

Interview

with Mr. Suresh Joseph, General Manager

Q. What have been the major achievements of India Gateway Terminal in terms of productivity, throughput and customer service delivery from the time it started operations at RGCT?

A. A holistic approach to address the 'Man, Machine, Method' equation has paid rich dividends in terms of productivity and service delivery at the RGCT. While the productivity hovered around 9 gross moves per hour in March 05, we are able to consistently achieve 15 gross moves per hour now and on better vessels with good stowage and bigger parcel size the terminal is able to deliver international standards of productivity. The growth in throughput was over 9% in 2005-06 against the historical rate of growth of 6.5%. In 2006-07 the throughput is slated to grow at close to 20%. Over the past 20 months the IGT Family has evolved into a customer oriented organization with benchmarked service levels.

Q. Are you satisfied with the growth in the volumes of containers? What steps you have taken to increase the flow from hinterland?

A. Let's say that the growth of cargo from the hinterland has been encouraging - the growth this year is nearly 18%. Satisfied? No. The state of satisfaction can happen only when the Cochin Port becomes a mega port and the container terminal is the preferred port of choice of the hinterland beyond the boundaries of the southern States. Regular sales calls, marketing meets, integrated logistics solutions and improved and hassle free road, rail and marine connectivity form the core of the steps being taken to enlarge the hinterland.

Q. What would your priorities be for the next year? What are the issues / business

opportunities that you would like to focus on?

A. The over riding priority for 2007-08 would be to ramp up the throughput at the RGCT. The growth trajectory has to be 25% over the next two years. With the additional equipment, a better working environment, more ground slots, additional rail connectivity and intensive marketing efforts the road ahead is clear and in sight. IGT will focus on facilitating integrated logistics solutions and easing the inter-State border crossing.

Q. What is the progress with the project work for ICTT at Vallarpadam? What are the milestones for the year 2007?

A. The project work for the ICTT is going on as scheduled. The work for rail and road connectivity is expected to begin in the first

quarter of 2007 with a lead time of 24 to 30 months. The preliminary design and drawing for the ICTT is being fine tuned. The ground improvement work is expected to begin in the first quarter and the civil works are expected to start in the first half of 2007.

Q. What is your reaction to the proposal to harness the potential of waterways in Kerala to bring containers to Kochi from different parts of the State?

A. Any initiative to use the waterways in Kerala to move containers from and to Kochi is most welcome as that will help to decongest the roads and also provide a more environment friendly transport alternative. However, the cost factor has to be carefully considered in the light of additional handling of the containers.

Handling a special cargo

IGT had the opportunity of handling a special cargo 'A Special Wooden Boat' to Felixstowe - England. The boat was built by M/s Yashka Boats, Mangalore at their Edakochi facility. The process of forwarding the cargo was done by M/s Gordon Woodroffe Logistics Ltd, Cochin.

The boat along with its cradle was towed to IGT berth on 18th Oct 2006 and was lifted off from water with the Mobile Harbour Crane (MHC) and stuffed on a 40' flat container.

The 53feet long boat weighing 27,000kg was finally loaded on MV OEL Express Voyage 143, on 19th Oct 2006, safely.

This was a typical operation and first of its kind after the taking over of RGCT by IGT and the complete operation was carried out with great enthusiasm and care. IGT is always waiting for such special type of operation to help the trade.

-Cherian Abraham

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