

Essential service for passing ships

SINCE opening an office and on-site warehouse at the Trade Zone of Durban's King Shaka Airport, Turners Shipping's Airfreight Department has been able to expand its ships' spares division offering a more efficient and cost effective service.

"The key to this sector of our business is co-ordinating the import and delivery of the goods with the ship's arrival in port," said Neren Dayanand, Turners Shipping's Branch Manager for KwaZulu-Natal.

The goods can be anything from a new propeller to a bundle of mail for the crew. Most commonly it is engine parts which are needed for repairs, radar and electronic equipment. "We have to facilitate the import of the freight, store it in our bonded warehouse and then get it to the ship when it is in port," he explained.

This is not always as simple as it sounds. Ships might only be in port for a couple of hours to refuel and this may be at anytime of the day or night, so the Turners Shipping office has a 24-hour, seven days a week service.

Recently members of staff at the Trade Port office worked around the clock over a two week period supplying 80 tonnes of freight to a research vessel that called in at Durban on its way from the Bahamas to India.

"Our staff seldom left the office before two in the morning ensuring the essential equipment was delivered to the ship," said Neren.

The Turners' warehouse is linked to the airport's Cargo Terminal by a sophisticated conveyor system which delivers freight directly to their warehouse. "The conveyor can carry single items weighing up to seven



Keeping freight flowing at the Turners Shipping Airfreight Department are, from left, Raveen Sahadeo, Airfreight Expeditor, Ephraim Sibaya, Airfreight Driver, Vishnu Chettiar, Airfreight Import Controller, Justin Naidoo, Airfreight Export Controller and Trevan Govender, Airfreight Manager – KZN

tonnes which means we no longer have to use vehicles for collection which saves time and cuts costs."

Much of the work is done before the goods arrive, "Our experienced staff have to ensure that all of the necessary documentation is in order before the ship arrives. The Port operates on a seven day, 24-hour basis but the Customs offices don't, so we have to anticipate and plan for ships that might arrive over weekends," he explained.

Over the next month or so the Turners Airfreight staff will be handling the export and import of ships parts for a vessel that is due in Durban's Dry Dock for major repairs. "Items that cannot be repaired locally have to be sent overseas for repair and then brought back.

We facilitate the process which has to run smoothly without any delays," said Neren.