

ONLINE

Ecofret makes big impression at Multimodal



VTG's latest wagon, the Ecofret, got its first public showing at the Multimodal exhibition at the Birmingham NEC in May.

Ecofret is a state-of-the-art container wagon, which can carry 9ft 6in high, 40ft and 20ft boxes on W10 gauge cleared routes. It provides an economical and environmentally-friendly alternative to other container wagons because it maximises the number of boxes that can be carried within a given train length.

Thanks to the implementation of a newly designed, 840mm wheel diameter bogie in conjunction with SCT, part of Wabtec Corporation, it also offers track friendly ride performance. The wheels are "semi-steering", giving a predicted 60% reduction in wheel wear compared to a "conventional"

bogie allowing a potential 110,000 plus miles between wheel turns to be achieved.

In conjunction with their first customer, Freightliner, VTG transported the triple-set wagon to the exhibition hall at the NEC, enabling potential customers to take a look up close. The wagons also sported boxes extolling the virtues of the Ecofret, while members of the VTG management team were on-hand throughout the three-day event to talk to interested parties about the new wagons, as well as to discuss other services offered by the company.

The Ecofret can be arranged in either twin

or triple platform configurations, and by mixing 11 triples and 2 twin platforms, it is possible to carry 37 x 40ft boxes (74 TEU) in an 80 SLU, 512 metre long train. This is a 32% improvement over a train of Megafrets which would only carry 28 x 40ft boxes (56 TEU) in the same train length. The Ecofret also eliminates the empty 20ft slots on FEA 60ft flats caused by the imbalance of 20ft to 40ft boxes.

Freightliner order Ecofret wagon for Shortliner service



Multimodal: VTG showcased the Ecofret wagons that will be used in Freightliner's new "Shortliner" services.




The first order of Ecofret wagons has come from Freightliner Limited. Freightliner ordered a fleet of twin platform Ecofrets, to be run out of Felixstowe and Southampton.

These wagons consist of a twin set of 40ft deck length wagons designed to maximise the number of 40ft containers that can be hauled per train without empty running or 20ft wasted spaces. Freightliner, through the use of these new wagons and their unique ability to haul longer, heavier trains using

the state of the art PowerHaul locomotives, is creating Shortliner services.

A Freightliner spokesperson said: "Through Shortliner services, we are able to increase the number of 40ft containers hauled per train by more than 40 per cent compared to a standard Class 66 service hauling 24 wagons, while still fulfilling the 20ft market demand."

Adam Cunliffe, Managing Director, Freightliner Limited, says: "Our investment in the new Ecofret wagons demonstrates

our commitment to meeting our customers' needs in a market which is increasingly dominated by 40ft containers.

"These new wagons complement our existing 60ft wagon fleet, ensuring maximum utilisation of both 40ft and 20ft containers. Our capability to haul longer, heavier trains teamed with our new wagons is ensuring more containers can be moved by rail, reducing CO₂ emissions and removing more lorries from the UK's congested roads."

New, efficient petroleum wagons heading for the UK



VTG's new petroleum tank wagons in their new livery promoting the environmental credentials of Railfreight.

A number of new high-capacity petroleum oil wagons are coming to the UK from Poland – with many to be painted in the bright blue and green colours of new UK client Greenergy.

The new wagon currently being built for VTG Rail UK is a development of the tried and tested 102 m³ cubic capacity wagons

which have been in service since 2001. They run on track friendly TF25 bogies and they are fitted with a vapour recovery system that enables the wagons to be both top and bottom loaded, with the vapour displaced during loading being captured, liquefied and returned to the storage tanks.

The wagons were built at Greenbrier, Poland, and 50 of them are destined for the UK in July and August.

Around half of the wagons being built will be used in the UK as replacements for older wagons and will sport a variety of new liveries endorsing the the benefits of Railfreight for the environment. The other half are to be hired directly to Greenergy, which supplies a fifth of the petrol and diesel sold in Britain. The wagons will be used for block train transportation of petroleum fuels for road use including biofuel components. With a high axle load of 25.4 tonnes, these wagons can transport a maximum payload of 76 tonnes of petroleum products. or 102 m³ of freight.

Supported all the way

One special feature of this wagon is the self-supporting design of the tank. The wagon does not have the traditional chassis with longitudinal supports, which reduces its overall weight so that more freight can be carried.

Supplying the wagons for Crossrail

VTG wagons will move more than one million tonnes of excavated material from the tunnel portal at Westbourne Park in west London to Northfleet in Kent as part of the Crossrail construction project.

Crossrail tunnelling contractor BFK has awarded GB Railfreight (GBRf) the contract to move the material as part of its commitment to remove excavated material by rail and water transport where practical to do so, and GBRf has hired two sets of "JNA" Open Box wagons from VTG to carry it in. More than 860 trains, each comprising 27 wagons and carrying in excess of 2,000 tonnes of spoil, will run between west London and Kent. The first Crossrail train ran on 18 May 2012, loaded with 492 tonnes of earth.

Currently, two trains per day run to carry the waste material – almost all of which is clean, uncontaminated and will be reused. Later in the summer the number of trains per day will increase to five.

VTG Managing Director Rob Brook said: "We are delighted to be involved in one of the great railway projects of the 21st Century. Wagon hire for such projects is the core of VTG's business and an area where we can add considerable value."

This deal is also good news for the environment as rail will remove at least



50,000 lorry movements from central London bringing major benefits by reducing traffic congestion and carbon dioxide emissions. The excavated material from the Crossrail western running tunnels will be unloaded at Northfleet and transferred by ship to regeneration sites, including a new 1,500 acre RSPB nature reserve at Wallasea Island, Essex.

The trains will utilise a newly reinstated freight link from the North Kent Line,

following a successful trial of the route in February of this year.

The Open Box wagons being used for the Crossrail project are part of VTG's large fleet of this vehicle type, which includes a range of volumes and carrying capacities, and is suitable for any product capable of grab or magnet discharge, including aggregates, scrap metal, spoil, coal and sand.

News from the group

VTG broadens scope of Rail Logistics Division



VTG UK's parent company, VTG AG, is expanding the product portfolio of its Rail Logistics Division to keep up with positive trends in the market. The German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development predicts a significant

increase in rail freight traffic volume in Germany in coming years. In the future, VTG will focus on three of the most profitable groups of products: liquids, including mineral oil and chemicals; agricultural products and industrial goods such as steel products.



Stable start to 2012 for VTG

The first quarter of 2012 saw VTG AG achieve a slight increase in revenue – increasing by 2.9 per cent to EUR 191.8 million. Operating profit (EBITDA) remained at the same level as the previous year in this quarter.

The Railcar Division saw a 10.2 per cent increase to EUR 77.9 million, primarily due to acquisitions in Russia and North America. There was a slight drop in capacity utilisation for the same period because the demand for wagons weakened, a large factor being the insolvency of a customer from the mineral oil sector rendering a large number of wagons redundant.

The Rail Logistics Division saw a subdued start to the year with revenue dropping 2.2 per cent from its 2011 level to EUR 75.3 million. EBITDA was also below the level of the previous year.

A major contributing factor was the costs of

the strategic repositioning of the division in the product segments of agricultural goods, liquids and industrial goods. Customer insolvency also had a negative impact on business in the Rail Logistics Division. Other factors included declines in sales in the agricultural sector due to weather conditions, changed product flows and the fact that one-time items that positively impacted the figures in 2011 no longer apply.

The Tank Container Logistics Division saw revenue remain at the same level as 2011 – EUR 38.7 million. EBITDA in this division saw a slight decrease to EUR 3.1 million compared with 3.3 million the previous year.

In the first quarter of 2012, Tank Container Logistics reported good demand, particularly regarding transport volumes, which were just below the level for the first quarter of 2011. The trend in intra-European and intra-

Asian transports was particularly positive. While the prospects for growth for the global chemical industry are generally good, the market is highly competitive, with high costs for energy and raw materials.

VTG has also seen a significant increase in the number of employees: As of March 31, 2012, the VTG Group had 1,205 employees, an increase of 170 since the end of the first quarter of 2011. 816 employees were employed in Germany (Q1 2011: 720), of which 362 were based in Hamburg (Q1 2011: 333). 389 employees were in the companies abroad (Q1 2011: 315). The number of employees increased in all divisions.

VTG is confident that, despite a slight decline in business in the first half of 2012, it will be able to achieve moderate growth overall in the year 2012.

News from the group

VTG first company to gain maintenance management certification from Federal Railway Authority



VTG is the first company to receive ECM certification (ECM = Entity in Charge of Maintenance) from the German Federal Railway Authority. The award of this

certification confirms that VTG's maintenance management system already meets the new legal requirements in Germany.

"The certification by the Federal Railway

Authority verifies that the system of quality and safety management we have long had in place meets the increased requirements", states Joachim Wirtgen, head of Safety and Maintenance Systems at VTG. He adds: "Our aim is now to meet the even stricter requirements of a new European directive."

Until July 1, 2007, private freight wagon keepers with wagons in use on the railways of Deutsche Bahn had to maintain their wagons according to the latter's rules. Only then freight wagons could be placed in service nationally and internationally without restriction. The obligation to organise proper maintenance has since passed to the wagon keeper.

To ensure minimum standards of safety, a certification process for the Entity in Charge of Maintenance has also been introduced. This is currently on a voluntary basis, supported by a Memorandum of Understanding, with a mandatory set of European rules to be introduced in future. From June 1, 2013, every freight wagon will have to be maintained by an ECM that has successfully undergone the required certification process.

Meet new staff member Maria Baugh



Maria Baugh recently joined VTG's Fleet Services team. We caught up with her to find out a little more about her.

"I've been in the rail business almost 21 years," she explains. "I started out at

Marcroft Engineering in 1991, and the company went through a management buyout in 2004." The subsequent move to Stoke on Trent Works saw Maria take on a new role as Customer Services Manager, training and overseeing the whole of the fleet team.

Following a company reorganisation, Maria was unfortunately made redundant in September 2011, but she was quick to take on a new challenge.

"I joined VTG in February 2012, which gave me the opportunity to work with some former colleagues," Maria says.

Outside of work, Maria enjoys walking, cycling and reading. She is married to David and has a son, Declan.

Pedals, paddles and more than a few blisters...



Four members of staff took part in the spectacular Snowdonia Charity Challenge in July 2012.

40 miles in a bicycle saddle, climbing the highest mountain in Wales and a tour in Canadian canoes – all in just one day! Maria Connolly, Janet Sheppard, Nigel Day and Rob Brook from VTG Rail UK took part in this very special triathlon challenge in early July to support the charitable organisation, Regain.

Regain provides resources and equipment for people who have been paralysed in a sporting accident. The aim of the charity is to give these people more independence and a better quality of life with the help of special equipment.

The Snowdonia Charity Challenge has

been held since the year 2000 in the stunning setting of Snowdonia National Park in Wales. Participants cycle through the region, climb Mount Snowdon and canoe on Lake Gwynant. By participating, the VTG team, led by Maria Connolly, hopes to encourage as many people as possible to make a donation to Regain.

Those wishing to do so can reward the efforts of the athletes at <http://www.justgiving.com/VTG-Rail-UK-Limited1>. All contributions are welcome!

Designing the Ecofret logo



With the arrival of the much-anticipated Ecofret wagon, we're going to be seeing a lot more of the wagon's green and blue logo.

The original concept for the design came from GCSE Art student Jack Pumphrey, son of VTG's Fleet Operations Manager, Mark Pumphrey.

Jack said of the concept for the design: "I came up with the design from taking the name, Ecofret, and trying to incorporate VTG into it, by taking the company logo I saw how I could fit that into the 'O' in Ecofret.

My dad, who works at VTG, asked me to try and see if I could design a logo."

Jack recently completed his Art GCSE and is heading for a B, which he said he was "really happy with". He also studied French, Citizenship, Religious Studies, English, Maths, Science and ICT.

When he's not creating logos or studying, Jack enjoys going to gigs – "I love music!" he shares – as well as going shopping and hanging out with friends.

The VTG Challenge



John Hollowood is the sixth winner of VTG's competition to see who can send in a photograph of themselves reading their copy of OnLine in the most unusual place or situation.

John is pictured enjoying his magazine at

the Goodwood Festival of Speed in Surrey at the start of July.

This was the last in the series of "VTG Challenge" competitions. Details of our new competition format will be published in the next edition of OnLine.