

AUCOS gets rolling

AUCOS is the automatic tractor/trailer kingpin connection system developed and patented by Rüdiger Metternich, who is MD of Germany's RMM Metternich Mechatronik GmbH.

AUCOS enables a fifth-wheel tractor to hook up a trailer automatically, by connecting the tractor's compressed air and electrical supply to the trailer through the kingpin assembly, eliminating the need for a tractor driver to get in

and out of the cab to 'hook up' hoses and cables.

Long Beach Container Terminal (LBCT) opted to install AUCOS on the terminal tractors at its new automated terminal. These are manned machines which transfer containers between the main yard and the intermodal cranes.

Speaking to *WorldCargo News*, LBCT president Anthony Otto endorsed AUCOS, saying the system is very fast and has improved

both productivity and safety considerably. LBCT has also saved a significant amount of money on insurance costs, as the drivers not having to leave the cab lowers its risk profile for accident claims.

AUCOS is also being installed at GCT's Deltaport terminal in Vancouver, where it will be used with new Künz widespan cranes currently being installed, which will be operated by remote control.

AUCOS can be installed on any brand of tractor, usually without modifications, depending on the frame design – for Kalmar's

new T2 tractor, one small hole has to be drilled in the bottom plate. At LBCT, the trailers (bomb carts) do not require brake lights, but the units for GCT Deltaport were specified for the complete system, including air, power and data connection.

For the Americas, RMM chose Magnum Trailer and Equipment Inc. from Abbotsford, Canada, as its strategic partner for trailers.

AUCOS enables the air brakes to be connected automatically on LBCT's tractors



Portek and Vahle link up in South East Asia

Singapore-based port engineering and operating company, Portek Systems & Equipment Pte Ltd, part of Mitsui & Co of Japan, has signed an agreement with Germany's Paul Vahle GmbH & Co KG, aimed at leveraging their knowhow and expertise to market Vahle products and systems in South East Asia.

Vahle is a world leader in the design, engineering, manufacturing and production of mo-

bile electrification systems, with many applications in the container handling sector and general port industry.

Portek is now the sole representative of Vahle port technology products and systems for South East Asia, and for other regions, agreed case by case, to market, install, commission and provide after-sales services for mobile electrification projects in the container handling industry.

Tok Soon Chong, Portek's CEO, said: "We believe that this collaboration will deepen our relationship and also allow us to expand our crane electrification activities rapidly in this region."

Portek is an established port operator in medium-sized ports, with operations in several locations in Africa, Indonesia, Latvia and Malta. It also provides turnkey port engineering services to the global port industry and offers a

wide spectrum of port equipment and comprehensive after-market port equipment engineering.

One area where the two companies could soon be working together is converting E-RTGs to remote control. A number of leading terminal operators in Asia are understood to be considering adding positioning and data communication systems to E-RTGs, before moving to remote-controlled machines.

Künz on the river

Nedcarg International has placed an order for a new Künz rail-mounted gantry crane for its inland terminal at Alphen aan den Rijn in the Netherlands. It will replace one of two existing cranes when it starts operating in September 2017.

Nedcarg is the parent company of Alpherium, and handles approximately 170,000 TEU per year at the terminal. The new crane will have a rail span of 60m, two 16m cantilevers, and a lift height sufficient to stack high cube containers up to four-high (1-over-4).

The contract was signed between Hans Künz GmbH and Nedcarg International at the Logistics & Distribution exhibition held in Brussels last month. Bert van Grieken, multimodal director at Nedcarg, said: "The new crane is faster, more silent, stronger, more energy efficient, and requires less maintenance than the existing cranes. Thanks to [its] higher handling speed, combined with greater reliability, we are increasing the capacity of the ter-

minal, enabling us to handle more containers. We will also be making an important step in reducing CO₂ emissions by making less use of heavy terminal equipment. Instead, we will be handling more moves with a crane that will be powered by green electricity."

Thomas Zeh, sales manager Benelux at Künz, added: "In the near future, we expect that inland terminals in Benelux will take profit from ports congestion and container volume growth, mainly due to Maasvlakte II, another terminal operating with 48 Künz automated stacking cranes."

Vincent Pelletier, area sales manager at Künz, added: "We are delighted to deliver this new crane to Nedcarg. It features the Künz patented directional travelling unit for longer rail and wheel lifetime, as well as the aerodynamic single girder for less wind resistance and lower operation costs. After van Berkel in Veghel, Nedcarg is the second company in the Netherlands that puts confidence in Künz and its innovative crane design".

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Fabrisem fronting up

Spain-based port and industrial trailer specialist Fabrisem SA has reported growing success with its range of port and heavy industrial trailers. In particular, the company noted that just 11 years after introducing disc brakes in 2005, 99% of its trailer output is equipped with them.

The reasons, said the company's product manager Carlos Ruiz, are outstanding performance and very low service and maintenance costs compared to traditional drum brakes, which still feature widely in off-road trailer markets. "Changing air disc brake times typically takes just a quarter of the time need to change 'S' cam drum brake linings, and this means cost savings," he said.

All chassis are provided with a five-year warranty, "which speaks for itself", he added. Fabrisem can boast a number of bespoke orders where difficult operating

conditions apply. For example, over the years, trailers with special steel have been applied to port and inland terminal operators in north-west Russia, where winter temperatures can fall as low as -50 degC. A new customer is pulp and paper manufacturer Ilim Group, which has facilities in the Russian Baltic and Arctic regions.

Ruiz accepted that producing trailers in a eurozone country is not easy, but said that Fabrisem, from the very beginning 20 years ago, decided there was no point trying to compete on price. Instead, it focused on mechanical strength, simple operation and lowest possible maintenance costs.

The result is a trailer that provides safety for stevedores and peace of mind for owners, with a fast return on their investment. "We manufacture robust, reliable trailers, designed and built to last," concluded Ruiz.

Disc brakes are now fitted almost universally by Fabrisem on its trailers



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