

Havenwerk ensures flexibility and craftsmanship at port

Port activities take place around the clock. That means specialised port personnel is required 24/7 – quite the challenge most days. But not for Havenwerk.



COLLEAGUE DANITSIA ON THE REACH STACKER.

Photo courtesy of Havenwerk.



ALWAYS CLEARLY VISIBLE IN THE RIGHT PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.



Photo courtesy of Havenwerk.

Havenwerk is a specialised service provider for ports and industrial logistics. With a pool of flexibly deployable professionals, Havenwerk works throughout the Netherlands; from Zeeland to Groningen. With about 70 flexible employees stationed at North Sea Port, Havenwerk is well-established in its home port. At North Sea Port, Havenwerk collaborates with various transshipment companies and industrial logistics companies. Think of Verbrugge, Kloosterboer, Ovet, Supermaritime Group, Acces World, Euro-Mit Staal, Damen Shipyards, and Shipyard Reimerswaal, to name just a few.

Safety awareness

Safety is Havenwerk's number one priority. All its employees are professionally trained. The enterprise has a valid VCA safety certificate, as well as other certificates required for the work. Employees keep up with regular toolbox meetings, good PPE, and advanced certified safety management. In an interview with Ton Veraart, Director at Havenwerk and Stéfanie Vermeulen, Communication Manager at Havenwerk, both stipulate, "Safety is our main concern and our employees are well aware of whether or not a company strictly follows safety rules. This is why we only send our people to work at companies within the port that adhere to the highest safety standards. As a lot of our employees operate industrial machinery, competence is a must." Mr Veraart elucidates, "That is why we decided to start up Havenwerk, and offer a different concept for the ports. If you use an employment agency, you will never be able to guarantee safety in a port. But with flexible professionals, you



HAVENWERK'S BAS-JAN ON THE JOB.



Photo courtesy of Danny Cornelissen.

can. Our people are heavily certified and can work in a great variety of roles, which also makes them more aware of what goes on around them." Mrs Vermeulen adds, "At Havenwerk, you receive a good education and we ensure training on the job. This works well for our people, and also for our partners. Together, we look at what is needed on the work floor and we make a plan to ensure that the flex workers are properly trained

to do the required tasks. In this way we guarantee the best all-round craftsmen.”

Flexinuity

Havenwerk has created a flexible pool of professionals with different qualities, so it can realise optimum staffing at various clients throughout the port. What sets the company apart is its striving for long-term and productive cooperation with customers and colleagues. A term that typifies Havenwerk is flexinuity. Flexinuity stands for flexibility, continuity, and quality. Mr Veraart explains, “Flexinuity is important for our economy. Continuity and growth are indispensable for the competitive strength of companies in the ports and logistics sector. With flexinuity, Havenwerk meets the increasing need for both flexibility and craftsmanship.” With the Balanced Labour Market Act coming into force on 1 January 2020, Havenwerk sees supported its mission of offering flex workers long-term contracts. Mr Veraart highlights, “We offer our people a permanent contract, even though they work flexibly. We believe that flex workers deserve better. Not only should they receive good pay and all the extras that a steady contract provides, the expertly trained and skilled professionals that work flexibly also need an improved status. Without them, the activities in the port will grind to a halt.”

Best of both worlds

Flexinuity does not only work well for employees, but also for Havenwerk’s partners in the port. Mr Veraart discloses, “Most companies require a minimum of employees to keep business going and on top of that, they need a maximum number of staff in peak season. These companies hence employ more people to ensure capacity when it is busy, but at peak times they still need to hire additional personnel and there are too many workers during quieter times. What we propose is that you employ a basic work team and let us take care of the rest. We will ensure that you have the people you need and supply you with a flexible stream of professionals throughout the year. So that companies can save money, and we can still guarantee our own employees fulltime working contracts. It is the best of both worlds.” “Yes,” nods Mrs Vermeulen. “Our people can work flexibly, receive good pay, a proper pension, education and training on the job, and a company car. Our clients get flexible craftsmen who know exactly what they are doing on the work floor.”

Across the border

Havenwerk has been active in North Sea Port for the past 20 years. It opened up a subsidiary in Rotterdam in 2008, and another in Amsterdam in 2015, and has just recently opened a new office in Delfzijl. The next step? Mr Veraart explains, “We want to expand along the canal towards Ghent. We will commence Havenwerk Belgium in 2020. It is a logical next step for us to move towards Belgium. We wanted to cross the border years ago, but had to bide our time due to divergent rules and regulation. This upcoming year, we are ready to jump to the other side. We will mainly focus on the industry and logistics behind the port, as regulations within the Belgium ports are distinctive. North Sea Port has helped us make the right contacts and connections. The fusion of the ports has been a catalyser for cross-border thinking and handling.”

Synergy

Havenwerk looks for synergy with its partners in the port and will advise them, if needed. The company’s goal is a long-term



Photo courtesy of Jan Nass.

TON VERAART, DIRECTOR OF HAVENWERK.



Photo courtesy of Havenwerk.

HAVENWERK’S TRAINER AND SAFETY EXPERT, XANDER.

relationship with both employees and partners in the port. Mr Veraart emphasises, “We are not an employment agency. We do not work with just anybody. We visit the companies we work with first and look at safety, the possibility of education and training on the job, developing a lasting partnership, and we should also agree on market prices. We look for partners with whom we can do business for a longer period of time.”