



## PORT'S MULTI-MILLION £ INPUT TO ECONOMY

Aberdeen Harbour's contribution to the economy of North-east Scotland exceeds £400 million in a year, supporting thousands of jobs, according to a new report.

The impact on Aberdeen City and Shire has been calculated at £420 million in 2006, a year of record activity at the port. The study estimates that the harbour helps sustain almost 11,000 full-time equivalent jobs - 9,330 in the Aberdeen and 1,450 in Aberdeenshire where the share of the financial input is estimated at £50 million.

The Economic Impact Assessment of Aberdeen Harbour by Ove Arup & Partners was commissioned by Aberdeen Harbour Board and included Board activities and those of the port's tenants, customers and suppliers.

Harbour Board Chief Executive, Colin Parker, said: "The findings reflect the considerable efforts of port users in generating record traffic and the harbour's major role in the North-east economy and community."

*"They add weight not only to the importance the Board give to helping sustain and develop activity by providing the right facilities to meet changing requirements, but also to the benefits of being a Trust Port re-investing all profits in the harbour."*

The study notes: "...users were very pleased with the range of facilities and choice of ways to meet their business objectives and the efforts of the Harbour Board to continue to invest and develop the facilities." The proximity of the port to landside storage and support facilities ensures transport cost savings compared to the use of competing North Sea ports.

It comments that "space limitations at the harbour...and road traffic congestion within the City were mentioned as disadvantages."

Colin Parker stated: "These concerns are well recognised by the Board and initiatives have been undertaken, with others underway, to ensure that the port's potential is maximised."

*"For example, the Board's current five-year development and maintenance budget of £40 million includes creating a surfaced back-up area at Point Law Peninsula and at Waterloo Quay."*

The study can be viewed on [www.aberdeen-harbour.co.uk](http://www.aberdeen-harbour.co.uk)

## Busy first quarter

A busy first quarter at Aberdeen Harbour has included a further rise in exports, although overall there was a small decrease in the total cargo handled at the port - down just over 20,000 tonnes to 1.20 million tonnes.

With 1,829 vessels using the port (1st quarter 2006 - 1,910), the tonnage of shipping was 5.30 million gross tonnes (5.32 million gross tonnes). While the tonnage of oil-related vessels was up again, the withdrawal of NorthLink's ferry, *Hrossey*, from service for over three weeks during upgrading of passenger accommodation was amongst factors affecting the overall total.

"The first three months saw another strong performance, and the busy start to the second quarter is encouraging, with the port's international traffic and its hub role for oil-field exports an important feature," said Harbour Board Chief Executive, Colin Parker.

\*June has seen the busiest week yet for the tonnage of shipping handled - 555,229 gross tonnes, beating the record of 529,505 gross tonnes set last year.

## Point Law progress

The resurfacing of an area extending to 20,000 square metres at Point Law Peninsula is expected to be completed by contractor, MTM, in the autumn in a £2.5 million project which has seen thousands of tonnes of concrete from demolished buildings crushed and recycled to form the sub base material.

Harbour Board Engineering Director, Ken Reilly, commented: "The upgraded yard will provide an extensive, additional back-up area in support of activities at neighbouring quays, including Albert Quay West which was reconstructed last year. The recycled materials are a particularly pleasing aspect and in line with our emphasis on caring for the environment in our operations."

## More room for activity

An extensive area at Waterloo Quay is to be upgraded in the latest phase of an ongoing programme to provide more room for current and future activity at Aberdeen Harbour.

The Harbour Board have awarded a contract valued at more than £3.5 million to Hunter Construction, Aberdeen, as part of the development of a yard which covers around 16,000 square metres.

With work scheduled to take 42 weeks, the project includes heavy duty paving suitable for use by container handling equipment and mobile cranes. Allowance has been made for a siding connecting to the rail network at the north end of the yard if required, in addition to the two existing links.

The enhanced, flexible lay-out design means that there are various potential uses for the upgraded yard, including marshalling cargoes, oil base support, short-term cargo storage, and

port-related rail freight and road haulage trailer parking.

Harbour Board Engineering Director, Ken Reilly, said: "The provision of yards in recent years for storage and marshalling has been a major factor in attracting record levels of cargo. The Waterloo Quay project will provide another modern, surfaced facility, with improved operational efficiency, safety and security, and is another important stage in development of capacity."

Owned by the Board, the former railway goods yard at Waterloo Quay has been used for short-term storage and trailer parking, container storage and the onward delivery by rail of coatings for the paper industry which are discharged from vessels using the port.

\*See - Point Law progress

## An international port

Aberdeen Harbour's role as an international port was highlighted during a recent week or so with shipments to-or-from North and South America, Scandinavia, mainland Europe, Central and Eastern Asia, and West Africa.

The traffic included pulp from the USA, Chile and Portugal, timber for Finland, scrap metal for Spain and rape seed for Belgium.

Among oil-related shipments were pipes for

Georgia and a consignment of specially coated pipes for Sakhalin Island, in the far east of Russia.

The cargoes added up to almost 25,000 tonnes and, in addition, there were also several high value, low volume oil-related shipments to West Africa, with which regular traffic continues to increase.

# STRATEGY for the FUTURE

Aberdeen Harbour Board continue to be proactive in ensuring the port's future, through further major investment, by seeking to sustain and diversify traffic, and by safeguarding the harbour's best interests.

The approach is outlined in the recently published Annual Review for 2006 which, for the first time, also contains a summary of the five-year Strategic Plan.

The Board's policy and objectives are detailed, along with the critical

success factors which influence decisions and actions in the operation and development of the port.

Expenditure plans of over £40 million for 2007-2011 include work at Point Law Peninsula and Commercial Quay East, additional storage and operational areas, office improvements, the provision of a new pilot boat and survey craft, the possible redevelopment of the berths on the River Dee and improvements to the navigation channel and entrance

to accommodate larger vessels.

The tonnage of cargo handled is forecast to remain steady in 2007.

The Review covers the management and operation of the port in a year of integration, symbolised by the opening of the Marine Operations Centre, providing the latest facilities and bringing together various activities.

\* The Review can be viewed on the Board's website.

## Real interest in simulator

The port's ship's bridge simulator is attracting increasing third party usage since its extensive upgrade and relocation to the new Marine Operations Centre last year.

Commercial applications to date have included training crews of offshore safety standby boats and assessing harbour pilots from other ports, with bridge management/teamwork, ship handling, command & control and emergency response among the courses offered by companies.

There are also bookings through the remainder of the year and discussions ongoing on the possible widening of the scope of training to include, for example, simulating cargo handling on vessels at offshore drilling rigs and production platforms.

The main use of the simulator by the Harbour Board is in training pilots and marine staff in port operations and emergency situations.

## Health and Safety appointment

The Harbour Board have appointed Kirsty Benedetti as Health and Safety Assistant. With a BA in Risk Management and recently awarded GradIOSH status, having completed her Diploma in Health and Safety Management, she brings practical experience in working on the promotion of safety culture, proactive management of near misses, building safety and safety communication.

Kirsty said: *"I am impressed with the safety systems I have inherited and these will serve as a good foundation on which to build as my colleagues and I promote and maintain safety within the port."*

Kirsty also recognises the benefits of the Port Safety Liaison Group. *"I see great potential for the Group to serve the safety needs of the broad cross-section of harbour users where activities overlap and interact."*

Kirsty can be contacted on any safety matters within the port on tel: 01224 597059 or by e-mail at [k-benedetti@aberdeen-harbour.co.uk](mailto:k-benedetti@aberdeen-harbour.co.uk)

## Upgrade expands ferry accommodation

Upgrades by NorthLink Ferries to their two passenger vessels, *Hjaltland* and *Hrossey*, will contribute to what is expected to be another busy summer season for sailings between Aberdeen and Orkney and Shetland.

A significant rise in passenger numbers in 2006 was reflected in NorthLink's decision to create twenty-two additional cabins on the sister ships, providing 76 extra berths on each.

Gareth Crichton, Commercial Director of NorthLink Ferries, said: *"The new cabins we had fitted earlier this year will be of considerable help in accommodating passengers during what we hope will be another record-breaking summer season on the routes."*

The new passenger accommodation was provided by moving crew to a new module on the upper deck and modifying the crew quarters to accommodate passengers.

A number of the new cabins feature televisions and DVD players, as well as tea and coffee making facilities. Four executive cabins have also been created. Ten existing four-berth cabins have been upgraded to improve their suitability for sharing.

## Environmental standards recognised again

An important double has been achieved in international recognition for the high environmental standards maintained in operating Aberdeen Harbour.

The award of a new Ecoports certificate confirms that Aberdeen's Port Environmental Review System (PERS) has been reviewed by Lloyds Register, Rotterdam, and met the standards defined by the EcoPorts Foundation.

The certificate was presented by David Whitehead, Director of the British Ports Association and a Board member of the Ecoports Foundation, to Patrick Jordan, the Harbour Board's Environmental Advisor.

Aberdeen was the first Scottish port and the fourth in Europe to receive the original certification and the ranking has been repeated in the recertification which is required every two years.

Patrick commented: *"There is a lot of good work out there, but something that is often lost is how this is demonstrated. A Self Diagnosis Methodology process has given us a benchmark against which we can assess progress and it backs up Aberdeen's full scale monitoring programme and our commitment to high standards."*

# A year at the helm

In a busy first 12 months as Chief Executive at Aberdeen Harbour Board, Colin Parker, has seen a number of key milestones achieved.

Here, he looks back - and forward.

## What have been the key features of your first year?

*During 2006, the port handled record tonnages of shipping and cargo. Annual turnover was above £20 million for the first time and the number of passengers was a record at over 141,000. My single biggest highlight was the opening of the new Marine Operations Centre - the fulfilment of an ambition I'd had for several years. The building has proved a great success, both with the marine staff located there and the visitors either training on the simulator or attending business meetings.*

*At a personal level, I would like to thank the Board and staff for their support during what has been a very busy time for all concerned.*

## And the frustrations?

*Traffic levels are high and more land is being cleared to help us handle both current and additional traffic. This inevitably all takes time and creates frustration when you know how good the new facilities will be. All the work is, however, progressing on budget and to schedule and I am certain the end result will be worth the wait.*

## What do you see as the biggest challenges in the years ahead?

*Ensuring improved and assured surface access for the port. The record levels of freight and passengers require better recognition when transport infrastructure is planned in the city.*

*Resisting the current proposed location of the symbolic offshore wind farm at the approaches to the port will no doubt occupy a disproportionate amount of our time. It is truly regrettable that anyone could consider such a project in such close proximity to a major transport hub and in the location used by ships to safely anchor over hundreds of years. Indeed, there is a certain amount of irony in proposing to locate a wind farm in the lee of the land when this is the reason it is attractive as a safe anchorage!*

## And the opportunities?

*Many of our oil operator customers are opting to share vessels, storage and transport more and more these days. The Harbour Board are planning further improvements to facilitate even more cooperation between companies. This should assist the port to strengthen its position as the centre of activity and attract even more traffic.*

*The local centre of excellence now firmly established for oil and gas exploration and production services has already generated international traffic through the port. We have several scheduled services to West Africa already in service and shipments to the Caspian Region are not uncommon.*

*The introduction of renewable offshore energy installations, with one very obvious exception, could also bring future business to the port. We have already handled two shipments of wind turbines for inland wind farms.*

## Redevelopment seems never ending over several decades. Why so - and is there more to come?

*The port's traffic is constantly evolving and as some sectors grow others shrink, dependant upon many and varied reasons. The Board have to try and predict or respond to these changes to ensure facilities provided are appropriate to the volumes handled and fit-for-purpose. The ever growing demand for space and deeper water has led the Board to invest many millions of pounds to meet these needs. One fine example is the current work being carried out at Albert Quay West where around 20,000 square metres of open quayside is being cleared and surfaced. This new area will support the new deep water berths created in recent years along Albert Quay.*

## Accommodating larger vessels has made a major contribution to increasing activity. Will the port be able to take even bigger ships?

*We are currently investigating widening and deepening our navigation channel. This should allow us to better accommodate the newer oil-related traffic being considered, as well as allowing us to attract new business. The possible deepening of the entrance will also help us to handle vessels during adverse weather conditions occasionally experienced.*

## Given the record traffic activity achieved, can this be sustained and increased?

*The entire region is faced with the challenge of ensuring continued prosperity for the local economy. There is a very high level of expertise across many sectors in the North-east and Aberdeen Harbour Board will ensure this port is ready to facilitate the traffic our users will generate for many years to come.*

## How do you see the port's future in the offshore oil and gas industry?

*We believe that, in the far distant future, when the last vessel servicing the North Sea industry sails, it will be operating from Aberdeen! Meantime, we'll see a developing role as a hub port supporting international traffic, while continuing as the centre of activity of operations in home waters.*

## Based on the recent decision not to refrigerate the fish market, are the Board really committed to the industry's future?

*Today's fishing industry has moved on from many years ago and Aberdeen has the opportunity to be ahead of the game by providing a purpose built multi purpose facility at a suitable location for good transport links and with space to operate. We're on record as saying we're committed to the fishing industry's future and will continue to work with interested parties to find the best way forward.*

## Are the Board still as concerned about road traffic congestion on the approaches to the port?

*This will always be a subject that the Board has to monitor. The need to keep freight moving is not always very high on the agenda of those seeking re-election.*

## There were issues this winter about bad weather and restrictions on the north ferries at the port entrance. What's happening about this?

*In common with all other transport modes, shipping can also be subject to disruption by the weather. The Board are currently investigating the widening and deepening of the navigation channel. If shown to be viable, then this will certainly help the port to address these issues on the rare occasions they occur.*

## What's your vision for the harbour in 10 years?

*I believe the harbour will continue to be one of the most modern and busy ports in the UK and Europe. Our Trust Port status allows us to reinvest the profits back into facilities, thus ensuring we are able to continue to provide the high quality product to meet users' changing requirements.*

\* Colin Parker joined the Board in December, 1987 as a Navigation Control Officer at the Roundhouse. He became Assistant Harbour Master in 1990 and Harbour Master in 1994, as well as Operations Director and Board member in 2003.

# New launch ordered

A second new pilot launch has been ordered by the Harbour Board as part of an ongoing programme to ensure the efficient operation of the port.

Valued at almost £800,000, the contract for the 15.25 metre steel, twin screw launch has gone to Pembroke-based, Mustang Marine (Wales) following a competitive tendering process which saw four yards, three of them in the UK, submit bids.

Designed by West of Scotland naval architects, Murray, Cormack Associates, it will be very similar to their design for Sea Shepherd which entered service with the Harbour Board in 2004.

As well as pilotage and general purpose duties, the new vessel will have the additional roles of hydrographical survey and VIP transport, and this is reflected in the design, with a more open aft deck and, in the wheelhouse, a station for the surveyor, as well as dual helm positions.

Captain Ray Shaw, the Harbour Board's Operations Director and Harbour Master, commented: "With Aberdeen Harbour handling around 17,000 vessel arrivals and departures annually and record tonnages of shipping and cargo, the new launch will replace a vessel in service since 1987 and contribute to our capability to accommodate increased traffic in the future."

## New lairage nearing completion

NorthLink Ferries project to develop a new livestock lairage at Jamiesons Quay is progressing well, with the building due for completion later this summer. The purpose-built facility will be used for resting and sorting of cattle and sheep to-and-from Orkney and Shetland into lots for onward travel.

Being built with the support of the Scottish Executive, it will have capacity for around 500 cattle and will meet and exceed all current guidelines for welfare of animals in transit.

## Chronicling growth

Significant growth in traffic and development of facilities at the port over more than 14 years has been tracked by the Harbour Board's newsletter, Quaynotes, now at its 50th edition.

## Fishing industry under review

Plans are being developed to remove the redundant section of the Commercial Quay fish market and resurface the area to bring it into use as open quay space for a range of vessels, including fishing boats. Minor refurbishment is also to be carried at the Palmerston Quay fish market.

The work follows an independent review commissioned by the Board into the fish market operation and the Board's conclusion that the market on Palmerston Quay should continue in its current role, subject to future landings being at a sustainable level.

Due to current poor levels and uncertainty over predicted landings, it was decided not to construct a purpose-built facility at the quayside for landings, cold storage and transhipment of fish, at an estimated cost of £3.5 million.

The Board called for a radical rethink on how the industry operates and urged all involved in the industry in Aberdeen to work together to ensure that the sector is fit-for-purpose in the 21st century.

Following subsequent meetings between the City Council, industry and the Board, it was announced that a strategic review of the industry would seek long term solutions reflecting industry trends.

## Listen at Lunchtime

The annual Aberdeen International Youth Festival's *Listen at Lunchtime* performances are again to be sponsored by Aberdeen Harbour, with musical groups from around the world appearing at various venues, including the Maritime Museum, Lemon Tree, Aberdeen Art Gallery, and Union Terrace Gardens. The Festival is being held from 1-11 August. Updates and details can be viewed on [www.aiyf.org](http://www.aiyf.org)

## On the right track!

Harbour Board Engineering Director, Ken Reilly, and Environmental Advisor, Patrick Jordan, were among fund raisers who headed for the top of the Forth Rail Bridge - a walk to 110 metres above water - to raise money for The Railway Children Charity earlier this month. Participants from the Aberdeen area contributed £2,500.

## Visit by Bank Governor

The Governor of the Bank of England, Mervyn King, was given an insight into the operation of the port during a recent visit to the city. Following a tour by launch, he visited the port's state-of-the-art Marine Operations Centre, opened last year, and which handles around 25,000 vessel movements annually.

## Sponsoring pupils' theatre visits

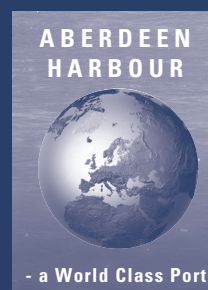
The first events under the Harbour Board's sponsorship of HM Theatre's Education Programme saw 730 children from 12 schools in Aberdeen City and Shire attend performances of Tracy Beaker Gets Real. In addition, pupils from six schools attended related workshops.

The £7,500 sponsorship provides schools with help towards transport, tickets and workshops.

The Theatre's Education Manager, Cate MacPherson, said: "Our Education Programme is a key element within our strategy to attract new audiences to HMT - and enhance the experiences of those who already attend."

"The programme enables young people - and people of just about all ages - to interact and engage with the performing arts, and the practical experiences we offer can help build confidence, relationships and enhance communication skills, as well as providing a lot of fun and laughter!"

Harbour Board, Chief Executive, Colin Parker, said: "We're delighted to further develop our involvement with schools by helping fund opportunities for pupils in the City and Shire to experience Theatre activities and performances."



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