

## Argol continues to do well

Carlo Mearelli, CEO of Italian freight handler Argol Air Logistics, comments: "Our cargo handling business is doing quite well, despite all the industry adversity."

"We can still be considered a 'start-up' company in terms of cargo handling and our paramount goals for this year have been consolidating our market, revising working standards and practices to increase efficiency and studying potential new businesses."

Other advances at Argol have included updating the company's IT system, which is now fully integrated at all of its warehouses in Rome and Milan, and renovating the Milan warehouse. Improvements are also being made at Argol's Rome Fiumicino ULD (unit load device) storage area.

Progress has been made, Mearelli observed, despite a volatile market. Imports have been hard-hit, particularly trade from the Far East, and as a result Argol has had to constantly tailor its organisation. Yet, new business is also being found. SriLankan Airlines and Biman Bangladesh Airlines are now both being handled by Malpensa Logistics Europa (MLE) – of which Argol is the majority shareholder – at Milan-Malpensa, as well as by Argol at Rome Fiumicino.

For the future, Mearelli says he is looking to expand both in northern Italy and abroad. In regard to the former, some regional airports "have very good potential and would very well suit our network expansion plans", he remarked.



Mearelli – Argol is looking to grow

## Cismat sees demand hold up

Milan-based general sales agent Cismat is having a good year, despite the difficulties being seen in the Italian market.

Imports from China and South Korea have held up well, says Cismat president Francesco Traverso Tardy, with capacity on the passenger and freighter services to which Cismat has access being in high demand.

In terms of exports, he explained: "We are specialised in the oil and gas business and we are seeing constant growth." Africa and Central Asia are becoming increasingly important in this regard, Tardy added.

One recent contract win has seen Cismat signed up as Kingfisher's GSA while, for the future: "Libya is one of our main targets for 2012; we are in contact with a big carrier operating to the country that historically has a strong relationship with Italy."

He notes that Cismat has – with the exception of the 2009 calendar year – been growing for more than 10 years now, but Tardy is still "evaluating some possibilities in other countries".

Looking back on 2011, he considers that it has been a successful year for Cismat, despite some ups and downs. "Orders for the beginning of 2012 look quite low but in my opinion nobody yet has a clear picture of what will happen in the coming months."

"My doubts are with the Chinese economy (and its exports into Europe). I think there is still over-capacity."



Tardy: "Libya is one of our main targets for 2012"

## BRIEFS • BRIEFS • BRIEFS

**FLAG-CARRIER ALITALIA** relaunched flights to Libya last month (November), flying between Rome Fiumicino and Tripoli four times a week. The airline carried 28,021 tonnes of air freight in the first half of this year – a 21.6 percent improvement on the same period of 2010. Revenue grew by 13 percent.

**GULF AIR'S INAUGURAL** flight to Rome Fiumicino International airport from Bahrain touched down in Italy on 30 November. The carrier is flying non-stop A320 services four times a week to the Italian capital.

# Cargoitalia enjoys healthy load factors

Cargoitalia, the freighter operator based at Milan-Malpensa International airport, has had a challenging time in recent months. However, according to sales and customer relations director Marc Oedekoven: "The demand for our scheduled services is very strong and we continue to enjoy healthy load factors at and above those of our business plan."

He confirmed that Cargoitalia now flies twice-weekly from Milan-Malpensa to Hong Kong via Dubai, as well as twice a week to New York and Chicago. "Other routes are under evaluation," Oedekoven said, also noting that around one-third of the carrier's total flying is now made up of charter and ACMI (aircraft, crew, maintenance and insurance) work, including fulfilment of long-term contracts with Africa West and TAAG.

"Although we face low rates and high fuel costs, we are a compact and highly flexible organisation that is able to react quickly to changing market conditions," he went on. Thus, facing difficult market conditions, Cargoitalia moved quickly to "suspend unviable destinations, focus on where demand and yield are stronger and increase our ACMI and charter activity".

For next year, Oedekoven's expectation is that – while challenges will certainly remain – the airline is well positioned for the



future. "Italy, as well as the markets served by Cargoitalia outside our home country, will provide big enough demand for us."

"We are confident that (those markets) will appreciate our unique strengths – customer intimacy, flexibility and the speed of implementing change."

Finally, "establishing efficient partnerships" will be another key priority for Cargoitalia next year, he noted. ✈️

Thanks for this year lived together,  
new days are coming ...

new perspectives for the future

... beyond the sky

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