

The Nectar Group – Return to Mogadishu



Ever since Nectar Group loaded its first train carriage on board a vessel destined for Tanzania in 1975, the company has had a growing desire to tackle extra-ordinary cargo handling projects. Delivery of 1,000 train carriages to Africa was just the beginning. Amongst the milestones that mark the 40 years of growth for the company was the development of the first generation of mobile bagging machine. Today, the most recent generation of Nectar's mobile bagging machine, the Compac M140, has won multiple awards and has revolutionized port activities around the world. Since the inception of Nectar's first generation bagging machine, there have been many attempts to mimic the advanced technology and superior craftsmanship but there is still no alternative that is comparable.

In recent years the global recession has reduced the global aid contributions destined for the Horn of Africa and other similar areas giving extra importance to economic efficiency. Ultimately, every Dollar saved during the discharge process results in another Dollar of aid cargo reaching the hungry. This only extends the importance of some of the poorer nations shifting the emphasis to port efficiency and onward inland logistics. Ultimately, some of the current difficulties in reaching inland locations in many countries in Africa, Asia, South America etc. is the result of a lack of aid deliveries but also, and more importantly in the battle to encourage self-sufficiency, domestic and international trade.

In recent years there has been a marked shift in attitudes in the emerging nations. The importance of ports and their relative significance in promoting a growing economy has led to many nations investing in improved infrastructure and efficiency on top of improved management styles. This emphasis on a more efficient method of handling incoming cargoes has been a major influence on the recent success of the Nectar Group's mobile equipment. An example of such a situation is the seaport of Mogadishu in Somalia. This is a location that has been in the

grasp of war for many years. The country itself has been stifled by famine and disease as a result of the infighting between militant groups and security forces. Whilst the city of Mogadishu is returning to a relative state of peace, there is still a sense of danger hanging in the air.

Mogadishu's port has seen a relative boom in the number of cargo vessels calling in the last year. Of late the increased stability of the country and the relative decline in piracy in the Indian Ocean has encouraged the importation of both aid cargo and private trade. It can certainly be said that there is a demand for technology such as Nectar's 'Compac M140' mobile bagging machines which improve the port's dry cargo handling ability and further promote trade and development. The benefit of such equipment is not just seen in increased handling efficiencies but also the resulting savings that are made. By shipping in bulk, as opposed to pre-bagged, the shipper saves a substantial amount in both the time saved and the losses incurred as each bag is delivered on the trucks in pristine condition when bagged



alongside the vessel in the port of discharge. In addition, members of the local community are being trained to a high standard with many transferable skills. Although the task of training inexperienced staff for the first time was a challenge, there is now a dedicated team of highly trained locals with improved work prospects. It is hoped that these workers will benefit from further training as Nectar's involvement in Mogadishu increases.

There must, however, be an onward momentum of similar personnel, equipment and logistical expertise. Nectar's operations in Somalia certainly increase the speed of discharge and the quality of product loaded on the trucks but the lack of good quality roads, railways, trucks and trains means that there is a considerable amount of cargo still lost or damaged before



reaching the point of destination. Within the dry cargo industry the importance of storage facilities, port conveyance, experienced and efficient management as well as regular improvements of standards cannot be underestimated but if the onward transport and infrastructure cannot meet these efficiencies back to back then bottlenecks will still be met. It is clear that more investment and development is still needed in these regions. However, with Somalia opening its doors to new opportunities, Nectar will continue to provide efficient bulk cargo handling and promoting development of bulk shipping to Mogadishu.



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