



Transport giants

Universal Transport is driving energy transition forward. The transport of components for wind turbine plants requires a vast amount of intensive preparation; the 70m long rotor blades, especially, create a real challenge. This kind of job is all in a days' work at Universal Transport, one of the leading contractors in the area of large capacity and heavy goods transport. PES investigates to find out more.

Components for three wind turbine plants in Ingolstadt had to be delivered. Extensive planning for all the traffic routing and management began as early as spring 2016. The feasibility study was prepared a whole year in advance. The route to the wind turbine park was through many small towns and villages and so made it absolutely necessary.

The result: the direct route proved to be the best. This is seldom the case in our business. The route posed one particular challenge though for Universal Transport: this was the transport of nine enormous rotor blades on a road through a village close to Riedheim which has a relatively sharp S-bend.

The delivery of the first of three wind turbine plants began in May. According to the client's schedule the delivery of further components was to start two weeks later. The client wanted the following sequence of delivery – the hubs, the turbine houses and the formwork components, for the tower, had to be there a day before the rotor blades. There was very little space on the building site so all the components were instantly assembled by a crane. The following day, after a spectacular s-bend tour, the rotor blades were delivered and then also attached with the help of a huge crane.

This project required over thirty large capacity and heavy transport vehicles plus



a number of standard trucks to transport all the wide, heavy goods as well as a number of smaller parts.

Energy Transition to the South of Germany

Wind turbine plants are no longer just being built in coastal regions with their constant supply of wind. These days, areas in the south also are also becoming attractive due to constant technical development. Our branch in Straubing (Bavaria) has recently supplied two wind turbine plants, with well over 220 components.

Over a period of six weeks ships arrived weekly at Straubing Port to deliver wind turbine components, for the gigantic building project. The so called concrete formwork components are used to build the tower. The heaviest, of these concrete components, weighs in at 52 tons with a width 5 metres. Each ship delivered an average of 40 of these concrete formwork components to the port on the Danube. Universal Transport has an office directly at the port.

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According to Mr. Holger Dechant, CEO of Universal Transport “Having an office so close to the port, we are always present when the cargo is unloaded on to the transport vehicles. Also we are very flexible when it comes to short term changes or when problems appear. This is of great advantage, least of all for our clients.”

Apart from the existing dockside cranes a 350 ton mobile crane unit was used for handling the cargo. The concrete components were temporarily stored in a 6000m² field and then loaded onto a low bed trailer.

Ten transport vehicles travelled between the port and the wind turbine plant

construction site, due to a very tight schedule on the building sites. The last concrete formwork components were delivered at the end of June.

We take care of everything

Unfortunately the road to the building site is not always suitable for the transport of wide loads and often needs much modification.

In these cases StB Verkehrstechnik (StB Traffic Technology), which is part of the Universal Transport Group, is needed.

StB has way over 15.000 square-meters of mobile road at its disposal, so it is possible to transport wind turbine components over otherwise inaccessible terrain.



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Very often signposts have to be removed, no-parking zones have to be erected and sometimes complete roads have to be blocked off, sometimes additional complex traffic light systems are needed. This whole package is part of StB's service, making even the most complex of journeys possible.

As convoy security becomes an increasing necessity in transport, a new type of escort vehicle was introduced this year, the so called BF4. Some counties are planning to give the BF4 auxiliary policing rights, with the option to actively direct traffic.

StB has a number of these BF4 vehicles, along with the specially trained staff.

Universal Transport opens up furthers market places

Apart from the delivery of wind turbine plants and other areas of heavy goods delivery, Universal Transport follows a stringent course of expansion. Currently Universal Transport is working to expand its competence in Egypt. Extensive market research showed a growing need for transport. In the future the country will need a better infrastructure and energy supply, in order to provide for its growing industry. This in turn means not only the need to transport vast amounts of diverse material in general, but also the transport of heavy goods.

A branch office was opened in Cairo, Egyptian and six heavy goods combination transport vehicles were purchased. Like in every new venture, certain local irregularities had also to be respected. For instance, the vehicles had to be fitted with special filter systems to avoid damage from the desert sands. Also the trucks have to have more ground clearance.

In the following weeks some of Universal Transports experienced truck drivers will travel from Europe to Egypt, to train the new colleagues in the art and finesse of heavy transport.

“We are confident that a thorough training is achievable in a short time. After all the Egyptians built whole pyramids and that was 4500 years ago”, says Mr. Holger Dechant.

The Egyptian branch of Universal Transport is the first step onto the African continent and henceforth its markets. Expansion onto foreign shores is nothing new for the Company as we have branches i.e. in Rumania, Russia and latterly also in Turkey.

Turkey an interesting market

Together with the Turkish logistic business Gürkan Nakliyat, a new company under the name of Universal Transport Gürkan (UTG) was set up. The great advantage: right from the start a complete transport fleet

is available. As well as 60 vehicles the Turkish partner has long-term experience in large- and heavy cargo transport and a dependable network in place.

“Turkey is an interesting market, just like Egypt. Both have large development potential and are stepping stones to the markets in the Middle East and the area around the Caspian Sea.” says Henning Bentien. Mr. Bentien is responsible for the development and organisation of these new ventures.

An office in Istanbul was opened in the second half of 2015. Now Universal Transport has its own vehicle fleet in place and can independently, organise and provide, the complete transport chain, from Western Europe all the way into Turkey and the Middle East. ■

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Universal Transport Michels GmbH & Co. KG

Universal Transport directs large capacity and heavy goods transport and organises transfers across land, water and air for customers in different sectors: i.e. the building, energy (wind turbine plants), rail- or plant engineering and construction industries all over the world. In 2015 the group had a turnover of 160 million Euros, 650 employees and 350 vehicles. At the beginning of 2016 Züst & Bachmeier Project GmbH, with over 100 years of experience in the sector of worldwide project logistic, joined Universal Transport.

