



Gulftainer invests to enhance UAE terminals

New equipment and IT technology have been deployed by the global terminal operating group at its Sharjah terminals over the past year

Above: New cranes have been installed at Sharjah Container Terminal

Our strong performance amidst a challenging global environment is an indication of our ability to adapt to economic volatilities.

– *Flemming Dalgaard, Gulftainer*

Sharjah-based Gulftainer recorded a strong performance in 2016, registering a container volume of more than 6 million teu across its global portfolio of terminals. Flemming Dalgaard, chief executive, observes: “While shipping markets around the world have been affected by overcapacity, as well as the slowdown in China and Europe, our strong performance amidst a challenging global environment is an indication of our ability to adapt to economic volatilities and fluctuations.”

In addition to port activities, Gulftainer’s third-party logistics company, Momentum Logistics, which operates freight forwarding, trucking, warehousing, container repair and contract logistics in the UAE, also recorded a positive performance in 2016, while Gulftainer Container Repair (GCR), a subsidiary of Momentum that provides value-added services, recorded an impressive 22% increase in inspection volumes and a 28% increase in sales. “These milestones have set a positive tone for the year,



Flemming Dalgaard, Gulftainer chief executive officer

and we expect to see them translate into further growth in container volumes in 2017,” says Dalgaard.

Gulftainer continues to improve and develop its facilities in the UAE to meet the requirements of its shipping line customers, who are deploying newer and larger ships by boosting available terminal capacity to handle higher volumes per call. Over the last year, the company has worked closely with the Sharjah Ports Authority to implement a number of investments at both Sharjah Container Terminal (SCT) and Khorfakkan Container

Terminal (KCT), including the introduction of a new Terminal Operating System (TOS) and the acquisition of additional handling equipment.

At SCT, Gulftainer has added two new ship-to-shore cranes, resurfaced areas of the container stacking yards and expanded container stacking areas. “These enhancements have enabled the terminal to cater for larger vessels and positively impacted the performance rates on vessels calling at the port,” Dalgaard suggests. SCT was also chosen to launch the new Marine and Container Handling (MACH) TOS, which is expected to lead to a significant further increase in productivity levels at the terminal.

Computerised control

MACH provides computerised control of the movement and storage of containers in and around the terminal. “This system is a major development in how we operate our terminals and provides a foundation for further automation including Internet of Things (IoT), predictive analytics and mobility,” says Dalgaard.

In addition, Gulftainer is making changes within its Khorfakkan terminal to allow it to move from being primarily a transshipment hub to also functioning as a gateway terminal for local and regional traffic. The engineering team at KCT has, for instance, recently developed a new specialised piece of crane equipment that can reach the upper parts of the loaded deck of a ship at an accelerated pace. Dalgaard says: “This initiative has enabled us to innovate how we handle container moves for large modern ships at the terminal.”

KCT has a distinct geographical advantage in being able to serve the Indian subcontinent, East Africa and the Gulf countries. The proximity of Khorfakkan to the Indian subcontinent, especially, has been a key factor in new feeder services being started by four major regional operators over the past year. These services cater to the needs of mainline carriers who call into Khorfakkan to tranship cargo for final delivery both to the Indian subcontinent and Gulf ports. ✨