



Welsh Affairs Select Committee **Inquiry into Ports in Wales** **Unite Submission - May 09**

Introduction

This submission is by Unite the Union. Unite is the UK's largest Trade Union with 2 million members across the private and public sectors. The union's members work in a range of industries including manufacturing, financial services, print, media, construction, transport and local government, food, agriculture, education, health, not for profit and of particular relevance to this guidance the docks, rail, ferries and waterways sectors.

The docks, rail, ferries and waterways sector has just under 19,000 members and is continuing to grow. Most port-based or coastal maritime activity, as well as the British Waterways canals, are all organised by Unite which by virtue of its dominance in this sector is actually the biggest maritime union in British waters, uniting masters and ratings.

Unite has members who are tug boat operatives and masters in companies like Svitzer. Unite also organises ferries in Scotland, Liverpool and Southampton, dredging companies and a host of port related maritime activity. Of particular relevance to this consultation Unite has members in Svitzer, Milford Haven Port Authority and Newport Stevedore. Therefore Unite is pleased to submit a response to the Welsh Affairs Select Committee on its inquiry into ports in Wales.

Milford Haven Port Authority

Unite believes that Trust Ports in Wales like Milford Haven Port should be about creating new and improved port infrastructure and facilities to benefit the economy locally and nationally, which is the aim in other countries; not simply as a mechanism used to remove Trust Port assets from public ownership. The wider purpose of seaports in facilitating trade and generating economic and social benefits is best stressed by public-owned Trust Ports like it is in other countries. Unite does not believe there is evidence that Trust Ports like Milford Haven Port should go into private ownership and never believes there will be.

Milford Haven Port Authority plays a very important role in the local community, not just through employment but in other social areas as well. Unite believe that it is of the utmost importance that it remains in the control of the Government and any threat to privatise or sell of any part of it will be resisted as vigorously as possible.

A great deal of the shipping that comes into Milford Haven Port is naturally coming to the refineries and is now coming to the LNG sites as well. Due to this Milford Haven Port Authority are doing performing well in these difficult times and there should be no question of any short time working or of any lay offs, which we have seen elsewhere.

Holyhead

There is the potential to increase the amount of cruise liners at Holyhead. However at the moment Holyhead is at a disadvantage because cruise liners can't disembark at the port side. Unite believes that this should be urgently rectified to allow Holyhead to have a better opportunity to compete with other ports in this regard.

Transport Infrastructure

The Government has a fundamental responsibility to the transport infrastructure for UK major roads, railways and rivers and canals. Its responsibility lies not only in the renewal and, where required, the expansion of this infrastructure, but also in ensuring that the freight that moves on it can do so easily, quickly and in a sustainable way.

The road services in West Wales needs improving and although progress is being made to the A40 and the A477 to Pembroke Dock there is still a lot more that needs to be done. Unite believe that Pembroke would benefit greatly from improvements in the infrastructure through increased tourism. Although Unite does accept that some would argue that it is attractive due to its rural nature and because it is not overdeveloped. The A55 to Holyhead should take about 2.5 hours from mid Wales however whilst improvements are being made it is taking more like 4.5 hours. This type of delay and inconvenience is affecting freight transport routes to and from ports and in Wales. Therefore, the Government should develop an integrated freight plan as a matter of urgency for Wales to put right these problems.

Environmental Concerns - Rising Sea levels

A rise in sea levels and other changes fuelled by global warming threaten roads, rail lines, ports, airports and other important infrastructure in the UK but particularly in Wales. A new study is to consider whether Welsh coastal towns may simply have to be abandoned in the face of rising sea levels. With scientists predicting sea levels will rise by about a metre by the end of the century, the Assembly-backed study will consider how viable it will be for people to go on living along the coast.

The study will focus on Pwllheli, in North Wales, and Barry, in the Vale of Glamorgan, and assess whether in the long term it is worth improving their sea defences to avoid scenes like those predicted by Lord Byron. But experts have warned it may be time to start thinking the unthinkable – that they simply have to be given up to the sea. Both Barry and Pwllheli experienced severe flooding in 2000 and the study will also examine the more immediate question of how this can be prevented in future.

So what can ports and terminals in Wales do to significantly improve their environmental profile?

Sources of Air Pollution in Ports

- Ships movements and alongside, on own power;
- Port activity – cargo handling, etc;
- Port/cargo-related transportation;
- Port/cargo-related process & storage industry;
- Distribution transportation; lorries and trains
- Intra-port traffic, including tugs, patrol/pilot boats

Types of Air Pollution in Ports

Air Pollution in Ports Areas arises principally from:-

- Diesel engines and other combustion processes involving fossil fuels:
- Carbon Dioxide – CO₂;
- Particulates PM₁₀, etc.;
- Hydrocarbons - HC;
- Oxides of Nitrogen - NO_x;
- Sulphur products – SO_x;

But other pollutants may also be present: Chemical vapours / gases from industrial processes.

“Cold Ironing” The Solution or Merely a Panacea?

- “Shore power” is nothing new – NATO and former Warsaw pact navies have used standard equipment in all major naval bases, for over 40 years:
- 440V, 3 phase, 3 wire, 60 Hz;
- Standard bolted connections to cables.
- For merchant ships, the lack of world-wide class standards for power systems creates difficulty in providing shore power to a wide variety of ships:
- “Cold-Ironing” is a way towards reducing emissions of ships in port but:
- It is more suitable for longer-term turn-around visits, especially where dedicated berths are provided to one company or class of ships;
- The environmental benefits are largely localised, rather than total;

Other Means of Reducing Pollutants while Alongside

- Shore-side Diesel generators – better matched to load, so lower “signature” but still producing key pollutants;
- Shore-side LPG powered generators – successful Pacific Gas and Electric Company trials in Oakland, USA, July 2007: Better but still not “Carbon-Neutral”
- Shore power will not always be possible, so we should identify other areas of sea and port activity, in which “offset” or other benefits can be obtained.

Cargo-Handling:

- “Specific Power” (power needed to move 1 tonne of cargo 1Km) reduces as ships’ sizes increase:

- Do ports need to invest in dredged access and cargo handling facilities for the largest container and bulk vessels?
- Increased Vessel Productivity to Reduce Time in Port – Double-Cycling and Twin/Tandem Picks for Quay Cranes

Container Yard

- Double-cycling of yard tractors
- Quay crane double-cycling
- Yard tractor double-cycling
- Pooling of tractors serving groups of quay cranes
- Intelligent route planning: Minimization of travelling distance yields increased productivity and reduced fuel consumption
- Storage buffers at on-dock rail yards
- Depending on terminal layout and the type of lift & transport equipment used, the benefit of double-cycling on a long drayage route may offset any extra lifts in a grounded buffer area.
- Enables double-cycling of dray vehicles

Port transportation:

- Cranes/container movers increasingly electrically driven;
- Trucks, etc. likely to remain fossil-fuel powered but Euro 4/Tier III engines available (reduced PM10s, HCs and Nox) Currently these are all typically powered by diesel fuel

Port-based process and storage facilities:

- Not only economic sense (adding value from real estate)
- But sound environmental benefits to be gained (reduced transportation: Tonne-Kms)

Port-located power generation.

Available industrial land and ports' permitted development powers lend to:

- Wind turbines;
- "Biomass";
- "Waste to power" generating plant.

Reduce the need for cargo onward double transportation?

- Ports should be developed with adjacent space for distribution facilities serving local markets;
- This needs Government understanding, recognition and support for planning, at both UK and local levels.

Co-Located Ports and Distribution Parks?

- Combination of Port adjacent to major distribution park:
- Typical of the European model but less usual in the UK.

Look to new technology to provide low-emission vessels for port activity:

- Seek efficient, modern tugs, running on low-sulphur MGO?
- Encourage intra-port cargo services to renew their fleets or upgrade propulsion machinery to Euro IV / Tier III standards?
- Operate low-emissions pilotage and patrol vessels?

Outside Lorries

- Reduce the number of truck visits for a given throughput
- Enable trucks to perform two transactions per port visit
- Web-enabled dispatch / container move matching systems
- Virtual container yard (reduces empty re-position moves) – Reduce gate process time and queuing / idling time
- Web-based pre-process and pre-advise
- Optical Character Recognition (OCR)
- RFID tagging of trucks – Spread the workload to the container yard
- Extend gate (and yard crane) hours
- Increase average truck travel speed on the road
- Appointments aimed at avoiding congestion hours

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1st May 2009

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Unite the Union

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