

Auto sector drives volumes

Increased volumes of container and vehicle shipments in and out of East London have kept Transnet Port Terminals' combi and ro-ro facilities on the move at the start of 2011.

January 2011 saw a significant year on year growth of 26% in Fully Built Units (FBUs), up from 37472 in January 2010 to 50513 units last month. Exports were 200% better than forecast and imports were 38% better than budgeted.

The market predictions were that East London would have had a good year by the end of the financial year on 31 March 2011.

Siya Mhlaluka, Terminal Executive Manager for Transnet Port Terminals' Eastern Cape terminals, said container volumes were boosted by the import of automotive parts.

"Cars are manufactured in East London and then exported. 47755 TEUs were handled in January 2011 resulting in a 17% improvement from last year's 39 799 TEU's," he said.

Recently TPT increased the combi terminal capacity to 90 000 TEUs and increased customer parking in order to remain competitive.

Currently the terminal is gearing up towards a massive export programme won by one of the local vehicle manufacturers.

East London car and ro-ro terminal boast state-of-the-art equipment with 2 800 undercover parking bays and an additional 1 000 open bays.

The car terminal has received numerous safety accolades, including five consecutive Nascar Awards for safety. The combi terminal boasts a 4-star Nosa rating.