



The Shipping Association of Trinidad & Tobago

Monthly Newsletter

November 2011

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Port chairman banking on Panama Canal expansion

Tenders for two cranes costing \$145 million, used in offloading and loading freight containers at the Port Authority will soon go out. The confirmation came from Port Authority Chairman Joseph Toney last week. "We are about to go out to tender for two cranes. They would cost us somewhere in the vicinity of \$145 million," said Toney. The cranes, Toney said, will have to be ordered according to specifications. The port has five cranes which offload and load containers onto docked ships. Most of the cranes, Toney said, have outlived their usefulness and needed to be replaced.

Noting that the Panama Canal is expected to be widened 30 metres by 2014, Toney said this would increase traffic on the seas and business. "It (cranes) will take at least 18 months to get it here. We will have to get the money if we want to prepare for 2014 and be an important port." Noting that T&T would be used as a transshipment point, Toney said this would involve a lot of business activity. He said the Chinese Government had already pledged US\$200 million to upgrade and develop Venezuela's Puerto Cabello port, which could pose as a serious competitor to the ports in Trinidad.



Not pleased with port, Customs relationship

Stressing that he was not pleased with the relationship between the port and Customs and Excise Division, Toney said: "I feel it could be better. I have received too many complaints about the lack of co-operation on the part of Customs and Excise Division with the Port Authority to get cargo cleared in a timely fashion."

Clearing barrels, boxes or freight containers for Christmas, Toney said, was a cumbersome task for citizens and business owners. In some instances, he added: "This has led to flaring of tempers, protests, traffic jams and long lines at the port."

With Christmas approaching and more cargo expected to arrive at the port, Toney said he was moving to have these problems rectified. Toney said Customs and Excise has the final authority to impose duties on goods as well as check and sign off all cargo entering and leaving the port. "So if they are falling down on that aspect of their jobs to give the final okay, obviously you would have a backlog of cargo." Checking procedures for Customs officers are manually done. Toney said this was a frustrating and laborious task.



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Port chairman banking on Panama Canal expansion



Closely monitoring Bay Ferries' contract

Toney also spoke about the port's two fast ferries, which operate between T&T and were managed by foreign firm Bay Ferries Management Company. "When I last checked they were earning between \$70 million a year. I feel locals can do the job."

The firm was awarded its second three-year contract. Toney said the three years they have operated, Bay Ferries has taken home over \$200 mil-

lion. "My argument is that it is money that we are paying to get assistance to run these ferries. The transfer of technology, managerial skills, knowledge and manpower to locals is taking too slow. I am not satisfied with it." We are not getting value for money." During his stint, Toney said, this contract will be closely monitored.





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In other News

T&T Eyes Panama Canal Prospects

Investing in Panama will bring revenue to T&T. Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar says it is “a greater revenue earner” to invest in another country. Panama and T&T are soon expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the establishment of several energy initiatives. Persad-Bissessar was speaking to the media at the Diplomatic Centre in St Ann’s on November 21st, after holding discussions with Panama’s Secretary of Energy Juan Manuel Urriola Tam, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Panama to T&T Arline Gonzalez, Energy Minister Kevin Ramnarine and several chairmen of energy state boards.

She said it was too soon to say the worth of the investments. She said: “The aim of this meeting was to further discussions for economic and technical co-operation between both countries. “Panama’s demand for energy is developing and as such, they are looking to Trinidad and Tobago for two things—the supply of energy as well as expertise in the services of the energy sector.” Among matters discussed were the supply of propane, butane, diesel, gasoline and bitumen by T&T firms to Panama; the acquisition of a bunkering licence for state-owned oil company Petrotrin in the Panama free zone; securing the supply of LPG from Phoenix Gas Processors; and a supply of asphalt from Lake Asphalt for Panama’s five-year road works plan.

Persad-Bissessar said the MOU will be signed next year. Meanwhile, Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Surujrattan Rambachan said the prime minister has worked since assuming office to bring new investments to T&T. He said Tam’s visit was a manifestation of the seeds she planted. Persad-Bissessar also said a task force will be established “to take these discussions forward.”

She said the Task Force will be mandated to deliver concrete “deliverables” by March next year. She said: “If we go to invest in Panama then we are going to get a lot of revenue. Meanwhile,

Tam said Panama was a country with a lot of new investment with its economy growing at rate of seven or eight per cent. He said over the next five years his government will invest over US\$13 billion in the Panama Canal in infrastructure.



Source: Trinidad Guardian Online (Nov 22)



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Regional News

MARITIME AUTHORITY OF JAMAICA HOSTS BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Ship surveyors, inspectors, legal officers, marine scientists and other persons responsible for maritime affairs in countries from the wider Caribbean region gathered at the Knutsford Court Hotel from November 14-15, 2011 to learn about the provisions of the Ballast Water Management Convention.

Hosted by the Maritime Authority of Jamaica (MAJ), the course sought to train participants on the compliance, monitoring, and enforcement of the Convention, an instrument of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) aimed at controlling the transportation of organisms in ships' ballast water.

Ballast water used in the stability of vessels is a potential vector for microorganisms that may cause devastating effects to a country's biodiversity when they are introduced in an alien eco-system through the exchange and release of ballast water.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Bertrand Smith, Director of Legal Affairs at the MAJ indicated that *"the wider Caribbean region accounts for a significant portion of the global fleet of international trading ships, having two of the top five ship registries and five of the top ship registries being administered by Caribbean countries. It is critical therefore that we understand our flag and port State control responsibilities and be vigilant in discharging these responsibilities as well as the obligations to develop national policies and strategies to reduce the threat of invasive species."*



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MARITIME AUTHORITY OF JAMAICA HOSTS BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Jamaica has seen the effects of ballast water with the pollution of the Kingston Harbour with the green mussel. According to Dr. Dayne Buddo of the Centre for Marine Sciences, Discovery Bay Marine Laboratory *"The green mussel has ecological implications as it competes against native species for food and space leading to a reduction in biodiversity; there are also public health effects due to the accumulation of harmful constituents inside the tissue of the mussel which when consumed causes illness among humans; further there are possible economic effects due to the increase in maintenance of seawater intake systems that become clogged with mussels."*

The course was organized by the Regional Activity Centre/Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, information and Training Centre (RAC-REMPEITC) Caribe in association with the IMO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Lecturers for the course were Mr. Fredrik Haag from the IMO, Mr. Raphael Braumler, International Consultant and Lecturer at the World Maritime University, Mr. Andrew Wood of RAC-REMPEITC and Lieutenant Commander Henry Tomlinson, Ship Inspector at the MAJ.

*Source: www.worldmaritimeneeds.com
World Maritime News Online*



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Did you Know

Did You Know?

PANAMA CANAL EXPANSION ON TRACK

The \$5.25 billion project to add a new traffic lane to the Panama Canal by 2014 is on track and "will change the face of shipping as we know it and will bring positive benefits for all -- from the suppliers [to the] logistics industry, shippers, retailers, and consumers," Panama Canal Authority CEO Alberto Aleman Zubieta said Nov. 15 at the Terminal Operations Conference & Exhibition Container Supply Chain: Americas 2011 (TOC America) held in Panama City.

The Authority announced Oct. 12 that it had completed phase three of the dry excavation project in the construction of the Pacific Access Channel, which will connect the third set of locks with the Culebra Cut and Gatun Lake. The third phase cost \$36.6 million, involved the excavation of 8.2 million cubic meters of material, and was completed "within budget, on time and in compliance with strict environmental, safety, hygiene and quality standards," according to Zubieta.

The Authority will showcase the engineering processes used in the expansion during the April 18-20, 2012, [International Engineering and Infrastructure Congress](#) in Panama, co-hosted by the authority and the American Society of Civil Engineers.

*Source: ohsonline.com
Occupational Health & Safety*



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On the Horizon

ON THE HORIZON



SATT CHRISTMAS PARTY 2011 !!!!

When? Thursday 8th December
Where? SATT Secretariat
Time? Commencing at 4:00pm

We look Forward to seeing you there!





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Thought of the Month

Thought of the Month

Failures do what is tension relieving, while winners do what is goal achieving.

Dennis Waitley