



# THE ALTERNATIVE: INLAND WATERWAY SHIPPING

**PORT OF HAMBURG**  
Magazine 3.15



# Dear Readers,



HHM/Marc Ihle

Hamburg is Germany's third largest inland port, with an 11 percent share of modal split, and clearing about 10,000 vessels per year. The Elbe links the port, not just with the world's oceans, but with important industrial centres as far away as the Czech Republic. Unfortunately not everything flows smoothly on the river and its adjacent canals. Seriously fluctuating water levels, and the Elbe Lateral Canal with its bottleneck at the Scharnebeck ship lifts, restrict the unlocking of further potential.

Since 2011 inland waterway shipping's share of goods transport in Germany has fallen from 15 to 12.3 percent. How does the situation look from the viewpoint of Germany's largest universal port? What needs to be done to incorporate the inland waterway vessel more strongly in seaport-hinterland transport chains? The crucial factors for our customers in Germany and elsewhere are the costs and the reliability of transporting goods between the Port of Hamburg and inland terminals. Between truck and rail, the inland waterway vessel gets overlooked now and then.

Apart from calling for upgrading of waterways as an element in transport policy, experts are constantly working on logistics solutions. We present a selection of these in our current issue. In addition, we report on some approaches to the optimization of services in this sector.

We trust that you enjoy reading this issue – and maybe gain a tip for your logistics processes?



Stefan Kunze



HHM/Zilski

**WHAT MUST BE DONE TO  
MAKE INLAND WATERWAY  
CRAFT MORE ATTRACTIVE  
FOR TRANSPORT CHAINS?**



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SCHRAMM Ports & Logistics GmbH  
Elbehafen, 25541 Brunsbüttel

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Fax: 04852 884-26  
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*The heavily industrialized areas of Brunswick, Hanover and Minden are served by the inland port of Brunswick*

Does container transport by inland waterway craft function at all in the Elbe region?

Hafenbetriebsgesellschaft Braunschweig

**René Oloff, a branch manager for Deutsche Binnenreederei (DBR), explains why it opts for push barges on scheduled services. Jens Hohls, Managing Director of Brunswick’s port operating company reveals which of its services have aroused interest among shippers.**

**Mr Oloff, in the Elbe basin Deutsche Binnenreederei (DBR) runs two regular services connecting the Port of Hamburg with inland ports. Apart from the Elbe ports served by Elbe-Container-Linie, DBR links up those of Brunswick, Hanover and Minden by the Elbe Lateral Canal and Mittellandkanal. What special challenges do you encounter in transporting containers by inland waterway craft?**

For us as suppliers of container transport services, these are the available Elbe water depth and resultant limited navigability. This summer we had to report a



René Oloff

dismally low water record. As a result, we were no longer able to provide any through regular services with our vessels for the ports beyond Magdeburg. By comparison with traffic on the Elbe, our services operate on canals in what for DBR is a stable, navigable area.

**How do you cope with the repercussions of a suspension of inland waterway ship traffic?**

Along with the higher transport costs for replacement

services such as trucking and rail that we have to organize and tolerate when the Elbe is no longer navigable, loss of revenues is especially painful for us. Only to a limited extent can we deploy the vessels normally operating on the Elbe in other areas. When the Elbe comes to a standstill, our ships lie idle.

**So does adequate cargo generally exist for your company for viable regular services by inland waterway craft on the Elbe?**

Cargo volumes along the Elbe are available, however, the repeatedly arising subject of low water problems makes it hard to stir up any enthusiasm from industry and forwarders for transporting containers along the Elbe. That applies even though our push technology reduces lay times in inland ports, and we facilitate a combination of shipping capacity in the Port of Hamburg,

with its numerous cargo handling terminals. From our angle, upgrading the Elbe is essential for viable operation and boosting container cargo on the Elbe. Only then will we be able to make the investments already required right now in state-of-the-art vessels and ship technology.

**Do the scheduled services on the canals around the Elbe create such great problems for you?**

Fortunately, conditions for our scheduled services along the canal are considerably better. We can run reliable daily services for the busy industrial areas of Brunswick, Hanover and Minden that are situated on canals. We offer our customers a high degree of supply stability. In tough competition with other carriers, it is only this that enables the inland waterway vessel to remain a fixed element of the transport chain





Directly on Mittellandkanal, the Port of Brunswick benefits from reliable water depth

for seaport-hinterland services. Our customers want door-to-door services and we develop these along with our partners.

**Mr Hohls, developing joint services for the customers – is this also the approach that you adopt in the Port of Brunswick for deploying inland waterway craft on a larger scale in transport chains?**



Jens Hohls

Yes, we work closely alongside carriers and shippers. When developing our services in the Port of Brunswick, we invariably take into account our partners' requirements. In Brunswick, we annually clear around 60,000 TEU, or 20-ft standard containers. That means that as an inland hub, we handle the largest volume of container transport in the region.

**How many of the containers handled in your port are transported by inland waterway vessels?**

Here I can give you a very satisfying figure. Two-thirds of all containers make their way to or from Hamburg by inland waterway craft. High container volume enables

regular services on the waterway to be organized economically. Demand is very good. That applies even though Brunswick is relatively near the Port of Hamburg and actually offers trucking favourable conditions in the competition between carriers. With expansion of the container handling services we provide, for major shippers the inland waterway craft has become attractive as an alternative to trucking.

**What did you have to do to make inland waterway shipping attractive compared to trucking for container handling in Brunswick?**

For a start, in numerous discussions with major suppliers we had to arouse interest in the inland waterway vessel as a carrier. Many companies no longer had inland shipping on their radar at all alongside truck and rail in their transport chains. So in 2001 our investment in a special container terminal for multimodal handling was a very important first step. Market acceptance for the range of services we provided rapidly increased. In the years before 2008, we expanded our terminal specifically to meet our shippers' requirements. Our customers now have on tap a complete logistics solution from one source that is competitive with trucking.

**Which services do your customers especially appreciate? Could you mention some examples?**

If logistics services in an inland port like Brunswick are to be rapidly and successfully expanded, it helps a lot if the container cargo volumes on the import and export sides are almost in balance. This produces even load factors on container services by inland waterway craft and avoids empty runs. Since container cargo covers a very large variety of goods, our terminal offers an interim storage facility, for example. Some of our major clients appreciate the chance of organizing just-in-time supply of their warehouses via the inland port of Brunswick. This saves them costs for their own storage and leads to optimization of their own logistics processes.

**Is Brunswick's accessibility for inland waterway craft stable and reliable?**

Yes, compared to the difficult water level conditions on the Elbe, thanks to the route via the canals that's not an issue for us. Basically, stable water levels make transport by inland waterway craft perfectly viable. At most, ice formation during harsh winters can cause problems for us. In that case we have to replace services by using rail or truck. With our multimodal terminal, we can handle those at any time. Whatever happens, we can offer our customers stable supply.

**For you, then, all is well with the world in Brunswick – or do you have any critical points?**

Proximity to the Port of Hamburg and satisfactory economic progress in the Brunswick area offer good growth prospects for the further development of our port. Yet the repeated delays caused by the dilapidated and only partially renovated Scharnebeck ship lifts are a source of worry for us. We understand that around one-third of the 4,000 truck runs every year



*The Port of Brunswick possesses trimodal links and also offers its customers logistics services*

between Brunswick and seaports are caused by unstable ship transit times. The ship lifts on the Elbe Lateral Canal, which like waterways are the responsibility of the Federal government, are meanwhile too small for today's inland waterway craft. So we cannot deploy any larger and more economic inland waterway craft there. To be able to offer reliable and viable transport by water in future, we urgently require an additional descent structure in Scharnebeck. A first step in the right direction is the unanimously endorsed petition from the state parliament in Hanover calling on the Federal government to give renewal of the ship lifts higher priority in the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan. Also requiring improvement in our view is the handling of inland waterway craft at container terminals in the Port of Hamburg. Concentration on the waterside on handling mega-containerships is repeatedly causing delays in handling inland waterway craft. These are hard to offset over such short distances as Hamburg-Brunswick. The potential for optimization here is immense. ■

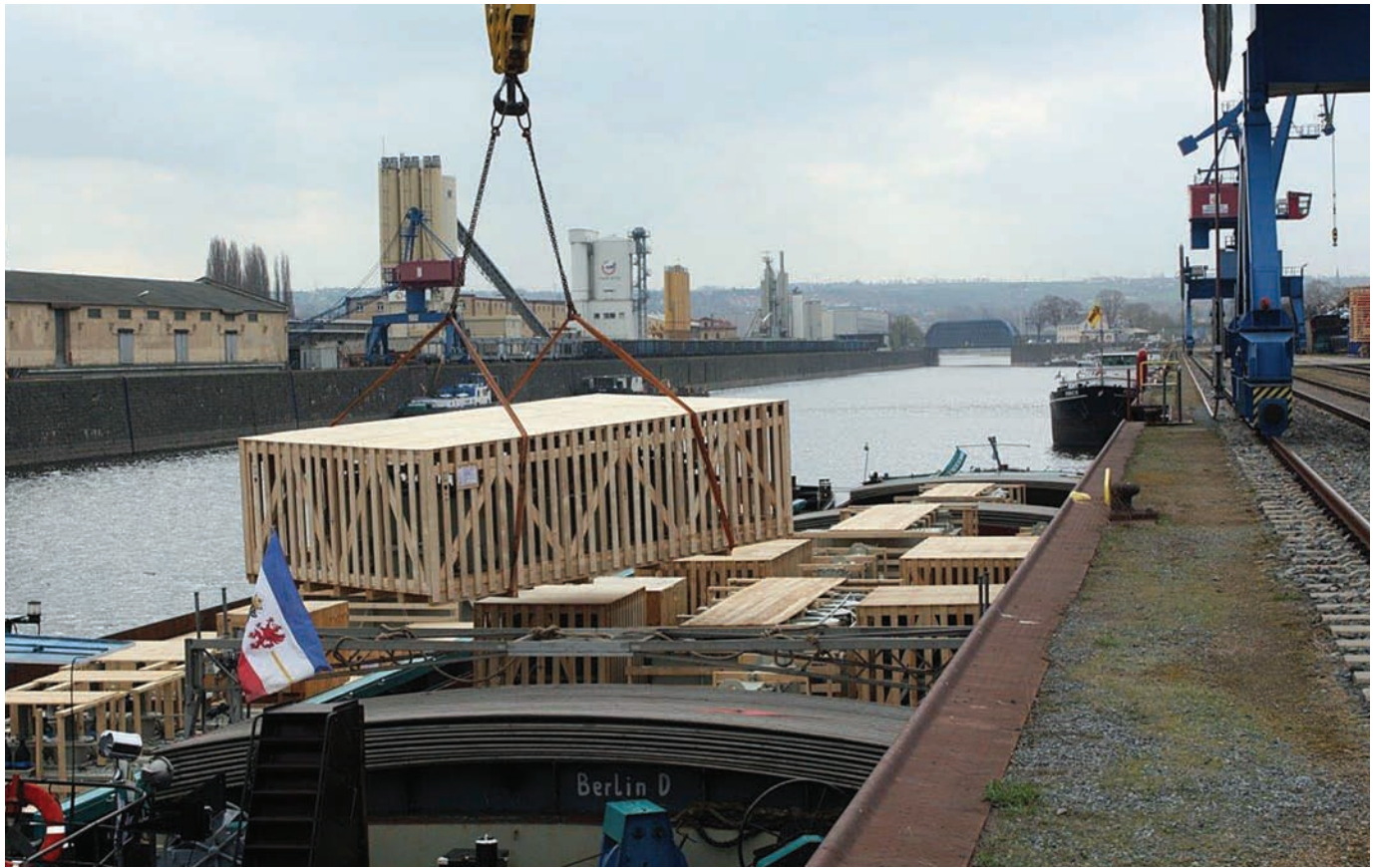


**1,000 TEU Jägermeister are swimming through the Mittellandkanal to Brunswick every year.**

*The Port of Brunswick is used by several major customers as the local hub for despatching and receiving containers. Mast-Jägermeister, for example, annually sends around 1,000 TEU, or 20-ft standard containers, to the Port of Hamburg by inland waterway craft. On carriage is by ocean-going ship to the USA. "For us as manufacturers of a high-value consumer item, the green logistics aspects are of importance as well as the great reliability of this logistics solution. Since we unfortunately do not have a rail siding suitable for container transport, we use the inland waterway craft to divert the quantities transported from the roads," says Peter Höfler, Mast-Jägermeister's Director Customer Service. "In addition, this solution also gives us the opportunity to secure a buffer between ex-works delivery and the shipping date in the Port of Hamburg and hence to optimize logistics processes," adds Höfler.*



The inland waterway vessel is the best solution for transporting bulky and heavy cargoes like these Siemens power transformers



Photos: SBO and IMPERIAL

# Using inland waterway vessels for cargo that cannot be transported by road

**Why the inland waterway vessel is first choice for Logistics Manager Stanley Koehl of the Siemens transformer plant in Kaditz, Dresden.**

**Mr Koehl, since 1923 power transformers have been built in Kaditz, from 1990 in cooperation with Siemens. As head of logistics you have to manage transport of these exceptionally heavy and bulky loads from your plant to the Port of Hamburg. How do these real heavyweights reach Hamburg from Dresden?**



Stanley Koehl

At our plant we manufacture transformers weighing up to 200 tons each for customers all over the world. The challenge with these transformers that have to reach the Port of Hamburg for shipping overseas is their colossal weight plus unusual height of up to 5 metres. Gigantic unit weight and dimensions render these export cargoes unsuitable for transport by road or rail. A further difficulty is that a special permit from the au-

thorities is required for road transport of weights in excess of 100 tons and a height of 4.30/4.40 metres. These are only granted after examination of each specific case. That costs a lot of time, and for heavy goods transport runs on this scale, tremendous effort. Our Siemens transformer plant is therefore a regular user of Dresden's inland waterway port. From there, the route by inland waterway craft runs direct to the Port of Hamburg for loading on to the oceangoing ship.

**How do you see a typical transformer shipment by inland waterway craft on the Elbe?**

The inland waterway vessel is an ideal carrier for our very special cargo. Loading at Dresden's Alberthafen gives us the opportunity of transporting several transformers and their accessories with one barge train. Apart from the distinct cost advantages of a combined run, by using an inland waterway ship we relieve the

roads. If we had to organize a shipment like this by road, we should have to use six low-loaders for the transformers and 25 semi-trailer units for the accessories. So the waterway is clearly advantageous. For us, the Elbe represents the direct route to the Port of Hamburg. Despite relatively high handling costs, the high quality of clearance in Hamburg and the excellent co-operation developed over many years with handling terminals in Hamburg are decisive for us.

**How do you manage Dresden – Hamburg with your heavy cargo shipments without draft problems?**

This comes up again and again. If we have low water in the Elbe for weeks and inland waterway traffic is suspended, then we have a problem. All that we can do is transfer our inland waterway shipments on to trucks. Yet with especially heavy and high transformers that

we are not permitted to truck to Hamburg, we are forced to organize interim storage in the Port of Dresden, then wait for adequate water levels on the Elbe. Even if we can often avoid contractual penalty claims by our customers, delivery delays caused by low water hit us hard. If we do not deliver on time, that means a loss of image for Dresden as a factory location. Not infrequently, it is also a negotiating point on follow-up orders. We therefore very much regret that the successful efforts of the Port of Dresden to respond to growing demands for shipping facilities from industry in Saxony should be jeopardized by barely predictable restrictions on Elbe navigability.

**Navigability of the Elbe is also a critical topic for Annett Hütter, Sales Manager of IMPERIAL Shipping Services, an inland waterway shipping company and Heiko Loroff, Managing Director of inland waterway port operators, Sächsische Binnenhäfen Oberelbe.**



Several weeks of low water prevent any movement by inland waterway craft and heavy cargoes need to be taken by truck to the Port of Hamburg at great expense or temporarily stored in Dresden



**Mrs Hütter, which particular challenges do you see for heavy cargo shipments by inland waterway vessel on the Elbe?**



Annett Hütter

For us as an inland waterway shipping company, the Elbe is of great significance for linking shippers in Saxony. Being strongly export-oriented, the region's engineering and heavy plant industry might have been invented just for transport services by inland waterway craft. So far we have also managed to fulfil all transport contracts. The additional effort required from us during low water on the Elbe is considerable, e.g., we need to distribute cargo between several vessels. This requires more craft than originally planned and calculated for. From time to time acquiring extra inland waterway craft is made more difficult by lack of availability at short notice. In such cases our excellent cooperation with Czech shipping companies functions well. Besides offering suitable shipping capacity, they also have crews with local knowledge on board. Using Elbe water levels to the utmost, they can accept cargo and transport it securely. Here too unconventional methods sometimes come into play. As we found when shipping a steam pressure turbine in Dresden only recently, for example, deploying RoRo craft with low draft, when

empty, improves the range of services. We nevertheless urgently need more than simply lip service for inland waterway shipping, but instead a shipping channel with predictable traffic conditions. If the Elbe does not become easier for inland waterway shipping to use, then not only will shippers lose their trust, but our business generally will lose the basis of its existence.

**Mr Loroff, how does Sächsische Binnenhäfen Oberelbe (SBO) successfully position itself in this problematical environment?**



Heiko Loroff

Dresden's Alberthafen was opened as a rail port in 1895. In recent years the face of it has been greatly transformed. When we nowadays raise the inadequate navigability of the Elbe with politicians responsible for transport, it is often overlooked that before World War II, more cargo was transported along the river by inland waterway craft than on the Rhine. Nowadays, if we are to survive on the market we, as a port group, need to repeatedly adapt to shippers' requirements. We are expanding our service range, one example being the shed we have erected in Dresden especially for assembly of jumbo components. As the next step, we



Persistent low water means that several challenges await the push-barge on the route between Riesa and Hamburg

shall be putting a heavy-load crane into service there. That's designed to handle ever-growing weights. Even if our six SBO ports are universal ports, there is some

specialization. Riesa, for example, is our multimodal container terminal, and Dresden our main facility for project cargoes. ■

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Rhenus Midgard Hamburg GmbH · 2. Hafenstraße 4, 21079 Hamburg · Tel.: +49 (0) 40 / 76 60 03-0 · Fax: +49 (0) 40 / 76 60 03-59  
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# We'd like to carry more on inland waterway craft

**Works manager and graduate engineer Hans Peter Fester discusses the advantages and disadvantages of transporting freight by inland waterway ships from the point of view of his company, Braas.**

**Mr Fester, Braas is Germany's leading supplier of complete roofing systems. In Germany around 1,000 staff work for Braas at 17 sites. Your product range extends from roofing tiles and components to solar systems and insulation to all-round service. Which products does your company receive by inland waterway ship and what part does this play in your transport chain?**

We prefer to receive the clay components we need for producing roofing tiles in Karstädt in Brandenburg by inland waterway ship. In close cooperation with Elbe-Port Wittenberge, two years ago we built up a transport chain running from the Rhine via the Mittellandkanal and on as far as Wittenberge. There these raw materials were transferred to trucks for the final 35 kilometres to our plant in Karstädt. By ship, they had previously only travelled along the Mittellandkanal as far as Haldensleben, near Magdeburg. That meant trucking the significantly longer distance of 150 kilometres to reach us. From the start we all realized that the Elbe is not a well-developed waterway for use by inland shipping. It is all the more astonishing that until the beginning of this year we were able to run this service very

well on the whole – always hoping that we were encouraging the promised modification of the Elbe. But meanwhile inadequate navigability then caused such a steep deterioration in transport reliability that we were unable to ensure production. We could no longer rely on our raw materials reaching us in good time. As the water depth required for loaded inland waterway ships is no certainty on the Elbe, since May we have regretfully had to switch back again for the moment to the longer transport route, i.e. by inland waterway ships as far as Haldensleben and then along the main road to Karstädt.

**It is highly regrettable that inadequate waterway infrastructure should compel industrial companies relying on inland waterway vessels to transfer transport jobs back from ships to trucks on a large scale. What logistics challenges do you see on the whole in structuring your transport chain?**

To avoid additional storage costs, we process raw materials as fast as possible. All auxiliary expenses, including all the transport arrangements and logistics, directly increase manufacturing costs. That endangers

*The Braas roofing tile factory is in Karstädt near Brandenburg*



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When the water level permits, clay components for Braas are delivered to ElbePort Wittenberge by inland waterway vessel

our competitiveness in a hotly contested market. Continuous supply of raw materials is therefore essential for our survival. We meanwhile produce eight different types of roofing tiles for the German-speaking area, Benelux, Scandinavia and the Baltic countries. Exports make up 60 percent of our total production. Without reliably functioning transport chains, we should rapidly face immense problems.

**ElbePort Wittenberge is run by Buss Group. Michael Beyer is Managing Director of Buss Inland Terminals. Mr Beyer, Wittenberge lies in a hardly accessible sections of the Elbe and relatively close to Hamburg. So what chance does the inland waterway craft have? How do you react to such occurrences as low water, for example?**

We use an inland waterway craft whenever the Elbe water level permits. At low water, we naturally have other transport solutions for our customers to keep them appropriately supplied. Yet these are unfortunately not as economical as the inland waterway ship.

**Buss Group has opted among other things to operate two inland ports in Wustermark and Berlin. What lies behind the optimism that led you, besides your main seaport terminal business, to become an inland port operator when waterway conditions are so problematical?**

One aspect is the growing importance of hinterland services; the second is that we want to offer our customers, both in the seaport and inland, one-stop sourcing. So we are linking two great conurbations via our Wittenberge and Wustermark (Berlin) sites and transferring products to or from the region off the roads and on to inland waterway ship or rail.

**What experience, good and bad, have you had so far**

**and what are your wishes for the future of your inland terminal?**

The community locally is doing its utmost to support us. Like us, it is reminding politicians at state and national level of their promise "to keep the Elbe waterway navigable on 345 days a year with a depth of at least 1.60 metres". Instead of constantly seeking new excuses, central government should stick with its agreement and act accordingly.

**Mr Fester, why is the inland waterway craft so attractive for your company's logistics? What are the arguments for its use via ElbePort Wittenberge?**

The port of Wittenberge on the Elbe is only 35 kilometres from our plant in Karstädt. Routing our clay component supplies via Wittenberge lessens the strain on highway 189. Environmentally friendly transport chains also correspond to our corporate philosophy. We set great store on sustained ecological and economical production. The advantages of the inland waterway craft lie in the larger freight volumes that can be transported. In addition, we provide relief for the road network, the environment and for our costs too.

**From your point of view, what needs to happen for inland waterway craft on the Elbe to take over a higher proportion of freight transport?**

In order to resume cooperation with ElbePort Wittenberge, strong support is required for the natural waterway. When the Elbe has only a little water, some sections are no longer navigable. If the Elbe is to be incorporated in transport chains as a reliable transport route long term, these stretches of the river urgently need to be modified. Only then will a higher proportion of freight volume be transported by inland waterway craft. ■



**NYK Line (Deutschland) GmbH**  
Am Kaiserkai 1 · 20457 Hamburg  
Tel.: +49-40- 33 400- 0  
Fax: +49-40- 33 400- 1290  
Mail: nykline.hamburg@ne.nykline.com  
www.nykline.com

**WILLIS GMBH & CO. KG**  
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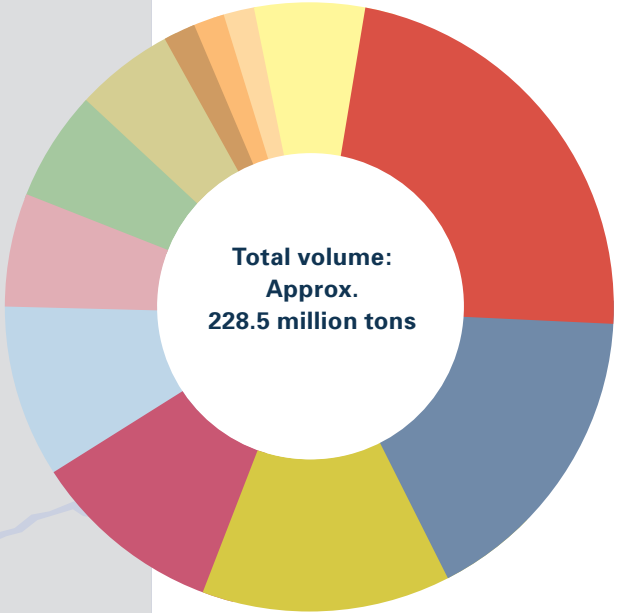


# INLAND PORTS IN THE ELBE REGION



## Cargoes shipped along Germany's rivers and canals:

Inland waterway shipping statistics for 2014, goods transported:



- Ores, stone and soils, other mined products: **56.5 million tons**
- Coking plant and oil products: **37.6 million tons**
- Coal, crude oil and natural gas: **35.5 million tons**
- Chemical products: **23.4 million tons**
- Agricultural, forest and fishery products: **16.9 million tons**
- Secondary materials, waste: **12.3 million tons**
- Metals and metal products: **12.1 million tons**
- Food, drink and tobacco: **9.7 million tons**
- Timber products, paper, cardboard, printed matter: **3.4 million tons**
- Other mineral products (glass, cement, gypsum, etc.): **3.2 million tons**
- Machinery and vehicles: **3.4 million tons**
- Unknown and other: **14.7 million tons**

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt





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**Terminal specialisation**

- Project and plant cargo
- Conventional general cargo
- Bulk cargo
- Offshore Components
- Logistics services

- Container

**Terminal area**

- Outdoor storage area 483,900 m<sup>2</sup>
- Warehouse space 27,900 m<sup>2</sup>

**Crane capacity and equipment**

- 3 cranes max. load 120 tons
- 2 oil transfer systems

- 1 liquid gas transfer unit
- Multidocker max. load 20 tons
- Reachstacker max. load 45 tons
- Fork-lifts max. load 30 tons
- Wheeled-loader/mobile excavator
- 2 truck weigh-bridges (max. 60 tons)

**Connections**

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)



**“I would like to see inland waterway vessels, the more environmentally-friendly mode of transport, become more important in seaport hinterland traffic, taking more goods away from the roads onto the inland-waterways.”**

*Frank Schnabel, CEO Brunsbüttel Ports*

**RENDSBURG**

[www.rendsburg-port.de](http://www.rendsburg-port.de)

**Terminal specialisation**

- General and heavy cargo
- Project cargo
- Container

**Terminal area**

Terminal area: 37,000 m<sup>2</sup>

**Crane capacity and equipment**

- 2 mobile port cranes max. load 250 tons in tandem mode
- Reachstacker
- Forklift max. load 16 tons
- 14 Rolltrailers



- 2 Tug Master
- Warehouse

**Connections**

- Link to waterway

**WITTENBERGE**

[www.elbeport.de](http://www.elbeport.de)

**Terminal specialisation**

- Container
- Project and plant cargo
- Bulk cargo
- Logistics services

**Terminal area**

- Terminal area 21,000 m<sup>2</sup>
- 384 m<sup>2</sup> loading platform area
- 150,000 m<sup>2</sup> extension area

**Crane capacity and equipment**

- Crane capacity 64 tons
- Mobile crane

- Reachstacker
- Skid-steer loader/ Wheeled loader
- Own truck pool with semi-trailers

**Connections**

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)
- 3,000 m rail track ( 5 tracks)



**“One of the reasons we have decided on the location Wittenberge is that policy-makers have clearly supported the navigability of the Elbe. Federal policy-makers should also feel committed.”**

*Jonathan Schünke, Terminal Operations Manager Inland Terminals, Buss Port Logistics*

**STADE**

[www.buss-port-logistics.de](http://www.buss-port-logistics.de)

**Terminal Specialisation**

- Container
- Project and plant cargo
- Conventional general cargo
- Bulk cargo
- RoRo
- Offshore components
- Logistics services

**Terminal area**

- Terminal area 35,000 m<sup>2</sup>
- 20 t/m<sup>2</sup> area load

**Crane capacity and equipment**

- Crane capacity 104 tons



- Mobile crane
- Mobile excavator
- Container spreader
- RoRo ramp

**Connections**

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)



MAGDEBURG

www.magdeburg-hafen.de

Terminal specialisation

- Container
- Project and plant cargo
- Conventional general cargo
- Bulk cargo
- Dangerous goods

Terminal area

- 40,000 m² undercover storage area
- 200,000 m² paved storage area

Crane capacity and equipment

- Crane installations max. load 50 tons
- Mobile crane max. load 500 tons
- Road vehicle weigh-bridge max. load 50 tons



- Public rail car weigh-bridge 120 t
- Landside power supply for inland-waterway vessels

Connections

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)



Magdeburger Hafen GmbH

**“I would like the shippers and logistics planers to see inland-waterway shipping not just as a stop-gap when there are bottlenecks in capacity handling, but also to consider the waterways system as a good alternative generally in their logistics concepts.”**

*Karl-Heinz Ehrhardt, CEO Magdeburger Hafen*

AKEN

www.hafen-aken.de

Terminal specialisation

- Import, export of raw materials, semi-finished and finished products
- Logistics services
- Dangerous goods

Terminal area

- Undercover storage area and paved outdoor storage area

Crane capacity and equipment

- Stationary crane installation max. load 270 tons
- Combined handling max. load 600 tons
- Two double jib level luffing cranes max. load 5 tons
- Mobile crane max. load 5 tons



- Container crane, 45 tons
- Reachstacker
- Public road vehicle weigh-bridge
- Rail car weigh-bridge

Connections

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)

**“We would like to see the Elbe maintained as a waterway and the navigation channels (1.60m fairway depth to Dresden 345 days annually).”**

*Peter Ziegler, CEO Hafenbetrieb Aken*



SÄCHSISCHE BINNEN-HÄFEN OBERELBE

www.binnenhafen-sachsen.de

Port group

- Dresden
- Děčín
- Lovosice
- Riesa
- Roßlau
- Torgau

Terminal specialisation

- Container
- Project cargo
- Conventional general cargo
- Bulk cargo

- Roßlau: up to 70 t
- Torgau: up to 35 t

Connections

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)

Crane capacity and equipment

- Dresden: up to 85 t
- Decín: up to 80 t
- Lovosice: up to 185 t
- Riesa: up to 50 t



**“The planned weir in Děčín has to be realized as soon as possible to connect czech ports with the european waterway network reliably and to allow free access to their markets. For this we trust on the implementation of a 1.60 m fairway depth in Germany.”**

*Veronika Weiß, CEO Česko-saské přístavy*

WEST-LADBERGEN

www.oelrich.com

Terminal specialisation

- Bulk goods
- Container
- General cargo
- Liquid fertilizer

Terminal area

- 4,000 m² undercover storage area
- 30,000 m² outdoor storage area
- 1,500 m³ storage tank for AHL
- 2,000 m³ storage and handling silo

Crane capacity and equipment

- Gantry crane max. load 5 tons
- Gantry crane m 40 tons
- Overhead crane max. load 12 tons
- Reachstacker max. load 45 tons



- Wheeled loader
- Forklift max. load 2-8 tons
- Filling systems

Connections

- Connections to road and waterway





**HALDENSLEBEN**  
www.uhh-haldensleben.de

**Terminal specialisation**

- Container
- Heavy cargo
- Logistics services

**Terminal area**

- 35,000 m<sup>2</sup> paved outdoor storage area
- 290 m quay

**Crane capacity and equipment**

- Special equipment for providing trucks
- 2 reachstackers max. load 45 tons each

**Connections**

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)

**“If I could make a wish, it would be that the check-in for containers for the Port of Hamburg could be brought forward and carried out in our inland terminal.”**

*Hergen Hanke, CEO UHH Umschlags- und Handelsgesellschaft Haldensleben*



**BRUNSWICK**  
www.braunschweig-hafen.de

**Terminal specialisation**

- Universal port
- Logistics services

**Terminal area**

- Terminal area 38,000 m<sup>2</sup>

**Crane capacity and equipment**

- 7 double jib level luffing cranes max. load 35 tons
- Pumping stations for liquid bulk cargo
- 2 gantry cranes max. load 50 tons
- Reachstacker

**Connections**

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)



**“For inland-waterway shipping I would like to see an integrated traffic network for the ultra-large motor vessels set up very quickly.”**

*Jens Hohls, CEO Hafenbetriebsgesellschaft Braunschweig*



**BERLIN (BEHALA)**  
www.behala.de

**Terminal specialisation**

- Container
- Project and plant cargo

- Conventional general cargo
- Bulk cargo
- Logistics services

**Terminal area**

- 20,000 m<sup>2</sup>

**Crane capacity and equipment**

- 2 Gantry cranes max. load 45 tons
- 1 Heavy Load Crane up to 350 t
- 1 empty container stacker

**Connections**

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)



**“Besides the fast re-building of the ship lift at Scharnebeck and the maintenance of the new locks at Wustervitz, I would like to see rate parity for handling inland-waterway vessels to the rail terminals in the seaports.”**

*Klaus-G. Lichtfuß, Head of Logistics, BEHALA*



**MINDEN**  
www.mindener-hafen.de

**Terminal specialisation**

- Container
- Logistics services

**Terminal area**

- Terminal area 33,000 m<sup>2</sup>
- Storage slot capacity approx. 1,000 TEU

**Crane capacity and equipment**

- 4 reachstackers
- Empty container stacker
- Forklift max. load 3.5 tons

**Connections**

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)

**“I would like to see awareness raised for the performance capability of inland-waterway shipping, e.g. inter-modal transport as a whole, as a measure to reduce emissions and provide an alternative to congested roads.”**

*Joachim Schmidt, CEO Mindener Hafen*





BERLIN (HAVELPORT)

www.havelport.de

Terminal specialisation

- Solid bulk cargoes
- Project and plant heavy lifts
- Logistics services

Terminal area

- Terminal area 28,250 m²
- 58,000 m² extension ares

Crane capacity and equipment

- 45 ton lifting capacity
- Reachstacker



Buss Port Logistics

Crane capacity and equipment

- Mobile excavator
- Skid-steer loader/Wheeled loader
- Truck weigh-bridge

Connections

- Links to waterways and roads
- Trimodal links planned



**“The Federal policy-makers should implement the German unity transport project no.17 (Einheit Nr. 17) on the Havel canal as soon as possible. This would make waterway transport in the Berlin region more economical and efficient and therefore more attractive to the customers.”**

*Michael Beyer, CEO HavelPort Berlin*



Cuxport GmbH

CUXHAVEN

www.cuxport.de

Terminal specialisation

- Container
- Project and plant cargo
- Conventional general cargo
- Bulk cargo

Terminal area

- 263,000 m²

Crane capacity and equipment

- RoRo ramps max. load 350 tons
- Reachstacker
- stacker max. load 32 tons
- Mobile port crane max. load 100 tons

- Gantry crane max. load 500 tons
- Crawler cranes

Connections

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)

**“I would like to see inland-waterway shipping with a constant, adequate draft for intermodal transport chains available.”**

*Roland Schneider, Business Development Manager Cuxport GmbH*



DORTMUND

www.dortmunder-hafen.de

Terminal specialisation

- Container
- Swapbody and trailer

Terminal area

- 60,000 m²
- 30,000 m² empty container storage
- In 2016 new terminal „Am Hafenbahnhof“ with 150,000 loading units

Crane capacity and equipment

- 3 cranes max.load 60 tons
- 3 reachstackers
- 4 empty container stackers



Dortmunder Hafen AG

- 3 high reach stackers max. 12 tons
- 8 reefer container plugs

Connections

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)



**“I would like to see the importance of inland-waterway shipping strengthened and public awareness raised. The advantages of inland-waterway shipping include an extensive system, already established and goods can be transported using less resources with a lot of free capacity readily available.”**

*Uwe Büscher, Management Board Dortmund Hafen AG*

KIEL (NORDHAFEN/OSTUFERHAFEN)

www.portofkiel.com

Terminal specialisation

- Nordhafen: Agricultural products,
- Ostuferhafen: Forestry prodcuts,

coal, general cargo, heavy lifts

Terminal area

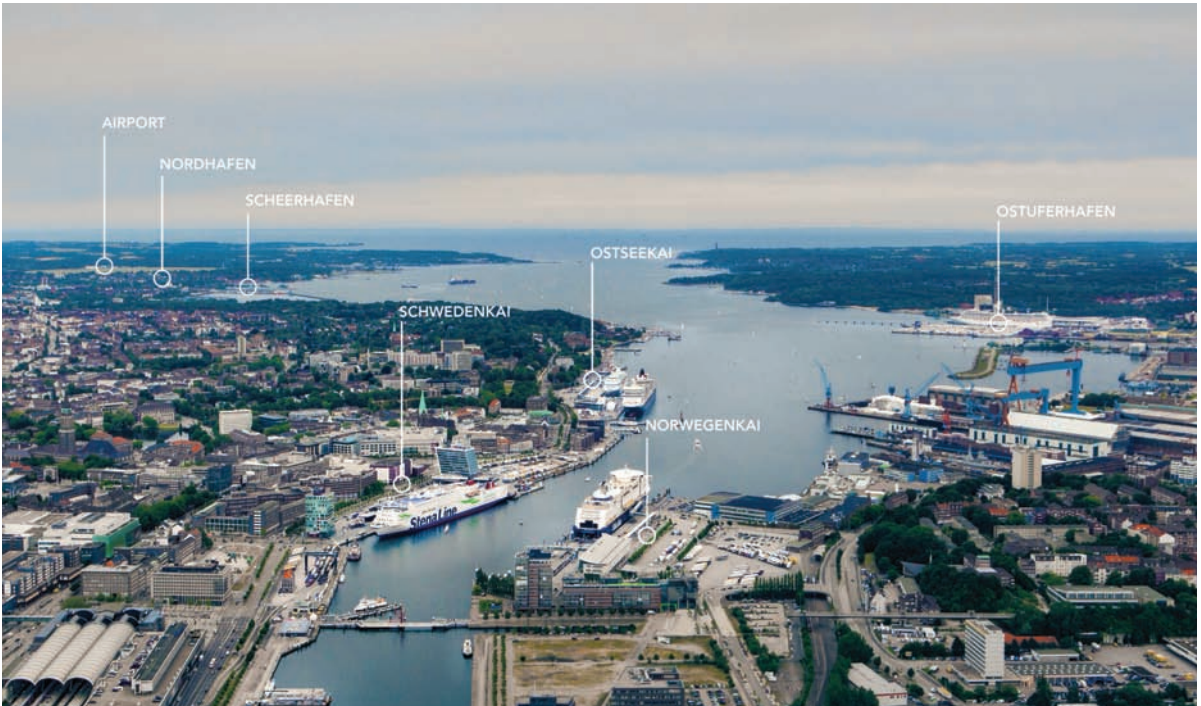
- Nordhafen: 16,000 m² outdoor storage area
- Ostuferhafen: 500,000 m² total area

Crane capacity and equipment

- 2 cranes
- capacity up to 140 tons

Connections

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)



SEEHAFEN KIEL



ČESKÉ PŘÍSTAVY

www.czechports.cz

Port group

- Ústí nad Labem
- Mělník
- Praha, Holešovice, - Smíchov, - Radotín
- Kolín
- Pardubice
- Container Terminal Pardubice Černá za Bory

Terminal specialisation

- Mělník: Heavy cargo, project cargo, conventional general cargo, container logistics
- Ústí nad Labem: agricultural products, container logistics, heavy cargo, steel products, conventional general cargo



Crane capacity and equipment

- Mělník: crane up to 300 t, 2 railway cranes up to 20 t, gantry crane up to 8 t

- Ústí nad Labem: crane up to 26 t

Connections

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)



GLÜCKSTADT

www.glueckstadt-port.de

Terminal Specialisation

- Project and plant cargo
- Conventional general cargo
- Bulk cargo
- Container

Terminal area

- 4,100 m<sup>2</sup> warehouse area
- 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> outdoor storage area

Crane capacity and equipment

- Port crane max. load 45 tons
- Wheeled loader including calibrated scales

- Forklift max. load 6 tons

Connections

- Connections to road and waterway

HAMBURG

www.hafen-hamburg.de

Terminal Specialisation

- Container
- Project and plant cargo
- Conventional general cargo

- Bulk cargo
- Dangerous goods
- RoRo
- Logistics services

Port area

- 7,145 ha

Crane capacity and equipment

- Crane capacity up to 406 tons

Connections

- Trimodal (road/rail/waterway)



# TRANSPORTWERK

Magdeburger  Hafen GmbH

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„Das Projekt hat Vorbildcharakter für andere Häfen.“

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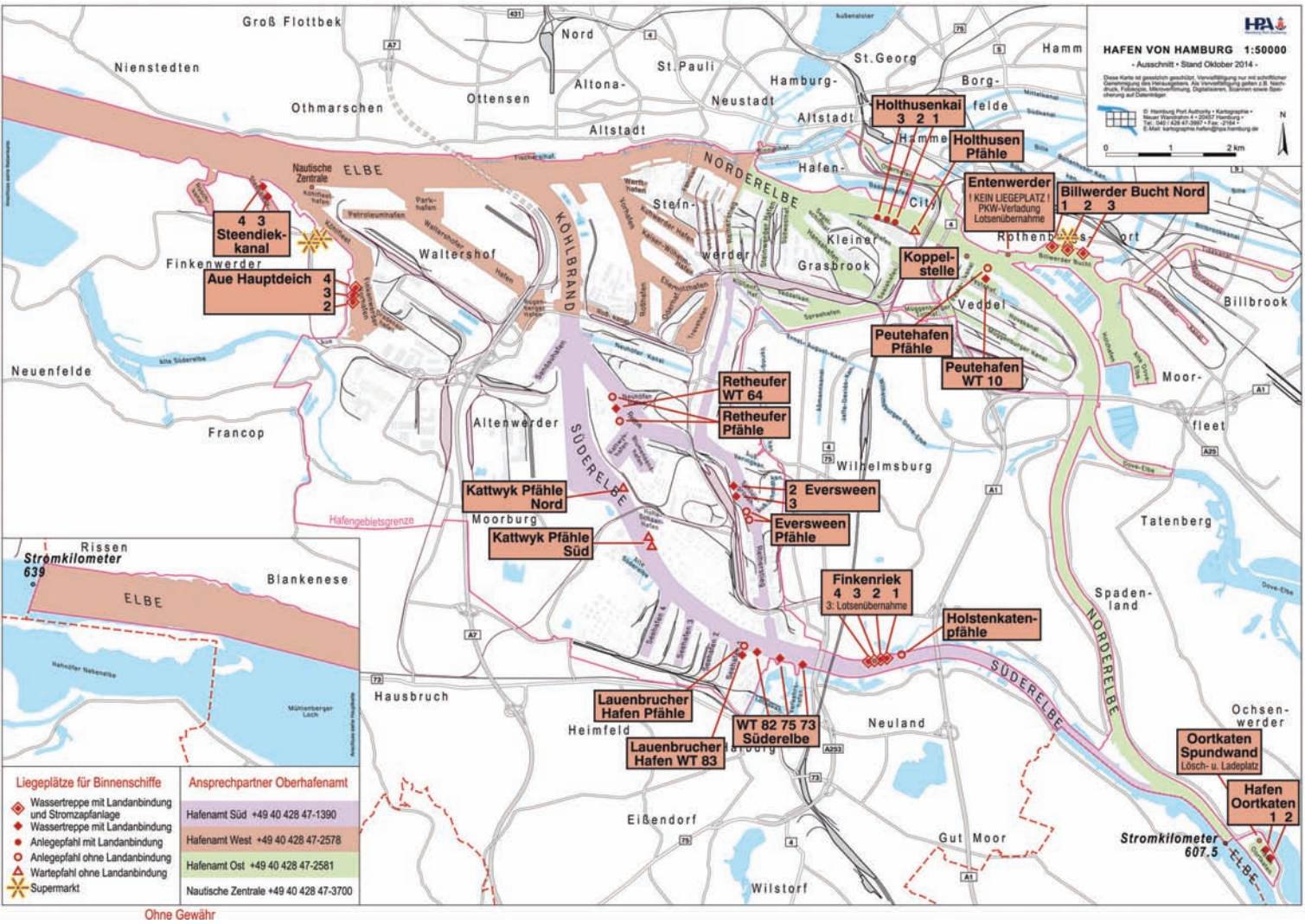
# Hamburg aims to be more attractive for inland waterway craft

Around 450 million consumers in the European domestic market expect to be supplied with foodstuffs, textiles and other consumer goods from all over the world. Efficient transport hubs such as the Port of Hamburg are essential for this. The port is also an indispensable centre for handling the despatch of export products, as well as supplying national economies with raw materials. Handling 146 million tons of seaborne cargoes, Hamburg is one of Europe's largest universal ports. Centrally located on international transport axes, it is supremely well linked with inland Europe by autobahns, rail and waterways.

Immense growth potential exists in Hamburg, especially in the inland waterway sector. Transport by inland waterway craft is environmentally friendly and efficient and can relieve roads in Germany of truck traffic. For example, one medium-sized inland waterway container vessel can accommodate at least 100 TEU, or 20-ft standard containers – or roughly the load for 63 trucks. Last year around 10,000 inland waterway craft with total cargo volume of 11.6 million tons were cleared in the Port of Hamburg. That represented 11 percent of hinterland traffic via Hamburg. An additional 46 percent were handled by

truck and 43 percent by rail. In container traffic, the inland waterway vessel's share of modal split was just 2 percent.

To make the Port of Hamburg more attractive for inland waterway shipping, Hamburg Port Authority and terminal operators have implemented and are preparing new schemes for optimized handling of these craft. These include: an Intelligent Transport System (ITS) for inland waterway shipping, a digital reporting procedure, an online overview of all inland waterway vessel berths, and a central coordination point for



**Overview of all berths for inland waterway craft in the Port of Hamburg**  
The Port of Hamburg provides 106 public berths for inland waterway craft. A map just published by Hamburg Port Authority shows where to find them: <http://www.hamburg-port-authority.de/de/hafenkunden/oberhafenamt/binnenshipping/Seiten/default.aspx>. This also indicates the main features of berth equipment and is continually being extended and updated.

## Intelligent Transport System (ITS) for inland waterway shipping

HPA is currently working on a scheme for developing an Intelligent Transport System (ITS) strategy for inland waterway shipping in Hamburg. This aims to optimize data interchange for inland waterway vessel services. Traffic data for all the players in the transport chain could

calls in the port. The idea is that in future these should simplify, speed up and strengthen inland waterway shipping in the Port of Hamburg.

in future flow into the system: Schedule and cargo data for inland waterway craft, terminal/lock/bridge availability, Elbe water levels and other current traffic data from the Harbourmaster's Office and the Nautical Centre. "Our aim is to optimize availability of data for inland waterway shipping in the Port of Hamburg, to enhance the reliability and calculability of transport processes, and to boost the utilization and efficiency of transport infrastructure," explains Saskia Zippel, responsible at HPA for its Inland Waterway Shipping Strategy. In addition, the ITS will reduce costs for users and improve traffic safety for

inland waterway vessels. Data interchange between all players in the transport chain would be paperless, simplified and accelerated. Among other advantages, this will enable inland waterway skippers and terminals to react more flexibly to non-scheduled delays or changes. Connecting this system to the smartPORT logistics (SPL) project will make the entire transport chain more transparent and efficient, with inland waterway shipping incorporated too. A first pilot project to detect berth occupancy and inland waterway vessel arrivals in the Port of Hamburg will commence next year.



**New LED water-level indicators and modernized shore-side power supply units**

A survey by the Harbourmaster's Office of inland waterway skippers calling in Hamburg indicated that they see a need for optimization of bridge clearances, berths, water level indicators and the situation on berthing at private quays. Among other moves, HPA reacted with the installation of new water-level indicators showing exact water levels and under-bridge clearances. "The first units have already been activated on the Rethe and Süderelbe bridges. Our goal is to install a new reversible tide level indicator at intersections in the port," reports Andreas Brummermann, Deputy Port Captain and Nautical Director. The shore-side power supply units at public berths for inland waterway craft have also been renewed.

**Digital reporting system for inland waterway vessels**

A further step towards modernizing inland waterway shipping was completed in April. Inland waterway craft can now use digital forms to report arrival and departure in the Port of Hamburg. Something that has been standard for years in oceangoing shipping, for rail and truckers, has long since been a Cin-

derella for inland shipping. Until now handwritten reports completed by its skippers have reached the HPA by fax. The new procedure simplifies and improves the reporting process. In addition, master data are saved for subsequent calls. As a next step, a web portal for the reporting process should go online in 2016.

**Use of inland waterway shipping for empty container logistics and inner port transports**

Inland waterway vessels will also be deployed on a larger scale for inner port container transports and transporting empty containers to depots. In 2014 around 72,000 TEU were shifted along the waterways between container terminals in this environmentally friendly way. Tremendous potential exists for boosting this proportion. "Around 90 percent of inner port container transports in the Port of Hamburg are still being handled by truck. That causes bottlenecks, especially on the Köhlbrand and Kattwyk bridges," explains Axel Mattern, CEO of Port of Hamburg Marketing. To better connect the waterside of depots for empty containers for inland waterway craft, HPA and the container depots are investing in expanding infrastructure and superstructure. Neuhöfer Canal, for example, is being upgraded to permit handling irrespective of the tide, while moorings are planned for

inland waterway craft, and new cranes for loading and discharging them are being taken into service.

**Prioritizing Elbe waterway in Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan**

The seaport-hinterland traffic so essential for the Port of Hamburg's added value cannot be taken for granted. In many regions of its hinterland, the Port of Hamburg faces tough competition from other ports in northern Europe. The modernization and expansion of infrastructure so essential for seaport-hinterland transport must be made the top priority in the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan. From Hamburg as far as the Czech Republic, the federal states are calling for a mean navigation channel depth of at least 1.60 metres on a minimum of 345 days in the year. In eight out of nine sections of the Central and Lower Elbe, average depth at low water does not even reach the depth promised by Federal government, being between 1.18 and 1.38 metres. "That is by no means sufficient for running regular and above all, viable inland waterway services," is Mattern's criticism. He estimates that with the reliable water depths called for, inland waterway shipping could more than double its function as an environmentally friendly carrier for the Port of Hamburg's seaport-hinterland traffic. ■



**Inland waterway vessels as alternative to transporting heavy loads by road**

*Restrictions on transporting heavy loads by road are in force in many places. That focuses attention on the inland waterway vessel in the heavy cargo and project field that is complex and generates high added value. Since such loads generally involve considerable weight and/or out-of-gauge dimensions, inland waterway transport is extremely suitable for shipments that need to leave the hinterland for the Port of Hamburg to be loaded aboard an ocean-going vessel. The state of the roads and clearances by rail provide no alternative in many places. By contrast with trucking, there is no need for complex special permit procedures for an inland waterway craft or for the waiting time caused by permission to move by road being confined to night-time when traffic is low. The inland waterway vessel is more flexible here and can take heavy loads straight to the oceangoing ship for transhipment.*



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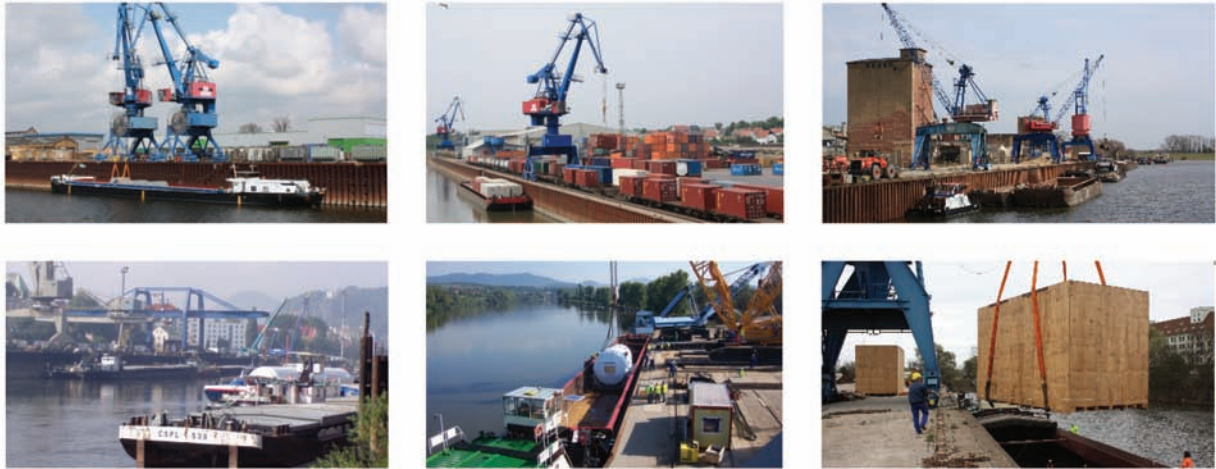


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# “One-stop service”

**FLZ could take over coordination of calls by inland waterway craft at Hamburg terminals.**

INTERVIEW Sabine Zilski

Prior to allocating berths, Hamburg container terminals expect to have timely notification as well as precise details on cargo volumes and the stowage situation and digital data communication. Inland waterway shipping companies want equal treatment at terminals on berth bookings and to be able to rely on stated clearance times. The expectations of both sides sound feasible and should go hand in hand. Yet to transform these wishes on day-to-day handling of inland waterway craft into reality will require some optimization. Here the Hamburg Feeder Logistics Center (FLZ) could fulfil an essential function. As a neutral body between shipowners and terminals, it offers to coordinate calls by inland waterway craft and optimize communications. FLZ was set up by the two container terminal operators HHLA and EUROGATE. With direct access to container terminal systems, since 2009 it has coordinated terminal rotations of feederships in the Port of Hamburg.



**Mr Hirt, with the FLZ you are offering to take on a central coordination function for calls by inland waterway craft in Hamburg. How did this idea come about and precisely what jobs will the centre take over?**

**Gerald Hirt:** “The idea of extending our coordination services for feederships to inland waterway craft had already come up when I joined FLZ more than three years ago. The basic idea of our Logistics Center is to optimize communication between terminals and shipping lines and to offer a central interface accessible round the clock, whether for rotation planning, berth coordination or stowage planning. Instead of dealing with four different contacts at four terminals, for example, with us inland waterway shipping companies would simply have one central partner to contact in Hamburg. They could gain just as much as feeder operators. So it obviously made sense to expand our range.”



**How, precisely, can inland waterway shipping companies profit from your neutral coordination centre?**



Gerald Hirt,  
Operations Manager of  
the Hamburg Feeder  
Logistics Center (FLZ)

**Gerald Hirt:** “We can see into the systems of the four Hamburg container terminals and are in regular contact with duty shift supervisors. This means that we notice immediately if a ship is unloaded and loaded earlier than planned. We can then consult them on possible use of a gap for handling an inland waterway craft. On the other hand, we can also see if a ship is arriving late and unable to keep the time slot allocated to her at the terminal. Then we check whether later handling is feasible or whether waiting time will be needed, in some cases they can call at another Hamburg terminal first. Should the rotation be altered, we naturally check on the repercussions for stowage planning and can intervene on that. It’s our philosophy always to have a Plan B up our sleeves and to present solutions. For the inland waterway skipper that means having a neutral service provider who rapidly spots disruptions to operations, can react 24/7 if something is not going to plan, can speed up clearance and continually optimize port rotation and stowage planning.”



**Mr Hanke, among other services Börde Container Feeder (BCF) offers regular container transport by inland waterway craft between Hamburg and the economically active areas around Magdeburg and Haldensleben. What advantages do you see for your business in a central coordination point such as the FLZ?**

**Hergen Hanke:** “One considerable advantage should be swift and reliable clearance in Hamburg. Currently we are working on agreements with up to eight handling facilities that all have their own requirements and conditions for handling

inland waterway craft. Should a delay occur at one terminal, we also miss time windows at the next terminal. That means a need to coordinate with the large number of partners we communicate with.”



Hergen Hanke, Managing Director, Börde Container Feeders



**Do you see any disadvantages or risks in outsourcing coordination of berths, handling times and stowage planning?**

**Hergen Hanke:** “With operating and controlling inland waterway ships as our core competencies, we are understandably a little wary of outsourcing. On top of that come the different operational requirements of personnel deployment on inland waterway craft, which you cannot compare with those for seagoing ships. So far the FLZ has had no experience with this. So we need to find contractual arrangements that are advantageous for both sides.”



**Mr Poser, Walter Lauk Group is a well-established provider of transport services and internal port repositioning by inland waterway craft in Hamburg. Along with FLZ, in August you embarked on a pilot project on the feasibility of a central coordination point. Do you have any anxieties that this could endanger jobs in your firm?**

**Sebastian Poser:** “We are initially simply testing the FLZ’s offer for our internal port transfers. We estimate that the required input corresponds to a quarter of a job. In that area we see a central coordination point as providing relief rather than competition. On inland waterway shipping, with loads being transported into the hinterland, the picture could be different, but first we’d need to test the individual scenario.”

**Gerald Hirt:** “In any case the core business of an inland waterway shipowner should be cargo acquisition. If we provide relief on communicating with the terminals and stowage planning, they can step up concentration on that.”



**What were the decisive reasons for you to take part in the pilot project and what advantages are you anticipating for your business?**

**Sebastian Poser:** “We have been discussing this project on and off with FLZ for over a year and we find this an interesting idea. The whole back and forth of coordinating terminal calls in Hamburg is a considerable stress factor and is very time consuming. When we get FLZ on board they can take over coordination with the terminals, giving us more time. Being able to look into the container terminals systems will enable FLZ to have a constantly updated overview of berth occupation and enable them to pinpoint gaps where our ships could be handled. We expect this will cut the waiting time at terminals that often occur in our transport chain. Our schedules can then be kept much more accurate.”



”

Sebastian Poser,  
Senior Manager  
with Walter Lauk  
Ewerführerei



?

**Where do you see the greatest challenge in putting the project into practice?**

**Sebastian Poser:** “For us, in repositioning, speed and flexibility are crucial. In addition, stowage planning is very demanding, as weight distribution on inland waterway vessels when landing and loading containers must always be kept in mind. Even one loaded container more or less can have an effect on stability in the water. For inland waterway vessels, the diversity of cargo creates the greatest difficulty. Requirements differ a great deal for transporting general cargo, bulk cargo, or containers. We also often have very tight time windows for handling at the terminals, sometimes only 30 minutes. On top of all that we often do not know today what cargo awaits us tomorrow. Then we must react very fast, requesting changes of custody at the Customs, compiling loading documents, informing the terminals and so on.”

**Hergen Hanke:** “I see standardization of the specific requirements for inland waterway vessels another major challenge. Demands by shippers mean that inland waterway shipping is constantly being required to carry optimization, so far through internal measures, ensuring transport runs are still commercially worthwhile. Carrier flexibility can rapidly suffer from any disruption of processes.”

?

**What are the costs for inland waterway shippers, if they use FLZ’s services?**

**Gerald Hirt:** “As a first step, we want to run a three-month test stage free of charge with all the shipping lines who are interested. We should together examine all current processes and check

the extent to which practical implementation of our scheme makes sense. Just as we’ve been doing with Walter Lauk since the end of August. We have also run a first trial for the Port of Braunschweig. Only after evaluating the test stage at the end of the year can we together work out the costs that will be involved in continuing our cooperation.”

?

**How will the test stage continue?**

**Sebastian Poser:** “For a start we shall need to evaluate the test stage together with the FLZ. Then we shall decide on whether to carry on, and to what extent. The fees are naturally an important factor. Any additional costs arising will need to be calculated for the individual containers and charged to our customers – cooperation with the FLZ should not lead to our no longer being competitive with our charges.”

**Gerald Hirt:** “We naturally hope that we can continue with these initial positive steps and find customized solutions for Walter Lauk and other shipping companies that are interested. If the project makes good progress, we could even envisage extending the system in the long term to lock administrations in the Elbe region. The locks are frequently the reason behind unpredictable delays for ships – repeatedly causing long waits or cancellations. We could for example be able to keep tabs on availability and perhaps even coordinate bookings for specific time-windows for lockings. On the Danube the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure is testing a system for recording ships’ arrival times at locks as part of the TEN-T project CoRISMa. A similar project involving timely notification is currently running on the Kiel Canal. This would open up completely new possibilities for more reliable time planning for inland waterway shipping.”

?

**One frequent criticism from inland waterway shipping companies is that Hamburg container terminals often defer scheduled handling times for inland waterway ships at short notice, causing long delays. The terminals for their part criticize short-term bookings by inland waterway ships and deviations in the container stowage situation. Do you think FLZ could contribute towards eliminating these shortcomings on both sides?**

**Sebastian Poser:** “Yes, I think it can. With one-stop operation, the communications chain is faster and more transparent. Everybody will gain from that.”

**Gerald Hirt:** “That’s what we should claim. While we cannot influence berth allocation, we see possible bottlenecks in terminals systems and are presenting forward-looking, efficient solutions. The terminals are grateful if we supply regular updates on whether or not the inland waterway craft will manage to reach the quay punctually. We intervene precisely whenever unexpected changes occur at short notice – whether in the shipping company’s schedule or terminal berth availability.”

**Hergen Hanke:** “There we have the real problem! Basically our ships can be punctual, but unfortunately disruptions repeatedly occur on the waterways that we can neither influence nor allow for in scheduling – defective locks, for instance. For optimizing processes and information flows, we need more acceptance on the part of the terminals and inland waterway shipping. To be able to deliver a stowage planning report at least one day before arrival in Hamburg, we need a fixed EDP connection between inland waterway vessel operators, terminals and the FLZ. This link will also need to be suitable for delivery of timely reports on any delays or volume changes arising.”

?

**Do you have one last personal word for our readers?**

**Sebastian Poser:** “Like Mr Hanke, I see a great need for action on digitalizing processes. Up to now we have worked on call-up and with handwritten loading documentation. The whole communications chain must be standardized. My IT colleagues are working hard on a digital interface to the terminal systems. We want all data to flow into the terminal system via the interface. We are planning to be ready next year and then we’ll see what happens next.”

**Hergen Hanke:** “Basically I assume that with FLZ in the driving seat, optimization of handling processes for inland waterway vessels should be feasible. Although at the moment, inland waterway shipping is fighting very different problems like the general infrastructure conditions, i.e. bridge heights, lock length, technical outages in the locks and much more. These repeatedly lead to unpredictable delays in inland waterway shipping.”

**Gerald Hirt:** “Whether a project like this is a success or a flop depends on whether people trust in it. In the feeder world there were initially reservations. Today, however, we enjoy access there to the operational systems run by our customers and partners. I only wish that we could continue to write this success story for inland waterway shipping as well.”

**Many thanks for a very informative discussion!**







*With locks and ship lifts just 12 metres wide, the Elbe Lateral Canal can only be used by inland craft with a maximum width of 11.45 metres*

# Longer, stronger, sleeker – Changes in inland waterway shipbuilding

**Many of the technical developments in the construction and operation of inland waterway vessels only become apparent at second glance. Rupert Henn (PhD in Engineering) is Managing Director of the Development Centre for Ship Technology and Transport Systems (DST) in Duisburg. He has followed changes in shipbuilding in the inland waterway shipping sector since the 1950s. Here he looks back for Port of Hamburg Magazine and explains what has altered in ship lengths, capacities, hull and propeller shapes.**

TEXT Dr.-Ing. Rupert Henn (DST)

Many of the technical developments in the construction and operation of inland waterway vessels only become apparent at second glance. Rupert Henn (PhD in Engineering) is Managing Director of the Development Centre for Ship Technology and Transport Systems (DST) in Duisburg. He has followed changes in shipbuilding in the inland waterway shipping sector since the 1950s. Here he looks back for Port of Hamburg Magazine and explains what has altered in ship lengths, capacities, hull and propeller shapes.

Even if many inland waterway craft from the post-war years are deployed on our waterways and the average inland waterway vessel has been in service for 50 years,

many alterations have taken place. Between the 1950s and today, the average capacity of freighters has grown from 451 to 1,094 tons. Average lighter capacity has increased over the same period from 819 tons to 1,940 tons.

The era of push-tug shipping commenced at the end of the 1950s. A push-tug shifts up to six lighters in one unit. Depending on the capacity of these, the total for the craft deployed can reach up to 13,800 tons. Lighters of types 'Europa I' and 'Europa II' boosted capacity per lighter to 2,300 tons. In the 1990s the need for larger ships of greater capacity led to the development of the 'Large motor ship' (GMS), with a length of between

86 and 110 metres and widths of 10.50 to 11.45 metres, able to transit standard locks 12 metres' wide. Drafts of the GMS varied between 3.20 and 3.50 metres, and capacities between 1,600 and 3,000 tons. A further surge in development produced the GMS combined with a lighter in a tug-barge system with a total length of 185 metres. In container shipping, the GMS with a length of 110 metres and a width of 11.45 metres has gained acceptance. This ship type has a slot capacity of 216 TEU, or 20-ft standard containers, and can transport up to 4,000 tons. The Rhine and the Danube can accommodate container ships 135 metres' long and up to 17.35 metres wide. Maximum capacity of these is 400 TEU.

.....  
**"The ship types deployed nowadays require tremendous propeller thrust."**  
.....

Along with ship size and the progress of push shipping, recent years have also seen research and further development of the hull design of inland waterway vessels under all manner of conditions. After many years of research, for instance, a stern shape for the inland water-

way vessel was developed resembling a square stern in its upper part and a cruiser stern in the lower part. Other improvements in flow conditions were achieved, for example, near the propeller by fitting a descending current plate. The ship types deployed nowadays require tremendous propeller thrust that is achieved on the one hand by a nozzle and on the other by large surface ratio and propeller diameter. To ensure that propellers up to two metres in size constantly remain swept by water even on empty runs, moveable tunnels that prevent any input of air are shaped into the modern stern. These also improve a fully laden inland waterway ship's performance in coming to a halt.

Along with the fixed pitch propellers on the shaft, other propulsion devices such as Schottel rudder propellers and jet drive are also widespread. In addition to the diesel engine that is still prevalent in inland waterway shipping, increasingly restrictive emission regulations are among the factors leading in future propulsion technology to growing evidence of trials and deployment of alternative LNG and hybrid-electrical propulsion systems. Propulsion technology using electric motors may open up potential for reducing CO<sub>2</sub>, but development of these is still in its infancy. ■



# QUEEN OF INLAND WATERWAY VESSELS

**Barely a single shipping company invests in new ships. Operating conditions are poor. Water depths are too low; locks are dilapidated and too small. An investment logjam on maintaining infrastructure blocks the potential of this environmentally friendly carrier.**

**To optimally adapt its ships to waterway conditions, two years ago shipowner B. Dettmer joined forces with the Development Centre for Ship Technology and Transport Systems in hatching the Dettmer Tank 140. She cost 6 million euros, showing just how cutting edge modern inland waterway craft can be. To keep readers of Port of Hamburg Magazine in the picture, we joined her for a day on board.**

It's 9.30 in the morning in Finkenwerder, and skipper Mike Thonig, a holdall slung over his shoulder, clambers along ladders across two barges and on to the

**Internationally, the German inland waterway fleet is showing its age. Some veterans on the Elbe have been sailing for over a century. Away from the Rhine, very few newbuildings are to be seen.**

TEXT & PHOTOS Sabine Zilski

Dettmer Tank 140. She's a motor tanker owned by the B. Dettmer shipping company. Once on board, he slips off his shoes, throws his bag on to the bed in his cabin, puts on comfortable sweatpants, pours himself a coffee and settles into the captain's chair in the wheelhouse. It's Tuesday today. For the next three weeks the ship will be his workplace and home.

"Have we enough water?" he asks his deckhand Andreas Schmiedeck, reaching for the tide tables. "Yep, we can go," confirms Andreas, meanwhile on deck to cast off. He has already checked the engine-room equipment and noted the oil level shown by the electronic display. The ship contains a mass of state-of-the-art technology. "If something is not functioning properly, an alarm sounds on the ship. A fault report also appears on Mike's shipboard computer up in the wheelhouse. Then I get to the bottom of it in the engine-room and try to repair the fault," explains Andreas. As back-up, remote diagnoses and troubleshooting by

external experts for the main engines are also available via an Internet link.

Mike presses a button in his cockpit to raise the wheelhouse at least a metre. "Just so that at least I can see where I'm going," he quips. He's been up since 02:30. He just had two weeks off, spending them in his native Bernburg at the River Saale, around 50 kilometres South of Magdeburg. This morning he has come by bus and train to Finkenwerder in the Port of Hamburg for the start of his shift on board. Four weeks on and two off is the regular pattern for B. Dettmer's crews. Andreas has already spent a few days on board. Yesterday he loaded 1,360 tons of diesel fuel in Brunsbüttel. It would take more than 50 tankers to transport that quantity by road.

The Dettmer Tank 140 casts off. As always, she'll sail up the river from Hamburg to the Elbe Lateral Canal and then along the Mittellandkanal to Magdeburg. The ship runs on an oil multi-national's shuttle service between Brunsbüttel, Hamburg and Magdeburg. Today six of the ship's eight tanks are full. The other two remain empty. Otherwise the vessel would be too heavy and lie too deep for canal navigation channels. If everything goes smoothly, Mike and Andreas will cover the coming 250 kilometres in two days. Yet they'll need to transit six locks. That costs time and nervous energy. "The locks are the unpredictable weak link in our schedules. Sometimes we are lucky and get through on a 'green wave'. On other runs we have had to wait up to 25 hours at the Scharnebeck ship lift. The

reason: Something kaput, or too many craft wanting to go through the lock at once. It's first come, first served there. The next ship waits in line," explains Mike. "It would be nice if we had more water in the Elbe. On the return run at least, we could then bypass the locks. That would save at least a day and a lot of fuel. We usually do the return run with no cargo on board, but even when empty we have a draft of 1,30 metres – sadly too much for the very shallow Elbe," adds deckhand Andreas. Channel depth in many sections of the Central and Upper Elbe is no more than 1.18 metres; and last summer persistent low water made it considerably less.

The Elbe bridges are getting closer. Mike picks up his binoculars and reads the water level display. He retracts the mast at the ship's bow and lowers the wheelhouse again. "Else we'll crash underneath the bridge." The Dettmer Tank 140 is 4.90 metres high, 86 metres long and 11.45 metres wide. That often makes passing bridges a tight squeeze, with just centimetres to spare. The ship is a Type C newbuilding, making her a Queen of Inland Waterway Ships. Two 745-kilowatt engines provide both bow and stern propulsion. The rudder units can be individually controlled via four separate hydraulic systems. Radar units, video and thermal image cameras ensure additional safety during the voyage. "Theoretically I no longer need to look out of the windows when steering her," quips Mike. Whether it's the oil level, cargo volumes in the ballast cells or the ship's draft – everything is measured electronically. Even loading and discharge processes are

*Skipper Mike Thonig gives us glimpses of his wheelhouse, cabin and galley on board the Dettmer Tank 140. For steering the tanker safely along canals and rivers, he uses the small lever below (right).*







Passing safely under the Elbe bridges is a matter of centimetres. To avoid collisions, Mike has to lower the wheelhouse and the mast at the bow

controlled by touchpad monitors, explains Andreas: "I don't even need to be on deck to open up the tanks for loading and unloading. It's all done at the press of a

button." Another special feature is the tanker's double skin, i.e. an additional hull has been inserted between the fuel and lubricant tanks and the external hull. Com-

pared to simple hulls, this enhances safety in the event of an accident. That puts the Dettmer Tank 140 at the forefront of technology – and from 2018 such a double hull will be mandatory for all tankers in Europe. Mike has been around since the maiden voyage in April 2013: "Tankers like this one are the future – that's why I wanted to be in on the change as soon as possible by switching from the Dettmer Tank 51 to this new ship type."

The phone rings. "On Friday you'll have to load oil in Magdeburg and bring it to Hamburg," announces a dispatch clerk at B. Dettmer. "No problem," confirms Mike. "Can you say yet when we will get a berth for discharging our present cargo?" Mike wants to know. The clerk says "No" and promises to get back to him as soon he knows more. It is 13:00 and Mike is making for the barrage in Geesthacht. This limits the tidal flow of the North Sea upriver. A two-chamber lock assist ships to overcome the height difference of up to 3.50 metres at low water. Mike makes radio contact with the lock attendant. "Dettmer Tank 140, 1,360 tons, draft 2.50 metres, I'm entering the sluiceway." Mike reaches for his binoculars again: A river cruise ship is already waiting in the chamber. The attendant waves through the Dettmer Tank 140: "Starboard please."

Andreas readies the bow lines for mooring. Immediately the tanker is securely tied up in the lock, the lock gate astern closes, the chamber fills up with water that raises the two vessels to the upriver water level. The lock gate ahead opens and the run can continue.

Cows, sheep and picturesque villages pass by on the left and right banks. The shipboard computer indicates a speed of 8.5 kph. The permitted maximum is 10 kph. Cruising speed plays an important role in inland waterway shipping: Moving 1.5 kph faster on a stretch of 250 kilometres can mean a saving of 4.5 hours. In recent years, time pressure on these runs has escalated rapidly. "Life used to be more relaxed in inland waterway shipping. We'd sometimes spend two or three weeks at a terminal before we could take on the cargo," Mike recalls from his childhood. "Today's it's just go, go, go... Time windows for loading and discharging are shorter and shorter. We usually have just a few hours for the job. That leaves precious little time for leaving the ship and taking a deep breath." Even if skippers are obliged to observe permitted duty and rest times, growing time pressure means that 14 hours and more underway are not unusual. "Since we spend four-week shifts on board and in principle do 99 jobs in one, even during rest periods there's always

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Entering a trough at Scharnebeck lifts requires the utmost concentration. On each side a gap of just 27 centimetres remains between the ship's hull and the lock wall

something to be done. We maintain and repair the engines, paint and varnish worn patches on the ship, cook, clean, do washing and much more," says Mike. On ships of up to 86 metres, like the Dettmer Tank 140, having two men on board is mandatory. "On some stretches there are three of us, but that's more the exception." Spending so much time together in a restricted space means that the chemistry between the crew must be right. "For some guys inland waterway shipping is just a job, for others a real vocation. If the chemistry is wrong, then a shift can be really tedious," knows Mike. The mood between him and Andreas is relaxed and friendly. They laugh together about the newest 'Minions' clips and each of them invariably has a ribald jest in store for the other. Deciding who does what requires virtually no discussion.

That Mike would one day become a skipper was a certainty from his childhood days onwards. He had inland waterways in his genes. His father was a skipper and he spent the first year of his life afloat with his parents. Then he moved with his mum to Halle, where he later went to school. Spending most of his life on board, his father was only home once a month for a few days. Not much time remained for his family and friends. "That was not always easy. It was one of the main reasons that I looked for a steady job in a shipping company," recalls Mike. At 16 he became an apprentice with Deutsche Binnenschiffsreederei. "The training lasted three years and was very largely practical. I spent most of the time on board ship and just nine months in the classroom." Today he wouldn't ex-

change his job for one in an office for all the tea in China: "I'd simply go berserk," says Mike. What he enjoys most on his days off is some DIY in his house in Bernburg. He's just tiled the bathroom and will tackle the grouting next. He also tries to find time for his family and friends. "I have a dwindling number of friends. When I am free, most of them have to work, that's a severe test for any friendship," explains Mike. "I don't need to even sign up at sports clubs. It wouldn't go with shift work." All the same, he doesn't miss much on board, "at most the sofa or lunch ready on the table," reveals colleague Andreas, smiling. Each of them shops for himself when on board. "During lay times, with luck one of us can run round to a supermarket and buy a few provisions," says Mike. In the galley today there's a small tomato salad for Andreas, plus a bag of rolls from the baker. On the shelf lies a packet of "Maggi 'fix & fresh' cooked mince." The clerk from head office in Hamburg is on the phone again. "The unloading date for Thursday is confirmed." "That's fine," replies Mike, and hangs up.

Just before Lauenburg, Mike sets course for the Elbe Lateral Canal. "Now for the most boring part of the route," he says. "For many kilometres it's just all straight on with nothing to see but grassy dikes." Mike switches on the autopilot and pours himself a coffee. Yet the Elbe Lateral Canal also presents one of the stiffest challenges to the inland skipper's patience: Scharnebeck ship lift. Built in 1974, this double vertical hoist is an unpredictable bottleneck that imposes a size limit for inland waterway craft on and around the




Elbe. The troughs are only 12 metres broad and 100 metres long, but modern motor barges can exceed 110 metres. Push barge trains can be much longer, needing to be un-coupled, which involves costs and takes time. Many forwarders therefore switch to road or rail, causing bottlenecks there. Hamburg and Lower Saxony, as well as representatives of business, environmental bodies and politics, are leaning ever harder on the Federal ministry for incorporation in 2015 of a second descent structure in the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan. That needs to be 225 metres long.

"Dettmer Tank 140, 1,360 tons, draft 2.50 metres," reports Mike to the Scharnebeck lock attendants. A launch giving folk a tour of the ship lift, plus two inland bulk cargo vessels, comprise the queue as the Dettmer Tank 140 approaches the ship lift at 15:30. Another passenger craft is just entering the left lock chamber. "Locking towards 17:00," confirms one of the attendants on the gigantic structure. The upper and lower water levels at Scharnebeck differ by 38 metres. Andreas ties up the tanker at one of the waiting spaces. Then he clambers ashore to buy some sticky rolls and croissants at the nearby Aldi. Mike leans back in his seat: "A wait of just an hour and a half is super. We are lucky today and should reach Magdeburg punc-


tually on Thursday. Maybe we shall even obtain a berth for the night too." He makes radio contact with the lock office again: "Any chance of a small berth upstream once we're through?" he asks. "Let's talk about that later," is the gruff reply. The left lock chamber containing the passenger craft slowly lurches upwards like some outsize elevator. Simultaneously the right chamber is on the way down. This contains the inland bulk carrier 'Marabu'. "A hoist like that, including entry and exit of the ship, can easily take half an hour. The next ship is waiting as a rule, is then summoned and brought down. By the time it's the turn of the next ship in the row below, at least an hour normally passes," reports Mike. With both chambers in operation today, a ship can be hoisted from the lower to the upper level roughly every 30 minutes.

Andreas returns aboard with some full shopping bags. During the joint coffee break, the lock attendant announces: "You can stay overnight." "OK, thanks." After an hour and half's wait, it's their turn at last: "Dettmer Tank 140, starboard," the radio announces – their starting signal. Mike retracts the masts and the wheelhouse so far down that he can no longer stand upright. Andreas casts off the lines and stands in the bows to give Mike 'parking aid' with hand signals and



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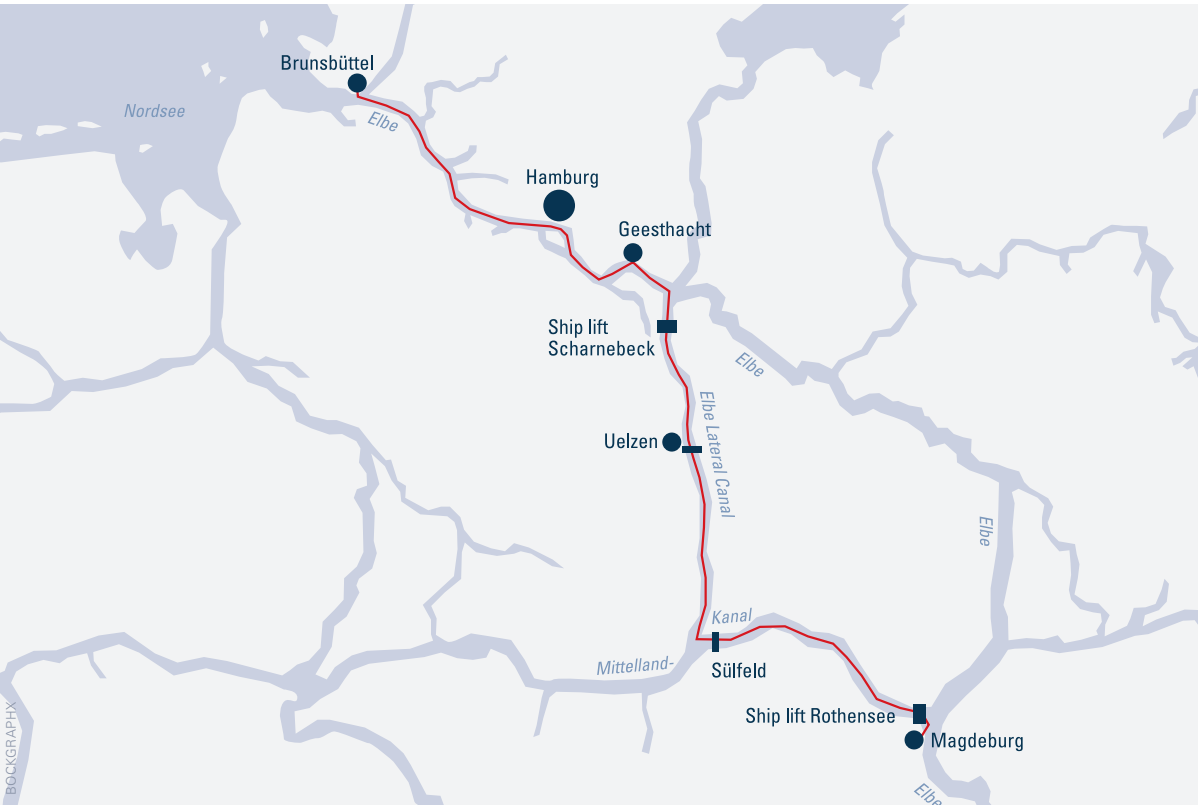




Mike and Andreas are in luck: Only four vessels are waiting before them for locking in Scharnebeck

the walkie-talkie. There are only centimetres to spare on entering the trough that's just 12 metres wide. Between the right and left of the hull and the lock wall only a hand's breadth remains. After a quarter of an hour, Andreas can secure the vessel with lines around the lock bollards. The gate closes, the Dettmer Tank 140 slowly ascends, leaving its still occupied berth 38 metres below her. Cars are moving over the bridges and vessels along the canal far below. Mike and Andreas literally sway above the world on the deck of their tanker. After a further quarter of an hour the gate ahead opens and

once again they have before them the familiar view of the Elbe Lateral Canal. Mike takes his place in the wheelhouse, briefly glances far down below, and starts up. The next vessels are waiting above for locking. Mike makes for the last holding berth to starboard, Andreas ties up the tanker and says: "That's it. We're done." He quickly switches on a revolving light on the channel side – the shipping signal for stationary craft along the banks – and now Mike and Andreas can look forward to their beds, laptops and maybe a nice DVD. "Cast off and carry on," will again be the signal early tomorrow, at 04:00. ■





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# SOME HELPFUL HINTS FROM PETER PICKHUBEN

## Holidaying on German inland waterways

Has this issue fired your enthusiasm for the notion of a trip along German waterways, among inland cargo ships? Then don't fail to brief yourself on river cruise shipping. The floating hotels nowadays even offer spa facilities, fitness rooms and swimming pools. Whether on the Elbe, Danube or Rhine, for a couple of days or two weeks – the ranges available are so varied that there should be something for everybody.



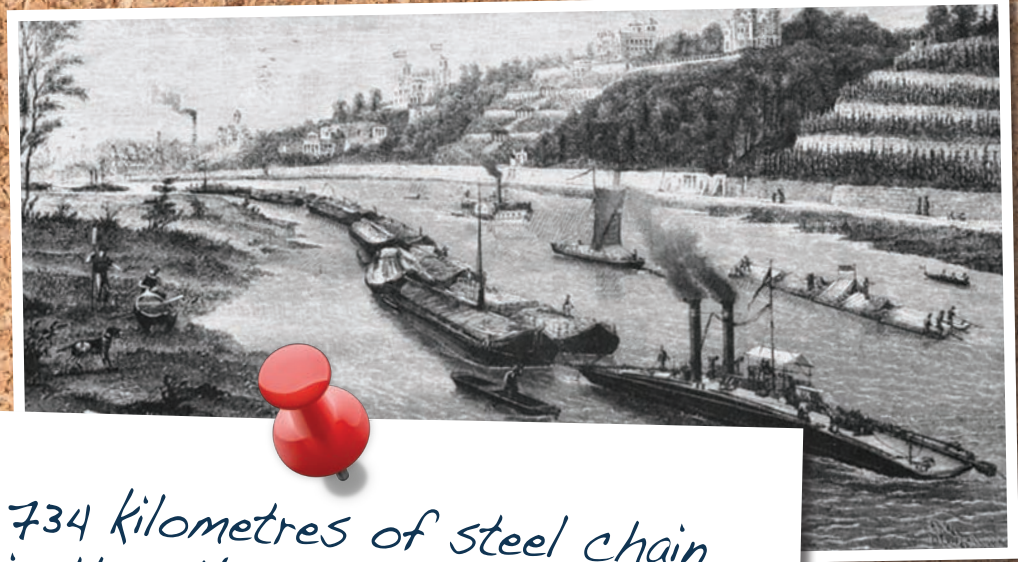
Dirk Becker

## The oldest lady on the Elbe

The inland waterway craft 'Mira' is the most historic vessel now regularly calling in the Port of Hamburg. Built in Capelle at the IJssel in the Netherlands in 1892, she has survived two world wars and the end of steamships. Meanwhile fitted with a 586-hp diesel engine, she has a capacity of up to 1,108 tons, is 80 metres long and 9 metres wide. Among the cargoes shifted by this venerable inland bulker are stone, scrap metal, and seeds for a company in Seevetal on the outskirts of Hamburg.



Thomas Kunadt



## 734 kilometres of steel chain in the Elbe?

There really was such a thing at one time. During the second half of the 19th century vessels would use chains in the riverbed to drag themselves along European waterways. Chain-boat navigation revolutionized inland waterway shipping at the time. Chain-boat tugs could pull strings of several barges along the chain. This enabled vessels to transport considerably more cargo, and also bulkier and heavier loads. In Germany, towage chains were laid in the rivers Elbe, Saale, Spree, Brahe, Weser, Neckar and Main. These could be several hundred kilometres long. A 734-kilometre chain ran in Elbe from Hamburg as far as Melnik. Parts of this still lie in the riverbed.

From 1890 chain shipping then became less important on the Lower Elbe. Paddle steam tugs and cargo ships came to predominate on the rivers. Just one chain-boat tug, the 'Gustav Zeuner', has been preserved. Since 2010, she has been on display in the former Handelshafen basin in Magdeburg.

## Inland waterway shipping down the centuries

Many maritime museums in Germany include displays on the history of inland waterway shipping from the Stone Age until today. Their exhibitions are extremely varied, covering living and working on board, passenger shipping, port cargo handling techniques, the German canal system, river regulation work, lock building and much more. In Hamburg I would recommend those interested to visit the International Maritime Museum or the Hafenmuseum Hamburg. In Dresden a visit to the Transport Museum is well worthwhile, and in Bremerhaven the same goes for the German Shipping Museum.





# Focus on transport chains

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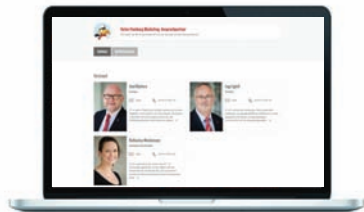
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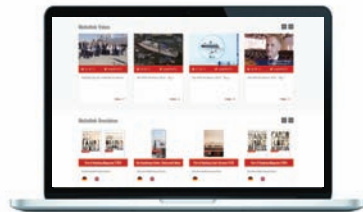
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**Credits**

**Port of Hamburg Magazine is a Port of Hamburg Marketing publication**

**Published by:** Port of Hamburg Marketing ■ **Editorial supervision:** Bengt van Beuningen, Sabine Zilski, Port of Hamburg Marketing ■ **Production:** Küter & Staack Creativepool ■ **Concept:** SPIDER DESIGN GmbH ■ **Layout:** [www.bockgraphx.de](http://www.bockgraphx.de) ■ **Printers:** GK & KK Druck GmbH ■ **Advertising manager:** Jürgen Wenzel ■ **English adaption:** T + S Team

Signed articles do not necessarily reflect the editors’ views. No responsibility is accepted for unsolicited photographs or manuscripts received. Print circulation: 7,000 copies in German. English edition available in mediathek at [www.hafen-hamburg.de/mediathek](http://www.hafen-hamburg.de/mediathek). Please send details of any changes of address or requests for additional copies to us at: Port of Hamburg Marketing, Tel: +49 40 37709 0, E-Mail: [info@hafen-hamburg.de](mailto:info@hafen-hamburg.de)

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