor Operations Belgium Rail.



SEVILLE/SPAIN

New services in Spain

Euro Cargo Rail (ECR), the Spanish subsidiary of DB Schenker Rail, is expanding its operations. Since March, it has offered regular services between Madrid and the port of Seville. To begin with, the company is offering four transports per week, but plans to increase that number in future.

Seville



MAINZ/GERMANY

Niederhofer new Board Member for „Region Central Production Companies“

Otto G. Niederhofer, 56, member of the DB Schenker Rail Deutschland AG Management Board has taken over the newly established Region Central Production Companies division with effect from 1 March 2010. Niederhofer will thus be responsible for management of the production companies which belong to Region Central - DB Schenker Rail Nederland, DB Schenker Rail Scandinavia, Nord Cargo (Italy), RBH Logistics, MEG (both Germany) and DB Schenker Rail Schweiz – as well as Cobra (Belgium) and BLS Cargo (Switzerland), in which DB Schenker Rail holds a stake. Niederhofer was formerly head of Asset Management at DB Schenker Rail.

Brussels

Mainz

Warsaw

Zabrze

WARSAW / POLAND

Award for acquisition in Poland

Every year, the Polish edition of the American financial magazine „Forbes“ awards prizes to the most important corporate mergers (based on the transaction volume) in Poland. In 2009, second place went to Deutsche Bahn AG for its acquisition of PCC Logistics and PTK Holding. Both these companies now trade under the joint umbrella of DB Schenker Rail Polska S.A.

ZABRZE / POLAND

Werner in charge of DB Schenker Rail Polska

With effect from 15 April 2010, Hans-Georg Werner has taken over the management of DB Schenker Rail Polska and simultaneously the Sales Board Division. He hopes that this move from the Supervisory Board to the head of the Management Board will ensure the swift and efficient integration of the Polish DB subsidiary in the company's international network. Werner will remain responsible for Region East in his capacity as member of the Management Board of the European company, DB Schenker Rail.



Rolling pipeline

Production at the BASF chemicals plants in Ludwigshafen and Antwerp is dependent on supplies by rail. Since March 2010, DB Schenker Rail has organised the company's international interplant transports.



BASF parent plant: the world's largest chemicals site
is located in Ludwigshafen.

Customers & Projects

Modern chemicals production is networked. Intelligent management of the flows of raw materials, energy and waste ensures maximum capacity exploitation and saves resources. Various chemicals plants produce different substances in carefully coordinated processes at one location, enabling them to share infrastructure and logistics. By-products from one factory are used as raw materials by another. The same principles apply to energy management: heat generated in one plant can be used to produce energy for another.

BASF applies this integrated production principle at its plants throughout the world. The system saves the company several million euros per annum at the parent plant in Ludwigshafen alone, where the strategy was developed. The world's largest coherent chemicals site is home to more than 200 production plants, which interact like one giant organism.

BASF's second major integrated production location in Europe is located in the Belgian port of Antwerp. As in Ludwigshafen, a complex network of pipelines is the core element for the endless circle of chemicals and energy. Materials also have to be exchanged between the two plants – non-stop and in vast quantities. However, that cannot be done through a pipeline. In this case, it is a "rolling pipeline" which transports the materials from the Rhine to Belgium and back again: a never-ending chain of tank wagons that run back and forth on rail between Ludwigshafen and Antwerp.

Reliability is an absolute must

In March 2010, DB Schenker Rail assumed management of these inter-plant transports. "High reliability and punctuality are of crucial importance for us, because even minor delays can cause disruptions in our production sequences," explains Dr. Bernhard Heyder, head of the Rail Service Centre at BASF. "The concept offered by DB Schenker Rail is convincing not only because it focuses clearly on reliability, but because the company also has the necessary structures and resources to satisfy our strict requirements."

BASF itself has considerable expertise in the field of rail freight. Roughly a quarter of the goods at its Ludwigshafen location are transported by rail. BASF has its own rail freight terminal, which handles 230,000 tank wagons per annum and also has its own marshalling yard, repair shop and cleaning facility. The company's own rail operations cover 213 kilometres of track and 200 loading points.

The Ludwigshafen plant has already worked with DB Schenker Rail – or respectively its predecessor companies – for decades, so that the various processes, interfaces and information channels between the companies are meanwhile well established and run smoothly. In 2008, DB Schenker Rail transported more than half a million tonnes of freight for BASF on around 200 different routes inside Europe.

In recent years, however, the transports between Ludwigshafen and Antwerp were handled by a rail freight operator in which BASF itself was a shareholder. After the sale of that company, tenders were invited for the transports for the first time in nine years. "We are delighted to have won the contract," says Jan Elfenhorst, Head of Chemicals Sales at DB Schenker BTT GmbH. "This allows us to prove not only our comprehensive expertise in the transport of chemicals, but also our ability to handle international transports extremely reliably and manage them from one central source."

DB Schenker Rail operates block trains from Antwerp to Ludwigshafen and vice versa at least six times a week. In addition to

Reliable connections

The two integrated BASF plants in Ludwigshafen and Antwerp are interlinked through daily rail transport operations. The sophisticated transport concept developed by DB Schenker Rail ensures that deliveries reach their destination reliably and punctually.



① Continuous monitoring

Within Germany transport operations are monitored through automatic equipment for measuring the passage of trains. Sensors built into the tracks continually transmit the train movement data to the Customer Service Centre, which can immediately intervene in case of disruptions.

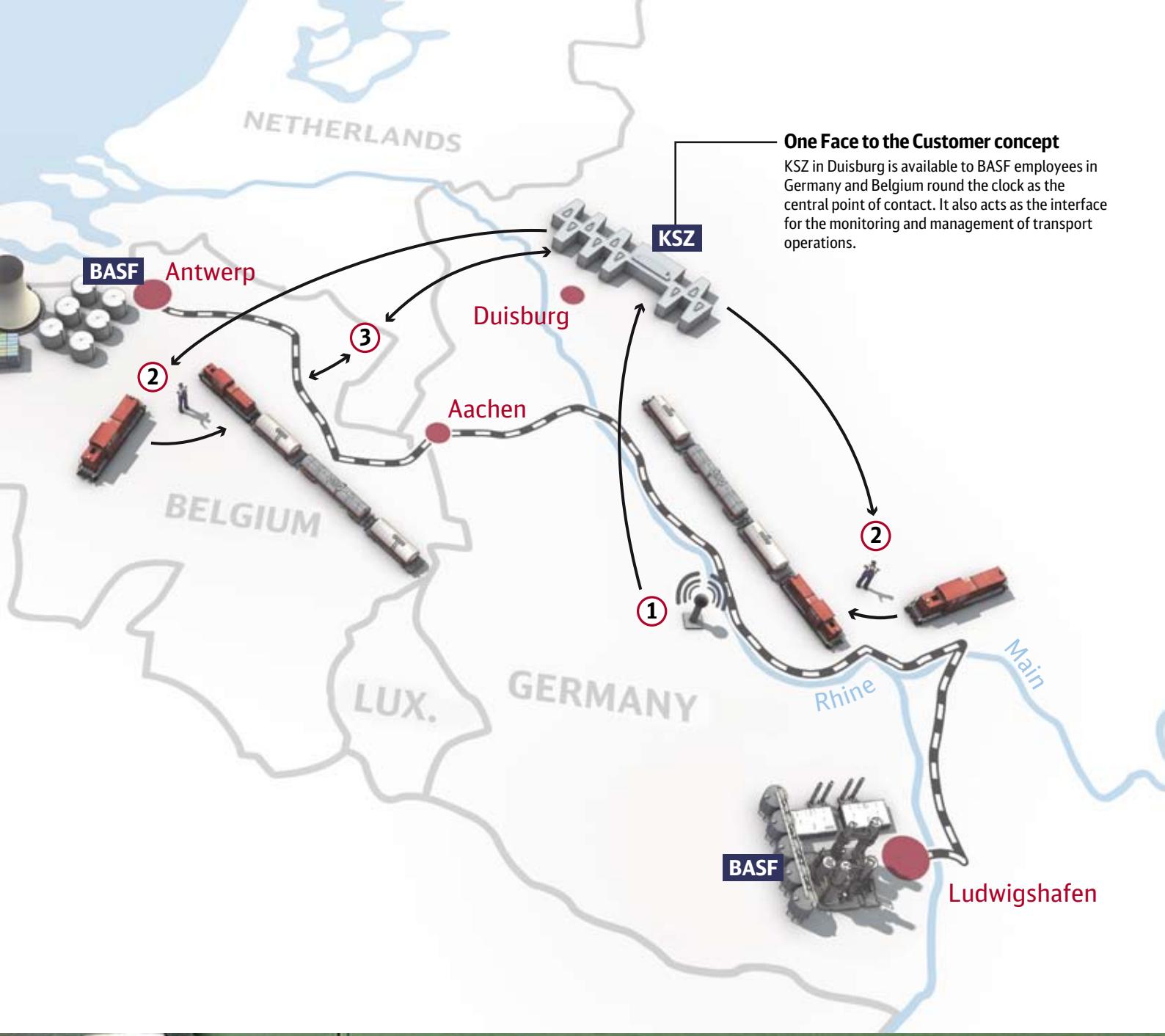
② Comprehensive back-up system

If a locomotive breaks down or an engine driver is absent prompt replacements can be organised along the whole route at short notice.

③ International exchange of information

Train movements in Belgium are monitored by B-Cargo. The data on train progress is continuously transmitted by the Belgian Cargo Operations Center to KSZ. Movement between Antwerp and Aachen is organised by the Cobra joint venture set up by DB Schenker Rail and the Belgian state railway SNCB. Interface problems at the border are thus avoided and the transport services are managed from one central source.





Customers & Projects

Styrene plant: there are over 200 production systems at the BASF site in Ludwigshafen which work together as one body.



BASF in Antwerp: the Belgian site constantly exchanges substances with Ludwigshafen.



KSZ Duisburg: The dispatcher coordinates all information flows and is in daily contact with the employees of BASF-Bahnlogistik.

these scheduled services, the company also organises special trains to carry any excess quantities or to deal with any individual campaigns. The substances carried in the tank wagons change according to the daily requirements at the two locations.

Unbeatable chemicals expertise

Ethylene oxide is one of the typical substances transported between the plants. Ethylene oxide is used in the production of pesticides, plasticizers for detergents, solvents and brake fluids.

Ethylene oxide is just one example of the many kinds of freight carried on behalf of BASF which call for special safety precautions during the transport. DB Schenker BTT GmbH's expertise in the sectors of both chemicals and dangerous goods was therefore an important trump card for DB Schenker Rail in its bid for the contract. As a company specialising in the carriage of liquid, gas and pourable substances, DB Schenker BTT is particularly familiar

with the safety requirements that apply to the transport of hazardous substances and can therefore devise appropriate transport concepts for such freight.

However, not only the legal requirements have to be satisfied in the carriage of sensitive freight. BASF also demands that its transport service providers also have SQAS certification (Safety and Quality Assessment System). SQAS is a standard developed by the European Chemical Industry Council which focuses particularly on the aspects of safety and minimum environmental impact. DB Schenker BTT is also committed to 'responsible care' – a self-imposed obligation devoted to compliance and ongoing development of strict safety standards in the transport of chemical products.

For BASF, reliability is an absolute must. Accordingly, DB Schenker Rail has devised a concept for the inter-plant transports in which the arrival and departure of the trains is perfectly synchronised with the internal loading and discharging processes at the plants. This means complying with precise time slots: a delay of more than 30 minutes would already have noticeable effects on BASF's downstream internal logistics processes.

Where everything converges

Satisfying such strict standards is not something that can be taken for granted – especially when international transports are concerned. Crossing national borders can all too easily cause delays because of differences in the technical systems and organisational structures. "We handle these transports with B-Cargo in Belgium, an extremely professional partner. We not only cooperate closely with this company, but also operate a joint venture," states Dr. Jörg Hilker, head of the Chemicals/Mineral Oil/Fertilisers Market Unit at DB Schenker Rail. "This means we can provide one single contact for BASF for the entire train journey from Ludwigshafen to Antwerp and to deal with any other queries."

This "one face to the customer" concept was a key criterion for BASF when awarding the contract. The "face" in this case is the DB Schenker Rail Customer Service Centre (CSC) in Duisburg, where specially trained dispatchers keep in contact with BASF in Ludwigshafen and Antwerp round the clock. The CSC is where all the different elements of monitoring and managing the BASF trains converge. The traffic control centre is informed about the exact location of the train at all times. As soon as the train enters the German section of the line, the relevant data is automatically transmitted by sensors on the tracks. In Belgium the train movements are monitored by the Cargo Operations Center of B-Cargo. The data is continuously transmitted to the DB Schenker CSC, so that it can also provide information about progress on the Belgian section of the route at all times.

In case of disruptions, the CSC immediately takes appropriate action, organising prompt replacements in case of damage to a locomotive, or the absence of a train driver.

"The BASF production concept is efficient and a global success – but it is dependent on smooth handling of supplies between the different locations," says Katharina Brönstrup, Key Account Manager for BASF at DB Schenker BTT. "We are proud that our transport concept plays an important role in this complex system." ■

"High reliability and punctuality are of crucial importance for us"

Dr. Bernhard Heyder

Customers & Projects



More room: the automotive parts box Kaluga enables new transport solutions.



Innovative transport box

In cooperation with Volkswagen Logistics, Schenker Automotive Railnet has developed an innovative transport solution for automotive transports.

Hardly any other business sector has developed such complex logistics processes as the automotive industry. Depending on the individual requirements, single parts or larger components are delivered to the plants for assembly. The suppliers may be external manufacturers or the company's own factories inside the country or abroad.

Keeping stocks of these parts no longer plays a significant role, as the processes at both the delivery and supply plants are precisely synchronised with each other and with the logistics service providers. The parts frequently have to be delivered directly to the assembly line within an exactly defined time slot ("Just in Time"). However, in view of the immense diversity of vehicles and models, the parts are now increasingly intended for the production of one particular vehicle and consequently have to be taken to the assembly line in a particular order ("Just in Sequence").

As if that were not enough: these already complex processes are not static, but subject to constant change. Volkswagen, for example, operates a plant in Kaluga, Russia, which receives assembly sets from several different locations in Europe. Since the first vehicles left the assembly line at the Kaluga plant in 2008, the facility has been constantly expanded to enable it to handle additional stages of the production process.

Innovative solutions

Volkswagen opts primarily for DB Schenker Rail to handle transport of the parts from its various plants to Kaluga. In the past, assembly sets have been carried by rail from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Germany to the factory, which is roughly 170 kilometres south-west of Moscow. Following the start-up of the plant's own body shop, paint shop and final assembly line in 20 October 2009, the demands on DB Schenker Rail have changed radically, as the assembly sets now have to be delivered straight to the assembly line as single parts and modules.

To ensure that can satisfy these strict requirements in future and compete successfully with truck transport, DB Schenker Rail has devised a new transport box in cooperation with Volkswagen Logistics specially for the transports to Kaluga. Many different

Customers & Projects

“Such investments in R&D are necessary to ensure that rail will be able to meet the growing demands of the automotive industry in future and play a central role in modern production and logistics systems.”

Axel Marschall

sectors at DB Schenker Rail and DB AG contributed their expertise to the development of this technically sophisticated transport container: Equipment Team and Key Account Management at Schenker Automotive Railnet, the Integrated Technical Systems, Freight Wagon and Load Unit Technology and “Purchasing” departments at DB AG, as well as the Special Consignments sector at DB Schenker Rail Deutschland.

“This transport box is a world premiere that has been designed specifically to meet the requirements of the automotive industry,” states Axel Marschall, Head of Automotive at DB Schenker Rail. “It enables us to offer completely new solutions in terms of transport volumes as well as upstream and downstream cross-modal loading and unloading processes.”

With an inside loading height of three metres, the APB-K transport box is a good 30 centimetres higher than conventional containers. That height is necessary to provide sufficient room for the loading racks used by the automotive industry. The boxes can hold up to 26.5 tonnes of material and can be hoisted by crane or mobile handling equipment. This means the existing crane facilities can be used to transfer them from the Central European standard gauge to the carrier wagons of the Russian broad gauge railway without delay. The APB-K is available in two different versions: as curtain siders with movable side panels and Wingliners, with hydraulically operated side panels. The curtain sider also has a lifting roof. Both boxes can be loaded from the rear and stacked in two tiers.

As from April, DB Schenker Rail will test the box on the Wolfsburg-Kaluga line for several months, before deciding in summer whether or not to begin series production.

“The APB-K has enormous potential for the automotive sector of DB Schenker Rail,” continues Marschall. “Such investments in R&D are necessary to ensure that rail will be able to meet the growing demands of the automotive industry in future and play a central role in modern production and logistics systems.” ■

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The boxes can hold up to 26.5 tonnes of material and are stackable in twos.



Photos: Pablo Castagnola





Taxiway bridges

DB Schenker Rail transports huge precast concrete parts to a construction site at Frankfurt Airport on behalf of Max Bögl.



Photo montage: the traversing bridges will connect the new northwest runway with the existing airport site.



DB Schenker Rail transports bridge parts which extend well beyond the conventional loading dimensions.

Frankfurt Airport, the most important air transport hub in Germany, is expanding its capacities. The project also includes the construction of two taxiway bridges which will link the new north-west runway to the existing airport site as from the start of the 2011/2012 winter flight schedule. Planes will cross the A3 motorway, the Frankfurt-Cologne high-speed railway line and the Airport ring on the new bridges.

The taxiway bridges will be made of precast concrete parts, including more than 400 girders produced by the Max Bögl construction company at its main plant in Neumarkt in Bavaria. The girders are enormous, with lengths of up to 38 metres and weighing up to 93 tonnes each.

To meet the client's requirements, Max Bögl has to produce the parts quickly and deliver them to the preliminary storage areas within certain time slots. To enable it to satisfy these demands, the company has commissioned DB Schenker Rail with transport of the girders from the plant in the north-east of Bavaria to Frankfurt. "We could not possibly comply with these stringent time demands without the sophisticated DB Schenker Rail transport concept," states Franz Koschella, Commercial Director for Transport and Equipment at Max Bögl.

Extraordinary transports

The Construction Materials, Industrial and Consumer Goods Market Unit at DB Schenker Rail designed the concept in close cooperation with the specialists of the Railports and Rail Projects sector, who contributed the logistics expertise required for such extraordinary transports. Thorsten Wartenpfuhl, head of that section, summed up the achievements of his team as follows: "The successful planning and implementation of this complex transport concept proves that the customer's confidence in our capabilities was well-deserved and confirms the impressive efficiency

and flexibility of DB Schenker Rail." The freight wagons used for the transports, for example, were specially modified: "During the transport, each bridge element is supported on two carrying wagons with one intermediate wagon in between," explains Walter Obermeyer, the responsible customer support agent at the Construction Materials, Industrial and Consumer Goods Market Unit of DB Schenker Rail. "The carrying wagons are fitted with special swivel bolsters to ensure that the girders can travel safely around curves in the line." Operational project coordination is the responsibility of the Customer Service Centre in Duisburg. The Construction Materials team serves as the central point of contact for the customer and the Market Unit, coordinates the individual trips, monitors empty and payload runs and also ensures the smooth exchange of information.

Since mid-January, four trains per week – each with 36 wagons carrying twelve girders – have made the approx. 300-kilometre trip from Neumarkt to the building site at the airport in Frankfurt and returned to the Max Bögl plant the same day. Each one-way trip takes around seven hours. Special cranes are used to load and unload the wagons, with each process taking ten hours. By the end of April, a total of 34 trains with a gross weight of 1,862 tonnes will have carried the girders to Frankfurt Airport.

As far as Max Bögl is concerned, truck transport was never an alternative. "Handling these transports on road would have been far more complicated," confirms Koschella. "Moreover, the ecological aspect is also an important consideration at Max Bögl, which is why we prefer to opt for rail transport whenever possible."

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Flexible and clean

New type of waste oil transfer plant saves loading costs.

Waste oil is a dangerous substance. If just one litre gets into the soil, it can contaminate up to one million litres of groundwater so severely that it can no longer be used as drinking water. Accordingly, special regulations apply to the disposal of oil and emulsions, i.e. mixtures of oil and water. These requirements are stated, for instance, in the "Waste Oil Regulation".

Karo As Umweltschutz GmbH is a company which specialises in collecting and recycling waste oil. It collects oil from locations all over Germany, using its own tank trucks to transport the oil by road to a total of 17 refilling points, each with a railway siding. There, Karo As transfers the oil to rail tank wagons. The oil is then taken by train to Lower Saxony, where it is treated at the oil refinery Dollbergen GmbH, an affiliated company of Karo As. In 2009, the company recycled more than 40 million litres of waste oil in this way.

As part of a project dealing with the fittings at waste oil transfer points, DB Schenker Rail has retrofitted all its oil handling locations over the past few years to comply with the legal soil and water protection requirements. Wherever waste oil or emulsions are handled, it has to be ensured that no oil can penetrate into the soil.

In the course of the project, the first mobile transfer filling stations were installed at two locations, Wolfratshausen in Bavaria

and Wanne Osthafen in the Ruhr area. If necessary, they can be transferred to a different location comparatively simply and inexpensively. The station at Wanne Osthafen was converted and put into service in cooperation with Wanne-Herner Eisenbahn und Hafen GmbH.

At both locations, the oil is transferred to the rail tank wagons using a so-called "Füllcomat with satellite", which was developed by I.T.U. Innovative Tank- und Umweltschutzsysteme. The "satellite" enables two tank wagons to be filled simultaneously. The "Füllcomat" filling apparatus and satellite have special fittings to ensure that no oil can escape into the soil. In contrast to the previous permanently installed equipment, this means that no additional ground sealing work and no oil separating devices are necessary.

"The innovative equipment saves costs and enables us to be more flexible, without compromising on safety in any way," explains Dietmar Wehe, responsible for Regional Sales North at DB Schenker Rail. "We are therefore planning to use these systems at other locations in Germany and in neighbouring countries." ■

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Commissioning the equipment at Wanne Osthafen; left to right: Wilfried Uhrmacher (Karo As Area Manager), Dietmar Wehe (DB Schenker Rail DE Customer Support Agent), Karin Anter (Rail Transport Manager at Karo As), Daniel Reckel (Project Manager at Wanne-Herner Eisenbahn und Hafen GmbH), Alois Anetsberger (Managing Director I.T.U.).



Pulling together

The general agencies for Austria and Southeastern Europe as well as the international subsidiaries of DB Schenker Logistics are jointly developing new transport solutions.

Interesting projects can come about in open round-table discussions. For this reason, the general agencies of DB Schenker Rail in Vienna and Budapest and the subsidiaries of DB Schenker Logistics in Hungary, Romania and Slovenia are engaged in an intensive exchange of ideas. "We are specifically looking for untapped opportunities for combining our respective skills usefully," explains Wolfgang W. Rogall, Head of the General Agency for Southeastern Europe of Deutsche Bahn AG in Budapest. "It is about devising solutions to improve the utilisation of our own resources," adds his colleague Hubertus Burckhardt, Head of the Vienna General Agency.

2009 saw a whole number of transport operations, the idea for which was conceived in international committees, including

the large-scale transport of prefabricated parts from Hungary to Norway, block trains carrying bulk cargo from eastern Romania to southern Germany, chemicals transport operations from the Netherlands to Bosnia-Herzegovina and shipments of aggregates from Slovenia to Germany. Especially important were the joint efforts to reload DB rolling stock travelling from Greece and Turkey via Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary to Germany.

"The success is encouraging us to step up the international exchange of ideas further," says Wolfgang Rogall. "If the individual DB Schenker companies grow closer together our customers are set to benefit from the innovative and economic solutions that result." ■

Safe and dry

Converted coal wagons are to attract more biomass onto rail in the UK.

British power stations are looking for ways of reducing their coal consumption. Biomass is a suitable alternative source of energy which will play an increasingly important role in future. Until recently, however, transporting large quantities of biomass by rail was problematic, as there were no freight wagons which satisfied the stringent requirements that apply to the transport of this material. As a result, DB Schenker Rail (UK) was unable to transport biomass for power stations as no specialist wagons were available.

However, Brian Hetherington and David Summers, engineers at DB Schenker Rail (UK), came up with a creative idea to resolve that problem: they developed a method of converting

bottom-discharge coal wagons so that they could be used to transport biomass.

The key criterion was protecting the freight during the transport, especially against the penetration of water. The new wagons satisfy these requirements and have already been approved for operation on the British rail network. They can run at speeds of up to 120 kilometres per hour and carry up to 74.5 tonnes each. They are also suitable for transporting other dry bulk goods such as cement, corn or sand.

"We now have the first multi-user wagon for biomass in the UK and are confident that this will enable us to enter into the biomass market and attract this cargo onto rail," comments Jonathan Moser, Managing Director of the Energy Segment of DB Schenker Rail (UK).

The project has already paid off for Brian Hetherington and David Summers: their work has earned them an award at DB Schenker Rail UK's annual employee Awards for Excellence ceremony. ■

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Brian Hetherington (left)
and David Summers in front
of a converted coal wagon.



Win-win-win situation

Berlin students conducted a four-month survey of the procurement market for biomass power stations on behalf of DB Schenker Rail.

Internships as part of a course of studies benefit everyone concerned: the students get a preliminary taste of the “real working life” that awaits them after graduation, learn to work strategically and simultaneously acquire an initial idea of the relevant markets and sectors of industry. Such cooperative projects give the universities a good opportunity to combine theory and practice, whilst the participating companies obtain a first-hand impression of potential employees at an early stage. And in ideal cases, the academic project also delivers results which can be put to use in business practice.

A good example of such a win-win-win situation for everyone involved was the semester project “Sectoral analysis for the DB Schenker Rail Business Unit” organised by Deutsche Bahn in cooperation with WIWEX, the faculty and alumni network of the Faculty of Economics at Humboldt University in Berlin. Nine economics undergraduates put their names down for the voluntary semester project. For four months, they analysed a market which DB Schenker Rail believed to have good development potential. The students were mentored by André Doerfer, Senior Business Analyst (Division Strategy DB Schenker) and initiator

of the project, Walter Brand of DB Schenker Nieten and Yvonne Boost from the Construction Materials, Industrial and Consumer Goods Market Unit of DB Schenker Rail.

The study dealt with the market for wood for use in biomass power stations. Between November 2009 and January 2010, the students investigated the international supply sources of power stations in Germany, Poland, Austria and Benelux, analysed the infrastructure of these markets and the potential for shifting more of these transports onto rail. They obtained the data from business enterprises, public authorities, research institutes, industrial associations and chambers of commerce.

The findings were presented at the beginning of February. “The study revealed that this market still harbours immense potential for the logistics industry, and consequently also for DB Schenker Rail,” sums up Stephan Strauss, head of the Construction Materials, Industrial and Consumer Goods Market Unit. “The findings are extremely useful for us; but quite apart from that, we got to know committed young people who will become interesting candidates on the labour market within the next few years.” ■



The CIM/SMGS waybill enables faster freight transports to Russia and Asia.

Bridging East and West

DB Schenker Rail has introduced a common waybill for use in Western and Eastern Europe as well as Asia. This will make international rail transports much faster.

For years, there has been a steady increase in rail freight traffic between Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Asia. One of the reasons for this trend is that many industrial companies in Western Europe have set up production plants in the former Eastern Bloc countries and consequently have to transport high volumes of freight between the different locations. Several Western European automobile producers, for example, now operate in the Russian city of Kaluga. DB Schenker Rail meanwhile regularly handles rail transports to Kaluga on behalf of one well-known German automobile manufacturer.

But no matter how much Eastern Europe may have opened up, as far as the railways are concerned the River Bug, which forms the border between Poland and Belarus, marks the entrance to a different world. On the one hand, this applies to technical aspects: this is where broad-gauge country begins so that freight has to be shifted onto different wagons at the huge reloading station in Brest. The other aspect is more of a bureaucratic nature and refers to the waybill that accompanies all consignments. Whereas shipments in Western Europe travel with a CIM waybill, Russia and other Eastern European and Asian countries demand an SMGS waybill. As a result, the document has to be re-issued at the border to satisfy the different legal requirements. This is not only a time-consuming procedure, but also a major source of errors. Using the CIM/SMGS waybill can now reduce the time spent at the border from seven days to just 24 hours.

Short and reliable transport times are crucial for international inter-plant transports: in the worst-case scenario, delays in the delivery of parts from one of the factories could actually lead to

a production stoppage at the next plant. DB Schenker Rail is the first European railway undertaking to offer its customers a waybill which is accepted on both sides of the River Bug, eliminating the need to have a new document issued at the border.

The "Dispolino" data processing system was developed in close cooperation with the DB Schenker Rail Customer Service Centre. Christoph Zyla, Service Coordinator Intermodal, was involved in the project from the initial development stage all the way through to implementation. "Devising this system was a real challenge for our staff, because they first had to learn the Cyrillic script, for example," explains Zyla. "But their efforts paid off, as our customers are already making intensive use of the new waybill, which has met with a highly positive response."

Before the start of the transport, all the variables are entered in the "Dispolino" data processing system in German and in Russian. The waybill is then e-mailed to the relevant railway in Brest. Once the document has been approved, it is printed at the forwarding station.

The new waybill can be used for both wagonload and combined transports. "It is recognised by the competent authorities in both the CIM and the SMGS areas, so that it substantially reduces the time required at the border," sums up Zyla. "That is an important step towards achieving unimpeded cross-border freight transports." ■

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More customer focus in international individual wagon transport

DB Schenker Rail and six other European freight railways form Allianz Xrail.

A new European alliance to strengthen transport in individual wagons is being launched. Together with the CEOs of six European freight railroads the Director of DB Schenker Rail, Dr. Alexander Hedderich, signed an agreement to establish Xrail in Zurich on 18 February. The aim of this alliance is to make international transport in individual wagons on European railways more reliable and customer-focused and thus to increase its competitiveness in relation to road transport. DB Schenker Rail, already well-positioned in the European market, is being joined in this alliance by SNCF Logistics (Belgium), CD Cargo (Czech Republic), CFL Cargo (Luxembourg), Green Cargo (Sweden), Rail Cargo Austria (Austria) and SBB Cargo (Switzerland).

"About half of international freight volumes are conveyed by rail in individual wagons. This production system is time-consuming and costly. Through uniform international quality standards we plan to improve decisively the processes involved on behalf of our customers," said Hedderich, adding that, "Working together the Xrail partners are giving transport in

individual wagons in Europe a future." Joint production and information standards in individual wagon transport have been agreed. Apart from greatly reduced supply planning, customers automatically receive electronic information on their shipments, which arrive at a punctuality rate of at least 90 percent on the services within the Xrail network. Together the partners are also seeking scope to simplify the processes.

The first trial services for selected customers passed off successfully. This year some 200 services which are important both strategically and in terms of meeting customer needs are to be offered on the key routes through Europe. For the time being, the Xrail network covers economic areas in Scandinavia, in Germany, Switzerland and Belgium as well as certain regions of Austria. ■

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Signing ceremony in Zurich; from left to right: Geert Pauwels (SNCF Logistics), Rodan Senekl (CD Cargo), Fernand Rippinger (CFL Cargo), Dr. Alexander Hedderich (DB Schenker Rail), Olle Wennerstein (Green Cargo), Ferdinand Schmidt (Rail Cargo Austria) and Nicolas Perrin (SBB Cargo).



**Krystian Makowski,
train driver**

TEM2-



Pivot between Western and Eastern Europe

By integrating its Polish subsidiaries in its European network, DB Schenker Rail has created the basis for offering completely new products in Poland and the entire region.

Poland is growing – in the face of all the negative trends. Despite the economic crisis, Poland's gross domestic product increased by 1.2 per cent in 2009, in contrast to the EU average which was down by almost five per cent. The forecasts for the Polish economy are also positive for 2010.

This dynamic growth can be attributed to Poland's large domestic market and its central geographical location in Europe. 38.5 million people live between the Oder and Bug rivers – that is nearly as many as the populations of Switzerland, Austria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary put together. Moreover, the country meanwhile plays an increasingly important role as the pivot between Western and Eastern Europe. International industrial conglomerates are investing substantial sums in the industrial region of Silesia, for instance, generating a high

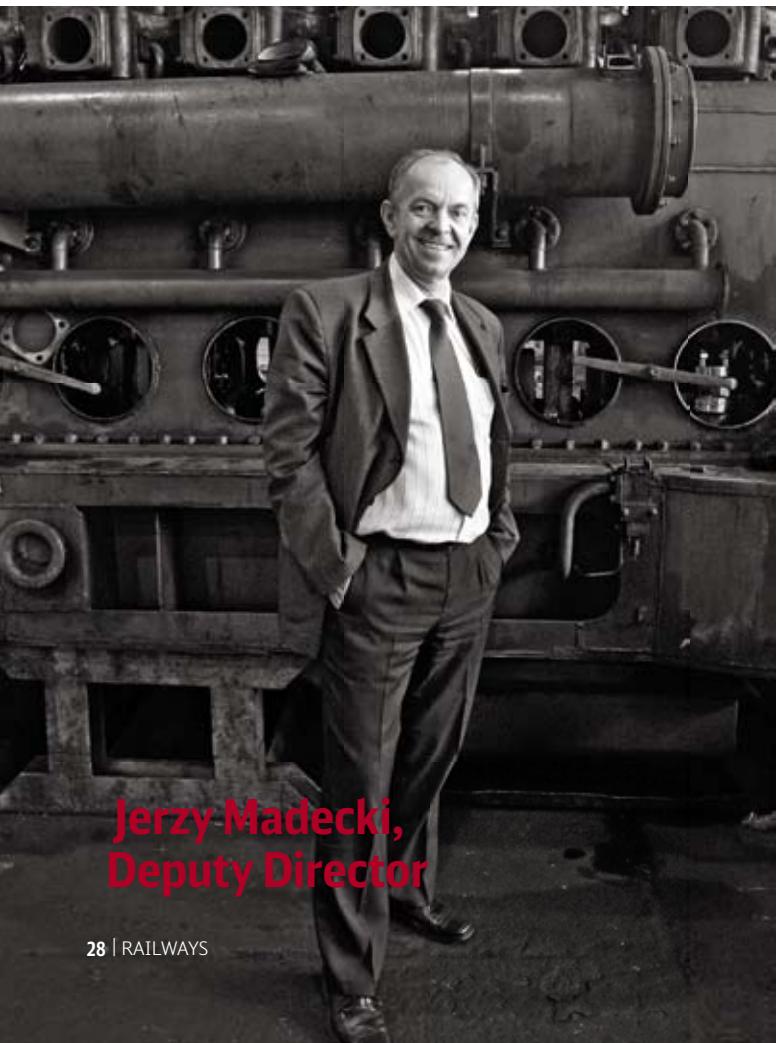
Company & People



**Martin Friebe,
DB Schenker Eastern Europe**



**Józef Ślusarczyk,
carriage master**



**Jerzy Madecki,
Deputy Director**



**Jarosław Ciempiel,
welder**

volume of freight transport between Poland and the EU countries in the West. Moreover, as a transit country, Poland provides the key connection from the EU to the East, in particular to Russia.

Rail has traditionally been one of the main transport modes in Poland and the Polish rail market is the second-largest in the EU, ranking after Germany and before France. In Poland, rail accounts for almost 20 per cent of the modal split.

However, the economic crisis in 2009 and its after-effects slowed down the dynamic development of the Polish rail market, causing rail to lose market shares to road. One serious consequence is that investments in infrastructure, which are urgently needed to modernise and upgrade the Polish rail network, have now been postponed.

All roads lead to - or through - Poland

Nevertheless, Poland has an integral part to play in the development of the trans-European railway corridors. Deutsche Bahn confirmed that importance when it purchased the PCC Logistics Group, the largest private rail freight operator in Poland, and PTK Holding S.A. in 2009. These two companies now operate under the name of DB Schenker Rail Polska S.A., creating the largest private railway undertaking in Poland and one which will play a crucial role in shaping the development of rail freight transport in Poland. As a freight operator which offers not only full geographical coverage in Poland but also international transports, DB Schenker Rail Polska will not only exploit the potential of the Polish market but also form the nucleus for opening up the entire Eastern European market.

DB Schenker Rail Polska is making every effort to integrate the individual companies as quickly as possible. Harmonised structures and one common brand presentation will make DB Schenker Rail Polska an efficient rail freight operator which will have a crucial influence on the development of the rail market in Poland and Eastern Europe.

Customers from Western and Eastern Europe are all looking to Poland, where they hope to find new solutions for their transport requirements. Backed by the expertise and the resources of the largest railway company in Europe, DB Schenker Rail Polska is now designing new national and international rail products. Below, we present three of these innovative products: the German-Silesian liner train, the logistics solutions for the port of Szczecin and seaport hinterland transport, and the new transports to the Ukraine, Belarus and Russia.

The industrial heartland of Poland

Silesia is where the industrialisation of Poland began in the mid-19th century. Upper Silesia, with the major cities of Katowice, Sosnowiec and Gliwice, is now the largest industrial area and second-largest conurbation in the country. Whilst Upper Silesia is dominated by coal mining and heavy industry, Lower Silesia – for example Wroclaw – is home to numerous national and international business enterprises from the chemicals and electrical industries, automobile manufacturers and mechanical engineering companies.

INTERVIEW

New standards

We put three questions to Hans-Georg Werner, head of Region East at DB Schenker Rail and Chairman of the Management Board of DB Schenker Rail Polska S.A.

What role does Poland play in DB Schenker Rail's international strategy?

DB Schenker Rail Polska is a key element of DB Schenker Rail's international network. Poland has an increasingly central role to play both as an industrial location and also as a transit country. The establishment of DB Schenker Rail Polska has made us a market player with a strong regional presence, on the basis of which we can continue to expand our position in Central and Eastern Europe. We can provide support for our customers as they expand eastwards by offering them the products and services they need – and in the quality they have come to expect from DB Schenker Rail in other countries – not only inside Poland, but also on international routes to and from Eastern Europe.

What new products can DB Schenker Rail Polska customers expect?

The transport of coal is one of the traditional core sectors of DB Schenker Rail Polska. In future, however, we shall be placing our business on a broader footing: amongst other things, we plan to increase our range of products for the transport of wood, chemicals and mineral oil. We shall also roll out logistics concepts, such as the DB SCHENKER and Railport, which are already established in other countries, in Poland and thus raise quality standards and boost our competitiveness. At the same time, we are

determined to preserve and build on DB Schenker Rail Polska's inherent strong points, such as its good regional representation, its proximity to the customers, its flexibility and its ability to come up with innovative logistics solutions. Above all, however, we are working on international transport concepts to ensure that freight trains can cross borders unimpeded on their way to Eastern Europe and between the different countries there. This will involve close networking between our various national companies. We have already launched continuous transports between Germany and Poland and between Poland and Romania. We have come up with solutions to the problems facing us at the national borders in Eastern Europe, for transports to the Ukraine and to Russia. Moreover, we are revitalising seaport hinterland traffic in Poland.

What are your key objectives for DB Schenker Rail Polska for the future?

As the largest private railway undertaking in the Polish market, we intend to set new standards for the rail freight sector in Poland and Eastern Europe by offering new transport solutions and a new level of quality. What's more, we plan to make use of our international network to strengthen Poland's role as the gateway to Eastern Europe and put more emphasis on the importance of the rail mode. Working in cooperation with our customers, our aim is to shift more traffic onto rail.



**Marek Koczar,
train driver**



One of the main reasons for this is the good transport infrastructure that is available. In addition to the traditionally well-established rail network, there are also motorways which link the region to Germany in the West and the Ukraine in the East.

Much faster freight transports

For companies that are dependent on regular freight transports between Germany and Silesia, a major milestone was achieved in linking the two regions in January 2010, with the launch of the "Silesian liner train". The train is operated jointly by the Polish and German national companies of DB Schenker Rail and provides a direct link to the DB Schenker Rail single wagonload network. Thanks to the new production concept, the turnaround times for freight wagons are now just seven days, a reduction of up to 50 per cent in some cases.

Like all single wagonload transports from Germany to Poland, the wagons in the liner train are routed via the Seddin hub, near Potsdam, to Senftenberg, where they are marshalled into the liner train. The wagons are not grouped when they are handed over from DB Schenker Rail Deutschland to DB Schenker Rail Polska at the Horka border crossing. In Silesia, they are distributed to the different regions through four set-down stops at Wrocław-Gądów, Kędzierzyn-Koźle, Gliwice and Jaworzno Szczakowa. From there, there are regular services to 19 freight handling terminals. Wagons taken over by DB Schenker Rail Polska at the border return to Germany with the next pair of trains.

"The shorter transport times offered by the liner train mean a crucial competitive advantage for our customers. Other benefits include a direct link to DB SCHENKERchem-solution, our dedicated transport system for the chemicals industry," claims Katarzyna Marciniak, Head of International Office at DB Schenker Rail Polska.

Revitalising the seaports

Poland has a coastline of more than 500 kilometres. Of the country's six major seaports, Szczecin is the second-largest after Gdańsk. DB Port Szczecin, as it has been called since Deutsche Bahn took over the major shareholder in the port management company, the PCC Logistics Group, has particularly promising development potential.

This is due first and foremost to its unique geographical location. Situated in the west of Poland, it provides the natural link between the Baltic and Eastern Germany, Central Europe and Italy. Ships coming from the west save between 28 and 36 hours of sailing by calling here rather than at Gdańsk. Whether Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Bratislava or Budapest: Szczecin is the nearest seaport for five European capitals. The port hinterland covers Western Poland, Eastern Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary and Slovenia. Szczecin is the only port in the Baltic region with a direct connection to the European inland waterway system; it also boasts excellent connections to the road and rail networks.

Company & People

Comprehensive range of services

The DB Port Szczecin has comprehensive infrastructure to cope with innumerable logistics requirements. A new container terminal with a capacity of 200,000 TEU is currently under construction beside the free port; with an overall area of 55 hectares and quays with a total length of 2.7 kilometres, there is ample room for future expansion.

The service portfolio at DB Port Szczecin breaks down into four different segments: Container Handling, General Cargo/Heavy Lift, Wood Products and the Free Port. The container terminal currently has a throughput capacity of 80,000 TEU and offers a full range of services, including refrigeration facilities.

There are connections to Rotterdam, Hamburg, Bremerhaven, Klaipeda, Saint Petersburg, Gdynia, Gdańsk and Copenhagen. Container shipping companies which use the port for feeder carriers include such illustrious names as Maersk, CMA/CGM, Cosco and Hapag-Lloyd. DB Port Szczecin was one of the first container terminals in Europe – and the only one in the Baltic – to satisfy the requirements of the Container Security Initiative (CSI). The containers are x-rayed at the terminal so that no further inspections are required for entry to the USA.

The General Cargo sector specialises in the transhipment of products such as steel, cement, non-ferrous metals, wood and fertilisers. Project Cargo & Heavy Lifts is equipped with two modern cranes that can cope with cargo weighing up to 100 tonnes, as well as a floating crane with a lift capacity of up to 300 tonnes.

The Wood Products segment has five large modern warehouses as well as a range of special equipment for paper and pulp. In 2008, it handled 185,000 tonnes of paper and 128,000 tonnes of pulp. Szczecin is also the largest port in Poland for handling granite: 250,000 tonnes of granite blocks and slabs were loaded here in 2008.

The Free Port has extensive storage space, a warehouse for dangerous goods as well as disinfection facilities. And finally, DB Port Szczecin is a key location for the shipment of military equipment and also has the relevant NATO certification.

DB Schenker Rail intends to make intensive use of the facilities available at DB Port Szczecin and also cooperates with other terminals in Świnoujście and Gdańsk/Gdynia. Wiesław Głański, CEO of DB Port Szczecin Sp. z o.o., believes that there is enormous development potential for seaport hinterland transport in Poland: "The integration of this port in our network opens up completely new prospects for us and our customers. Szczecin is ideally equipped to handle hinterland transport on rail and we have already launched the first block trains carrying steel and granite. The terminal and the DB rail infrastructure give us a great opportunity to change the face of the port landscape in Eastern Europe and reroute the flow of goods."

Gateway to Russia and Asia

The eastern border of Poland not only marks the eastern boundary of the European Union; freight transport on the other side of the River Bug also has to play by different rules. In Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine, for instance, trains run on Russian broad-gauge tracks, which are 65 millimetres wider than in Germany, Poland and the greater part of Western Europe. The Belarus city of Brest on the Polish border is the most important reloading and gauge conversion station in Europe; this is where all transports have to be changed over to the other gauge.

However, apart from the different gauges, a number of legal requirements also change here: whereas shipments in Western Europe travel with a CIM waybill, Russia, the Ukraine and Belarus demand an SMGS waybill. The border crossing consequently involves time-consuming bureaucratic procedures. DB Schenker Rail is the first European rail freight operator which has succeeded in developing an international waybill that is accepted by both legal areas and which drastically simplifies the formalities at the border (cf. Article on P. 26).

Noticeable cost savings

In the past, goods travelling to Poland from Russia or the Ukraine via Belarus were always transhipped in Poland after crossing the border. This work was done by the Polish state railway PKP Cargo. "In cooperation with other providers, we have now succeeded in drawing up transport concepts which involve handling the freight on the Belarus side, resulting in substantial cost savings," explains Paweł Pucek, head of Product Management at DB Schenker Rail Polska.

At the beginning of February, for example, the first coal transports from Russia to Poland were executed in cooperation with BC, the Belarus state railway, on the basis of this new transport concept. OAO SUEK, the largest Russian coal exporter, delivered 4,200 tonnes of Russian coal to a power station in Warsaw via Belarus. With the help of DB Schenker Rail Polska, the customer – who was responsible for the supply of roughly one million tonnes of coal to Poland in 2009 – reduced handling costs by approx. ten per cent and also saved substantial amounts in the transport costs in Poland. The total savings amounted to around 15 per cent.

The first extensive wood shipments from Belarus to Poland have meanwhile also been handled in collaboration with the Belarus railway. On behalf of Global Wood, one of the largest wood producers in Belarus and the Ukraine, two block trains, each carrying 1,050 tonnes of wood, ran to Żary in the west of Poland. Again, costs could be reduced by ten per cent by having the freight handled in Belarus, and further savings were also achieved during the ongoing transport inside Poland. ■

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**Jarosław Gądek,
welder**

Smooth operations

The Equipment Management department of DB Intermodal Services keeps Combined Transport running smoothly.



Combined Transport (CT) unites the benefits of such diverse transport modes as rail, ship and truck. Freight that can be carried by cost-effective and environmentally friendly rail along the greater part of the transport route can make the pre- and post-rail sections by truck. This combination enables fast, flexible and efficient connections between even the most remote places. As a result, business enterprises throughout Europe are increasingly opting for Combined Transport solutions.

Containers are the crucial elements of these complex mechanisms. These standardised transport boxes can be used to carry all different kinds of goods – from detergents to sports cars – and can be transported by rail or truck. Container terminals serve as the interfaces between the different worlds of “rail” and “road”. This is where containers, swap bodies and semi-trailers are transhipped from one transport mode to another and, if necessary, taken into intermediate storage. An increasing degree of automation ensures that transhipment and storage proceed swiftly and smoothly.

DB Intermodal is the specialist DB Schenker company for Combined Transport and the leading European provider of logistics services for this segment. DB Intermodal Services GmbH

(DB IS) is a wholly owned subsidiary which operates eleven container depots and four transhipment terminals in Germany, handling roughly half a million load carriers per annum. The company also manages 12,500 carrier wagons and almost 2,000 load units on behalf of DB Schenker Rail. These are used exclusively for Combined Transport and have a load capacity equivalent to around 16,000 truckloads.

In the right place at the right time

The management and deployment of these resources is the responsibility of the Equipment Management department at DB IS. “We make sure that the wagons and load units are in the right place in the right quantities and at the right time to ensure that the logistics processes at our customers can run smoothly,” explains Kerstin Corvers, head of the department and authorised signatory for DB IS. From their large open-plan office in Mainz, Corvers’ colleagues monitor and control each individual wagon and load carrier – not only those which belong to the company’s own fleet, but also non-DB resources, such as those owned by the Italian company Cemat.



The equipment team at DB Intermodal Services GmbH.

Schenker also dispatches its own equipment to destinations all over Europe on behalf of customers. In order to ensure optimum satisfaction of the highly diverse requirements, DB Intermodal can offer a choice of 25 different types of CT wagons. Its key accounts include Kombiverkehr, a logistics company which organises rail-road transport for forwarding agents. DB IS also handles regular transports of chemical products from Ludwigshafen to Verona in Italy for DB Intermodal and Kombiverkehr. "Our customers have to know that they can depend on reliable transports between their different international locations, as any delays would disrupt their own production processes," states Armin Riedl, Managing Director of Kombiverkehr. "We have cooperated with DB IS for many years, not only because of the high standard of transport quality, but also because of the comprehensive resources the company has to offer."

Continuous monitoring

Karola Muth points to one of her two flat monitors. "Our IT system enables me to keep track of our entire equipment, so that I can inform the customer of the exact location of his train at any

given moment," explains the product manager, who has worked in the Equipment Management department for the last 20 years. She has to intervene in these processes several times a day. "Today, for instance, there was a damaged freight wagon at Rostock transhipment terminal. In such cases, it is important to organise a replacement as soon as possible. Ideally, the customer never even notices that there has been any disruption."

Area schedulers like Oliver Hämel are in charge of a specific region and are informed about the wagon supply situation at all times. "We are also responsible for ensuring that our own equipment and that of our customers is deployed as efficiently as possible," explains the department's technical manager. Again, this is where the computer system helps: it shows the deployment frequencies and standing times of each individual wagon. This allows DB IS to offer joint wagon management in cooperation with other companies outside Germany.

Other variables that are constantly monitored are the kilometre performance and maintenance intervals of the wagons. "Each wagon has to be serviced at regular intervals. However, if we receive notice of any damage, they are brought in for repair before the next regular service is due," says Kerstin Corvers. To ensure a high safety standard whilst simultaneously keeping costs and down times within acceptable limits, in cooperation with DB Schenker Rail, DB IS has developed and expanded its "mobile maintenance" system which is now available throughout the entire operating area. "The wagons are checked in the course of ordinary operations on arrival at the freight terminal," says the head of the Equipment sector. "Most of the damage can be remedied by local mechanics right there and then without any disruption of operations." Last year, 1560 wagons underwent mobile repairs at Munich-Riem transhipment terminal alone.

The Equipment Management department is responsible not only for freight wagons, but also for the swap bodies owned by DB Schenker Rail. "We have an extensive network of authorised repair shops," says Patrick Radtke from DB IS Load Unit Management. "If a swap body is found to be defective during the transhipment process, or if a truck driver reports a missing lashing strap, we arrange to have this repaired and ensure that the swap bodies are back in operation again as soon as possible."

Finally, DB IS also attends to the efficient deployment of other loading equipment such as pallets. In addition to the UIC 800x1200 mm EUR flat wood pallets – of which there are currently approx. 500 million in use worldwide, making this the most successful load carrier in the pallet exchange pool at the moment – the range also includes other EUR pallets such as the EUR 2, 3, 6 and mesh-sided box pallets. "As a well-established logistics specialist for loading equipment, DB IS organises the use of all load carriers, from EUR pallets, non-returnable and special pallets right through to tensioning straps and tarpaulins on a national and international scale," claims Andreas Griebel, Load Equipment Manager. DB IS not only organises the procurement, provision, return and administration of loading equipment as part of the regular exchange process, but alternatively offers customers the option of leasing loading equipment or having customised equipment designed specially to suit their specific requirements. ■

Save the Date

DB Schenker Rail attends all major trade fairs and industry events across Europe. Take the opportunity to join us for a personal meeting.



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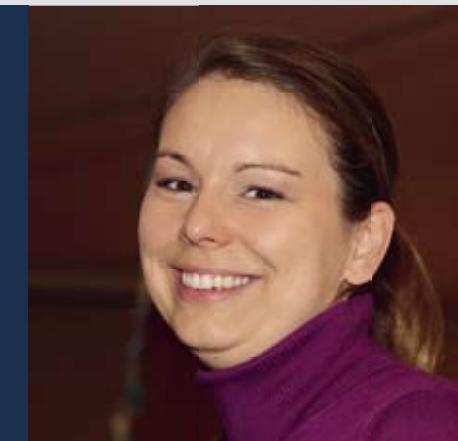
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Susanne Schmidt, 30, is a Scheduling Team Manager for the "Cobra" project at DB Schenker Rail in Brussels.

The pinnacle of Belgian culinary pleasures: pralines.

Variety with just a hint of cherry

Even after a year in Belgium Susanne Schmidt keeps discovering new sides to her host country.

Yesterday I was in delirium. But don't worry – I am well and in full possession of my faculties. "Delirium" is a bar in the centre of Brussels known for the over 2,000 beer varieties served there. The drinks list is correspondingly thick and not unlike a catalogue.

The Belgians are a beer-loving nation; the small kingdom is home to over 500 breweries. This rich diversity is however also related to the fact that, unlike Germany, Belgium does not have a purity law for beer. Purists may turn their nose up at such specialities as "Kriek" – I, on the other hand, have become a fan of this ruby-red cherry beer since coming to live in Belgium.

Belgians are gourmets. This is best experienced by leaving behind the hustle and bustle of the Rue des Bouchers "street of restaurants" with their pushy doormen. In bars and restaurants off the beaten track you can get to know the full variety of Flemish and Walloon cuisine which has something for every taste, ranging from seafood, to meat (including horsemeat!), to delicious desserts. Yet the pinnacle of Belgian culinary pleasures for me is the chocolate. It is not a number one global export for nothing. I am doing my bit to boost sales by always including a few boxes of Bel-

gian chocolates for friends and family each time that I return home.

Belgium is of course also very diverse both linguistically and ethnically. It has three official languages: with the French-speaking Walloons in the south, the Dutch-speaking Flemish in the north and a German-speaking minority in the east. The capital is however a huge melting pot and home to people from all over the world. Both French and Dutch are the lingua franca. There is no better place to learn two foreign languages at the same time, and after just a year in Brussels I feel very confident in both tongues.

Most Belgians speak very good English. Certainly one reason for this is that feature films are usually not dubbed. In a cinema recently for John Cusack's original English voice I had the choice between French and Dutch subtitles.

Even though I already almost feel like a "Bruxelloise", I still enjoy travelling around as a tourist. The distances involved may be short but there are still many places and landscapes to enjoy in Belgium, each with its own distinctive character. The beautiful Bruges, the cosmopolitan Antwerp, the North Sea coast, the Ardennes... You have to take time to enjoy this country – perhaps over a glass of "Kriek".

DB Schenker Rail Polska: in the heart of Europe

Silesian scheduled train service

Bremerhaven DB Port Szczecin
Germany

Seaport hinterland transport
Services to Eastern Europe

Szczecin Gdańsk Klaipėda
Ukraine Russia
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