

New deepsea port takes shape

Ready for the future

When the Savona / Vado Ligure port operated by APMT opens its gates at the end of 2017, it will be the only port of the four located on the Ligurian coast to be able to process container vessels of the triple E-type. ITJ correspondent Anitra Green visited the site.

There is not yet a lot to see in Vado Ligure. However, behind the scenes work is already in full swing, because APM Terminals (APMT), which is part of the Maersk Group, plans to bring its new deepsea connections on stream by the start of 2018 at the very latest. And a lot still needs to be done by then.

The container yard spreads across a surface area of 19 ha of reclaimed land. The berths span a length of 700 metres and will have a depth of 16 metres. In combination with five gantry cranes that will have a range of 22 rows of containers each, this should provide the capacity to handle 900,000 teu of cargo annually. In addition, APMT purchased the already existing reefer terminal as early as at the start of this year, «since we believe it is necessary to integrate the port activities in Vado Ligure,» as Carlo Merli, CEO of APM Terminals Vado, explained. The container terminal in Vado, which benefits from its location in a naturally deep port, is designed exclusively for handling import and export cargo shipments. In a first step, Merli expects to see volumes



Photo: Anitra Green

The port of Vado is scheduled to come on stream as early as the end of 2017.

of 3,000 teu per call, which will likely arrive at the port three to four times a week. «It won't be a big port, just a medium-sized gateway. The main focus is on efficient operation,» emphasised the APMT manager. Much like its big brother located at Maasvlakte 2 in Rotterdam, the Vado terminal will also be highly automated. «We expect Vado to deliver a gross crane productivity of at least 30 moves per hour,» he added.

Well-connected

The immediate task is now to extend the pier and relocate both the existing bulk facilities and pipelines for oil handling. A new railway terminal will be erected, because between 40% and 50% of the incoming and outgoing containers are to be transported using railway services. That would be more than at other ports of a similar scope. Fer Net, a privately owned company that consists of the port authority and private logistics companies, will be responsible for shipping them. The railway specialist already operates connections between Savona/Vado, Genoa and La Spezia as well as intermodal hubs further inland, such as Rivalta Scrivia, Mortara and Mondovi. Here, international trains with a length of up to 700 metres can be assembled and depart for destinations in the north, for instance Switzerland, Austria and Germany.

An own motorway link for trucks driving in and out of the port is also in the pipeline. The facility will additionally be topped off by a new innovative gate system. «The idea is to have three lanes for trucks in the terminal, of which two are for tractors to transfer containers to the offdock rail yard,» explained Merli. Although this system may not necessarily be the optimal solution, it is certainly an acceptable design for the purposes of this new Italian terminal.

The objective is for the facility in Vado to reach beyond the immediate region in its range of impact. Already firmly established as a popular centre for fruit trading in the Mediterranean, the plan is for the hub to develop into a viable alternative to the traditional ports in northern Europe.

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