

BTS-CHARTER

Obligatory use of BTS by terminal and barge operators in the port of Antwerp

1. Glossary

- **ATA = Actual Time of Arrival** at the place where the barge moors or passes a certain point.
- **ATA = Actual Time of Departure** from the location of the barge.
- **Barge operator (BO)** = Includes all transport enterprises that are active in transport of containers by barge and that call at the Port of Antwerp with barges and/or pusher convoys.
- **BTS = Barge Traffic System**, a web application to be found at www.portofantwerp.com/secured/bts. The application is used to give advance notice of arrival/departure and to book terminal berths.
- **BTS Charter** = an accompanying set of rules that govern the handling of container barges within the Port of Antwerp.
- **Lost loading/unloading** = containers that cannot be loaded on board a barge or unloaded from a barge due to a change in scheduling.
- **OGT = Agreed time of handling on day D-1**
- **Port of Antwerp (PoA)** = includes all locks and docks managed by Antwerp Port Authority on the left and right banks of the river Scheldt (excluding the Strasbourg dock, the Lobroek dock, the Large and Small docks in Merksem and the quay at Hoboken), together with the part of the Scheldt and its roads governed by the Port Authority.
- **Port Decree** = the decree of 2 March 1999 issued by the Flemish Parliament dealing with seaport policy and management.
- **RTA = Recommended Time of Arrival**, i.e. the recommended time for a barge to moor, given by the terminal operator.
- **Terminal Operator (TO)** = covers all terminal operators that handle containers on their sites within the Port of Antwerp.

2. General principle

The Barge Traffic System was developed by Antwerp Port Authority as part of the “chain approach” for shipping traffic management within the port of Antwerp (i.e. handling all shipping movements as part of a single, interconnected chain, from open sea to berth in port and vice-versa). BTS is a central, transparent berth reservation and barge monitoring system for container barges within the PoA. It comprises a web application that enables terminal operators and barge operators to manage barges and terminals, draw up a terminal operating schedule, book berths and give advance notice of arrival, and closely monitor the sailing schedule of barges.

As of 3 September 2012 it is obligatory for all barge and terminal operators to use BTS, and moreover to use it correctly for all berth requests and scheduling of container loading and unloading within the port of Antwerp.

The obligatory use of BTS will lead to more efficient, safer and more sustainable management of shipping traffic within the port area. Moreover it is made mandatory by article 14 of the Port Decree. The mandatory use of BTS is also laid down in the Municipal Port Police Bye-Laws (Gemeentelijke Havenpolitieverordening - art. 3.6.1). Contravention of the BTS rules will be sanctioned by fines as laid down in art. 11 of the Act of 5 May 1936 defining the powers of harbourmasters, without prejudice to the further application of the tariff regulations for barges.

Antwerp Port Authority will devote all necessary time, effort and resources to make the BTS web platform available and to achieve the greatest possible accuracy. Any temporary non-availability of the web platform lies outside the scope of control of Antwerp Port Authority.

3. BTS-charter¹

Barge and terminal operators must use BTS according to the principles of the BTS Charter.

3.1. Preamble

3.1.1. Object

To obtain correct, workable agreements between BOs and TOs with regard to calls by and handling of container transport within the PoA by means of the BTS reporting system.

¹ Drawn up on the basis of Barge Traffic System 4.3.

3.2. Definitions of D-2/D-1/D/D+1

Day D-2:

- Day on which the berth request is entered in BTS, i.e. the day on which the BOs enter their data in order to inform the TO.
- Day D-2 ends at 1900 hours, which is the deadline for barges to give notice.

Day D-1²:

- Day on which the TO uses the available information to draw up a terminal operations schedule and enter it in BTS. This information is used by BOs to complete their barge operations schedule (sailing schedule for the barges concerned).
- Day D-1 starts on day D-2 at 1900 hours and ends on day D at 0545 (when the schedule goes into operation). The schedule is automatically entered in BTS on day D-1 at 1400 hours, and the definitive schedule must be available in BTS at 1600 hours.
- Day D-1 must be a weekday (not Saturday or Sunday), and also not a public holiday.

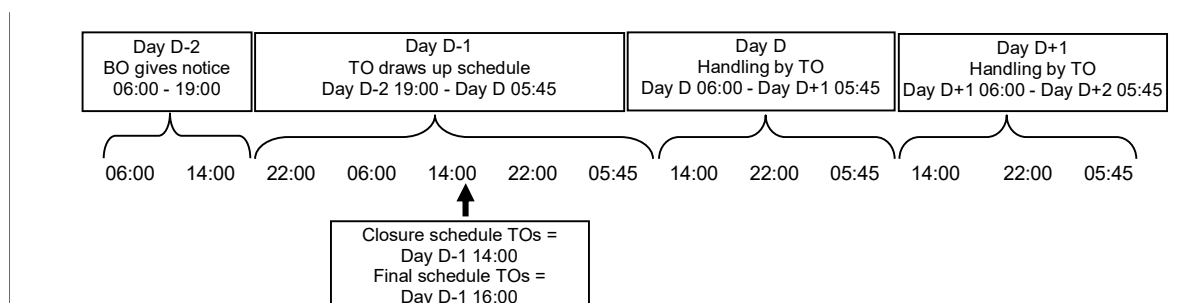
Day D:

- Day of operation, i.e. the day on which the barges enter the port and the terminal and the barge operation schedule is carried out.
- Day D starts at 0600 and ends the next day at 0545.

Day D+1:

- Day of operation for barges that cannot be handled on day D and so are put back to the following day.

Summary Schedule



² Day D-1 must be a weekday, and also not a public holiday.

If day D falls on the weekend, then day D-1 is always the previous Friday.

If day D falls on a public holiday, then day D-1 is the previous day, unless the public holiday falls on a Monday, in which case day D-1 is the previous Friday.

If day D is the day after a public holiday, then day D-1 is the day before the public holiday, unless the public holiday falls on a Monday, in which case day D-1 is the previous Friday.

3.3. Operational framework

3.3.1. *General*

- The BO shall provide all TOs called at with:
 - the necessary information (numbers, times, barge names, convoy compositions etc.) in BTS in a correct and realistic way, by the latest on day D-2 (1900 hours). The TOs use this information to optimise both their operations on the terminals and the handling of the barges. All persons that work for the BOs and TOs and are involved in this process are informed of this procedure.
 - the final loading and unloading data by electronic means by day D-1 (1200 hours) at the latest.
- TOs that handle containers within the PoA undertake to process the advance information and to enter the schedule in BTS in good time. Moreover the TOs make every effort to coordinate their barge handling schedules with each other in order to achieve the desired results.
- On Day D-2 the TOs enter the terminal capacity per half shift (including the capacity reserved for the fixed windows). If on Day D-1 and/or D there are changes in the stated capacity, the TOs will adjust the capacity as quickly as possible. When making berth reservations the BOs must take the stated capacity into account.
- Antwerp Port Authority ensures obligatory use of BTS by TOs and BOs, and moreover makes sure that they use it correctly. The Harbourmaster's Office of Antwerp Port Authority ensures correct compliance with this Information Note.

3.3.2. *Day D-2*

BOs:

- Give advance notice in good time on day D-2 = before 1900 hours.
- In BTS 4.3 the terminal schedule is displayed when logging in. This clearly shows the terminal capacity available and the reservations already made. BOs must take this into account when reserving berths.
- In their sailing schedule BOs must indicate not only which terminal calls are interchangeable but also the various possible orders of the calls. This gives the TOs the necessary information to offer an alternative call in case of conflict, within the required time window (turnaround time in port) and to avoid conflicts between terminals.
- When reserving a berth for pushbarges (that will be picked up at a later point of time), the BO must always register the name of the pushbarges at the respective quays. In this way the TOs know which pushbarges are destined for which quays and conflicts can be avoided in BTS.

- Any cancellation must be entered in BTS as soon as the situation becomes known to the BO. This can be done up until 1900 without having to telephone.

TOs:

Before 1100 hours, the TOs declare the available capacity of the terminal on day D (including the capacity for the fixed windows). They do this per half shift (number of cranes and available moves).

3.3.3. Day D-1

BOs:

- If there are any changes after 1900 on Day D-2 with a difference in number of containers of 5 or more, or a difference in time of 1 hour or more, the BO must contact the TO involved by telephone; then and only then will the necessary changes will be made in BTS.
- Once the schedule has been published in BTS, the BO begins the process of converting the RTA (requested time of arrival) into an OGT (agreed time of handling). If the RTA differs from the ETA by more than 4 hours then the BO must consult with the TO by telephone to determine the OGT.
- If there is no change in the RTA, it is automatically converted into an OGT at 1900 hours.
- If a conflict arises after the schedule has been published in BTS (with a conflict time > 1 hour), the BO must take the initiative to resolve the conflict as quickly as possible.
- Any cancellation by the BO must first be notified to the TO by telephone as soon as the information is known to the BO; it must then obligatorily be entered in BTS.
- If a barge cannot be handled on day D and is put back to day D+1, then the BO has to choose from among the following options on day D-1 between 1400 and 1900 hours³:
 - Keep the call (and call ID) so that it is handled as soon as possible on day D+1
 - Keep the call (and call ID), but the BO makes a new proposal for the time when the barge becomes available (ETA) on day D+1.
 - Cancel the call, if the barge cannot be there on day D+1.

³ Applicable as soon as BTS version 4.3 comes into force.

TOs

- The terminal operators confirm the definitive terminal capacity per half shift for day D (including the capacity for the fixed windows) and reserve it on day D (barring unforeseen circumstances⁴). They do this per half shift (number of cranes and available moves).
- The TOs aim to collaborate among themselves at a higher level, port-wide. This means that the TO has to take into account all the players involved when drawing up the barge schedule, before announcing the definitive schedule by the 1600 deadline on Day D-1. If a realistic sailing schedule has been submitted but the TO is not able to handle it as requested, then the TO will propose an alternative schedule. This alternative will if necessary be drawn up in consultation with the other TOs and the BO concerned, and must not conflict with other requests. The information provided by BOs in BTS is essential to obtaining this result.
- If there is a change to the RTA, the TO also has to change it in BTS. The RTA is automatically converted to an OGT (agreed time of handling) at 1900 hours.
- In case of conflict the TO will use the provided information regarding interchangeability to draw up an alternative schedule that follows the barge's original schedule as far as possible.
- If it fits in with the BO's sailing schedule and the TO's operating schedule, the TO will handle any barges that have been put back to the next day as soon as possible, unless the BO makes a new request. However, the new request will be refused if it does not fit the TO's schedule.

3.3.4. Day D

BOs:

- If there are any changes on the day of handling with a difference in the number of containers greater than 5 or a difference in time of more than 1 hour, the BO must notify the TO involved by telephone and enter the change in BTS.
- If a barge cannot be handled on day D at its scheduled time and has to be put back to day D+1, the BO must notify the TO by telephone about when the barge will be available again to be handled as quickly as possible. Once the new time has been agreed the BO must enter the changes as quickly as possible in BTS.
- Any cancellation must first be notified to the TO by telephone as soon as the information is known to the BO; it must then obligatorily be entered in BTS.

⁴ Definition of unforeseen circumstances:

Internal causes: extreme weather conditions, technical and electrical failures, IT problems, safety reasons, industrial action, changed ATD (only in the case of tide-dependent seagoing ships, as imposed by authorities), structural shortage of labour (with respect for the min. capacity), or construction work on the waterfront.
External causes: technical failures affecting barges or inland terminals, delays on previous terminals, lock failures (inside and outside the port area), industrial action, or instructions by the authorities or Harbourmaster (emergencies).

- In the case of berth requests in BTS for pusher convoys (pusher barge with one or more dumb barges), the convoy must be presented on day D at the handling terminal with the dumb barges hitched side by side. Any unhitching must be done in advance so that the convoy is ready for unloading/loading at the stated RTA.

TOs:

- The TO shall follow the sequence of barges as closely as possible according to the schedule in BTS, so that the sailing schedule can be observed. If there are any significant changes and/or changes that will affect the time of arrival at the next TO, then the TO must contact the BO involved by telephone.
- Once the scheduled barges have been handled on day D, the TO completes the operational information in BTS. This information includes ATA, ATD, actual number of moves handled, and start & end of operations.
- The TO confirms the new RTA of barges that have been put back to day D+1 in BTS.