

# HIGH-TECH OPERATION

The potential waiting times at the Dube Trade Port cargo terminal have been reduced by an average 29 minutes through the use of state-of-the-art equipment, Worldwide Flight Services believes.



The highly sophisticated and extremely efficient equipment employed at the Dube Trade Port cargo terminal has enabled Worldwide Flight Services to focus its resources on the important aspects of the cargo-handling business.

**A**ir cargo-handling company Worldwide Flight Services (WFS) was awarded the contract to operate Dube Trade Port cargo terminal at the new King Shaka International Airport near Durban in KwaZulu-Natal in August 2009 and began operating the cargo terminal on May 1 2010. The equipment which it inherited ensures efficient operations within the 15 000 m<sup>2</sup> building which has capacity for 120 000 tpa of cargo.

"It is a very impressive system; allowing us to complete tasks at the touch of a button," Darren Coleman, general manager of WFS, enthuses. "It is a fully automated system. At the touch of a button, the cargo ends up exactly where it needs to

**"The cargo terminal has an average 21-minute queue-waiting time due to the efficiency of the equipment."**

be rather than manually trying to manipulate unit load devices (ULDs) or aircraft pallets around the building. We are also able to maintain an inventory of all pallets we receive; allowing us to track and trace from start to finish."

#### Waiting time decreased

"In our opinion this highly sophisticated and extremely efficient equipment has enabled us to reduce our waiting times," Coleman tells *JFM*.

"There is the perception that the use of state-of-the-art equipment takes the job of a person and puts people out of work – on the contrary. Because of the equipment we have at our disposal, we can focus our resources on the important aspects of the business, such as

increasing the number of open doors and allowing cargo to flow more speedily and efficiently in and out of the building."

According to Coleman, instead of having a potential 50-minute queue-waiting time, the cargo terminal now has an average 21-minute waiting time due to the efficiency of the equipment which enables WFS to focus on other areas of the business. "The high-tech equipment enables us to concentrate on meeting the service-delivery levels set out in the service level agreements (SLAs) we have with airlines and allows us to have that average of 21 minutes whereas if operating a manual system, we would probably be looking at double that at least."



### African first

Among the 21st-century equipment installed in the Dube Trade Port cargo terminal is the only ULD X-ray machine in Africa. This machine enables the South African Revenue Service (SARS) to pre-clear incoming cargo.

"Images of the cargo coming in from overseas can be seen before it is broken down, for example, so SARS can pre-clear goods if it is happy with the contents before we actually break down the cargo," Coleman notes. "Without this machine, this wouldn't be possible."

Sanjay Reewith, WFS facilities manager for the Dube Trade Port cargo terminal, says that the machine can X-ray a fully loaded ULD and is used mainly by SARS to X-ray the incoming cargo.

Reewith states that the ULDs used for cargo and bags are manufactured according to IATA specifications. These ULDs, which comprise a number of different shapes and sizes, are loaded onto the ULD workstations for building or breaking down cargo. Each ULD has a unique number for identification so that it can be tracked around the world, Reewith notes. The ULDs are sent to either the storage racks or the airside lanes, when they

**"SARS can pre-clear goods before we actually break down the cargo – without this machine, this wouldn't be possible."**



Turret trucks