



## Ahlers keeps improving tailor-made solutions along the New Silk Road

**Marko Buneta has been working for Ahlers as a Key Account and Project Logistics Manager for more than 16 years. We had an opportunity to question him about the coordination of heavy machinery equipment transportation worldwide.**

**What kind of business does your company focus on? In which regions do you operate?**

Ahlers offers innovative, sustainable, and tailor-made solutions beyond logistics with one common approach, global and local. For more than 110 years Ahlers has been helping clients with logistics solutions all over the world. With 650 employees in 3 regions (Europe, CIS, Asia), we provide state-of-the-art logistics and tailor-made solutions. We enable our customers to stay focused on their core business by creating and managing innovative solutions that add value and solve their supply chain challenges in complex markets.

Our core services include end-to-end sustainable supply chain solutions, management of complex global projects and transportation of heavy machinery, tailor-made with a dedicated team, secured Transport of high-value or theft-sensitive goods, trade facilitation and after-sales services, and data analytics team who offers customized dashboards linked to client's KPIs, supply chain visualizations and optimizations.

We have offices in Russia and other CIS countries, which are strategic key markets for us. Furthermore we are present in Lithuania, Ukraine, China, India, Indonesia and we have our own chartering desk in Singapore. We also rely on our huge network of specialist project partners.

**How large is your road transportation fleet? What kinds of heavy machinery do you move?**

Between the cost to own and operate a fleet, an increasing demand for expedited delivery



Marko Buneta, Key Account and Project Logistics Manager Ahlers

at competitive prices, and the industry's dreaded driver shortage, we decided to focus on what we do best and outsource our fleet road transportation to only the best carefully selected partners.

We move heavy machinery, which include dump trucks, excavators, bulldozers, skid steer loaders, you name it...via intermodal solutions to and from all the over the world. At strategic locations we can off and onload on barge, truck, rail, whatever is needed. In addition to this, we also offer value-added services for machinery shipments, such as storage, survey, removal of wheels or buckets for transport cost optimization, protection or removal of fragile parts or theft-sensitive components. You always obtain our services from one dedicated team, whether they involve inland waterway, project logistics chains, transshipping



Heavy construction machines such as crawler excavators are being regularly transported

heavy goods or transporting goods with excess dimensions or weights.

### **At what extent was the transportation process affected by the pandemic situation?**

Of course, we felt the effect of COVID-19 in the last months. We had to tackle challenges with suppliers being closed, production stopped or even some

investment projects put on hold or canceled. As the Silk Route is our main trade-lane, we also faced various challenges and constantly changing measures at the various borders which meant that we needed to remain very agile and flexible. Despite these challenges, we still managed to grow our business, having created some contingency plans for the resumption of service after borders re-opened. The key is to act quickly to changing market conditions and be ready for a rapid surge in demand, offering alternative solutions, underpinned by a well-defined strategy of focused business development and integrated team approach.

### **Do you use your own network of warehouses?**

Ahlers has different warehousing locations in Russia and Ukraine in places such as Saint Petersburg, Chelyabinsk, Kharkiv, Kyiv, Moscow, Novorossiysk, Novosibirsk. We also have several external rented locations in Saint Petersburg, used for specific warehousing operations in Shushary and Utkina Zavod.

We constantly keep improving infrastructure, continually



MOAZ-75290 underground mining dump truck weighs 22 tons

improving our operations, and pursuing innovations, to better meet the needs of our customers, facing complex supply chain challenges. They can turn to us for leasing as well as 3PL services. Our investment in our recently announced new regional headquarters for Russia and CIS in Saint Petersburg was initiated by proven expertise working on the Russian market since 1993. Our warehouse under the customs control base in Saint Petersburg, Russia, is the largest in the area.

### **Can you share any interesting recent job story with us?**

Whether it is using the New Silk Route or transporting by landing crafts in Indonesia, Ahlers has the right solution for transporting your heavy machinery and mining equipment. During the past 5 years, Ahlers on average transported 2 oversized machines per every day of the year, so for us – this is just part of our daily job.

One recent interesting example of a mini project is our transportation of 8 units of one the world's largest dump truck from Belarus to India. Units were partly disassembled, and our scope included handling all

operations from the workshop in Belarus via the port of Klaipeda up to arrival at Nhava Sheva port in India.

Units were delivered by rail from the production yard to the port of Klaipeda where all components that could be containerized were stuffed in dry containers, while oversized equipment was shipped on flat racks or conventionally. Despite the difficult political situation in Belarus, our local colleagues in the Baltics managed to ensure smooth operation throughout the process and most importantly, on time arrival of all the equipment to India. Meantime, additional 8 units were confirmed to us for execution in early 2021.

### **What would you like to aim for in 2021?**

In 2021, despite the challenging business environment, we at Ahlers believe that we have the right focus to continue our steady growth. Perhaps even more importantly, we want to keep engaging with our customers and providing them with tailor-made solutions and operational excellence.

