

Jeddah Islamic Port's new terminal kicks off

JEDDAH - The Red Sea Gateway Terminal (RSGT), Jeddah Islamic Port's new \$510 million container facility located at the northern end of the port kicked off operations on 22 December 2009 with the arrival of UASC's Vessel Al Muttanabi.

The vessel's arrival marked completion of work on the first phase of the 1.8 million teu Greenfield terminal on which construction began in January 2008. The second-generation terminal, constructed under a BOT agreement with the Saudi Port Authority, is due to be fully completed by Q3 2010 and boast capacity for the next generation supersize container vessels.

"Less than 2 years ago we broke the ground on this project. And despite facing a globally, challenging year our first ship has berthed on schedule", said RSGT ceo Aamer Alireza. "The realisation of first phase of the terminal is a result of much more than excellent construction and world-class equipment: it is a testament to the accomplishments made possible by successful partnerships. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the solid support of our shareholders, especially MMC of Malaysia, a leader in the port and infrastructure development, who have worked alongside in turning our terminal into a commercial reality."

Six Tandem-lift, Super Post-Panamax, 85-ton cranes, manufactured by ZPMC were delivered and commissioned earlier in the year.

These ship-to-shore cranes are complimented by twenty, advanced (RTGs)-Yard Cranes. An additional four cranes and six RTGs are also scheduled for delivery by June 2010.

Other port investments in the past year include the latest Terminal Operating Systems,

Navis Sparcs N4, a fully integrated solution from gate to yard to vessel; highly "smart" Gate Automation System; as well as the employment of the latest construction techniques and environment-friendly materials available worldwide.

Earlier in the week, RSGT completed and transferred the ownership of its dedicated deep-water channel with a depth of 16.5m and alongside turning basin with a depth of 18m to the Saudi Port's Authority. To be used solely by vessels calling at the facility, the channel is another one of the terminal's key features readying the container facility to serve the new generation of supersize cargo vessels.

"The port efficiency and canal capacity are clearly going to be a game-definer in the container terminal industry," stated coo Lye Seng Tan. "Terminals will have to allow for the newer supersize 13,000 teu container vessels that require deeper drafts to transport the maximum amount of goods in the most efficient and safe manner."

JIP is considered a natural gateway and transshipment hub, due to its strategic location in the middle of the Asia-Middle East-Europe route.

Nearly 73 percent of total container throughput of the country passes through it gates. The new terminal promises the start of a new era for the JIP, adding 45 percent to its annual capacity, equivalent to 1.8 million teu.

"RSGT's concept is to satisfy not only current needs, but to provide for the kingdom's future requirements", he said. "Our facility will no doubt have a significant impact on increasing the efficiency of cargo movement, reinforcing JIP's position, and in turn stimulating the Saudi economy through new job and investment opportunities." - Agencies