

## Multimodal and Coastlink work together again

Coastlink is an association of companies committed to expanding the role shortsea shipping plays in transporting containers around Europe. Members include deepsea and shortsea shipping companies, multimodal operators, ports and stevedores, forwarding and logistics specialists and shippers.

Coastlink was established in London in 2004 under the Chairmanship of David Cheslin, Managing Director of Dunelm Public Relations Ltd. Gavin Roser of Pantrak Transportation is the Deputy Chairman.

Policy is driven by a steering committee that includes executives from DFDS, Johnson Stevens/ China Shipping (UK) Agency Co, Port Authority Zeebrugge, The Port of Tyne and ZIM UK.

Coastlink's origins lie with a meeting in December 2003, initiated by Cheslin and Roser. This set out to explore the viability of a coastal container service along the UK East Coast that would cater for both deepsea feeder boxes and the carriage of UK domestic traffic. While it was felt that the viability of moving domestic cargo by containers was still some way off, the meeting did conclude that regular meetings to discuss shortsea matters would be worthwhile, especially given the looming spectre of port congestion during the 2004 peak season.

Since its inception, Coastlink has broadened its scope from a purely UK association to include subjects of interest to those involved in shortsea shipping throughout Northern Europe. The resultant networking opportunities, most notably between ports and shortsea/feeder shipping companies, have already led to a number of new service initiatives while Coastlink is also working actively to identify and eliminate where possible those factors that restrict shortsea shipping's ability to compete with road transport.