U.K. and U.S. Ports move forward with relocatable warehousing option

One of the great problems of warehousing and storage at port facilities is the inflexibility of its availability. Traditionally constructed facilities such as silos, concrete domes or regular steel/brick buildings cannot provide the speed of response that is required by modern day port operators. Many such facilities are impossible to dismantle and relocate, or at best take considerable time and cost to do so.

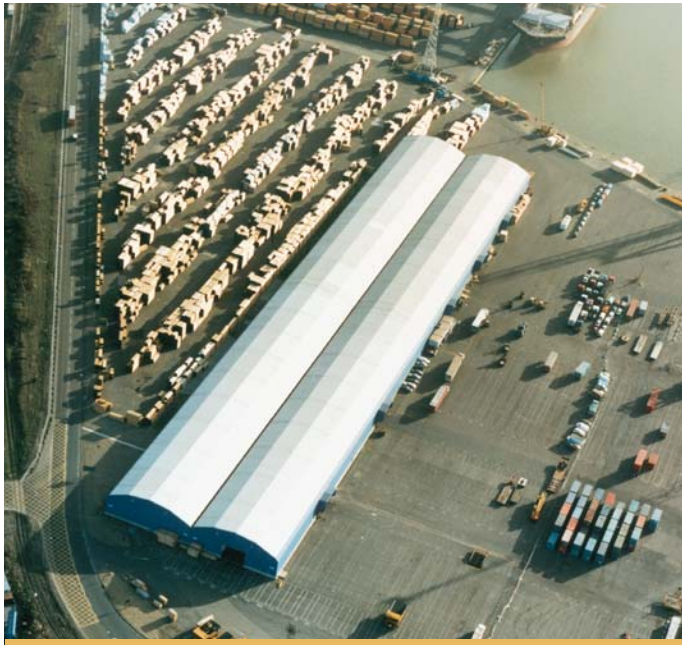
This is becoming a critical problem for nowadays fewer and fewer companies hold stock and product reserves on site as this can often tie up critical cash requirements. More and more businesses are following the 'just in time' route, i.e. ordering up products to meet orders as they are placed.

In addition, other factors such as the development of electronic communications like e-mail and internet use have added to the pressures to provide instant and flexible storage to meet changing demand patterns.

One obvious solution to the problem is for Port Authorities to simply store the product, if it is relatively weatherproof and of low value, in the open air, however this strategy is becoming increasingly questionable as new regulations make the physical covering and protection of products necessary.

However, Rubb Buildings Ltd are meeting the market's need for a rapid storage response by providing relocatable flat storage buildings as an alternative to traditional solutions. These buildings are extremely rugged, meeting stringent standards and are made of a steel framework, galvanized, covered in PVC impregnated polyester fabric. They offer many advantages over traditional storage amenities. In the first instance they are more economical and quicker to install, furthermore they are not hampered by many of the planning requirements associated with other buildings. The result is a storage facility that is erected in several weeks rather than many months. Just as they are easy to erect they are easy to dismantle too and so provide a cost-effective storage solution that can be moved at short notice from location to location to meet demand as and where needed.

Relocatable buildings are flexible in design format too and can be provided with steel or metal sides as required, with easy to move interior retaining walls as well. Furthermore in not every case is the original supplier required to dismantle and then re-erect a building. Some years ago a 138m x 60m relocatable warehouse was constructed at the Port of Tilbury by Rubb Buildings. Over a year later to meet increased storage requirements this building was doubled in length, 5 years on and the building was dismantled, converted and relocated at three different berths at the Port, however recently two of these sections have subsequently been relocated again but this time dismantling and re-erection was carried out by local contractors.



The configuration of a Rubb building at Tilbury prior to relocation

Over in Ireland a Rubb building was recently installed for the Londonderry Port Authority. As the photograph shows this is a substantial warehouse, measuring 145m in length with a 40m span. With a 6.25m high sidewall the building was designed to incorporate six roller shutter doors for ease and speed of access in the storage of plywood pack. In order to maximise internal storage space the building is constructed with column walls as an alternative to the traditional 'lattice' design. From the initial Rubb proposal to handover to Client the project only took six months to complete. As Harbour Master Bill McCann commented, "The main reasons we went for a Rubb building were versatility, as we can move it in the future if needed, and speed of construction, and we were able to have the building erected only 25 metres from the quay." The benefits of a Rubb building have also been noted by Belfast Harbour Commission and also for the storage of packed wood. A 175m long by 45m span warehouse with a 7m high sidewall has just been completed. Ease of access has been assured by providing the building with 6 off 12m wide by 6m high openings complete with 2.5m deep canopies; and once again 'lattice' walls have been replaced by column walls to maximise storage space.

Rubb's relocatable warehousing at the Port of Londonderry

The new Rubb dockside warehousing at Port Arthur, USA

On the other side of the Atlantic, Rubb Buildings' associate company in the USA, Rubb Inc of Maine recently had to provide and innovative, quick, cost-effective solution at the Port of Port Arthur on the Texas gulf coast. Here additional dockside warehousing was needed as the importation of forest products had become a significant growth sector in the port's expanding import and export business. An important element of the brief was to incorporate covering the port's railroad siding in addition to normal storage requirements.

Rubb constructed a 67m wide by 160m BVE range bi-link building with 9.76m sidewalls, providing an additional 100,000ft² of transit storage. The building was designed to meet the stringent Texas gulf coast building code requirements, including winds of 130mph (209kph).

The building features six 10.97m wide by 7.3m high bi-parting Norco® doors for access on dockside as well as access through the ends of the building.

Two 5.5m wide Norco® single panel sliding doors provide additional access. The lighting system was designed so that the lights are automatically turned off during daylight hours when the white translucent roof membrane provides a bright working environment. This will also conserve energy for the Port.

The project took only seven months to complete and cost the Port of Port Arthur less than conventional construction. Future plans call for expansion utilizing the Rubb Building System.

Another successful contract in the USA has seen the completion of a port terminal break bulk warehouse at the Port of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania. The building comprises another BVE range bi-link building, measuring 148.6m in length by 33.53m wide with 7m high sidewalls.

Covering the port's railroad siding at Port Arthur

In this instance Rubb not only designed, fabricated, delivered and installed the facility but a number of accessories were provided too, such as personnel doors, intake louvres, fans and a total of 12 framed openings for ease of access.

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The BVE range twin-link building at Philadelphia, USA