

# Efficiency in global transport chains

*Enhanced visibility of the chain for all...*

**T**he Smart Container Chain Management (SMART-CM) project, co-funded in the EU FP7 and the project partners from freight related industries, deals primarily with the possibility of using state-of-the-art technologies to enhance the security and efficiency of global supply chains, as well as attaining agreements among all the relevant actors as to how this should be achieved.

During the last decade, a number of strict regulations were put in place to increase the security of the global supply chains. These regulations have always been seen as somewhat of a burden by the transport and logistics industry actors since they generally lead to a lack of efficiency, and thus a loss of time and money. The challenge is to achieve efficient information flow in full alignment with the physical movement flow. In this context, the SMART-CM consortium started a cross-sector assessment of the requirements needed to develop a technology-based solution that can be implemented globally. After three years of research, development and implementation work, the SMART-CM platform is a reliable, real-time information-based solution that provides added value to the transport industry by enhanced visibility for all.

The project built upon the Green Lane concept, initiated by the Belgian Customs. Container Security Devices technology provides continuous monitoring of the status of a container that has been loaded and securely closed by an authorised person at the origin. All the actors and administrations involved receive information in real-time along the whole journey through a platform that guarantees secure information. In cases where all requirements are satisfied for a specific container then the customs can give the 'green

light', meaning that it does not need to be checked when entering their territory of jurisdiction.

SMART-CM provides the global supply chain community with both technology products and standardisation/consensus building proposals in order to achieve highly secure and efficient supply chains. More specifically:

- The SMART-CM single window neutral platform – enabling real-time monitoring of containers and a trusted operational environment where industrial parties and customs can share critical information that facilitates customs clearance procedures;
- The SMART-CM value-added service platform – allowing an intelligent combination of logistics related and container monitoring related real-time information for enhanced visibility and efficient management;
- The project proposal for a neutral information administrating organisation identity and role – a neutral organisation embracing the Green Lane concept implementation will optimally operate the neutral platform and pursue further mutual agreements with customs on this basis;
- The Container Security Devices technology standardisation proposal – an important step towards technology improvement and global solution achievement for Secured Trade Lanes implementation.

The robustness of SMART-CM solutions was validated in the context of real trade lane operation from China, Thailand, India to EU ports. The exploitation potential of these solutions was confirmed by the industrial parties and the consortium members that invested in them. The step



towards vast implementation requires further cooperation and agreement among the public and private actors involved in global transport, regarding the new roles that emerge and the globally accepted standards on key performance indicators of the technological solutions for security.

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