

# Breakbulk players join forces to operate Antwerp terminal

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DP WORLD Antwerp, Conti Lines and Rickmers-Linie have formed a new company called DP World Breakbulk, which will operate a common-user general cargo terminal in Antwerp.

DP World already owns and operates the existing breakbulk facility in Antwerp but now the two other partners come onboard and a large investment programme will start.

Initially €32m (\$45m) will be invested in upgrading the facility.

The fresh investment is expected to boost capacity from around 1.7m tonnes to at least 2.1m tonnes annually. Revamping the terminal will take place in five phases over four years.

The trio say the breakbulk facility, which is based in the Churchill dock and has a quay length of 1,650 m, safeguards

future breakbulk capacity requirements. DP World will hold a 60% stake, while Conti-Lines and Rickmers-Linie will both have a 20% share. DP World will continue to manage and operate the terminal.

Conti Lines, the Antwerp based breakbulk owner/operator, has historically been a key general cargo customer at DP World in Antwerp and is responsible for a significant part of DP World's general cargo volumes.

Frank Driesen, project manager of Conti-Lines, said: "We wanted to make sure that the investment needed is being done and we want the facility to be the best breakbulk terminal in Antwerp."

Rickmers-Linie has frequent calls at the Belgian port. The line will move to the DP World Breakbulk facility effective January 1 next year, from Nova & Hesse-Noord Natie Stevedoring.

Eric Noterman, managing director of DP World Antwerp, said: "We very much look forward to working with our partners, Conti-Lines and Rickmers-Linie and see-

ing the terminal go from strength to strength. This cooperation is also the basis for creating a modern facility which can serve various customers."

Work has already started on repaving the terminal and some cranes will be replaced or upgraded.

Conti-Lines chief executive Jean-Frederic Brion expressed his enthusiasm for entering into a joint venture with DP World and Rickmers-Linie. "This agreement is a genuine proof of our firm commitment to the trade. Our goal is to safeguard and guarantee the continuity of handling breakbulk cargoes in Antwerp in the future," he said.

Rickmers-Linie chief executive Jan Stefens said: "This joint venture secures us specialised terminal capacity for the growing volumes of breakbulk, heavylift and project cargoes shipped to and from Antwerp on our services, and enables us to develop and to offer value added service to our customers."

**Belgium Special Report — Pages 10-15**