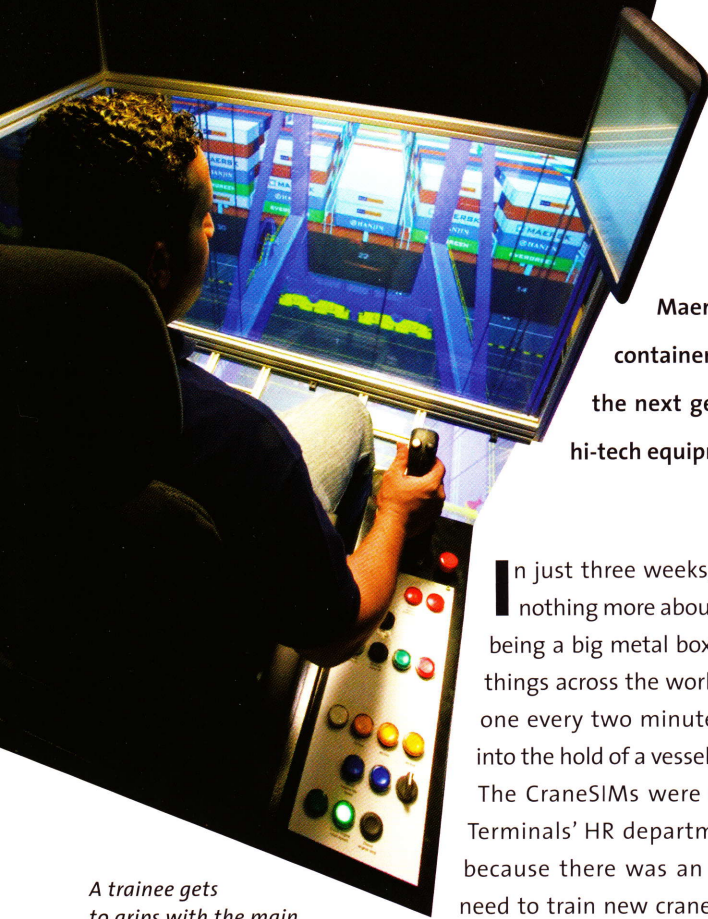


# Training raises moved container efficiency



Maersk Training Centre's unique CraneSIMs, of which there are two, are forty foot containers which have been specially converted into mobile training centres to teach the next generation of crane operators. Each contains half a million dollars worth of hi-tech equipment, the central feature being a full-mission crane simulator.

**I**n just three weeks, people who knew nothing more about a container than it being a big metal box which transported things across the world, are able to move one every two minutes from a quayside into the hold of a vessel – and safely.

The CraneSIMs were conceived by APM Terminals' HR department in the Hague, because there was an urgent worldwide need to train new crane operators and the most logical way seemed to be to take the classroom to the growing number of ports.

Earlier, the options for training staff involved either shipping them to specialist training centres or the equally costly method of training on-site. Quayside training means taking equipment and personnel out of the normal work schedule, thereby reducing the ports' efficiency and risking costly errors by the new operators.

## **Built to stand the heat**

The first two host ports, Tangier and Salalah, received the CraneSIMs hot off the drawing board. The ports made a tremendous contribution in helping to develop the project, in the process ironing out the little technical hiccups which were bound to crop up.

The whole project is built around it being as geographically versatile as possible. The first ports put specific trials on the equipment and the operators. They were sent initially to two of the hottest ports in which they might be expected to operate. Temperatures outside often hit the mid to high 30s °C in Salalah and the air conditioning installed simply could not cope.

"It was hot, very hot, inside but we managed to struggle on until a new bigger A/C was installed," said Peter Hope, Salalah's Education and Training Manager; "now I believe we could train polar bears without complaint."

## **Handling dangers from day one**

So far the project has been a success as Peter Hope, Salalah's Education and Training Manager explains; "the CraneSIM has enabled us to train up to four students at a time with just one instructor; there is absolutely no impact on operations and the CraneSIM can run twenty four hours a day seven days a week. From day one in the simulator a potential crane operator can learn how to deal with all the trials and problems that real life can throw at you but with no risk of damage to personnel or property. I believe through MTC and with a little input from ourselves, currently we have the best CraneSIM training programmes available."

The experience in Tangier and Salalah indicates that one of the major aims of the CraneSIM has been accomplished. The quality set-up of the full-motion simulator and part task desks have helped the trainees focus and absorb what they were being trained on. The results on completion of the three week course have been above initial expectation, with the trainees rating between 25 and 30 moves per hour.

For the time being the Salalah based CraneSIM will remain on site as it is too busy creating new crane operators, but as worldwide demand remains, Maersk Training Centre is currently evaluating the purchase of a third unit.

*A trainee gets to grips with the main full mission control cabin inside the CraneSIM. Any mishaps are restricted to recorded images on files, not bending huge bits of steel.*



*CraneSIM 001 on site at Tangiers. The new Moroccan port was the first to host the mobile computer classroom where it spent six months training new crane operators.*