

General Cargo is Growing

Associated Terminals' General Cargo Division has seen diversification in the types of cargo that it has been transloading in 2013.

While historically, steel and project cargo have been and remain the primary products handled by the division, Associated Terminals' proximity to southern yellow pine markets and the construction upturn internationally has led to an upswing in the amount of logs that the Company handles. Currently, logs are being shipped to Associated Terminals in St. Bernard from Louisiana and Mississippi and being exported to Turkey, India and China. To date, Associated Terminals has moved over 100,000 tons of logs.

The logs are being transported to the facility via truck and barge transport. Sending logs by barge is a cost-saving measure, which allows the equivalent of 80 truckloads to be sent per barge. When the shipment arrives, the logs are off-loaded, fumigated, processed and stockpiled on hard surface lay down areas and once the ship arrives, loaded on the ship.

The division has also seen diversification in the type of steel that it is transloading. Recently, steel slabs from Mexico weighing approximately 30 tons and measuring 25 feet long and 6 feet wide were handled by the division. The slabs were sent via barge and railroad to the Midwest for the manufacturing of railcars. As stated by Vice President Cy Hill: "Rail service at the terminal is key. Norfolk Southern has a reciprocal switching agreement with the other five Class 1 railroads. This rail system offers direct access to many U.S cities as well as connections to all trunk line railroads serving New Orleans."

Strategy is key when handling general cargo. Prior to a ship's arrival, the group meets in a roundtable discussion to formulate a game plan and reviews hazards, risk and exposure to make sure each job is handled safely and to the customer's specifications. Post vessel meetings are held to discuss any complications which may have occurred in order to avoid issues on future vessels. The General Cargo Division's experience runs deep. With over 100 years of experience, the team has the expertise required to handle such complex loads.