



King Abdullah Port lives up to promise

Throughput at King Abdullah Port (KAP) on the Red Sea coast is racing ahead, confirming the success of the first privately owned, developed and operated commercial port in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which opened in early 2014.

First half 2017 throughput at the port reached 821,694teu, an increase of around 14% over the 720,483teu of the corresponding 2016 period. The number of vessels calling during the six months was up by the same percentage, to 349.

Meanwhile, in the month of May alone the value of imports increased 60.7% year-on-year to reach SR1,277m (\$340m), according to the country's General Authority for Statistics.

Full year container traffic for 2016 had reached 1.4m teu, an 8% increase over the 1.3m teu of 2015, allowing it to enter the world's Top 100 container ports for the first time, according to industry analyst Alphaliner.

'These numbers clearly indicate the success of King Abdullah Port as the latest infrastructure megaproject in the Middle East,' said Eng. Abdullah

Hameedadin, managing director of the Ports Development Company, owner and developer of KAP.

'King Abdullah Port is built according to state-of-the-art specifications and is designed and executed to cope with the Kingdom's commercial and economic growth in the coming decades,' he continued. 'With its advanced equipment and impressive numbers, the port is able to effectively contribute to the Kingdom's prosperity and revival, fulfilling its desired role in contributing to the realisation of Vision 2030.'

Ports Development Company is now cooperating with all relevant entities to support KAP's progress and finalise all its facilities. For example, it recently announced the completion of building and equipping the central operating room for monitoring and linking together the x-ray customs inspection systems in the port.

In addition, it also covered all customs inspection areas with a wireless network utilising the latest global technology, reports Hameedadin. 'The project was successfully delivered to the Saudi Customs at KAP, making the port a pioneer in equipping the central

operations centre and activating the 24-hour container inspection initiative,' he says.



Abdullah Hameedadin,
KAP md

Other advantages of the port include its strategic location on one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, close by the King Abdullah Economic City's Industrial Valley and bonded zone; state-of-the-art processing systems; extra deep 18mtr water berths; expanding ro-ro activities; and fully integrated Port Community System.

Another key factor in KAP's success has been the establishment of Specialized Marine Services (SMS) as a jv between Port Development Company and the National Port Services Company. SMS is the primary supplier of marine services in the port and operates a multi-purpose fleet of tugs offering round-the-clock support to vessel movements in the port. In 2016 it provided towage and handling services to 1,460 vessels and this number is expected to rise by 30% during 2017.

Once fully built, KAP will be able to handle 20m teu as well as 1.5m vehicles (car equivalent units) and 15m tons of clean bulk cargo every year. ●