

Port of Zeebrugge extends concession agreement with COSCO

In early January of this year, the Port of Zeebrugge announced that it has extended its concession agreement with COSCO Shipping Ports for another 15 years. The extended concession period for the CSP Zeebrugge container terminal, located at the Albert II dock, took effect from 1 January 2022, and will now run until 31 December 2055.

This extension will allow CSP to further invest in superstructure and handling equipment. With the hub strategy, activity will also increase, and additional capacity needs to be provided. The Port of Zeebrugge initially entered into a concession agreement with APM Terminals on 15 December 2004 for a period of 36 years. In January 2018, CSP Zeebrugge acquired all of APM Terminals' shares, bringing the same concession agreement into the hands of COSCO Shipping Ports. The newly announced extension will see both COSCO and Zeebrugge cooperate closer than before.

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“The Zeebrugge terminal has developed strongly in recent years, and the throughput will increase by 53 per cent to about 930,000 TEU in 2021. This is inseparable from the close cooperation between the two parties” said Zhang Dayu, managing Director of COSCO Shipping Ports. “As the first holding terminal in Northwest Europe, the development of Zeebrugge Terminal has always been an important strategic move of COSCO Shipping Ports. The signing of the contract to extend the franchise right to 2055 is of great significance to both parties. We hope to continue to strengthen cooperation with the Port Authority of Zeebrugge and continue to develop the terminal in the future. Improve operational capabilities and provide customers with competitive services.”

Zeebrugge's central geographical position is a major asset for maritime logistics. Additionally, its quality connectivity to other parts of Europe and the UK also facilitates the reception of large vessels. This partnership will help develop the port into a strategic crossroad.

Tom Hautekiet, CEO for the Port of Zeebrugge, added: “The extension of the concession term offers new opportunities for the Port of Zeebrugge in the near and distant future. The cooperation with COSCO Shipping Ports has certainly already borne fruit. The strong growth in the share of deep-sea container traffic resulted in an increasing interest of other shipping companies and services for the Zeebrugge port system. Together we want to lift the pioneering role of the Port of Zeebrugge for international logistics to a higher level and optimise the port infrastructure within the framework of our intended ‘clean port strategy’.”

Previously, ShibataFenderTeam (SFT) established a new office in the Netherlands and was contracted by the Port of Zeebrugge for a major construction project. This project consisted of a new quay wall with a length of 930m and a height of almost 30m. After the construction of the quay wall, a cofferdam will be built in the polder zone between the Boudewijnkanaal and the new quay wall.