

REHABILITATION OF THE RAIL FERRY TERMINAL AT AKTAU

Final Recipients :

Maritime Department, Ministry of Transport, Communications and Tourism (MOTCT) of Kazakhstan

Justification and Objectives :

The northern branch of the TRACECA corridor passes through the port of Aktau. It is the preferred routing by Kazakhs for their traffic, as obviously it increases revenues to the Kazakh railways and the port of Aktau, relative to the more southerly route passing through Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

The port of Aktau is recovering from a decline in traffic, thanks to its ideal position for servicing the Tenghiz oilfields, and an increase in general cargo between other origins and destinations especially since the Russian crisis two years ago when transit of goods via the Kazakh-Russian borders has become problematic.

Between 1986 and 1992 the port operated a ro-ro ferry service between other ports, principally Baku. Due to the conflicts in the Caucasus this service was halted. The condition of the ferry ramp in Aktau has deteriorated due to age and lack of attention, so that today it is not operable. The port of Aktau has negotiated a loan of 50 million € from the EBRD in 1997 for the rehabilitation of the general port facilities, this loan does not cover the ferry ramp.

A former TRACECA project, Traffic Forecasting-Caspian Sea (Interstate 1998, budget 1.500.000 EURO) investigated on:

- the demand for the ferry service including detailed origin-destination studies of existing traffic across the Caspian
- investment costs, operating costs and revenues.

The feasibility study of the economic and financial potential of the ferry terminal in Aktau and the relevant technical documentation provided by that project are the basis for this investment.

There is also a strategic utility of this ferry connection, in providing an alternative Caspian Sea crossing in competition to the existing ferry connecting between Baku and Turkmenbashi, which suffers from the ongoing disputes on transit tariffs between Turkmenistan and the other Traceca countries. Turkmenistan is not yet a signatory of the Multilateral Agreement on Transport. Thus the project will enhance the integration of Northwest Kazakhstan in the corridor and will strengthen the Caspian link in the Traceca corridor.

Furthermore, during the preparation of this project, on 1st June 1999, a memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Kazakh MOTCT and the Government of the Azerbaijan Republic, with regard to the rehabilitation of the rail ferry terminal. The Azerbaijan Republic committed itself to placing a tugboat at the disposal of the Port of Aktau, whereas the Kazakh Ministry agreed to carry out the preliminary works on their own resources.

Main Components :

The project will be implemented according the detailed feasibility study, including the technical specifications for design and construction, done under the project 'Traffic Forecasting and Feasibility Studies' (TRACECA 1998).

The Contractor will be in charge of the engineering designs, conform to Kazakh and European standards, for and the execution of the remaining works, as well as the overall technical supervision of these designs and works during the entire implementation period :

1. Marine works and berthing

- renovate central pier (sheet wall protection, new pavement, concrete surfacing);
- renovate finger pier (new fender system, sheet wall protection, new pavement);
- renovate pier access road (underground piping, raising of land end, pavement);
- renovate ramp/tower supports (raising of concrete base, sheet wall protection).

2. Ferry ramp rehabilitation (structural, electrical, mechanical)

- renovate the 2 linkspans (new timber deck, review of structure, replacement of damaged parts, new surface protection, omission of railway switches);
- renovate machinery (spindles, wires, counterweights);
- procure and install a new control system for lifting operations;
- renovate tower superstructures (roofs, walls, surface protection).

Project Budget :

2 000 000 EURO