

# PRESS RELEASE



6 December 2011

## **Europorte Channel runs new European service from Spain to the UK for Stobart**

International multimodal logistics expert Stobart Group has re-started its low-carbon, rail freight service between Valencia in Spain, and Barking near London. The seasonal rail service is operated by Europorte Channel, part of GB Railfreight, which is the third largest rail freight operator in the UK and a subsidiary of Groupe Eurotunnel. Europorte Channel will carry 30 chilled containers of fruit and vegetables from Spain to supermarkets and retailers in the UK.

The first train arrived into Barking on Friday 25 November and was monitored throughout the journey by the latest satellite tracking software which closely observes progress and ensures that the temperature of each 45 foot-long, refrigerated container remains suitably chilled. The journey takes just over 50 hours with the service passing through Spain, France and the Channel Tunnel. It saves around 250 cross-continent truck journeys every month, slashing vehicle carbon emissions, and reduces road congestion on Spanish, French and British motorways.

In an innovative move, Europorte Channel and Network Rail have used the international rail lines at the Folkestone end of the Tunnel, removing the need for an extra stop on the northbound leg of the journey – reducing both cost and journey time. The new service has been part-funded by a European Union Marco Polo grant, promoting freight modal shift from road to rail to relieve congestion on key European routes and reduce carbon emissions. Initially it will run weekly building up to five services per week at peak times.

**Liam Martin, Stobart Rail Freight managing director, said:** *“The resumption of this seasonal service has been driven by the commercial advantages it offers and the environmental benefits. It will help take trucks off European motorways and ease congestion at key pinch-points such as the Pyrenees. The service will allow us to offer a cost and time-effective solution for supermarkets and food retailers in a carbon-friendly manner.”*

**Kevin Walker, Director for Europorte Channel said:** *“Working closely with the team at Stobart Rail, we have been able to adapt to the demand of our customer and to the challenges of such a long route through the European railway network. This is a truly international partnership that demonstrates the added value that cross-channel rail freight can bring to the market.”*