



## Concern over windfarm plans

Aberdeen Harbour Board are to commission a study which will examine the interface between a windfarm proposed for Aberdeen Bay and the thousands of vessels which use the area annually.

Colin Parker, Aberdeen Harbour Board Chief Executive, said: "While we welcome the removal of turbines from within the port limits in the latest plan and the developers' commitment to discuss fully the maritime industry's remaining serious concerns, the study is required to ensure that all the implications of the windfarm proposals are fully considered.

"The plan to site turbines in an established busy location for both vessel movements and anchoring raises major safety concerns, with independent studies already revealing that wind farms closer than 1.5

nautical miles can interfere with ship's radar.

"The Maritime and Coastguard Agency's guidance is for windfarms to be at least two nautical miles clear of shipping routes – which clearly is not the case in Aberdeen Bay where there are around 17,000 vessel movements annually.

"These concerns have been repeatedly raised by the Board throughout our contact with the windfarm developers. We support the development of renewable energy, and in this instance all involved must ensure there is no hazard to shipping."

The study will be completed later this year.

### MOC milestone

Another milestone has been achieved in the development of the port's new Marine Operations Centre overlooking the harbour entrance. With construction completed at end-May, the building was handed over to the Harbour Board by main contractor, Sir Robert McAlpine.

The next phase is now underway, with fitting-out and commissioning of the Centre which will include reception area, training room, upgraded simulator, emergency response, staff facilities, and Vessel Traffic Services with the latest technology.

The £4.5 million Centre will be brought into operation during the summer, bringing further significant improvements in port facilities.

### New traffic in timber

A successful first shipment of timber from Aberdeen to Finland in late-May has quickly led to further exports and the hope of continuing traffic.

In a trial consignment, UPM Tilhill, the UK's leading forestry and timber harvesting company, shipped around 2,500 tonnes of pulpwood sourced from various locations in North-east Scotland. It was stockpiled on Commercial Quay, ready for loading onto the vessel, *Crownbreeze*, and delivery to Rauma where UPM has a pulp mill.

Harbour Board Chief Executive, Colin Parker, said: "The availability of a quayside area for the advance laydown of the wood - facilitating loading and the rapid turnaround of the vessel - was an important factor in the success of this operation which, it is hoped, will lead to regular traffic."

OBC Shipping's Aberdeen office was instrumental in attracting UPM Tilhill to use the port for the first time and acted as local agent for the shipment.

The developing connection saw a second cargo of 2,330 tonnes again stockpiled on Commercial Quay and shipped in early June on the *Argo 1*.

The shipments are another example of the port's capacity to handle increasing and diverse traffic.

### Record start to year

Busy times at Aberdeen Harbour in the current quarter are adding to record activity in the first three months of this year when cargo and shipping reached new levels.

The port handled almost 200,000 more tonnes of oil-related freight - 549,166 tonnes - for the offshore industry between January and March, compared with 349,180 tonnes in the same period in 2005.

A total of 1,304 oil-related vessels called at the port, up from 1,021, while the volume of shipping reached 3.41 million gross tonnes (2.60 million gross tonnes).

With the commercial sector also contributing to the continuing growth, the port handled a record total of all cargoes in the period - 1,226,780 tonnes (955,522 tonnes). The tonnage of shipping at 5.32 million gross tonnes (4.44 million gross tonnes) was another first quarter record, with 1,910 (1,658) vessels using the port.

Harbour Board Chief Executive, Colin Parker, said: "The first quarter was much busier than usual, due in particular to oil-related traffic. It underlines the importance of the offshore industry, not only to the port, but also to the economy generally and the need for every effort to be made to sustain activity."

### Pipeline to Russia

Aberdeen Harbour's role as a gateway servicing the international oil and gas industry in the Former Soviet Union continues to develop, with recent activity including a shipment of around 3,000 tonnes of large diameter pipe from Russia...for Russia!

Produced 500 miles east of Moscow and shipped from Arkhangelsk, on the Barents Sea, in western Russia, the pipe was delivered to Aberdeen for the fitting of connectors at Oil States Industries UK's plant at Altens. It is believed to be the first time a UK company has worked on pipe manufactured in Russia.

The shipper Mitsui contracted international logistics group, Kuehne + Nagel, as agents for the shipment on the *Igor Grabar*, with Nor-Cargo as port agents and stevedores.

The finished pipe will be re-exported later this year via the south of England and used by Sakhalin Energy in drilling off the far east of Russia.

\*This year's shipments of 7,372 tonnes of equipment to the Caspian region by end-May compares with under 2,500 tonnes in the whole 12 months of each of the previous two years. Routes include via the Baltic and Russian waterways or trans-shipment at Continental ports.

## Support for Festival

The Aberdeen International Youth Festival's popular *Listen at Lunchtime* programme is to be sponsored by Aberdeen Harbour for the second year in succession.

There will be seven performances at four venues – The Lemon Tree, Aberdeen Maritime Museum, Rubislaw Parish Church and Aberdeen Art Gallery - in the period 3, 4, 7, 8, 10 and 11 August, including groups from France, UK, Azerbaijan and China.

The Festival's Chief Executive, Stephen Stenning, commented: "The lunchtime concerts are a really important way of ensuring that the city benefits from the presence of talented and exciting young artists at Festival time. The programme brings the performers into people's daytime experience of Aberdeen."

For more information on the Festival, from 2-12 August, visit [www.aiyf.org](http://www.aiyf.org)

## West Africa shipments

The UK offshore industry's growing successes in international markets mean increasing use of Aberdeen Harbour as a marshalling point for the export of oilfield equipment, with West Africa a key destination.

Annual exports to the region almost doubled in the first half of this decade – from 19,353 tonnes in 2001 to 37,774 tonnes in 2005. Shipments this year to end-May topped 12,955 tonnes.

Shipping companies, Safmarine and Universal Africa Lines, have established scheduled services between Aberdeen and West Africa, and there are also specific charters.

\*The latest addition to UAL's fleet, the new build *UAL Malabo*, arrived in Aberdeen earlier this month on her maiden voyage to load cargo for Port Harcourt/Onne and Malabo.

## Dredging undertaken

The annual maintenance dredging and bed-levelling programme has been undertaken at the port, with the removal of an estimated 144,000 cubic metres of material. Dutch Dredging's suction dredger, *Lesse*, carried out the work in around four weeks from early May, with the bed levelling tug, *Shakespeare*, then clearing remaining ridges and high spots.

Members of the Board were given a presentation on dredging operations and visited the *Lesse* while in operation.

## Harbour Board appointments

Aberdeen Harbour Board appointed Captain Ray Shaw as Operations Director and Harbour Master, effective 1 May, 2006. Following 15 years' international experience with the Merchant Navy, he gained his Master Mariner's certificate in 1993. Joining the Board as a Navigation Control Officer the following year, he was promoted Assistant Harbour Master in 2000.

Captain Shaw, who holds a Diploma in Port Management and qualified as a Vessel Traffic Services Supervisor in 2005, is a member of the UK Harbour Masters' Association.

Captain Danny Stroud, who joined the Board as a Navigation Control Officer in 1992, has been appointed an Assistant Harbour Master. He sailed mainly on general cargo and container ships before becoming a Mate and Master on anchor handling supply vessels worldwide and qualifying for his Class 1 Master Mariner's certificate. Danny also gained his Vessel Traffic Services certificate last year.

## Awards sponsor

Aberdeen Harbour is again a supporting sponsor of Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce's annual Northern Star Business Awards which recognise "the North-east's brightest and best in business". The awards dinner will take place on Thursday 28 September at the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre.

For further information, please visit: [www.northernstarawards.co.uk](http://www.northernstarawards.co.uk)

## More visitors at Harbour Gallery

The recently refurbished Aberdeen Harbour Gallery is helping to attract visitors to the city's award-winning Aberdeen Maritime Museum – the figure of almost 7,750 for May was up 19% on the same period last year.

The enhancement was part-funded through £45,000 in sponsorship from the Harbour Board, which made a similar contribution when the Gallery was added to the expanded museum in 1997.

The upgraded Gallery was officially opened at the beginning of May by Board Chairman, David Paton OBE, and his wife, Juliette. Describing it as "another – nautical – milestone in the relationship between port and museum," he said: "The Board's contribution to the upgraded Gallery is on behalf of everyone involved in the port and helps ensure recognition of the efforts of so many over the centuries, leading to today's world class port."

Commenting in June, John Edwards, Keeper of Science and Maritime History, said: "The Gallery is proving very popular and attracting many favourable comments."

Younger audiences can enjoy tailor-made hands-on exhibits, while computer consoles allow access to the history in depth. The revamp means curators can change displays frequently and update audio-visual presentations.

\*On historic Shiprow, the free entry Museum is open from 10am to 5pm, Monday to Saturday, and from 12 noon to 3pm on Sundays.

## Seasonal visitors

Aberdeen is again a port-of-call for cruise ships this summer, with nine visits scheduled so far.

The specialist Russian cruise vessel, *Grigory Mikheev*, embarked passengers for a nature cruise to Fair Isle, returning to Aberdeen before going to Spitzbergen and the Arctic Circle.

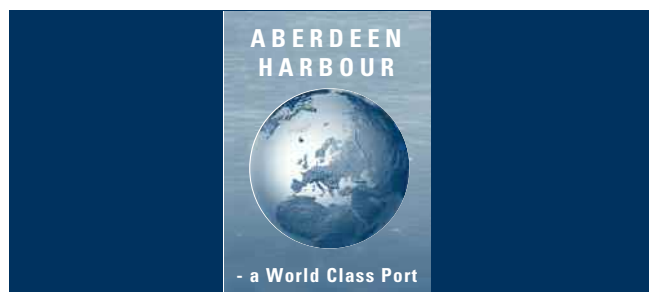
The *Island Sky* berthed twice on a round trip between Leith and Orkney.

Another specialist ship, *Professor Molchanov*, arrived from Fair Isle, before returning with new passengers, while the *Hansaetic* berthed on her way from Leith to Stromness.

A cruise to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the National Trust for Scotland included Aberdeen. The *Black Prince* anchored in the bay and transferred passengers by tender.

The 2006 schedule includes two calls by the *Polar Pioneer*, a former Russian research vessel, in June and July on an eco-cruise to Oban and back.

"As well as providing ease of access to the city on its doorstep and to the hinterland, the harbour continues to develop a niche role as a port-of-call for specialist cruises with passengers interested in marine and birdlife along the Scottish coast," said Harbour Board Chief Executive, Colin Parker.



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