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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2011

Gulf Coast Ports Target Expanding Trade

Louisiana International Gulf Transfer Terminal lease

While New Orleans continues to add container capacity there are still plans by the State of Louisiana to move ahead with the creation of the Louisiana International Gulf Transfer Terminal (LIGTF) near the mouth of the Mississippi River. Mississippi state Senator A.G. Crowe, (R-Slidell), who sponsored legislation to create the LIGTF as a state agency in 2008, said that investors for the project are expected to be lined up within the next three months. “The way it’s set up and the way it’s staged right now, is that everything is in place,” said Crowe. “Everything is in place, there’s no negotiating the lease, and it’s in the legislation.”

Pointing to a recent ten-year lease agreement between the Port of New Orleans and the Mediterranean Shipping Company, Crowe said he believes the transfer terminal will fill what he sees as a “need for additional capacity” to handle container cargo on the Gulf Coast.

According to Crowe, the new facility would be built on a 260-acre tract of land along the east bank of the Mississippi’s Southwest Pass, in Plaquemines Parish, and would allow ships that are too big for existing ports on the river, such as New Orleans and Baton Rouge, to have their cargo transhipped to smaller vessels for onward carriage upstream. Crowe said project officials plan to travel to China shortly to meet with potential investors in the hopes that the project could be completed in time to take advantage of the widening of the Panama Canal.