
ÖBB Rail Cargo Group organises multimodal transport for Brau Union Österreich & SPAR

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Brau Union Österreich and the SPAR retail chain have turned to the multimodal option for their latest transport operations with the ÖBB Rail Cargo Group (RCG).

“We offer door-to-door solutions in multimodal logistics, which means that we don’t necessarily have to collect the goods from the customer by freight wagon, but can instead do so by truck,” explains Wolfgang Riedl, RCG Business Unit Manager for Wood, Paper, Building Materials, Consumer Goods and Environmental Solutions. This means that rail and road can be combined in the best possible way and in the interests of the environment.

From Vienna-Schwechat to every SPAR store

At the Schwechat brewery, the journey of the beverages begins with the first mile. The truck brings the goods to the Vienna South Terminal in a curtainsider swap body. The main leg of the journey then involves single wagonload transport to terminals as close as possible to the seven SPAR warehouses in Austria, such as the Hall terminal in Tyrol. The final step of the logistics chain, the last mile, is again handled by trucks. They transport the beverages to the SPAR warehouse in Wörgl. From here, SPAR distributes the beverages to the stores before the beer and soft drinks eventually end up in customers’ shopping trolleys.

The entire process from order to delivery in Wörgl takes just three days. “The advantage of rail is obvious to us: loading and unloading works in the same way as it used to on trucks. This means the same amount of work, the same amount of time – but with much lower CO2 emissions. And this is something we want to reduce significantly in the future. Wörgl is therefore just the beginning,” promises Thomas Wiesinger, Warehouse Manager at Brau Union Österreich. “Customers reach onto a shelf but rarely think about how the food got there in the first place. Nevertheless, it is important to us at SPAR Austria that the ‘journey’ of our products is as sustainable as possible,” explains Martin Gleis, Head of Logistics at SPAR Austria.

Curtainsider swap bodies show what they are capable of

For these transports, the new swap bodies of RCG, also known as Curtainsider Swap Bodies, are being used. These are real stars among load carriers because they are multimodal, bridging the gap between road and rail, and enable universal loading. “This means that they can be loaded and unloaded from all sides, as well as from above. This is what sets them apart from a conventional container,” explains Erwin Ferstl, Segment Manager Consumer Goods at RCG. Another advantage is that they can be used across all industries for any kinds of goods (e.g. for chemicals or in the automotive industry). In 2023, the RCG has invested in a total of 300 new swap bodies to meet the increased demand in Europe.

Sidings are optional

The transports for Brau Union Österreich and SPAR highlight the greatest advantage of multimodal transport: customers do not necessarily need their own sidings at the location. Thanks to the ideal combination of different modes of transport, with the focus on sustainable rail transport, both customers and the environment benefit from an efficient end-to-end logistics solution. So far, the use of eight swap bodies has facilitated savings of 5.7 tonnes of CO2 equivalents – a big plus in terms of sustainability, considering these transports previously took place exclusively by truck.

“The cost-intensive investments that customers had to make in the past in order to be able to transport goods by rail are no longer required here. With our door-to-door solution, we transport the goods over long distances by sustainable and environmentally friendly rail and can ultimately deliver them to every customer’s doorstep, either by siding or by truck,” says Riedl about multimodal logistics at RCG.

Transport throughout Europe

In addition to beverages, RGC transports a wide range of consumer goods throughout Europe – including pasta, disinfectants, sauces, pet foods, electronics, and much more. There are no limits when it comes to transport routes. Transport services between Germany and Italy or Hungary and Turkey, for example, are provided for a wide range of customers.

(ÖBB Rail Cargo Group)