

# High capacity, stable service

**DB Cargo Logistics transports cars from the Northern Range ports of Zeebrugge and Rotterdam to Switzerland for the Emil Frey Group. It offers stable departure times and plenty of wagon capacity – benefits that won over the Swiss customer.**

**D**B Cargo Logistics has put together a fine-tuned network for transporting finished vehicles for the automotive industry. A new customer is now reaping the benefits: Switzerland's Emil Frey Group. The company is one of Europe's largest automotive dealers and imports several thousand cars from overseas a year.

Large vessels ship the vehicles from Japan, South Korea and China, arriving in Zeebrugge and Rotterdam at regular intervals. The cars then need to be taken quickly to the customer in Switzerland. DB Cargo Logistics began transporting the imported vehicles for Emil Frey in January 2020 using a bespoke, rail-based concept.

"Train capacity created when wagons are unloaded in Zeebrugge can be used immediately, allowing the Emil Frey Group to benefit from our network," says Andreas Eigl, team leader for the finished vehicles network at DB Cargo Logistics. DB Cargo Logistics transports new cars to the ports for export on behalf of other customers. Once the wagons are empty, they are loaded with imported vehicles for Emil Frey and head back in the other direction. This system allows DB Cargo Logistics to provide two trains in Zeebrugge and one in Rotterdam on scheduled departure days. DB Cargo Logistics has the network flexibility to react quickly to any

changes and provide the trains when they're needed – even adding special trains if necessary.

"Even if there are train delays en route to Switzerland, DB Cargo Logistics can keep reloading empty wagons at the ports, since it has access to a large number of empty wagons there. This means that loaded runs don't depend directly on empty runs," says Ralf KÜchle from the Emil Frey Group. "DB Cargo Logistics' ability to ensure on-time departures is what won us over."

## Precise planning before loading

The port terminal is responsible for precisely planning loads. DB Cargo Logistics sends a loading recommendation in advance to make sure that the cars are loaded onto their assigned wagons based on their size. "Communication between the railway logistics provider, terminal and customer is extremely important in situations like these where empty wagons are immediately reloaded," says Markus Fischer, key account manager at DB Cargo Logistics. "This is the only way for us to guarantee precise loading and arrange train paths so that vehicles reach their destination on time."

The trains, each loaded with roughly 230 cars, then travel to Switzerland. DB Cargo provides traction itself along the entire route from Belgium or the Netherlands

## STRONG PERFORMANCE

- DB Cargo Logistics is Europe's largest rail logistics provider for the automotive sector, with some 5,000 car carrier wagons.
- The company is responsible for managing and optimising the network structure and works with its customers to develop high-performing and reliable transport solutions.
- DB Cargo Logistics is striving to expand its network and leverage synergies. It is able to offer attractive solutions especially from automotive ports, such as Bremerhaven, Zeebrugge, Antwerp, Vlissingen and Koper.

through Germany and onward to the customer's siding. Eigl sees two major advantages: "Reloading empty wagons makes for more sustainable transport and reinforces the network aspect of our service." This fine-tuned collaboration between the three DB Cargo companies in Belgium, Germany and Switzerland also translates into a high degree of transparency and stability for the customer. "We would like to see the service be developed and hope that communication will remain open and direct in case of any disruption in the future too," says KÜchle.

Trains arrive in Switzerland the next day, in the small town of Safenwil, where Emil Frey's double-track terminal is located. From there, the up to 30,000 cars a year that pass through the Northern Range ports are transported to dealers and customers. "We have to overcome one last hurdle once the trains arrive in Safenwil," Eigl said. The terminal has a very narrow window when trains can arrive: business days from 8 pm to 10 pm and not a minute before or after. Eigl explains: "The high frequency of passenger trains, which are given priority, and night-time noise regulations mean that this is the only time trains can arrive." The automotive dispatchers in Duisburg and Kelsterbach build slack into the timetable at Offenburg in



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**RALF KÜCHLE**  
Head of PDI Emil Frey Group

Germany to allow for this narrow window. Once the wagons are unloaded in Safenwil, they are transported back to automotive plants in Germany, completing the cycle. ●



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*— Dealerships throughout Switzerland are served from Safenwil.*