

# Energy team gets green light

**Bellville Rodair International** (BRI) doesn't just move with the times, it listens to its customers and sets the pace which other freight forwarders try to follow.

Just one example of this is the way BRI has led the way in the race to go green. The global demand for renewable energy paved the way two years ago for the launch of Bellville Rodair Energy Team (BRET), bringing together a highly experienced outfit, dedicated to overseeing the logistics requirements of power generation and energy-related industries.

In this time, BRET has built quite a name for itself in the energy sector, marking it out as a first port of call for any energy companies looking for a smooth-running supply chain. Recent projects include transportation of windmill tower sections from the Czech Republic to Hungary and France, windmill blades from Poland to Japan and a 7.2m diameter hydro power plant crown and band set from Romania to Canada.

BRI's message is clear: no shipment is too large or too heavy for the ENERGY TEAM to handle and what better industry to work with than one helping to protect Planet Earth, while providing a secure future for generations to come.

Ever the trailblazer, BRET was launched much to the delight of BRI's project cargo customers. Having already spent many years focusing on the movement of energy-related shipments, this dedicated team has quickly cemented its name in the renewable energy sector. BRET has an extensive knowledge of this highly-specialised sector, one that needs careful monitoring at every stage in the supply chain.

David Ower, BRI's MD Europe, says: "The Energy Team members are selected for their proven expertise in handling

energy-related project shipments and having demonstrated the imagination required to find the right solutions for our customers. Everything we do is underpinned by flexibility and reliability."

"Our Team members are strategically located in our offices around the world and are ready to deploy at any time to meet customers, contractors, perform port and site surveys and prepare everything for the smooth flow of goods," he adds.

BRET offices include: London; Budapest; Brasov; Amsterdam; Prague; Hamburg; Helsinki; Klaipeda; St Petersburg; Shanghai; Porto Alegre; Toronto; Vancouver; Montreal; New York; Houston; Los Angeles; Miami.

BRET is currently transporting the parts

for a combined cycle (gas and steam) power plant to Pakistan. So far around 20,000 cubic metres have been shipped from Europe and China. The project is expected to be completed by this summer.

As Jan Kadlcik, Branch Manager of BRET's Prague office, explains: "The Pakistan project is on-going and we have another few months to go before it's finished. A few weeks ago, we discharged 3,000 cubic metres of cargo for the project. This included a 140-tonne generator and several 50-tonne condenser units.

"By the time we are finished, we will have moved a total of 25,000 cubic metres of cargo for this project," says Kadlcik. He says that handling of such specialist project cargo needs very careful planning and above all experience.

"There are some units that weigh 150 tonnes per piece. We have units that are 120 tonnes in weight and 24 metres long. Handling these all the way from Europe and China to inland Pakistan can certainly be challenging at times. Heavy units require special handling instructions and lifting devices" he adds.

Perhaps most challenging of all is the inland transport aspect of the supply chain, particularly in a country like Pakistan. "BRET has the expertise to handle this and the ability to source the specialised multi-axle hydraulic modular systems that are required," says Kadlcik.

To ensure there are no glitches in the supply chain for this project, BRET members work closely with an exclusive partner in Pakistan, which looks after customs clearance, transport and co-ordination of the cargo once it hits Pakistani shores.

This project illustrates the flexibility of BRET: "We weren't given much time before the job had to be completed. We had to arrange equipment, and road haulage permits, which differs from country to country. For example, in Czech Republic you can only transport such loads at night only," says Kadlcik.

He also had to organise the urgent movement of wind-energy related cargo from Antwerp to the Portuguese port of Figueira da Foz – in just one week. "We organised a small coastal vessel but we didn't have much time to find a suitable vessel. However, with the excellent contacts we have built up over the years and our wide knowledge of the market, this was not too difficult."

"It was a challenge as there were two units that were 40 tonnes each. If they had been smaller, we could have loaded them on a container vessel but instead we had to charter a conventional vessel," Kadlcik adds.

According to David Ower, key factors to BRET's success are: planning; budgeting; managing; reviewing and improvement. "We use BRET satellite tracking devices which are attached to the critical items of cargo, so that we know their exact location at any time and can keep our customers informed."

David Dines, BRI's Energy Team Leader, says BRET's specialist skills have been put to good use, moving dozens of complete windmills in the past few years. BRET also manages parts storage and distribution to wind farm developments. Dines believes BRET's flexibility sets it apart from other forwarders.

"Last year, we had several large shipments of windmill equipment from Spain to Hungary and we handled everything by barge from Antwerp to Gonyu Port. "The blades were 45 metres long and packed three to a cage. The tower sections were sent by coastal vessel from Antwerp and then by barge down the Danube to Gonyu Port. The port is used mainly for agricultural shipments and doesn't have its own stevedores so we provided them and we brought in mobile cranes to off-load the windmills."

Between April and December 2008, BRET moved 25 complete windmills. "We're talking about large volumes of cargo. The foundation rings have to be placed in the ground six weeks earlier and then all windmill parts arrive by barge. This requires careful planning and co-ordination."

BRET focuses on renewable energy and is looking to expand the number of wind, hydro and solar power customers it has.

Bellville Rodair International (BRI) has nearly 30 years' experience of the global freight forwarding industry and counts many blue-chip companies among its loyal customer base.

Other divisions which make up the BRI family include Bellville Rodair Automotive Team (BRAT) and Couture, which specialises in the movement of high fashion goods.

BRI employs well over 200 people at more than 20 locations worldwide. ▀



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