

July 2000

# Zeebrugge

## – North Sea hub for the flow of Group goods

Just 12 months ago, this particular area of Zeebrugge harbor was one big sand desert. Today, the place is a hive of activity. The Stora Enso terminal at Wielingen Dock is the new terminal for the export of paper and board from Sweden. Huge volumes of these products are now handled by this Belgian port.

Text and photo: KJELL ÅKERMAN



A vast paper terminal has risen out of the sand in Zeebrugge, the new hub of the Group's exports from its Swedish mills.



Personnel in Zeebrugge, from left: Anje Peuteman, Nita Solala, Vicky Van de Velde, Nele Merlevede, Jens Rigtorp (data consultant), Annick Cappon, Jerry Comeyne, Daniël Bauwens, Christian Barbry and Pieter Keeris.

**Completed** in slightly more than six months, the vast new terminal is a tribute to Belgian engineering.

In terms of area, the paper terminal at Wielingen Dock is the size of six to seven soccer pitches laid end-to-end. Each square meter has been specially designed to accommodate Stora Enso Transport and Distribution's new Base Port transport concept.

History was written in Zeebrugge's outer harbor area on January 9. That's when the first vessel with a consignment of paper and board from Sweden arrived at the new terminal. Would all the routines and new technology function as planned? Had sufficient training been given to subcontracted dockers and the Group's own personnel? Terminal manager Pieter Keeris summarizes the first five months:

"We have now taken the first important step and have recently moved into second gear. But as you can see, the terminal is functioning,

despite some minor teething problems. We are working hard to increase the pace of operations and to achieve our goal, which is to make sure our customers are satisfied."

**In transport terminology**, the terminal is called a "hub," around which everything revolves. Everything in this respect being paper and board received from the Group's Kvarnsveden, Grycksbo, Gruvön, Fors and Skoghall mills – and, as of this autumn, Hylte. The mills load their goods in specially constructed cargo units, known as SECUs, which are shipped by rail to the port of Gothenburg, where they are loaded onboard new, custom-built vessels. At present, the Gothenburg-Zeebrugge line is trafficked four times a week. In November, a third vessel will be added to the route, which will increase this traffic. Let's say that each vessel arriving in Zeebrugge carries a cargo of 5,000 tonnes of paper and board. That's 20,000 tonnes per week. No wonder that distribution manager Daniël Bauwens has his work cut out.





Activity in the terminal area is often feverish. Here, a SECU is towed from a vessel for unloading.

► "It's a never-ending flow. In principle, nothing should be stored here. But we have to operate a short-term holding point for those rolls and pallets that sometimes have to wait for between one day to three weeks for onward transport."

Transit is defined as a process of "passing through," and that is exactly how most things happen at Zeebrugge. The SECUs arrive at the transit hall on one side of the long terminal area, following which their cargoes are unloaded with the help of special "grabber" trucks. The remainder of the process is determined by the ultimate customer destination. If the goods are scheduled for Germany, France, Italy or Spain, rail is used for onward transport and is arranged through the Belgian company B-Cargo. Up to 17 rail cars can be loaded simultaneously in a building that measures 500 meters. The train transports the goods to local terminals in each country before the paper or board consignments reach the end customers.



"We're headed in the right direction," says distribution manager Daniël Bauwens.

**For onward** transportation by sea, the solution is an ocean-going container vessel. Such vessels are located in another part of the Zeebrugge harbor area. Following a simple transference of goods to containers, the paper and board sail away to destinations in Asia or North America.

"Environmentally compatible," notes Daniël Bauwens pointing to the grabber trucks buzzing around the terminal area. Electrically powered, they generate no emissions in terms of gases and minimal noise. Environmental consideration is an important feature of Base Port, and we are determined to make our contribution.

Being visible is an important feature of the terminal environment. Grabber loading trucks and conventional trucks are in constant movement. The latter belong to carrier companies who transport any goods that are destined for local distribution to customers within a 500 km radius of Zeebrugge. We follow the loading of a consign-

ment of newsprint from Kvarnsveden that is destined for a Dutch printing company. The truck drivers wait impatiently to get away with their fully laden trailers. To reduce waiting time, the terminal has extended its opening times to ten hours a day and loading routines have also been finely tuned.

"A lot of people are involved in handling operations and there are many new things to learn," observes Bauwens. "Not all of the routines have become second nature yet, but we are moving in the right direction."

The Stora Enso Transport and Distribution workforce consists of seven full-time employees and two employed on probation. Grabber truck operators and other terminal personnel, about 30 in number, are hired temporarily from the stevedoring company, SeaRo.

Nita Solla is responsible for local distribution operations:

"Things are hectic because volumes are increasing the whole time. Handling paper and board is very new to people in Zeebrugge. No wonder we need training. And now we're going to take on a third type of product – pulp." Zeebrugge's role will be to coordinate pulp deliveries to and from the mills. The first shiploads from Oulu, Kemijärvi, Skutskär and Gruvön arrived here at the end of May. For the time being, handling operations will be conducted in a provisional terminal.

According to Pieter Keeris, almost one million tonnes of paper and board flow through Zeebrugge. The volume of pulp will be considerably more modest.

"Next year, the volume of goods will grow by another 50 percent. At that stage, we want to be operating flat out in fifth gear..."



**Footnote:** The Zeebrugge terminal was inaugurated in a ceremony on June 16, during which Senior Executive Vice President Yngve Ståde was one of the speakers. The terminal in Gothenburg was inaugurated on May 22 by Deputy CEO Björn Hägglund.





Cross docking from SECUs to rail cars is conducted using electrically powered "grabber" trucks.

## Deliveries to UK

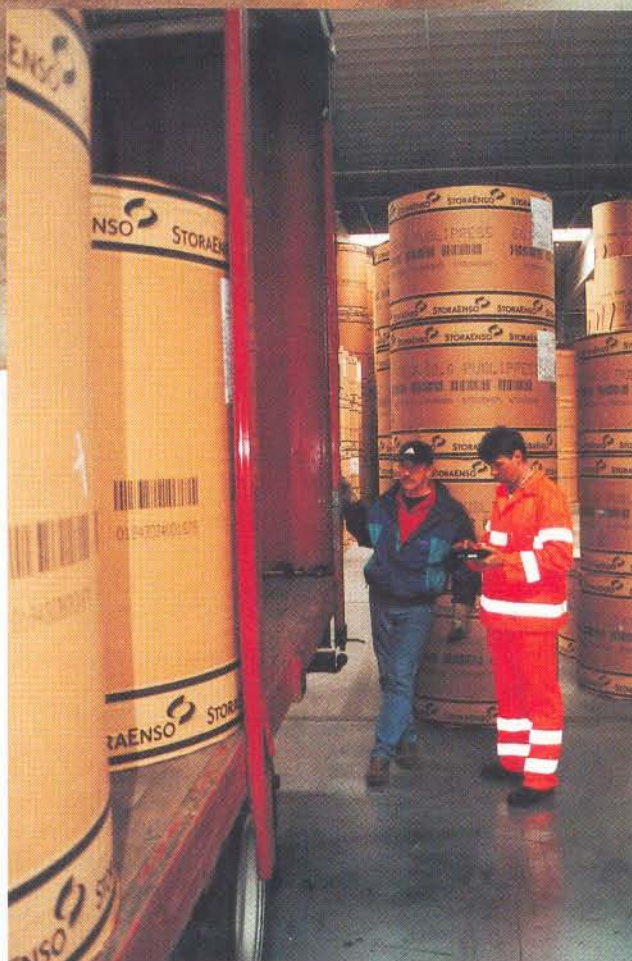
The export of newsprint from Sweden to the UK market will be handled via Zeebrugge for onward shipment by rail.

This was confirmed recently by Bengt Johansson, President of Transport and Distribution. The newsprint will be channeled through the Base Port system and shipped to Zeebrugge by sea.

"On arrival, it will be transferred to rail cars. We

have made a trial delivery from Zeebrugge via the English Channel tunnel to our terminal in Barking, London, which worked very satisfactorily."

Initial deliveries via this route will focus on the newsprint supplied from Kvarnsveden to the London area. Regular rail traffic is estimated to commence during the autumn.



Newsprint from Kvarnsveden is loaded for truck transport to a customer in the Netherlands.