

Liebherr mobile harbour cranes set all-time record

- 112 units supplied to six continents in anniversary year
- Well-filled order book leads to optimistic outlook

Liebherr mobile harbour cranes set the benchmark in terms of annual deliveries, supplying as many cranes per year as no other manufacturer has ever delivered before.

2014 was a year of celebration for many reasons. Exactly forty years after the delivery of the first Liebherr mobile harbour crane (LHM), these advanced machines are more in demand than ever before.

“For a fantastic year like 2014 several factors have to come together. We started with a record order backlog into the year. Throughout the year demand for our state-of-the-art cargo handling solution was very stable on a high level. Moreover, large orders helped to significantly increase the population of Liebherr mobile harbour cranes. Finally, we broke the existing record by nearly 10%, which is amazing considering the economic environment,” said Matthias Mungenast, Sales Director for Liebherr mobile harbour cranes.

Major order from Algeria

One highlight in 2014 was the large order from Algeria, Africa. A purchasing association of Algerian port operators opted for 20 Liebherr mobile harbour cranes. The mobile harbour cranes were delivered to seven destinations at the Algerian coast. The tasks of this impressive and highly efficient mobile harbour crane fleet include the handling of general cargo, dry bulk operation and container handling.

Liebherr mobile harbour cranes have a long tradition in Algeria, with the first units delivered almost 20 years ago. Thanks to this major mobile harbour crane order, the total number of LHMs delivered to Algeria nearly doubled and jumped to 43.

SmartGrip® – the evolution of bulk handling

In June 2014, Liebherr introduced a new technology for even more productivity in bulk handling. SmartGrip® operates as an intelligent system which optimises grab filling rates in a self-learning manner. There are many factors why the grab is not operated at full capacity, including suboptimal grabbing angle and varying material density. SmartGrip® automatically optimises filling to maximum capability taking grab size and outreach into account. Right from the second load cycle, SmartGrip® ensures that the grab filling rate is above average. This unique technology provides a number of valuable advantages, including higher performance, zero overloads and less stress for crane drivers. Operators of older Liebherr machines can equip their existing cranes with this unique feature for more bulk turnover and the installation of SmartGrip® is fast and easy.

Sales review

In 2014, exactly 112 units have been supplied across the globe. In other words, throughout the year almost every third day a new Liebherr mobile harbour crane unit was delivered. This is the highest number of annual deliveries ever achieved by a mobile harbour crane manufacturer and clearly tops Liebherr Maritime Cranes' old record when 102 units were supplied in 2008.

The LHM 550 was the most successful model of the year. In 2014, 35 units were shipped to customers worldwide. Five of these are portal solutions.

The LHM 280 also experienced a jump in demand in 2014, with 23 units sold to eight countries. This is more than double compared to 2013. One reason for this positive development is that this model was the favourite choice in before-mentioned major order from Algeria.

A geographical breakdown shows that Europe (including Russia) is again the main region for mobile harbour cranes. In total, 42 units were supplied to this area, which is nearly 38% of all deliveries in 2014. Second is the African market, where 33 units (almost 30%) started operation last year. Thus, the annual number of units supplied to

Africa has tripled, compared to 2013. Customers in Latin America opted for 14 units in 2014, which equates to nearly 13% and is exactly the same amount as for Asia. Further deliveries to the Middle East, North America and Oceania complete the picture.

Sales outlook

Particularly the strong expansion in iron ore, coal and other major bulks drove seaborne trade, which grew an estimated 4.2% in 2014. The importance of bulk handling as an application is reflected by the fact that almost two thirds of all 2014 mobile harbour crane deliveries are used for bulk operation, either bulk only or in combination with container and general cargo handling. For 2015, strong growth of 5.3% is forecasted in terms of world merchandise trade, which also is a positive signal for shipping.¹

The LHM order backlog for 2015 is in line with this positive forecast and is one of the highest ever. Throughout the world, the demand for Liebherr mobile harbour cranes and their innovative features is on a very high level. For that reason, Liebherr is optimistic that 2015 will be another successful year for its mobile harbour cranes.

Captions

- Two LHM 550s assist with the assembly of a new LHM 550 in Italy.
- Two Liebherr LHM 280s combine forces in Toledo, USA.

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¹ http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/rmt2014_en.pdf (page 20)

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