

Are Scandinavian Ports and Terminals Making Bad Investments?

The development towards designing and planning ports and terminals based on world *best practice* principle – where expectations to future high utilisations of quay wall, stacking area, handling equipment, cranes, etc. are taken into account – has yet not gained a strong foothold in Scandinavia. The consequence could be significant bad investments in super- and infrastructure and technology.

The performance and utilisation of quay operations, rail handling operations, gates, cranes and handling equipment – just mentioning a few – has increased significantly the last 5 years. This is mainly due to the technological development, as well as the development towards larger vessels, larger call sizes, and shorter port time. For that reason, port and terminals should be planned and designed differently than what is seen in most ports and terminals today.

For Scandinavian ports and terminals, the consequence is that, with the same volume, there is a need for significant less stacking area and quay length, but stronger quay and pavement, larger and more powerful handling equipment and cranes, as well as more advanced operations-IT.

Ports and terminals with small volumes can benefit economically from implementing current *best practice* in design and planning.

Seaport Group has the last years participated in more expansions of ports and terminals in and outside Scandinavia. By utilising operations planning and design *best practice*, the capacity was in more cases increased with more than 100%, without additional investments in port infrastructure and additional port lands.

Still we are witness to more planned and ongoing port and terminal projects, where it – to the best of our belief - is a disproportion between quay length and stacking area, as well as location of rail handling area, warehouses, etc.

However, it is not only through an optimum layout of the ports and terminals that there are currently considerable untapped benefits. Through an upgrading of the existing operations IT combined with an optimisation of the work processes, there is a considerable productivity improvement potential for the handling equipment and staff (equipment- and man-hours per container handled). Here we are especially referring to solutions like real-time dispatching, real time inventory update, pooling of handling equipment, gate systems, appointment systems, etc.

The article and other articles can be found on www.seaport.com



Kent Busk has the last years participated in more design and optimisation projects of smaller ports and terminals, where significant capacity increases and performance improvements has been achieved by only limited investments.