

First Call of a Car Carrier Ship at Cochin Port

The first call of a Car Carrier ship, M. V. Dresden is scheduled at Cochin Port in the evening of 26.09.2016. The ship is a foreign carrier of Cyprus registration, which has obtained license for coastal run between the ports in India, and is of 177 m length and 7 m draft. The Car Carrier has the circuit of Ennore-Cochin-Kandla-Cochin-Ennore, connecting the automobile production hubs in Tamil Nadu in the East coast and Gujarat and Haryana in the West of India. The ship has 13 decks with the capacity to carry 4,300 cars. The Car Carrier will be landing 500 cars at Cochin.

The operator of the Car Carrier is SICAL Logistics based in Chennai, which is a leading player in bulk operations in many ports and operates a Coal Terminal at Ennore. The Car Carriers, which are Roll on-Roll off (Ro-Ro) ships, are highly productive with automobiles being driven in and out of the ship. The operator will be carrying the vehicles of Renault, Ford, Hyundai and Toyota from Tamil Nadu and Honda and Ford from Gujarat. The operator is also targeting Maruti. The Steamer Agent of the Car Carrier at Cochin is Neo Logistics.

Car handling requires highly clean surroundings and storage area of high quality. Cochin Port has identified the Q7 berth at Ernakulam Wharf for handling the ship, and a clean yard of 4,000 Sq m area at Q7 is allotted for storage of cars until delivery to the dealers, which is normally expected in a week's time. Car handling is highly prestigious, and at adequate volumes could be a steady source of income of about Rs.3 to 6 Crores per annum to the port in addition to the significant contribution in environmental safety by eliminating thousands of trucks from the road and the resultant emission savings.

Kerala is a major consumption centre of cars with annual sales of about 1,50,000 to 1,80,000 units, which is highly significant in determining logistic patterns. The present mode of movement of automobiles for internal consumption in India is dominated by huge car carrier trucks plying on our congested roads, and Kerala is no exception. Therefore, the potential coastal transport market segment could be strong; 50 ship calls a year with 1,000 cars per call will be required if 30% of the Kerala market shifts to the coastal transport mode. The prospect of Cochin Port attracting coastal movement of cars, with major automobile manufacturers moving cars to dealers in Kerala from factories in Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Haryana, assumes significance in this regard.

The new business is the culmination of sustained efforts of Cochin Port. The Port has offered rebates in Port charges in advance towards attracting the business; concessional Wharfage of Rs.500 per Car and Rs.900 per Truck, and 50% rebate in the notified Vessel Related Charges.

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