Thursday August 6, 2020

Lloyd's List
Maritime intelligence | informa

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Blast may have devastating impact on Lebanon's trade flows

THE PORT OF BEIRUT is vital to Lebanon's economy and Lloyd's List Intelligence data reveals why the devastating blast will likely have such an impact beyond the immediate aftermath.

Whatever the source of the explosion, operational consequences will be significant, with the likelihood that Lebanon's second port of Tripoli — believed to be operating at just 40% capacity due to the health crisis — now set to become the main gateway for emergency supplies and normal trading.

Beirut is by far the most significant import gateway for Lebanon and Tripoli is not set up to increase operations overnight.

The blast which shook the port late on Tuesday will have severe repercussions for food and goods supplies in the country. A grains silo was damaged in the series of explosions, which were linked to a store of ammonium nitrate, a commodity used in fertilisers.

Lebanon's reliance on imports is greater than its exports, leaving it with a deficit. The country's total value of imports was $14.2bn last year, while its exports totalled $3bn.

Damaged grain facilities

The port's container terminal handled 1.2m teu in 2019 and will struggle to replace that capacity at alternative ports.

Lebanon also typically imports 1.2m tonnes of wheat and 900,000 tonnes of corn each year. Barley imports amounted to 70,000 tonnes

last year, although the country was expected to import up to 200,000 tonnes during the 2020-21 season, according to analyst Maxigrain.

It mainly relies on Russia and Ukraine for its grains shipments.

"From a trade flow perspective, Lebanon predominantly imports wheat and corn from the Black Sea and some Argentine corn," said Danish grains consultant Jesper Buhl. "Lebanon imports most intensively during the late summer and fall months with monthly averages ranging between 150.000 and 300.000 tonnes.

"With grain facilities damaged in Beirut and no immediate alternative it is hard to image this import level is likely to continue in the coming weeks and months," he said, adding that the nearby port of Tripoli did not seem to have an adequate grain-handling facility.

Vessel calls

Lloyd's List Intelligence data shows that 150 fully cellular containerships called at Beirut last year, followed by 121 general cargo ships. Sixty-eight vehicle carriers also made their way there in 2019, while 56 chemical tankers and 33 bulk carriers visited the port.

Beirut was expecting to see six vessel calls at the port on August 8, the highest number of vessels in the coming week, Lloyd's List Intelligence data shows. Three were due on Tuesday, while five were scheduled for yesterday and another five today, Thursday. A further five vessels were due on August 10.

Lebanon also imports chemicals, and animal products and metals.

Tripoli is the second-busiest port in the region, with 101 general cargo visits last year, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence

Beirut explosion hits container links

THE explosion at the port of Beirut is likely to seriously impair the country's containerised supply chains, threatening its ability to import essential supplies.

It has also dealt a severe blow to the French container giant CMA CGM.

The French line, which has close links with Lebanon, had a ship in port at the time of the explosion, the 11,400 teu *CMA CGM Lyra*.

In a statement, CMA CGM said the vessel, which was 1.5 km from the blast, was not damaged and neither were any crew members hurt.

However, the group's Merit Shipping headquarters in Beirut has been severely damaged. Of the 261 staff in the city, two have sustained serious injuries while one is missing.

CMA CGM and its subsidiary CEVA Logistics have offered the Lebanese and French governments logistics and maritime assistance in order to respond to the emergency.

An operational organisation has been put in place to establish a logistics hub in Tripoli. All ships will be diverted to Tripoli or other terminals in the region until further notice. In order to maintain business continuity, the group said it had set up three recovery sites, of which two are in Beirut and one in Tripoli.

Other shipping lines are also rapidly drawing up contingency plans. Hapag-Lloyd, whose Beirut offices were completely destroyed in the blast, had no ships in Beirut at the time of the explosion, but told customers that probably most laden and empty containers in the port were caught up in the blast.

The German line said the 2,760 teu *Fleur N*, deployed in its Levante Express, has cancelled its Beirut call scheduled for August 7. Beirut import cargo loaded on the ship will be discharged at Damietta, in Egypt.

In its East Med Express, the 6,300 teu *APL Norway* will also omit its August 7 Beirut call, and will instead divert to the Lebanese port of Tripoli to discharge cargo.

Another line whose agent's offices were totally wrecked, Grimaldi, said one of its vessels was due to call in Beirut on Sunday. This ship, which usually serves Tripoli as well, may discharge its cargo there instead, depending on how the situation evolves. Neither company reported any staff casualties.

Earlier, Maersk had said its offices had been damaged and three employees injured, but they were discharged from hospital on Tuesday evening.

Beirut is Lebanon's key container port, and while the extent of the damage to the container terminal remains unknown, damage to surrounding port infrastructure is likely to severely impact throughput.

"The silos that exploded were around 1.5 km away from the main quay of the container terminal, which is in itself not that far, on the other hand, it might be far enough not to have damaged all of the critical infrastructure," Dynamar consultant Frans Waals told Lloyd's List.

Container capacity limited

The port handled 1.2m teu in 2019 and Lebanon will struggle to replace that capacity at alternative ports. Tripoli has just 600 m of quay space with two cranes, compared with the 1,100 m at Beirut with 16 cranes. Tripoli has capacity for only 400,000 teu per year.

The terminal can serve ships of up to 18,000 teu, although small feeder vessels make up the majority of the terminal's calls.

"Assuming Lebanon does not want to be dependent of Israel, its only alternative is, ironically, Lattakia, in Syria," Mr Waals said.

Only four major deepsea services call at Lebanon, with three of these going to Beirut, according to data from Sea-Intelligence. Of these, the 2M AE20/ Dragon service is currently suspended, leaving the Ocean Alliance BEX and MX1 services as the only direct deepsea calls to Beirut.

The collapse of the Lebanese economy and the collapse in demand brought about by the pandemic meant that there were only three deepsea calls to Beirut in June, compared with 12 in the same month last year.

But the port has an important role in eastern Mediterranean transhipment and feeder services. CMA CGM and Mediterranean Shipping Co are the container terminal's major clients, responsible for over 80% of transhipment cargoes.

CMA CGM has a regional headquarters building near the port in the centre of Beirut and has six feeder services for intra-Mediterranean and northern Europe.

As part of a government privatisation plan, Beirut port authority Gestion et Exploitation du Port de Beyrouth earlier this year called for international bids for a concession to manage, operate and maintain the Beirut's container terminal.

Bids were due at the end of March, but Lloyd's List understands that delays caused by the pandemic meant that the process had been put back at least until the end of this year.

CMA CGM, which provides a third of the terminal's business, was considered a likely bidder, but the future of the privatisation programme is now in doubt following the damage to the wider port.

Stored ammonium nitrate cargo link to Beirut blast

A SEVEN-year-old consignment of ammonium nitrate stored in a warehouse at the port of Beirut is emerging as the likely cause of a huge explosion that rocked the Lebanese capital and killed at least 100 people.

The cargo is thought to have emanated from Moldova-flagged bulk carrier *Rhosus* in 2013, which was forced to divert to Beirut after developing technical problems while en route from Batumi in Georgia to Biera in Mozambique.

A number of Beirut port officials are being placed under house arrest pending an investigation into Tuesday's huge explosion, Lebanon's government has said.

The International Transport Workers' Federation has confirmed to Lloyd's List its involvement in the case after the ship was subsequently detained by port state control, at which point it was abandoned after the charterer and cargo interests lost interest in the consignment of ammonium nitrate.

According to ITF records, it took a year to secure repatriation of the crew to their native Ukraine, after the owner claimed that the cargo owner disappeared, along with the cargo documents.

The sticking point appears to have been the reluctance of the port authority to allow the ship to be unattended, which meant that they were unwilling to allow the crew to leave without replacement.

The ship was arrested by the agent and the port authority for unpaid bills in the order of $100,000. Meanwhile, the ITF engaged a lawyer to secure back pay and permission to leave for the crew. This was granted in September 2014, with the owner paying the airfare home.

Crucially, the ITF's records also suggest that Lebanon's ministry was aware of developments, after the ITF contacted it to invite its intervention

Lloyd's List Intelligence records show that *Rhosus* was seized in February 2014 on account of unpaid bunkers. It sank in the breakwater in February 2018.

At some point between the detention and the sinking, some 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate — an industrial chemical widely used in the manufacture of fertiliser and of both commercial and illicit explosives — were warehoused inside the perimeters of the port.

Ammonium nitrate is used for fertiliser as a good source of nitrogen for plants. It is also a key component in industrial explosives used in mining.

It is not explosive by itself and requires another substance, such as oil, to become highly explosive.

There are unconfirmed reports that welding work in the proximity of the warehouse may have sparked the blast.

Meanwhile, marine insurers are gearing up for what is likely to prove one of the most expensive insured cargo and port infrastructure losses ever, on a scale at least as large as the one resulting from the explosion at the Chinese port of Tianjin in 2015.

Peregrine Storrs-Fox, risk management director at logistics insurer TT Club, said the Beirut incident was clearly shaping up as a major claim.

"There is a suggestion that this relates to ammonium nitrate, but until such time as that is confirmed, that is conjecture," he said.

"The storage of dangerous goods, and the issues arising from that, is an issue for the whole of the supply chain industry. This will be a warning for those involved in carrying, handling and storage such cargoes, which needs to be done with the utmost care."

While the size of claims cannot even begin to be estimated this early on, the whole port can be seen to be impacted from available video footage, and plenty of claims are certain to arise, he went on.

TT Club — one of the most important insurers of ports facilities — "may well" face exposure itself, Mr Storrs-Fox confirmed, and will of course pay out on insured claims.

If the ammonium nitrate was confiscated, it is unlikely itself to be insured. But the assumption is that cargo in adjacent warehouses will have been covered by cargo insurance

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ANALYSIS

Cost of repatriation is deterring crew changes, say seafarers

THERE are fears that some shipowners are failing to make enough effort to repatriate seafarers working beyond the end of their contracts because crew changeover costs are continuing to soar to meet stricter quarantine and immigration rules at key hubs worldwide.

A number of seafarers are complaining on private social media forums about employers who will not repatriate them, but such messages are easily misunderstood and highly nuanced, seafarer charities and managers told Lloyd's List.

In some cases, seafarers asking for repatriation were set to travel on to ports where immigration rules would prevent them from leaving, but they still believed owners could or should do more.

In other instances, owners were looking to keep costs low, to the detriment of their crew, and keeping staff on board. Other owners were waiting for access to a port with fewer restrictions or hoping for policy changes that would lower repatriation costs.

"You have a responsibility as an employer [to repatriate where you can]," said International Transport Workers' Federation inspectorate co-ordinator Steve Trowsdale. "The ITF and maritime organisations have given you some leeway to extend contracts without us taking an issue.

"There are some examples where [employers] say it's not possible to crew change and we're investigating, but nobody can force governments to change

restrictions and unless they start opening up channels for seafarers then this is going to go on and it's only going to get worse. You'll be looking at some seafarers who by Christmas will have been at sea for almost two years."

An estimated three quarters of the 100,000 crew changes that need to take place monthly have not been possible since March when the coronavirus pandemic saw countries introduce a cascading series of lockdowns that shut off international travel.

Around 300,000 of the world's 1.5m seafarers are on vessels with expired contracts, with a further 300,000 unemployed in their home countries waiting to relieve them.

"It's hugely expensive to move people to work on ships these days," said Bjørn Højgaard, chief executive of Hong Kong-based shipmanager Anglo-Eastern Univan Group.

He said there had been recent cases where the cost to get six men off and another six men on a ship came to $60,000, compared to normal costs of about $10,000.However, few risked leaving crew on board. "The chances are that by the time you come to the next port you can't do a crew change and it only gets more expensive," Mr Højgaard said.

Stories have emerged of owners compensating by sending hampers of baby gifts to the families of crew who have missed the birth of their child.

"It's been the most frustrating six months of my bloody career," said Mr Trowsdale. "I know but there for the grace of God go I; I could be a seafarer stuck on a ship.

"They ask me 'can we crew change here?' and you know there's absolutely no chance and you say 'I'm sorry', and well, what can the ITF do? We can try and talk to governments and companies... personally I think this is going to go on for quite some time."

Australia, Belgium and the UK are three countries with maritime authorities known to have detained vessels for having crew with expired seafarer agreements.

Mr Trowsdale said the world needed a maritime authority or government willing to take up the challenge of dealing with lapsed contracts.

"A lot of seafarers are not coming to us because they're worried about not being rehired and [that] they'll be blacklisted," he said.

While Singapore and Hong Kong remain harder for crew changes, shipmanagers have reported making crew changes at hubs including the Suez Canal, Lome in Togo and even Mombasa, Kenya, in recent days.

The United Arab Emirates, where many problems have been reported despite assurances that Dubai is open, is now insisting that all the emirates are allowing crew changes.

Container port capacity growth to contract with declining trade

EXPANSION of container port capacity is expected to contract by at least 40% over the next five years in the wake of the slowdown in port throughput induced by the coronavirus outbreak.

Drewry Shipping Consultants says in a new report that it expects boxship terminal capacity to grow by an average 25m containers a year, which is "well below" the annual average increase of more than 40m containers added over the past decade.

The consultant projects port throughput to grow at an average annual rate of 3.5% over this period to reach 951m teu by 2024 from 801m teu in 2019.

But the firm hedges by saying "risks remain to this outlook should a resurgence in Covid-19 cases cause further widespread economic lockdowns over the forecast period".

Eleanor Hadland, Drewry's senior analyst for ports and terminals, says the five-year forecast for global container port handling has been cut back "drastically" due to the pandemic, and the risks remained "heavily weighted to the downside".

Ms Hadland says operators and port authorities are "actively reviewing" delivery of planned projects as a result of the "drastic slowdown" in economic growth and "uncertain" short-to-medium-term outlook.

"Major expansion projects and greenfield projects that are already under construction and due for

commissioning in 2020 and 2021 may face minor delays due to interruptions to global supply chains during the first half of 2020," she said.

"But if market conditions remain poor, then cancellation or suspension is more likely for projects which are currently at an earlier stage of planning, particularly where construction contracts and equipment orders have not yet been tendered."

Drewry says that global operators had already scaled back investment plans in recent years, with only a limited number of greenfield projects in the pipeline. However, it says leading operators "look set" to continue to lead the way in terms of terminal automation.

MARKETS

Freight volumes show signs of recovery

GLOBAL containerised freight volumes ticked up a notch in June in signs that the impact of the global pandemic may be relenting, albeit slowly.

Figures released yesterday by Container Trades Statistics show a 1% increase in volumes in June from a month earlier to 13.5m teu. This is below the monthly growth figure seen in May, but that reflected the evisceration of demand that had occurred in April.

June figures are usually lower than those for May due to changes in seasonal demand, so an improvement in the numbers was a good sign, CTS said.

"With demand for container shipping taking a huge knock as consumer spending has plummeted, surely things can only get better from here."

But while the second-quarter figure of 39.2m teu was marginally up on the first quarter, volumes remained at just under 10% of the corresponding period in 2019.

The 78m teu lifted so far this year is also 6.8% down on the first half of 2019.

Despite this, freight rates continued to hold up in June, CTS said. Its price index held steady at 71, up five points for the second successive month.

"In spite of everything, carriers seem to be showing great resilience," CTS said.

"Schedule adjustments and lower oil prices have surely helped. The future remains uncertain but for the moment the lines seem to be weathering the storm."

The figures came as Sea-Intelligence reported continued bullishness on the transpacific trade, which saw the Shanghai Containerised Freight Index leap to an all-time high last week as increased demand pushed up freight rates.

Moreover, carriers are continuing to add capacity to the trade lane, despite few signs of improvement in US economic indicators.

Third-quarter Asia-North America west coast capacity is scheduled to grow 8.4% this year, while capacity to the east coast is set to grow 12%, both record growth rates since the 2010 rebound from the global financial crisis.

"Under a reasonable assumption that carriers are not suddenly going to be heavily underutilised, this must be backed by volume expectations," Sea-Intelligence said.

But at the same time it warned that the increase in volumes was partially due to the overly tight capacity constraints that carriers applied during the second quarter that had left cargo rolled.

And comparisons to last year's third quarter had to be tempered by the fact that the market contracted during the period, as the impact of the trade dispute between China and the US took its toll on the peak season.

Additionally, capacity was not being reinstated at the same pace on other trade lanes, including those to Europe, where the pandemic has been better controlled.

Peak season capacity on the Asia-northern Europe trades will contract by 0.5% this year, while Asia-Mediterranean capacity will be down by 9.2%.

"Either the carriers are not yet optimistic of a demand pickup on the Asia-Europe trade, or they are currently sailing under-utilised and any demand pickup will fill up the existing vessels," Sea-Intelligence said.

K Line to cut 52 vessels amid harsh business environment

KAWASAKI Kisen Kaisha expects "a harsh business environment" for the 2020 fiscal year as the Japanese shipping giant posted its first quarter results.

The company's top priority would be to control damage to the full-year results from the coronavirus pandemic, it said in an announcement.

"The group will steadily implement such measures as reducing operational costs through scaling back of the fleet in accordance with the decline in cargo volume, rationalization of vessel allocation, suspension of vessel operation and mooring of vessels, securing sufficient liquidity on hand, and asset sales intended to support the capital base," it said.

This fiscal year, the company plans to remove 20 vessels, including capesize, panamax and smaller-sized bulkers, woodchip carriers, thermal coal carriers and car carriers.

It aims to reduce its fleet by a total of 52 vessels, most of which are exposed to spot markets, by the 2025 full year.

As a result, K Line forecast it would have no net profit for the 2020 fiscal year, which ends on March 31, 2021, and expected to see ¥27bn ($25.6m) in operating losses. The company had delayed its forecast from May, citing uncertainties created by the health crisis.

For the first quarter between April and June, net losses stood at ¥955m compared to net profits of ¥7.8bn in the same period a year earlier. Operating revenue was down 17% to ¥152bn.

The performance was mainly dragged down by the company's dry bulkers, offshore support vessels, car carriers and short-sea transport businesses. However, its box shipping segment, operated by the Ocean Network Express joint venture between K Line and compatriot shipping companies Mitsui OSK Lines and NYK Line, turned profitable, with high freight rates and vessel utilisation backed by void sailings.

Looking forward, K Line said the dry bulker market was showing signs of picking up, with countries pumping in economic stimulus measures to spur demand for raw materials, although it would take time for "a fully-fledged recovery" to materialise.

It also warned that cargo movements in liner shipping might remain sluggish in the second quarter and beyond due to the continued spread of the virus.

"ONE will continue to implement various measures to improve profitability, including flexibly reducing the number of voyages in accordance with demand," said K Line.

Meanwhile, NYK Line also released its belated full-year forecast, which was originally due in May.

The company had a more positive view. With improved earnings seen in container shipping and air freight businesses in the first quarter, it estimated a net profit of ¥13.5bn and an operating profit of ¥13bn for the 2020 fiscal year ending on March 31, 2021.

Its bottom line in the three months to June strengthened by 27.8% year-on-year to a gain of ¥11.6bn, despite an 11.1% drop in revenue to ¥361.1bn.

NKY Line underlined the difficulties of changing crew with the pandemic-related international travel restrictions, which have increased the cost of such operations.

"The additional expenses required for crew changes have been estimated and incorporated into the forecast," it said.

Last week, MOL maintained its previous forecast that it would break even in the 2020 fiscal year, mainly citing the pandemic's impact on its car business and container shipping.

Baltic Dry Index gets lift from capesize and panamax segments

THE Baltic Dry Index, a benchmark indicator of the dry bulk sector, was up 78 points on Tuesday to close at 1,463 points, thanks to burgeoning capesize and panamax markets that have seen earnings improve in recent weeks.

At the close on Tuesday the BDI was 199 points higher compared with the previous week, according to the Baltic Exchange.

"With the exception of the supramax sector the rest of the sizes enjoyed a week of firm activity with capesize vessels outperforming their smaller counterparts," Intermodal Research said in its latest weekly report.

The capesize sector, which has been the main driver for the surge in the BDI, was helped by Chinese iron ore restocking. Around four fixtures were reported from Australia to China on Tuesday at firm rates.

The Baltic Capesize weighted time charter average was assessed at $20,687 per day as the route out of Dampier in Western Australia to China rose 45% week-on-week, as miners' enquiries rose.

"Although the average spot rate broke the psychological $20,000 a day mark, activity actually remains healthy and enough to keep that rough price level as support in the months ahead," Breakwave Advisors noted.

The Atlantic market drove rates higher for the panamaxes with increased front-haul grain trades from east coast South America and the US Gulf supporting freight rates.

Panamax time charter earnings were around $11,840 a day, up $553 compared with Monday, according to the Baltic Exchange.

"The high-specification and economical vessels were high in demand from Far East delivery and those willing to give optionality were starting to get picked up at better rates than previously," the London-based organisation said in its daily report.

"This improvement has yet to transmit into better levels for Pacific rounds for now, but sources suggested a better immediate outlook in the area."

Dry bulk shipping is a leveraged play on the global economy and as such should experience a revival in demand, Breakwave Advisors said.

"Grains trading is also keeping a lot of vessels busy, with multi-year highs in terms of US export quantities (both for corn and soyabeans)."

"All in all, the environment over the next six months will be favourable for smaller size dry bulk vessels, even though year-to-date panamax and supramax freight rates have underperformed," it added.

Meanwhile, indices came off for another week for supramaxes and handysizes as most regions suffered from ample supply of tonnage compared with a smaller number of cargoes.

IN OTHER NEWS

Full impact of pandemic on dry bulk cannot be predicted, says Safe Bulkers

SAFE Bulkers, the Cyprus- and Greece-based owner of dry bulk carriers, has posted a second-quarter loss due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, warning that the longer term implications of the virus for the dry bulk industry are essentially unpredictable.

The US-listed owner of 42 bulkers increased second-quarter revenues by 5% compared with last year, to $50.1m.

However, average charter rates suffered and voyage expenses soared to $18.6m from $2.1m in the same period of 2019. This was "as a result of increased vessel repositioning expenses, higher loss on bunkers sales and bunker consumption costs for scrubber-fitted vessels under charter agreements which provide for variable consideration based on the bunker consumption," the company explained.

ITF secures repatriation of 250,000 cruise sector seafarers

SEAFARER unions working in collaboration with the cruise industry have achieved the repatriation of almost 250,000 cruise sector seafarers, although the crew change crisis has still left 300,000 stranded on other vessel types, according to the International Transport Workers' Federation.

Cruise company employees in capacities ranging from catering, hospitality, and entertainment to

deck and engine officers and ratings were caught out when governments starting imposing travel restrictions as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Dave Heindel, chair of the seafarers' section of the ITF, said: "On the one hand, we have seen governments shamefully shutting their doors to seafarers as port states, transit countries and even the home countries of seafarers, when really they should have done everything within their power to get seafarers on cargo and cruise ships home."

Kanfer Shipping plans for LNG bunkering quartet

NORWAY's Kanfer Shipping is sounding out shipyards for up to four liquefied natural gas bunkering tankers to be built to a design developed by CGR Arctic Marine.

Stig Hagen, the firm's managing partner, said it expected to secure its first projects before the end of this year or early next year.

The small-scale LNG-focused player will then move on to place an order with a shipyard for two firm newbuildings plus options for another pair of vessels.

Salvage operation starts to refloat grounded capsize

NAGASHIKI Shipping, the owner of the capesize dry bulker *Wakashio* grounded off Mauritius, said that salvage operations had started.

"Salvage experts and crew have started with pumping operations in areas on board the vessel which have suffered water ingress," the owner said. "Currently all water being pumped from damaged areas is being stored in other tanks on board to avoid any chance of pollution."

The company said that it was working closely with the Mauritian authorities and the salvage company for the safe refloating of the 2007-built, Panama-flagged vessel.

Autonomous ships platform project launched

AN international initiative to develop autonomous ships has been launched.

Representatives from flag, coastal and port authorities from China, Denmark, Finland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, South Korea and Singapore took part in a virtual event to form the so-called MASSPorts network.

The initiative aims to address the challenges and achieve alignment of standards for the trials and operation of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships in ports.

Greece move prompts GasLog Partners leadership change

GASLOG's move to consolidate senior management of the group in Greece has led to a change at the top of separately-listed subsidiary GasLog Partners.

Andy Orekar, who has led the partnership since its original public offering in 2014, has decided not to relocate and is stepping down on September 15.

The former Goldman Sachs banker's role will be assumed by Greece-based Paul Wogan, who is already chief executive of mother company GasLog Ltd.

Seanergy eyes 'full-blown recovery' for capesizes

SEANERGY Maritime is predicting a healthy market for the next year or longer following a first half hit by disruption to Brazilian ore exports on top of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

"We are confident that the stable demand from China, the Covid-19 economic stimulus relief and the ramp-up of Brazilian exports, in line with Vale's recently reiterated production guidance, will contribute towards what we believe will be a sustainably healthy market for the rest of 2020 and in 2021," said company chief executive Stamatis Tsantanis.

Current market conditions were already showing "significant reversal of the negative factors of the first half into a full-blown recovery," he said.

Classified notices follow

ALTERNATIVE USE BOSTON PROJECTS LTD

SECTION 48, PLANNING ACT 2008

REGULATION 4 INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (APPLICATIONS: PRESCRIBED FORMS AND PROCEDURE) REGULATIONS 2009 (THE 'REGULATIONS')

BOSTON ALTERNATIVE ENERGY FACILITY

NOTICE PUBLICISING A PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER

Alternative Use Boston Projects Ltd (the 'Applicant') of 26 Church Street, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, England, CM23 2LY (Company Number 11013830), published a Notice in June 2019 publicising a proposed application for a Development Consent Order and advising of its intention to make an application (the 'Proposed Application') to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (the '2008 Act') for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') authorising the construction, operation and maintenance of a power-generation plant, known as the Boston Alternative Energy Facility, within the Riverside Industrial Estate, Boston, Lincolnshire (the 'Proposed Development').

Summary of Proposed Development

The Proposed Development would comprise:

- an Energy from Waste facility comprising three thermal treatment units and steam turbine generators to generate up to 102 MW (gross) of energy;
- a wharf with cranes and berthing points;
- a storage bunker and contingency external storage area for the temporary storage of Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) bales;
- a RDF bale shredding facility (a sealed building) to remove bale wrap and reduce the particle size;
- conveyors to transfer RDF bales and processed material;
- turbine plant comprising three steam turbine engines, make-up water facility and associated piping and ductwork;
- air-cooled condenser structure, transformer pen and associated piping and ductwork;
- an on-site grid connection and substation to facilitate the export of up to 80 MW to the National Grid;
- a lightweight aggregate manufacturing plant to process the thermal treatment ash and air pollution control residues into two separate aggregate products;
- two carbon dioxide (CO_2) recovery plants, allowing a proportion of the CO_2 from two of the three thermal treatment units to be captured and converted to food grade CO_2 for off-site industrial use;
- a storage area for lightweight aggregate product prior to removal (by ship) from the site; and
- associated infrastructure including a visitor centre, car parking, onsite roads, site surfacing, site security, storage and workshop facility, weighbridge, fencing, site control centre and welfare facilities.

The Proposed Application will also seek authorisation for the compulsory acquisition of interests in and rights over land, the temporary use of land, and the overriding of easements and other rights.

Consultation

The Applicant carried out statutory consultation in relation to the Application from 25 June 2019 to 6 August 2019 but did not publish the statutory notice in Lloyd's List or an appropriate fishing trade journal as required under the Regulations. This Notice is being published in Lloyd's List and Fishing News Weekly to rectify this omission and to seek representations from those who may not have had an opportunity to respond earlier. This consultation is taking place from 10 August 2020 to 10 September 2020. In addition to this statutory consultation, the Applicant is also carrying out further non-statutory consultation during the same period.

Preliminary Environmental Information

The Proposed Development is 'EIA development' for the purposes of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This means that the proposed works constitute development for which an Environmental Impact Assessment is required. Accordingly, the Proposed Application will be accompanied by an Environmental Statement containing information about the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development.

During the 2019 statutory consultation, preliminary environmental information was included in a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (the 'PEIR') and summarised in a non-technical summary of the PEIR. Since the PEIR was prepared there have been changes proposed to the project. The Applicant has therefore prepared a leaflet summarising these changes. This leaflet is available to view and download free of charge on the project website (www.bostonaef.co.uk). A copy of the leaflet can also be obtained free of charge until 10 September 2020 by contacting the Applicant using the details set out at the end of this notice.

The PEIR, together with the consultation leaflet, plans, maps and other documents, which show the nature and location of the Proposed Development (the 'consultation documents') are also available for inspection free of charge on the project website at https://www.bostonaef.co.uk/consultation/ from 10 August 2020 until 10 September 2020.

Electronic or hard copies of the consultation documents can be ordered using the contact details set out at the end of this notice. A reasonable copying charge may apply up to a maximum of £250 for the full set of documents and £10 for an electronic copy on CD or USB stick.

Information Events

The Applicant is holding information events but due to COVID-19 limitations on public gatherings, it is not possible to hold public exhibitions as was previously done. However, in order to ensure that your questions can be answered, the Applicant is hosting two webinars and, for those without access to a computer, a telephone surgery. Details of when the webinars and telephone surgery are taking place are set out below. Please book your place using the contact details set out at the end of this notice.

Webinars

Each session will last between 1–2 hours, depending on the number of questions from the public. These are taking place on—

Webinar 1: Tuesday 11 August 2020 at 12.00pm

Webinar 2: Thursday 20 August 2020 at 12.00pm

Telephone Surgery

These are 15 minute slots where you can speak directly with a member of the project team. This is by appointment only. An additional session may be arranged if this is required. Please check the project website for the latest information.

Telephone Surgery: Wednesday 26 August 2020 10.00am–4.30pm

Responding to the Consultation

Any person may comment on the Proposed Development or otherwise respond to this publicity. Responses must be received by 11.59pm on 10 September 2020. When providing your response, please include your name and address or, if you would prefer your comments to be anonymous, your postcode only. Please also confirm the nature of your interest in the project.

Responses can be submitted in the following ways—

Website: By completing a Comments Form on the project website at www.bostonaef.co.uk

Email: By emailing consultation@bostonaef.co.uk

Freepost: In writing to Freepost RTLY–RLGH–GKSE, Boston Alternative Energy Facility, 25 Priestgate, Peterborough, PE1 1JL

The Applicant will have regard to all consultation responses before submitting its application for a DCO to the Secretary of State.

Copies of your comments may be made available to the Planning Inspectorate, the Secretary of State and other relevant statutory authorities so that your comments can be noted. Personal details are not placed on the public record and will be kept confidential. Your personal details will be kept securely by the Applicant and any appointed agent of the Applicant in accordance with data protection legislation and will be used solely in connection with the consultation process and the Proposed Application. Your personal details will not be passed to any third parties except as noted above. Respondents do not have to provide any personal information, but this information will help the Applicant to understand the range of responses, and to provide updates about the project and the outcome of the consultation.

Please note that the deadline for receipt of consultation responses on the Proposed Application is 11.59pm on 10 September 2020.

Contacting the Applicant

The project website (www.bostonaef.co.uk) contains all relevant and current information about the consultation and the Proposed Application.

If you have any questions about the consultation, Proposed Development, Proposed Application or wish to request copies of any of the consultation documents, please contact the Applicant using the following details :

Email: consultation@bostonaef.co.uk

Post: Freepost RTLY–RLGH–GKSE, Boston Alternative Energy Facility, 25 Priestgate, Peterborough, PE1 1JL

Telephone: 0800 0014 050

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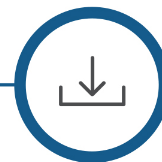

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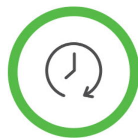

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