

TOFTIR'S RISE TO PROMINENCE

With new development plans in place to increase capacity for handling freight traffic, Toftir Harbour continues to attract new business—aided by prospects of a giant submarine tunnel to connect the area with Tórshavn.

THE INDUSTRIOUS community of Toftir is stepping up its bid to become an important hub for sea cargo in the Faroe Islands.

Since the 2008 establishment of Fresh Link, which followed the opening of a new freight terminal, business has been buzzing at Toftir Harbour despite an overall downward trend in the economy.

According to Símun Johannesen, mayor of the Municipality of Nes, the number of companies based in the Toftir area is increasing. This could be linked to a few key factors including the growing competitiveness of the location.

For one thing, Toftir is situated on the island of Eysturoy and is already well connected to the Faroese mainland area. What's more, a new fixed link between Toftir-Runavík-Strendur and the capital of Tórshavn is in the works—the largest

construction project ever to be undertaken in the Faroe Islands. The project, which was to be given the final go-ahead at the top political level in the spring of 2010, is expected to take five years to complete with costs totaling approximately 1 billion DKK (134.37m EUR). It will connect the two arms at the mouth of the fjord known as Skálafjørður by submarine tunnel to the capital, which means Toftir will only be a few minutes drive away from Tórshavn.

“For example, a major Tórshavn salt vendor is relocating to Toftir shortly,” Mr. Johannesen said. “This may not have anything as such to do with the forthcoming underwater tunnel system, although that may well have been part of the considerations. In fact most of his clients are saltfish processors based in various places in Eysturoy including Toftir. Well, perhaps it's also the fact

that the service this harbor has to offer is generally very competitive.”

Toftir is traditionally known as a fishing village and has long had a lively business scene. The establishment of the Faroe Islands' only fish market there back in the 1990s catapulted the place to a new level as it became a key white-fish harbor, sending freight trucks full of fresh catch on a daily basis to Tórshavn and other places for processing or export.

Much of the catch landed at Toftir is still dispatched by road but with Fresh Link, the new shipping line between Toftir and the north of Scotland, a large proportion of that fish is now transported by sea directly from the Cargo Terminal, which likewise receives weekly truck loads of seafood from elsewhere for export. Although the shipping line is



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Cargo Terminal: 96m with minimum depths of 7.5m alongside, ISPS certified.

Fishing Terminal: 320m with depths of 6 to 8.5m alongside.

Ice Berth: 85m with depths of 4 to 7.5m alongside.

Industry, services:

Fish auction, fish landing, fish processing, fish containers, mechanical repairs, ice, freshwater, electricity, fuel, provisions.

The mayor Símun Johannesen; longliners landing their catch at the Fishing Terminal (below); view of the Cargo Terminal with the reefer vessel Silver Fjord in the foreground (bottom left).

owned by seafood exporters and primarily serves as a vital link to Scotland for such interests, imports have been rising slowly but surely.

“The new service to and from Scotland has been well received in the marketplace,” Mr. Johannesen noted.

“It certainly seems to indicate that the need was there and that they did the right thing when they started the route.”

KIMO SCHEME: Meanwhile Toftir's port authority, the Municipality of Nes, has decided to extend the Cargo Terminal to gain additional quayside as well as increasing the depth alongside.

“We're working on a plan to extend the terminal,” Mr. Johannesen said. “Ultimately it can be extended by 200 meters but the work is going to be car-

ried out in stages on a need-to-do basis. Already the first stage will have a water depth of 10 meters, compared to the 8 m. we have alongside the existing quayside.”

With a total of just over 500 m. of quay, Toftir Harbour consists of the 320 m. Fishing Terminal and the 85 m. Ice Berth, in addition to the Cargo Terminal and a marina with a capacity for 70 boats and inshore vessels. Fresh water, electricity, and other basic services are available in all parts of the harbor, as well as engine and mechanical repairs, provisioning and more.

About 1,150 calls per year are received from vessels with a capacity of 50 tonnes and above with some 5,500 calls coming from smaller fishing boats.

Toftir Harbour is known for a successful flat-rate service that makes it

easy and convenient for vessels to get rid of their litter hassle-free and without paperwork. To take this effort one step further, Toftir Harbour, as the first one in the Faroes, has decided to participate in the 'Fishing for Litter' scheme in cooperation with KIMO, the Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation.



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