

# Case study

## Bennett's Tugs and LASH



### Key facts

**Key vendors:**

**Site:**

**Sector:**

**Client:**

**Contractor:**

### Brief

Lighters Aboard Ships (LASH) is the term used to describe a concept that preceded the container revolution, by loading barges full of goods and merchandise onto an ocean-going mother-ship giving the ability to travel between continents.

LASH barges are designed to take advantage of navigating on shallow rivers and waterways, the system overcomes the double-handling of cargo at the port which was necessary in the past when inland waterway craft carried exports from the manufacturer s warehouses to the docks. This is particularly useful in countries where there is a delta or low lying area like

the West Coast of India and the Gulf States of North America and the continent of Europe.

### Solution

Alan C Bennett & Sons Ltd have recently negotiated a 3 year Towage and Service agreement which follows on from the service that commenced in 2000 when the LASH feeder ship "SPRUCE" commenced its present service for Forest Lines from the US Gulf ports to UK via Rotterdam.

The 400 tonne capacity LASH barges take on cargoes of rice in bulk on the Mississippi river before being lifted aboard the mother ship "Rhine Forest" or "Hickory" for the sea voyage to Europe. The mother ship discharges east bound barges in The Port of Rotterdam where they are distributed to other European Countries either towed through their network of waterways or across the North Sea aboard the "Feeder Ship" Spruce.

Every 2 weeks the Spruce calls at Sheerness with up to 15 loaded LASH units, where Bennett s tugs remove the loaded barges from the ship, and float on any empty barges required to be repositioned for loading Westbound cargo in other ports. The LASH barges loaded with rice are towed by Bennett s Tugs onto private wharves on the Medway and Thames to be discharged for milling and distribution into the many retail and catering customers. Other loaded LASH barges are towed to general cargo handling wharves to discharge forest products etc for storage and distribution.



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