

# The WAVE

All the latest news and views from **Maritime Transport**





# MESSAGE FROM JOHN

Welcome to the final issue of The Wave for 2017. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our customers and partners for the outstanding support we have received this year and for the last 16 years – we look forward to continuing our close relationship and to support your development in these exciting and challenging times.

This issue coincides with my 40th anniversary since leaving Wales as an 18 year old and joining a small company called Russell Davies who had 44 vehicles based mostly in Felixstowe and Ipswich. Recently I was interviewed by Andy Salter, the Editor of Motor Transport and Commercial Motor, and extracts will soon be available on Maritime Transport YouTube (once all the exaggerations and mistakes have been edited).

Like many of my peer group, we have seen extraordinary changes over this period and I couldn't do the subject justice if I tried. Most of my time has been spent toiling in the container transport and port industries and it is fascinating to reflect on some of the bigger events that have taken place:

- The extraordinary mergers, acquisitions, failures and scrapping of liners, creating a small number of fewer truly global mega carriers.
- The scrapping of the National Dock Labour Board Scheme, the announcement coincided with Gorbachev's state visit to the UK.
- The privatisation of British Rail creating the privately owned train operating companies.
- The enormous investment in the Ports and the creation of a new port on the Thames.
- The computerisation of so many processes and the introduction of mobile telephony.
- The massive switch from Carrier Haulage to Merchant on import haulage.
- The improvement in safety across all industries.
- The vast improvement of our road network throughout the United Kingdom – the M4 previously started at Newport in Wales – the M25 wasn't built – and the road connecting the Port of Felixstowe was called the A45 and HGVs would travel through the town in Ipswich – it was mayhem.

And of course, the creation of the greatest transport company the world has ever seen!

In the foreseeable future we will be reacting to autonomous trucks, alternative fuels and the likelihood of disruptive technology players challenging the norms.

We are also sadly seeing the demise of the shabby but iconic Manchester Containerbase as the site will be redeveloped into a car showroom from January 2018. The base has been in existence since 1967 and will now be lost from the industry. Many of our UK based customers will I'm sure have recollections of this facility and we are planning on interviewing, on video, people who would like to make a contribution for posterity. We're not sentimental but once it's gone, it's gone and the opportunity will be lost. If you feel you would like to share your recollections, please let me know or contact Lucy Gregory by emailing her [l.gregory@maritimetransport.com](mailto:l.gregory@maritimetransport.com).

As a result of the impending closure of the Containerbase, the pressure was on to secure an alternative site for the containers. In a transaction which would have impressed even the SAS, we succeeded in acquiring the adjacent former Kellogg's site in a freehold purchase. We are now preparing the site to accommodate our vehicles and the containers will relocate to our existing depot at John Gilbert Way. This was a timely and outstanding acquisition as it secures a vital facility for our customers in Trafford Park and retains the exceptional people we employ.

Our distribution business, which was a clean sheet start six years ago, has won incredible success with awards from Coca Cola, Tesco, Amazon, Ikea, Aldi and La Doria Heinz (LDH). In the case of Tesco we won our first dedicated Distribution Centre contract in which 125 drivers and 100 vehicles transferred to us under TUPE. This has been executed seamlessly even though we took over during the peak holiday period of the summer.

We are delighted with this success as it will demonstrate to all our Distribution customers that Maritime are capable of carrying out

complex and demanding transactions like Snodland Fresh.

2017 has been successful and challenging, some of the most challenging conditions I can recall.

As a Transport company we rely absolutely on our drivers and employing and retaining the very best. This year, alongside the likes of Ryanair, we have experienced serious manning issues. There has always been in recent memory a demographic time bomb and a shortage of drivers. The situation was exacerbated this year by a nett outflow of qualified drivers back to their home countries, or to Germany which has experienced an increase in demand.

We don't employ Agency drivers for reasons of safety, quality and reliability and therefore we require at least 10% more drivers than trucks to manage holidays. With 50% of our 1,200 vehicles double manned 24 hours, 7 days per week, we require at least 2,000 lorry drivers to utilise all shifts. We also have very strict criteria before we employ drivers and send them out on the road. As you can imagine this has been a challenge and we look at a number of ways to incentivise drivers to work and to stay with us and as such we will be rewarding our drivers with a pay out of nearly £1 million in safety related bonuses and long service and loyalty bonuses.

Fundamentally, until professional HGV Class 1 drivers are rewarded appropriately across the entire industry, we will be facing an uphill task. The road haulage industry needs to professionalise and reduce drivers' hours and improve drivers' facilities.

These challenges and more will be waiting for us in 2018 and I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the entire staff and driving workforce to thank you again for your support and to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous 2018.

**John Williams**  
Group Managing Director



# MARITIME PICK THE POPPY

For the third consecutive year, we are delighted to be supporting The Royal British Legion and their Poppy Appeal

Each year we support a range of fantastic causes and since 2015, The Royal British Legion has been one of our chosen charities – a decision that is whole heartedly supported by our entire workforce as a number of our staff are ex-service men and women.

Our famous blue and white livery displayed the symbolic red poppy for the entire period of remembrance and as always, we received some fantastic feedback from our staff, supporters, and customers.



In a military-esque operation, volunteers from each of our 27 depots helped to fit over 1,100 poppies to our entire fleet over the weekend of the 28th and 29th October. "We are extremely proud to be able to support The Royal British Legion and their Poppy Appeal," said **John Williams**, Group Managing Director. "The charity offer a great deal of support to both serving and ex-service personnel – as well as their families – and means so much to so many people."

Over the same weekend, Suffolk launched their fundraising efforts in Felixstowe, the town where our award winning head office is situated. In a ceremony attended by the Mayor of Felixstowe – Nick Barber, Suffolk Deputy Lieutenant – Mrs Gulshan Keyembe, Felixstowe Poppy Organisers – Dawn and Stephen Kemp and Suffolk Community Fundraiser RBL Poppy Appeal – Mandi Cox-Osborne, Gary Austin, Training and Development Manager, proudly presented the charity with a cheque for £11,000 following a parade through the town led by the Salvation Army and Cadets.



"Last year The Royal British Legion raised £770,000 with the Poppy Appeal and it has made such a difference to so many families," said **Mandi Cox-Osborne**, Community Fundraiser in Suffolk. "We were delighted that Maritime were able to join us at our launch and once again can't thank them enough for their generous donation and continued support of both the Poppy Appeal and The Royal British Legion."

The driver shortage is a highly emotive subject within our industry, and one which evokes many different opinions and interpretations. In this article we are going to look into this in a little more depth, using our own personal experiences of managing large numbers of drivers – it currently sits at a whopping 1,826 – whilst also using some factual information from the various trade press organisations and the latest government statistics (2016 – the last full years data available). We will then go on to reveal the current effect of the driver shortage and the potential impact this will have on our industry going forward.

# THE DRIVER SHORTAGE

So, to set the scene, 2016 saw HGVs continue to be the UK's primary and favoured method of transport with 76% of all goods moved via road in the UK – with rail at just 9%! It was also a notable year for many reasons; The UK voted to leave the EU and Russia reportedly tampered in the US elections however, the UK transport industry saw a 15% increase in the amount of goods moved by HGVs to 1.89 billion tonnes (the highest since records began in 1990) and the number of kilometres covered by HGVs increased by 5% to 19.2 billion kilometres. So not only are we bringing in and moving more goods, we are also working our trucks and drivers harder! Our drivers and vehicles were transporting all manner of products, with Food Products, Minerals (such as metal ore) and waste being our top three commodities, all being complimented by 107 million tonnes of products defined as 'Dangerous Goods' – something that drivers need a special qualification to move! So as far as the economy and our import and export industries were concerned, all was going well however, there was an element that nobody was paying attention to – the professional HGV driver.

As we move more goods, we work our trucks and our drivers harder, but finding more efficiency alone is not enough to satisfy this ever increasing demand. Driver recruitment has stepped up, with many companies attempting to lure in whoever they can,

whether British or International, to take their C+E tests and become the 'noble and respected' lorry driver. The result is that we now have, according to a Labour Force Survey, 318,700 employed HGV drivers to man the 404,800 registered HGVs in the country (a 2.1% increase on 2015). This is an interesting figure, and when we look back at previous employment figures we can see that the number of employed drivers has pretty much stagnated, with our current numbers 1% higher than the 2006 figure of 316,900. Looking even deeper, the number of British drivers has reduced below the 2006 levels, but has been supplemented by an increase in Foreign Nationals taking up HGV driving jobs in the UK. This increase of 18% over ten years has been dramatic but absolutely necessary in order to maintain our undertaking of moving goods around the country. But still we have a deficit, with many of our industry press claiming the number to be as high as 45,000 – 60,000!

So does this mean that we are importing, exporting and moving only 1% more than 11 years ago? As the aforementioned stats suggest this is not the case and therefore we are either just working our drivers even harder or we are failing miserably as an industry – perhaps it's a mixture of both. It is without doubt that we are asking more and more of our drivers, and we will soon be at the point where we cannot ask them to do much more. Therefore we need to look inwardly and place

some blame on our industry as a whole. There are too many companies in our sector who see a driver as no more than a 'bum on a seat' and they offer no training or development. As a result, drivers come and go with the wind and we are seeing very few of our young people looking to start a career as an HGV driver. Furthermore, we are seeing the average age of an HGV driver in the UK rise to where it now sits at 57. This is a worrying number and if the trend continues the shortage will only get worse.

Despite a previous increase in foreign nationals taking up driving jobs, something that is integral to our industry, with Brexit negotiations ongoing, bringing with it uncertainty over residency and a fluctuating currency, we are now seeing many of those foreign nationals leave Britain – and who can really blame them?

So, with our industry getting busier and greater demand being placed on hauliers and drivers we need to react quickly. The facts are that the average driver is getting older and is not being replaced by the younger generation. It is still a male dominated industry, with government stats suggesting 99% of drivers are male, and with huge reliance placed on foreign drivers in a very uncertain world, we may not be able to count on them for much longer. The effects of these issues, amongst others, could be disastrous. It is a very real concern



that there will be a chronic driver shortage, worse than in 2014 when the DCPC was brought in. The result will be snap reactions that will see driver wages significantly increase over a short period and this will impact any business that relies on drivers to move goods around the country.

So how can we improve the situation? Whilst paying the right wages is a key point here, there are also other areas we can all work on. We need to make a commitment to our drivers and improve the conditions that they work under. There are far too many businesses out there who take advantage of the industry and take the driver for granted and this must stop. Few companies will invest in the training of their staff and schemes to bring on and develop drivers.

There are drivers with limited experience who are rarely given the chance to be properly trained with reputable companies, and this has meant a growing number of drivers are finding themselves working with an agency. They're supplied back to the same companies that didn't give them the chance of full time employment, given the keys and, more often than not, told to get on with it with no induction and very little training – after all, they're not an employee! This agency route is also becoming more tempting for the more experienced professional driver as they are lured in with promises of big hourly rates, flexibility and

the self-employed 'limited' route with minimal payments in tax and NI. So not only are we experiencing a shortage of drivers, there is also now a major shortage of professional, experienced and trustworthy drivers. This is a major problem, and the lack of incentive and responsibility we believe is making drivers more complacent.

In contrast to this, an employed driver is likely to have more interest in the company they work for as well as their customers. After all, they are now responsible and accountable for their actions. Things like the benefits a company may offer, the reputation of the business and the way they look after their employees with regular wages, sickness, holiday, life insurance and pensions are likely to impact the way the driver may behave whilst in their employment. These responsible companies will also make a commitment to ensuring the DCPC is adhered to, and rather than being nothing more than some 'compulsory hours in a classroom' with no test at the end, some employers are using it to develop their staff. For Example, at Maritime one of the courses we have designed is First Aid which has enabled our staff to develop themselves and help the public should they ever find themselves in a situation that requires medical assistance. Sadly, the subject of medical assistance has unfortunately hit our industry hard over recent months, with notable fatal incidents involving HGVs hitting

the news, including the tragic incident between two lorries and a minibus that left eight people dead on the M1, in October a fatal crash between a lorry and a car, leaving one dead on the M4, and a crash on the A140 involving two lorries and a car sadly costing the driver of the car his life. Just weeks separated each of these incidents and following investigations, questions were raised about the HGV drivers involved.

The reputation of our industry is lower than it has ever been and unfortunately responsibility and accountability are being diluted more and more to the point where the consequences are almost irrelevant. Without drastic action, accidents and fatalities are likely to continue, the press will run stories, the public will become more hostile and we will all feel the impact.

This driver shortage is a very real problem and unless we do something about it, it will only get worse. We need to invest more in our staff, offer training and development and improve facilities and working conditions. We need to give our drivers more stable shifts, increased flexibility and the opportunity for progression. If we do not accept our failings and address them immediately then we may find ourselves in an untenable position in which vehicles are not manned, goods are not delivered and accidents do not become a thing of the past.

# THE END OF AN ERA

As one of the UK's last remaining Inland Container Depots closes its doors for good, we take a look over its remarkable, 50-year history.

**M**alcolm McLean's influence on the intermodal container as we know it today revolutionised the international freight industry, kick-starting the containerisation of all manner of cargoes and bringing with it ease of transportation from one continent to another and cargo safety and security, never experienced before. Recognising the impact of containerisation in the UK early on, OCL set up five Inland Container Depots (ICDs) throughout the UK: Barking for London and the South; Perry Barr for the Midlands; Coatbridge for Scotland; Leeds for the North East and Manchester for the North West. Each opened in the late 1960s and since being registered as individual companies they have witnessed a number of global events, including the first human heart transplant and robots landing in

space. As shipping lines began to embrace containerisation, the work involved at ports lessened and the need for large spaces at strategic inland locations grew.

Built in 1967, Manchester Containerbase stood in almost splendid isolation before Trafford Park was rejuvenated to become the largest industrial estate in Europe and home to many global retail consumer brands, as well as shopping centres, hotels, museums, factories and nearly 300,000 people.

Surrounded by open fields and countryside, from the beginning, the Containerbase handled over 45,000 containers every year, thanks to its busy railhead, servicing trains from Southampton, Tilbury and Felixstowe. Known by employees as 'the well-oiled

machine', the Containerbase has been the source of substantial, permanent employment over the years and despite changing owners, a handful of the original employees still work there today and remember 'the good old days' when it felt like a village and cats and foxes would live and play amongst the towering container stacks.

Earning its title 'the well-oiled machine', the Containerbase was a hive of activity. Throughout its busiest years, over 250 people were employed on site, including engineers, operatives and clerical and canteen staff.

Receiving three trains a day, the sites' two gantry cranes were used to unload box after box, before one of two straddle carriers would position the containers in stacks across



## 1967

Overseas Containers Ltd. (OCL) opens the 27-acre Manchester Containerbase as a registered company, 'Containerbase (Manchester) Ltd.'

*Christiaan Barnard performs the first successful human-to-human heart transplant in Cape Town, South Africa.*

## 1970

Fire damages a large part of a shed after a drum containing nitro-cellulose falls from a wagon. Only two men suffered minor injuries and quick-thinking drivers managed to save the containers inside the building.

*The Boeing 747 jumbo jet makes its first commercial flight from New York to London.*

## 1987

OCL ceases to exist and P&O Containers Ltd. takes over their entire containerbase operations, including the Manchester Containerbase.

*President Reagan and Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, sign the first ever treaty to cut the size of their nuclear arsenals.*

## 1996

P&O Containers merges with Nedlloyd and the entire P&O container operation, including ownership of the Containerbase, is now owned by P&O Nedlloyd.

## 1996

Customs' checks cease at the Containerbase.

*Dolly the sheep, the first mammal to be successfully cloned from an adult cell, is born in Scotland.*

## 2002

Sheds on site are let out as warehouses to 3rd parties for the first time at the Containerbase, adapting to new logistics requirements.

*Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee celebrations.*

Map shows locations of the five Inland Container Depots (ICDs)



the site. With two sheds, one for imports and the other for exports, goods would be manually sorted with selected cargo awaiting HM Customs' clearance before they could be collected by one of 600 vehicles that would visit the site every day.

Spread over 27 acres, the Containerbase eased congestion at ports, not only by storing empty and loaded containers, but also by allowing goods to be held until they had cleared HM Customs – a considerable job, now taken for granted, in the days before EDI systems and computers!

Despite the fast paced environment, staff on site built fantastic relationships with one another and amongst the hustle and bustle of the job, there was a healthy sense of rivalry, especially between the two shift teams manning the site, each trying to outdo the other to complete the highest number of box moves. Though little else surrounded the site other than fields, the pub down the road proved a popular destination after work on a Friday and the staff social club meant a whole host of activities were arranged, including trips to London theatres and nights out in Blackpool.

Before the Containerbase was opened, strikes were rife amongst dockers. However, word soon started to spread that the Containerbase was the best paying job in Trafford Park and so a large number of people came over from the docks and Kellogg's, who at the time also paid their staff very well. ➤



## 2005

Maersk completes the buyout of P&O Nedlloyd to become the new owner of the Containerbase.

*52 people are killed and over 700 injured when al-Qaeda associated militants detonate four bombs in London.*

## 2008

After five years, Maersk sells the business to Aegeus Transport, parent company of Roadways Container Logistics.

*Stock markets around the world crash amid growing fears of a global recession.*

## 2010

Recession hits and Aegeus Transport hands back eight acres to the landlord.

*Prince William of Wales announces he will marry long term girlfriend, Kate Middleton.*

## 2012

Last ever train arrives at the Containerbase, at the end of the year.

*The Summer Olympics are held in London.*

## 2014

The railway tracks are lifted and scrapped.

Maritime Transport acquires Roadways Container Logistics and with it comes the Leeds and Manchester Containerbases.

*Philae, a robot, lands on a moving comet for the first time following a ten year journey.*

## 2018

The Containerbase shuts its doors for car dealership redevelopment.

*Mars will make its closest approach to Earth since 2003.*





## Aerial view of Manchester Containerbase

In its early days, the Containerbase was a 24/7 operation and, for over twenty years', staff on site were so busy, they were all given three hours' overtime, every day.

HM Customs would call for a large number of imports and exports to be searched every day. Tip offs were quite common and on one occasion, remembered by some of Containerbase's longest serving members of staff, a container full of tennis rackets arrived via one of the rail services. A tip off had suggested the cargo would also contain drugs and so HM Customs cut the handles off every single racket and found nothing – it wasn't unusual for cargo loads to be searched and damaged in the process, costing cargo owners a fortune in cargo claims.

Over the years the site has packed all sorts of goods, including Mini's doubled up carefully within containers and even the steel works for Hong Kong Airport.

When the Containerbase first opened it had two Lancer Boss Straddle Carriers, these were only able to stack containers two high and so in the early 70s they invested in new machinery to stack containers up to five high – hugely improving the operation and allowing more containers to be stored at any one time.

As advancements in technology were made, much of the manual work done in the bonded warehouse was instead completed at Ports or customers' own sites. HM Customs activity slowed down and eventually checks no longer took place at the site. After a few years, the empty sheds were let out as warehouse space to a number of businesses, many of which remain on site today.

In 2012, with very little notice, the site received its last train and overnight the role of the Containerbase changed forever. The number of loaded containers on site dramatically reduced and sadly, a few years later, the train line was taken up and sold for scrap.

Just a few months afterwards, the Containerbase got its sixth and final owner – Maritime Transport and we began to breathe life into the operation, introducing new business. Today we employ ten people directly throughout the Containerbase. It has been a busy operation with empty and loaded lifting, over 200 gate moves every day and storage as the staple activities.

Container repairs are still carried out on site too. As well as our own operations, 115,000 sq. ft. of warehouse space is rented out to a number of companies who have been able to grow their businesses significantly at the Containerbase.

The site has even featured on a number of Television shows, including 'Cradle to Grave' and more recently, 'Top Gear', where a PacMan maze was built out of containers to race city cars.

Manchester Containerbase has been an integral part of the resurgence and success of Trafford Park and a backbone for freight logistics in Manchester and the wider area over the last fifty years. It is with much regret that time is finally being called on this important logistics landmark as we wind down the 'well-oiled machine' for redevelopment in the New Year.

Perhaps fortuitously, given the scarcity of available land for open storage in the area, as one door closes, another has opened for us. We are delighted to have been able to source and secure freehold tenure on a new site within Trafford Park, only a stones' throw away from the Containerbase and our depot on John Gilbert Way.

The new plot, a former Kelloggs' site, is 5.7 acres of secure hard standing and will become our new transport depot at the end of the year. We are working hard to prepare the facility to be able to move our transport operation, 'lock, stock' in late December, releasing our John Gilbert Way site for empty container storage.

Some readers will remember that our depot on John Gilbert Way had previously been used for container storage and it was only after the acquisition of Roadways Container Logistics in 2014 we decided to consolidate empty and loaded container storage onto a single site at the Containerbase.

*"Our Property and Operations teams have been hard at work to ensure we have a smooth transition from site to site and we are ready for the start of 2018 and to continue to support our customers' needs in container transport and distribution, empty container storage, reefer monitoring, export container preparation, container and reefer maintenance and repairs and more comprehensive refurbishments too,"* said **Simon Smart**, Managing Director, Container Transport.



Giant PacMan maze from BBC's 'Top Gear'



Lancer Boss Straddle Carrier



**IS YOUR LOAD SECURE?**

**THIEVES STRIKE WHEN PEAK STRIKES**



A growing number of laybys & truckstops are being targeted by thieves.  
**CAN YOU BE SURE YOUR CARGO IS SAFE?**



# CARGO CRIME ON THE RISE

As the Pantomime season draws closer it is remarkably evident Ali Ba-Ba and the forty thieves have re-emerged as this seasons 'one to miss'. Unfortunately, 'Lookout he's behind you' doesn't suffice as a deterrent and a growing number of hauliers and cargo owners are falling victim to the thieves. Clearly, we at Maritime must encompass our primary responsibilities to ensure driver safety and to mitigate risk and loss to cargo entrusted to our custody and control.

Whilst we remain confident in our systems and procedures, achieving this goal does not come without cost. Throughout recent weeks we have noticed freight is more likely to come under attack when parked in Motorway Service Areas compared to purpose built Commercial Vehicle parking facilities.

This has resulted in the removal of several MSA locations from our list of approved parking sites in recent weeks, albeit some of the Moto sites have now been re-instated as security personnel are employed at times of higher risk. Whilst this goes some way towards achieving safer transit, increases in parking costs have already been announced by some operators of service locations and the bottom line remains, less safe parking facilities available equals more off route running necessary.

Even the more commercial, HGV orientated locations rarely provide overnight security attendance but the non-right of way to the general public and presence of other like-minded drivers offer some form of comfort and security. The perfect solution is to make the safe haven of a Maritime Depot and even though we have added the prime location of Alconbury to our Depot network, some 'off route' running costs for drivers and fuel are inevitable.

We are taking additional security precautions, including the use of Bulldog Locks fixed to the rear locking bars of containers whenever laden containers are parked overnight. This simple device, along with driver diligence in fitting it has proved to be the catalyst of more than respectable statistics. We are operating in excess of 1,600 vehicles on the road in any 24 hour weekday period and although we

have encountered 62 attacks on vehicles parked in Motorway Service areas this year (to October 2017) on just four occasions has a full breach been achieved by the perpetrators of the crime. We acknowledge four is still too many and our efforts to eradicate theft of this nature continues.

In amongst all of this, it would be very remiss to go about our business without acknowledging the ever increasing demands placed on Police forces throughout the length and breadth of the country. With a heightened threat of terrorism, as well as the regular seasonal increase in criminal activity, parking areas need to be made safer, security must be increased and our drivers, vehicles, and their cargoes, must be protected. The industry must work together to help tackle the ever increasing issue of cargo crime.



**THINK  
OUTSIDE  
THE BOX**

**WE DO**

**We're a transport company making our mark in rail. We're here to innovate, collaborate and grow with you.**

With road congestion and pollution on the agenda, we see rail and our ability to offer a complete solution, a natural area of progression for Maritime Transport.

With two Railports on the doorstep to London and the Midlands, we can offer:

- Connections to all of the UK's major Ports
- Guaranteed resource from all UK Railheads through our fleet of 1,500 trucks
- Over 13,000 TEU of Empty and loaded storage across the UK
- 24/7 operations.

Speak to us today and let's do something great.

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