

2 September 2015

## **GB Railfreight increases capacity at the Port of Felixstowe by over one fifth, actively switching freight from road to rail**

GB Railfreight today [2<sup>nd</sup> September] ran its first train in its new slot at the Port of Felixstowe, enabling the freight operator to increase its capacity at the Port by over one fifth (23%).

The new slot, GB Railfreight's 7<sup>th</sup> at the Port, was awarded last week after a competitive bidding process. It marks an important milestone in GB Railfreight's operations at the Port, its first new slot since 2012.

This slot allows trains to run from Felixstowe to Birmingham Intermodal Freight Terminal (BIFT) at Birch Coppice in the West Midlands, a major intermodal freight terminal owned by Maritime Transport. It is the first train to serve this route out of the Port, meaning it will be actively switching freight from road to rail.

Trains will run to and from the Port once a day, five days a week (Monday to Friday) over the next five years. The first train, locomotive 66761, left the Port for Maritime Transport's Birmingham Intermodal Freight Terminal, Birch Coppice, at 10:29 am.

To begin with, the trains will consist of 33 wagons. However, GBRf has placed an order for a further 15 Ecofret triple-platform wagons, which will make the train 45 wagons in length. This will allow the freight operator to continue to serve the demand for 40 foot containers and increases GBRf's capacity at the Port by 23% - over one fifth.

John Smith, Managing Director of GB Railfreight, said:

*"This is a really exciting day for us. We have worked extremely hard to identify opportunities to increase our capacity to and from the Port. As a result, we now run the longest intermodal freight trains on the network with wagons that can accommodate 40 foot-containers."*

*“The winning of our 7th slot is an important milestone as it enables us to further expand our capacity, helping us to continue to meet the demand from our customers and support the growth of the intermodal rail freight market and its potential to take freight off the roads.”*

John Williams, Group Managing Director of Maritime Transport, said:

*“BIFT is an important strategic freight interchange in the West Midlands and we are delighted that GBRf has chosen our rail terminal for their new service.”*

Clemence Cheng, Chief Executive Officer of the Port of Felixstowe and Managing Director of HPH Europe division, said:

*“As well as being the busiest container port in the UK, Felixstowe also operates the country’s biggest intermodal rail facility. In 2014 we handled close to 900,000 TEU by rail. This record volume was achieved by the investment we made in our newest terminal, the North Rail Terminal, and the dedicated employees in our rail team working closely with our customers and Network Rail to improve on our efficiency and the handling of longer trains. The 30+ wagon trains that run from there are the longest intermodal trains in the UK.*

*“Capacity at the North Rail Terminal is being further enhanced by two new Rail-Mounted Gantry Cranes. Together with the new service launched today, this investment further enhances the unique range and frequency of services available at Felixstowe giving port users greater choice and more opportunities to strip carbon from their supply chains.”*