

Offshore logistics handled in port

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The supply of offshore wind farms is gaining more and more importance, especially in these times. From an initial niche and a lot of pioneering work, Emden and in particular Ems Ports Agency and Stevedoring, or epas, has established itself in the wind energy segment. A full-service partner for nearly 30 years, today it supplies almost every wind farm on the German North Sea coast.

Since 1993, Ems Ports Agency and Stevedoring Beteiligungs GmbH & Co KG has been providing international transport solutions for goods of all kinds. Headquartered in the German seaport city of Emden, the company has been operating as a full service partner in all logistics areas for almost 30 years.

Consisting of the tide-independent inland port, the outer port and several more recent

port extensions, it occupies a leading position in Europe as a high-performance universal port. In addition to automobile handling, forestry products and cargo, wind turbines are of great importance.

The supply of offshore wind farms is becoming more and more important. Climate change and the move away from fossil fuels are increasingly driving demand for wind energy. From an initial niche, the

port is establishing itself in the development of wind energy. Proven concepts, acquired competences, expansion reserves and the continuing pioneering spirit offer an excellent basis for the upcoming expansion goals off the German North Sea coast. That is the Spirit of Emden.

epas is currently represented with over 1,500 meters of quay length, more than 20 hectares of terminal space and up to



directly in the port can be used.

As well as common cargoes, which range from SD cards to switch cabinets, the location also moves OOG Cargo. For the entire goods receiving and the different goods movements a broadly positioned fleet of vehicles is assigned. From 1.5 ton electric forklift trucks to terminal tractors and 55 ton reach stackers, the appropriate vehicle is ready for use for every handling operation. The experienced, highly qualified and best possible trained employees know how to use this equipment tailor-made and always safely.

In addition to logistics, offshore and agency services, epas also provides the necessary customs services for its customers along the supply chain. As an authorized consignee and consignor, it is basically authorized to receive and transfer goods. Also, the status of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) benefits from security-relevant customs controls and simplifications according to customs regulations. Customs formalities such as export declarations, temporary storage, various transit procedures and import customs clearance are part of the daily business of the internal customs department. Procedures such as inward processing are also handled by epas at the Emden site.

Due to the increasing demand of wind energy and the associated increase in complexity of the projects, the internal processes of the customs and offshore sector have already undergone an internal process-oriented transformation. In cooperation with various business and contractual partners, some of whom have been with epas for many years, the important competencies of wind energy construction and installation are being expanded to include offshore maintenance, servicing and dismantling.

The cooperation partner OWS Offshore Wind Solutions GmbH carries out, among other things, overhauls of large components at the site. In this context, campaigns for the Alpha Ventus and Merkur wind farms are being run from Emden to replace these major components. With SeaRenergy Offshore Holding GmbH & Co. KG, epas also has a strong partner at its side. In this cooperation, all important trades interlock.

The equipment of the DolWin 6 platform is the next milestone in this partnership. SeaRenergy will offer PSV Cargo runs from Emden before the end of this year. The supply vessel, chartered especially for this purpose, with a deck area of approx. 650 m², will be stationed in the base port of Emden.

Due to the conclusion of the contract with TenneT, the supply of such platforms in the German North Sea is already a routine daily business. Since March of this year, this has been supplemented by the staging of foodstuffs. With appropriate training and concept extensions, this work could be

20,000 m² of warehouses at two terminals in Emden's inland port. At the so-called north and south quays, it has the largest loading capacity in the port of Emden. Due to the optimal logistics and supplier network, a high availability of services and spare parts for the maritime sector is guaranteed.

The network is complemented by the airport with its heliport and attached logistics park. This means that wind farm incidents can be responded to immediately not only by water, but also by air. As a leading full service partner, epas is your contact for any issues.

Every supply concept is based on a high-performance base port, which is much more than a 'shelter port' for the ships. Due to the well-developed infra- and superstructure, almost 600 ships are supplied annually. The strength of the agency department is particularly evident in this work.

Besides the official registrations and crew

changes, the agents also take care of project business, such as maritime consulting for towing of large components, such as a fish farm. Due to the good network, local, national and international services can be provided in response to customer requirements.

The chartering of helicopters, crew transfer vessels and platform supply vessels is an important part of this. Of the approx. 600 ship calls, almost 400 calls per year can be assigned to the offshore sector. These include the offshore service vessels (OSV), PSV and CTV, which each call at the wind farms from Emden to carry out service and maintenance work.

For the various supply runs and orders, epas offers suppliers an internal logistics hub, where goods are delivered, temporarily stored, picked and loaded in certified load carriers such as offshore containers. In addition, a 4,000 m² distribution center

included in the internal service portfolio. It is the internal project managers who are subject to this training and further education in order to be able to act as a responsible single point of contact for the customers.

With such diversity and depth along the value and supply chain to operate offshore wind farms, safe working in the port, on the vessels and offshore is always the highest priority. Ports are thus subject to quality, health, safety and environment requirements and are therefore directly involved in the processes of wind farm operators and service technicians.

In line with the motto 'Safety needs our energy', epas is certified to ISO Quality Management 9001:2015, ISO Environmental Management 14001:2015 and ISO Occupational Health and Safety 45001:2018. Occupational safety awareness is also regularly reviewed in the Safety Culture Ladder.

Furthermore, it also has a specially issued Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) concept. The idea of this elaboration is that companies are always aware of their social responsibility and as a result, make their actions more sustainable. In addition to the effects on society, those responsible should also explicitly focus on the effects on the environment in these times of energy transition. In working groups of different

networks, it is working on strategies for a CO₂ neutral site. An important element of this elaboration is the local production of green hydrogen for regional and national needs.

The importance of the ports within the energy transition must be clearly communicated and presented. At the individual locations, target-promoting tasks are taken on by assuming various roles and necessary measures are taken. Esbjerg, for example, acts as a base port for the construction of wind farms.

The strengths of Emden, on the other hand, lie increasingly in the Operation & Maintenance segment due to the aforementioned circumstances. After safety, the highest priority for epas is to ensure and promote existing relationships and the resulting security of supply. An expanding market requires a permanently reliable supply concept and sufficient capacities for the operation of the various offshore wind farms.

As the growth of wind energy leads to stronger competition, epas pleads for securing existing corporations and networks. For a continuous supply security of the offshore sector, the experienced partners and concepts should not be distressed by possible ambitions of new market participants and should primarily invest in reliable innovation projects. The



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Spirit of Emden is an important building block in the implementation and security of energy supply in Europe.

With this in mind, the location will continue to develop in a targeted manner, be attractive as an employer, make optimum use of expertise and potential, expand areas in Emden and also be available as a competent partner along the entire coast.

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