

# PILOT NIGHT TIME OPENING OF CONTAINER TERMINALS



(c) Jan Crab

Ports such as the port of Antwerp are characterized by an unequal distribution of traffic during the entire day: peaks and possible congestion in the morning and evening are combined with periods during the day in which there is

still plenty of road capacity. Especially during the night, capacity exceeds traffic flows.

First initiatives to spread the traffic flows and using the night time were introduced in 2017. In the “Deurganckdok around the clock”-initiative, container terminals at the Left Bank are open 24/5 (24 hours a day during weekdays). In addition, toll on the Liefkenshoektunnel is reduced by 75% during nights. All these initiatives are aiming to spread traffic during the day (peak shaving).

As only the terminals on the left bank were open, a new phase in the night shift is organised as from February 2020: also the terminals at the right bank of the port were opened 24/5 during a pilot phase. It was organised that the pilot phase took 3 months. As a result of the COVID period, the pilot phase was extended until the end of 2020.

## CONTEXT & CHALLENGES

The specific objectives of this measure are:

- To expand the night opening 24/5 to other terminals and extend it from the left bank to the right bank.
- Monitor the effects of opening the terminals (increased night transport also on the left bank)



(c) Frederik Beyens



(c) Sigrid Spinnex

Implementation measures are enlarged due to the COVID crisis.

• **Challenge 1:** Night transport is much needed in the port area because of a peak shaving effect. Although, the opening of terminals at night offers increased possibilities for port users, it also creates extra costs for port terminals. Therefore, traffic flows need to be large enough to offer possibilities also for terminal operators.

• **Challenge 2:** Many different actors are involved, i.e. port authority, companies,

transporters, terminals, etc. It is key to involve all stakeholders in the dialogue and work towards a joint plan together.

• **Challenge 3:** Because of the diversity of the stakeholders, it is not easy to come to a joint solution. There has to be something in it for everybody.



(c) Port of Antwerp

## RESULTS - FINDINGS - LESSONS LEARNED



The Port of Antwerp has launched a pilot project to look into the possibilities of night-time logistics on the Right Bank of the river Scheldt. By encouraging transport by night,

less trucks will be on the road during the day (when it is more congested). The pilot project was planned to end in April 2020, but is extended until July 2020 because of COVID19. As a result of the following (lockdown-)measures, road congestion decreased significantly during the day. Therefore, there was less incentive for logistic transport by night.

It is worth mentioning that market parties have responded quite positively to this pilot. The pilot project is running with a limited number of players, but others have already expressed interest in joining. Based

on the results of this pilot project, it will be decided which next steps to take and how to proceed. In the meantime, several technological partners have already shown interest in working together to create one joint system/platform for the organisation of night-time transport, should this become a permanent solution.

| No. | Objective and target  | Rating | Comment  |
|-----|---|--------|--|
| 1   | To open the container terminals on the right bank during night period (24/5) and expand the possibilities from the left to right bank | ★★     | Container terminals were opened during a trial period.     |
| 2   | To monitor the usage of night openings at right bank as well as left bank   | ★★     | Figures will be collected during the extended trial period |
| 3   | Trial period is extended as a result of external circumstances  | ★★     | Trial is extended from July until the end of 2020          |

NA = Not Assessed    O = Not Achieved    ★ = Substantially achieved (at least 50%)    ★★ = Achieved in full    ★★★ = Exceeded

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