The Northwest region of the country has a long coast line of over two thousand kilometres and has existing ports in over forty locations. Many of these traditional harbours are unsuited to the large container ships or bulk carriers of today. New sites have been found for developing several new anchorages suited to the massive ships required by today’s transport needs. One such port is Pepard on the seaway on the south eastern coast of this region. This port has been developed specifically to handle the export of our new range of cars built to meet national and world demands for small, economical and environmentally friendly family transport.

Development

Port Pepard, a successful public – private enterprise, is emerging as an important gateway port on the West Coast for containers, bulk and liquid cargo. With less than ten hours steaming time from the region’s largest city, Port Pepard provides excellent access to the main trade lines in the North Western region. Its handling facilities are developed to manage the efficient transport of our cars.

Port Pepard is operated by one of the largest container terminal operators in the world. APM Terminals has operations spread over more than 50 terminals in 31 countries, on five continents. With a 54% stake, APM Terminals is the largest shareholder in Port Pepard.

The Waterfront

Port Pepard offers a total quay length of 1,075m and accepts vessels up to 14.5 metre draft. There is an on-dock rail facility with dedicated sidings to handle containers, bulk and break-bulk cargo. It also offers extensive back – up infrastructure, including warehousing facilities, open stack yards, weigh bridges and dedicated rail sidings.

Excellent Connectivity

Port Pepard is well connected by road and rail to the rest of the country. It is directly connected by the broad gauge rail network of the National Railways. Port Pepard has set up a joint venture with the National Railways – Pepard Rail Corporation Limited, making it possible to offer the most competitive rail freight and transit times in the western coast. The hinterland capabilities have also been augmented with new scheduled services being provided to our new manufacturing plant

Port Pepard has built an 11 km long four-lane expressway connecting the port to the National Highway.  The Government has undertaken a project to construct a central spine road, extending up to Port Pepard.

Port Pepard has the most competitive rail freight rates coupled with excellent transit times as compared to other gateway ports on the West Coast. Port Pepard is now connected to its hinterland by the broad gauge rail network of the National Railways and is now connected by rail to all the major Inland container depots in the North West. The broad gauge rail connectivity project has been undertaken by Pepard Rail Corporation Limited (PRCL) promoted by Pepard Port Limited and the Ministry of Railways. Port Pepard has an equity stake of 38.8% in PRCL. The Port can handle incoming and outgoing trains simultaneously and the current capacity of the rail link is 22 trains per day. At present, the port is handling on an average 2 trains per day.

Port Pepard is the first port in this country to receive double stacked container trains (March 2006), which have a capacity of carrying 180TEUs as against 90TEUs carried in a single stack train. At present, the double stack container trains run to the inland railhead.

Oceanographic Conditions

Port Pepard is protected by two islands, which act as a natural breakwater making the port safe in all weather conditions. The presence of these islands also leads to the tranquillity of the water in the harbour. It also ensures the wave height is less than 0.5m most of the time. Port Pepard has now increased the draft to 14.5 metres from 12.5 metres. The water currents are between 2.5 to 3 knots during peak tidal conditions.

These favourable oceanographic conditions at Port Pepard ensure easy and safe navigation of ships round the year. Thanks to the twin islands, Port Pepard can offer its services throughout the year, even during the monsoons, which provides an added advantage to its customers.

Storage Developments

One of the unique features of Port Pepard is the availability of large tracts of land. This is attractive to several customers who wish to set up tank farms or warehouse facilities on site. A car storage facility is built here to hold cars while awaiting shipping. Cars are brought in by rail and loaded into containers in a newly developed container storage facility. This was developed in preparation for the launch of the new Micro range of cars which we believe will meet world wide requirements for environmentally friendly personal transport that is easily afforded by families of modest incomes.

*Car exports*

We have come through some difficult years for manufacturing and show here how our planned exports of cars were actually met through the recent years of world economic downturn. It will be seen that we came through that and are meeting export targets again as world trade has picked up.