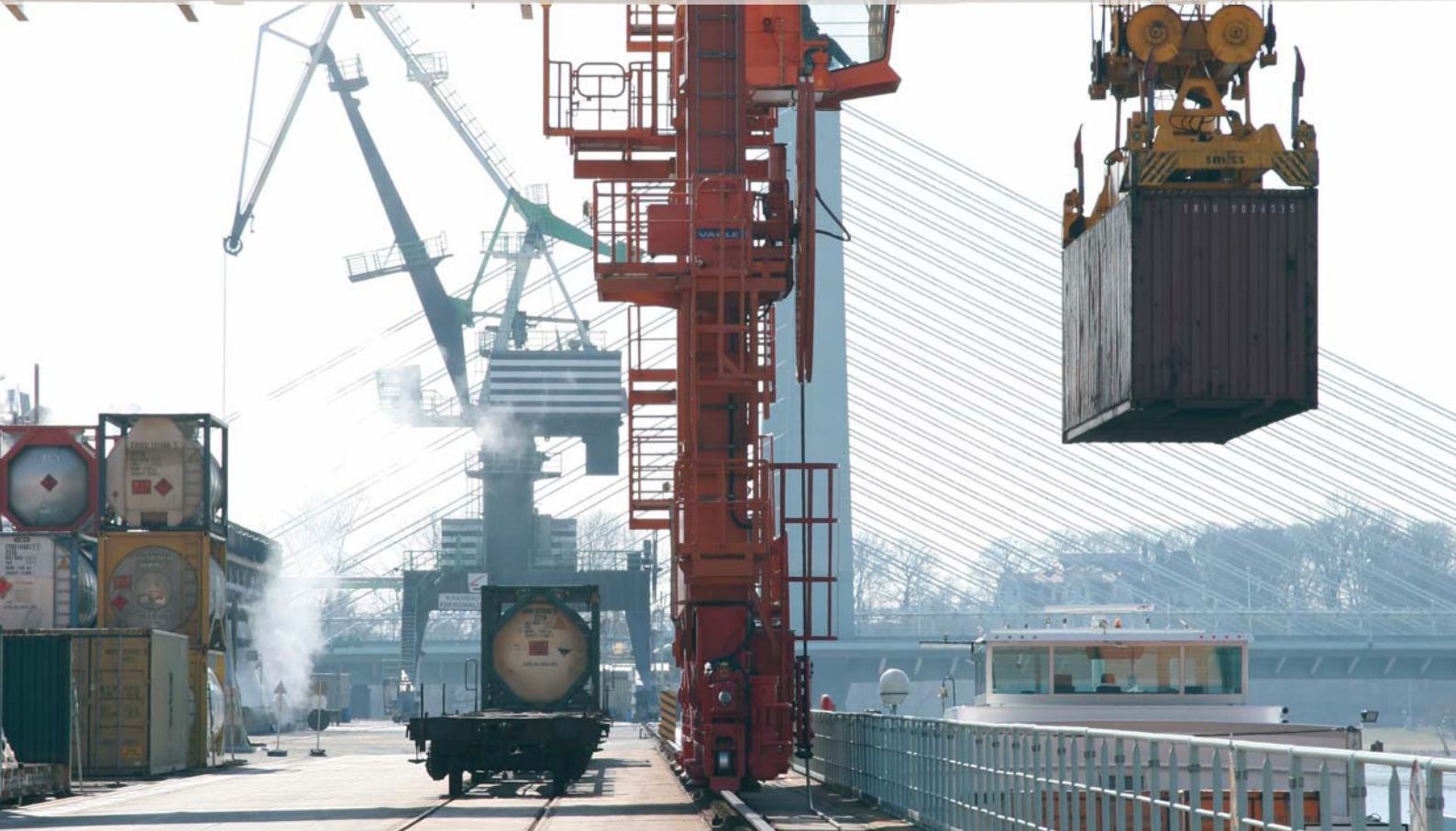


CO₂ Balance at the Press of a Button

Contargo software compares emissions of combined container traffic with truck shipments alone



Companies entrusting their goods to the container logistics specialist Contargo not only obtain the best possible economic solutions – the effect on the environment can be obtained immediately too. Each shipping agent can now use the IMTIS software to discover the CO₂ that their load is causing when sent in combined container traffic and compare this to the emissions caused by door-to-door transportation by truck.

Contargo operates container traffic between the Western European ports of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp and Zeebrugge, the German ports of Bremerhaven, Bremen and Hamburg and the European hinterland. IMTIS, the “Intermodal Tariff Information System,” which is available free of charge, has been helping customers decide on the best possible mode of transport to use since 1996. The system is being further developed all the time and it now “knows” more than 115,000 locations in Europe. The CO₂ calculator was added in 2007.

Those who are planning shipments only have to inform IMTIS of the seaport and the destination in the hinterland. The system then suggests a route using combined traffic systems – inland waterways, trucks and rail networks – and quotes the shipment price. IMTIS takes into account the truck tolls in Germany, the distance-related heavy vehicle fee (LSVA) in Switzerland and the bunker surcharges (BAF) for inland waterway vessels. The program not only provides users with a price – but also the CO₂ emissions and compares them with those caused by truck shipments alone.

Intelligent Links

Modes of traffic have to be combined to an ideal degree in order to provide climate-friendly container logistics. Contargo uses inland waterways, rail systems and trucks in such a way that the strengths of each are fully exploited within the dense network of terminals and transport lines. Ships generate the lowest emissions per ton-kilometer, they are reliable, cheap and serve almost every terminal in the ARA ports using fixed timetables. The rail network provides fast connections between the terminals within Germany and in other European countries; trucks remain unrivaled when it comes to flexible, fast services in a local area.

When calculating the greenhouse gas emissions, IMTIS takes into consideration the specific figures for the various modes of transport and many other details from the transport chain. The system, for example, detects whether a ship on a river is operating upstream or downstream, because this has a huge influence on the emissions. In the case of exports, the shipment of the empty container to the shipping agent is just as much part of the calculations as the journey taken by the loaded container to the terminal and handling costs there, the loading procedure on board the ship and the journey to the seaport. If several terminals are available for handling the goods, the system runs through several alternatives. The energy consumed by the administrative departments is also included in the climate balance figures. The CO₂ figures are based on consumption data that has been gathered for years and this takes into account the expenditure incurred by producing and distributing the fuel.

“We were always aware that inland waterway shipping was not just an economic alternative to truck shipments,” Heinrich Kerstgens, Managing Director of Contargo, explains. “Many shipping agents now demand exact data on CO₂ emissions from transport firms. Our customers now receive specific figures for their planning work. For example, transporting a container from Bruchsal in Southern Germany to Antwerp by truck generates 476 kilograms of CO₂ – but if inland waterway shipping is used as well as a truck, the emissions are cut by more than half. We are sure that many schedulers will choose the environmentally-friendly route in the light of these figures. After all, this also saves them money.”

New Record Reached

The volume transported by Contargo exceeded one million Twenty Feet Equivalent Units (TEUs) for the first time in 2007 – this represents an increase of 20 percent over the previous year. “We can now see how right it was to invest in the development of our terminals and transport lines,” Kerstgens emphasizes. Contargo has four of its own inland waterway shipping lines and the company provides 60 percent of its transport services on the River Rhine and its tributaries. In contrast to the road network, the inland waterways still have free capacity and Kerstgens also believes there is more potential available on the rail network: “We are ready to relieve roads and move a major part of the growing volume of traffic on to the waterways and rail system.”

The IMTIS tariff calculator is available free of charge on CD and can be ordered by e-mail.
The address is: IMTIS@contargo.net

