



A convoy carrying cold boxes of liquid air for ITER from Berre l'Étang to Cadarache.

Daher

Obstacles block overland activity

Overland transport in France is a continuing challenge – but perspectives on the issue vary. *Megan Ramsay* highlights some of the difficulties.

Marc Sagot, sales manager breakbulk, project cargo and ro-ro at Shipping Agency Service au Havre (part of Naxco Group), does not see any particular problem for overland transport in France. “Road transport for abnormal loads is, quite logically, regulated in France, as it is elsewhere,” he stated. “Our

maritime solutions can allow overland distances to be reduced, and enable the development of shortsea (intra-Europe) alternatives.”

According to Paulo Goncalves, managing director, Sarens France, the permit process takes a long time simply because there are so many parties involved, all of whom must be notified: regional administrations,

concessionaires (highways operators, rail company SNCF, the waterways agency and so on) as well as local authorities.

Things are improving, though. “The government has started to designate itineraries based on total rolling weight... but sometimes without any links between these routes, which must be requested on a case by case basis,” he said.

Chris Grigentin, operations manager, industrial projects France for Bolloré Logistics, suggested that to facilitate heavy lift transport by road: “Strategic export projects for industrial manufacturers with international commitments should be eligible to benefit from priority treatment, for example.”

Management system

He would also like to see a more centralised management system supported by staff with knowledge of abnormal loads, and with access to a database that integrates elements such as alternative itineraries and public entities responsible for facilitating the movement of such shipments.

Bruno Le Gurun, industrial projects specialist at Haropa, noted that fewer and fewer road transport permits for abnormal loads are being issued.

“This is a trend that will increase because the French authorities want to get lorries off the roads,” said Lionel Guilbaud, Blue Water Shipping SARL, France. “They are draconian because they want to discourage abnormal loads that fall outside certain limits and the constraints are becoming tighter, so the industry is having to find other solutions.”

Blue Water Shipping is carrying out more and more small cabotage jobs, for instance, while Haropa is working with Voies

Sarens moves Siebert bridge

Sarens recently transported the Siebert bridge, dating from 1931 and weighing about 1,000 tonnes, from its location near Meudon sur Seine to Boulogne Billancourt on the island of Seguin for demolition.

A barge from Rotterdam (pictured) was used to move the span. A new, wider bridge is expected to be in place by 2021, following a tender process.

