



TRANS-ATLANTIC FILLS A LOCAL NICHE WITH GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

AT FIRST GLANCE, THE ARRAY OF

SERVICES PROVIDED BY TRANS-ATLANTIC AGENCIES TO ITS CUSTOMERS AROUND THE WORLD APPEARS INCREDIBLY DIVERSE.

And so it is. The Baltimore-based company handles everything from transporting and deploying armaments and equipment for foreign military forces, to handling project cargo like power plant facilities and giant 20-story power-generating windmills, to serving as a worldwide agent for the captains and well-heeled owners of private yachts in the 85- to 200-foot category.

But all of Trans-Atlantic's varied services have grown out of a common resource: the global network the company has developed in the years since its founding in Baltimore in 1969.

"Our core business is representing breakbulk shippers and tramp carriers that specialize in breakbulk cargo," says David Keller, president and owner of Trans-Atlantic since the mid-1980s. "Yet we are rather diversified in that we're kind of complicated in what we offer. We don't do traditional container work or Ro/Ro work. In-

stead, we're sort of a niche agency. We service some markets that are outside the norm here in Baltimore.

"The key is really this network that we've established over the last 15 years: a global network of agency partners that specialize in the yachting business, and also in naval representation," Keller adds.

Keller recalls that Trans-Atlantic Agencies got started as "primarily a steamship agency serving the liner and tramp trade here in Baltimore and in Wilmington, where we also have offices."

And from there, Trans-Atlantic began its diversification.

One of several specialized niches in which Trans-Atlantic has flourished since 1995 is representing naval fleets from various Western European nations. Keller's company offers its military clients global logistical support for special cargoes, including special project cargoes, military vehicles, support equipment and Class 1 munitions and explosives.

"We represent various naval fleets in different parts of the world, as well as here in Baltimore," says Keller. "For instance, we represented the German naval fleet while it was here on the East Coast of the U.S.

"We coordinate everything for them," he adds. "They basically tell us, 'Okay, we have 'X' number of ships coming your way,' and Trans-Atlantic's responsibilities are to coordinate local support services — everything from agencies, to repairs, to berthing, to docking, to fueling — the full variety of services that are required when a naval ship or yacht goes into port. That's what we do.

"An outcrop of our military representation is that we've also established a niche in the transportation of military and special commodities: military ordnance, commercial ordnance. We'll do the full logistics for that. If we have a shipper or defense contractor here in the U.S. who makes TNT or some other type of explosive



Left to right, below: Wolfgang Koenig, vice president; Jane Zientak; Donna Keller; David Keller, president.



“ Our goal with all the services we offer is to provide each client with a professional, comprehensive and efficient agency service. ”

– David Keller, President & Owner of Trans-Atlantic

or detonating cords, and is shipping it somewhere around the world, we basically make the transportation arrangements. We have a complete profile of where we can move these materials and what ports are capable of handling them, not only from the standpoint of ordnance material, but military equipment and vehicles and so forth.

“Our staff knows all the current International Maritime Organization regulations pertaining to the use of the IMDG code. This includes the application of the code in transporting hazardous materials, including the use of proper and accurate documentation, review of compatibility with other materials, labeling, loading and documentation.”

Keller claims no cargo is too small or large for the company to handle, from the small ammunition box, to several hundred containers, to a complete army

unit of vehicles and support equipment.

For the past decade and a half, Trans-Atlantic has also added another dimension to its operations, serving as a worldwide agency for private yacht owners and captains.

As explained on Trans-Atlantic Agencies’ website (www.trans-atlanticagencies.com), this service customarily begins with “an initial discussion with the captain of his intentions and requirements. Once an understanding has been developed of the travel desires of an owner, with input from the captain, we begin to formulate a plan. This plan includes information on the location, touring and guide services, local agent representation, cost estimations and other valuable information.”

Trans-Atlantic began offering yacht services when an out-of-the-blue request came in 1987 from a somewhat unusual

source: *Forbes Magazine*.

“Knowing that we were agents, *Forbes*’ security people approached us to see if we could assist them in helping coordinate a highly publicized nine-month cruise for their yacht, *Highlander*, to the Far East,” Keller recalls. “Our responsibilities were enormous; they included everything from arranging port agents, berthing locations, fueling, accounting and a multitude of other port services.”

“Working with our fairly extensive network of agency partners around the world, we were able to coordinate that nine-month trip, including everything from paying the bills, arranging local agents and so forth,” Keller recalls. “We assisted not only *Forbes*, but the yacht crew and the captain in making it a successful trip.”

“Since then we’ve represented a variety of elite individuals, working with their private yachts. A yacht owner will tell us, ‘I’m going to A, B and C places,’ and we take it from there.”

“Our goal with all the services we offer is to provide each client with a professional, comprehensive and efficient agency service,” Keller emphasizes. “We apply our high standards to all aspects of our vessel agency.” ∩