

Greening bulk handling

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Dust emissions from bulk handling is a common problem worldwide and while some work is being done to reduce the environmental footprint, Ray Lee from Portside Solutions told GreenPort there's a long way to go.

The Australian-based company, which provides operational and management support, has been helping ports and terminals reduce dust emissions from bulk handling for around six years in co-operation with Intermodal Solutions Group (ISG) and RAM Spreaders.

The product is containerised from the mine, so there are no open stockpiles, while product loss during transportation is avoided thanks to the patented Intermodal Solutions Group (ISG) automated lid lifting system.

At the port, a Revolver system on the crane greatly reduces the chances of dust being released into the air, while the use of a misting system fitted to the hatch of the vessel catches any possible dust emissions.

"The containerised bulk handling process is quite simple but it's only been around for a few years," said Mr Lee, managing director, during a talk at TOC Europe in Rotterdam this week.

Going forward, Mr Lee told *GP* the challenge is changing the view on the environmental side of things. "More and more companies are thinking about the environment these days, but there's still more to be done," he added. "I don't think you can ever stop trying to improve your environmental impact and I think in Australia especially, they've got it right."

Adding to this, there's also the challenge of developing a solution to eliminate dust emissions at the other end of the supply chain, once the product has been delivered. Mr Lee told *GP* a prototype container which acts like a vacuum to collect the product from the vessel at the other end, is in the pipeline, specifically for grain.

"The current system works well though, and I don't think it's limited to any one commodity like coal or iron ore; at the moment there are talks about using the system in South America for agri-bulk products like grain."

Portside Solutions is currently carrying out feasibility studies for Australia's Fremantle Port and is expecting more work in Mozambique where Mr Lee says environmental awareness is growing with the implementation of a new port authority.

Since its establishment in 2007, Portside has also worked with Exxaro in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Puerto Angamos and TPR in Chile, Transnet, Ironclad and Maputo in Mozambique.



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