

## BPS Spedition

# Swiss specialist for southern Europe

BPS Spedition, a Swiss forwarder that specialises in road haulage services between Switzerland and Spain, Italy, France, Portugal and Germany, has augmented its service portfolio and become the leading transporter of ceramic tiles from southern Europe.



Photo: Wilf Seifert

BPS swap bodies being loaded at the Hupac terminal in Basel for demonstration purposes only. BPS's official hub in Switzerland is the Duss terminal in Basel/Weil am Rhein.

The Swiss forwarding company BPS Spedition has been offering a daily connection between Switzerland and Spain since October this year. The product is called BPS Express. Shipments destined for either the Barcelona (Spain) or the Basel (Switzerland) regions reach their destinations within 24 hours. A maximum of 72 hours is required to haul goods to other parts of the countries.

In addition to its express service, BPS Spedition-Service Muttentz AG, which is based in the canton Baselland and has an eight-strong team of employees, has the products economy, thermo and eco in its portfolio. Economy stands for the daily departures to/from Spain. Thermo refers to the temperature-controlled transport of goods around 0°C. Eco, the second-newest BPS product, was only established in mid-April. This service links Basel and Barcelona twice per week and direction. BPS deploy swap bodies and use the advantages offered by unaccompanied intermodal transport (UIT) on this route. This saves some 758 t of CO<sub>2</sub> that trucks would emit on that journey. The UIT shuttle trains run via the Busto Arsizio-Gallarate terminal (Italy), which is operated by Chiasso (Switzerland)-based Hupac

Intermodal. Each of its blocktrains is comprised of 44 swap bodies, four of which are owned by BPS. The wide range of commodities that are hauled in each direction is dominated by ceramic tiles and wine from Spain. The BPS managing director and co-owner, René Häner, reckons that traffic to/from Spain has enormous potential for development. On the fringe of Fiesta Española, an event which BPS staged for 80 guests in Muttentz to mark the roll-out of its eco service, the manager mentioned that his firm had invested EUR 725,000 in 60 swap bodies.

### Unique selling propositions

«We are the only Swiss forwarding company that works directly with Spain, and we want to play a prominent role in UIT and HGV services in future,» he reported. BPS can rely completely on Hupac in the UIT sector, added Hupac's business manager for project development and strategy, Dr Alberto Grisone. The forwarding company's business had a «significant influence on our decision to launch a new connection to Spain.»

The swap bodies are BPS's sole owned mobile assets. The firm purchases all op-

erative services. Sub-contracted drivers collect the goods in Switzerland and take them to the Duss terminal in Basel/Weil am Rhein. They collect incoming consignments there and then distribute them throughout the country. The same procedure is used at the Barcelona Morrot terminal. BPS has 15 trucks and drivers under contract for transport services in Spain.

Only trailers can travel on the main transport leg by rail to/from Barcelona, as the tunnel and bridge profiles in France have a 3.64 m profile. Another difficulty is the different track gauges in France and Spain. The swap bodies have to be cross-loaded in Portbou on the Spanish border. Häner mentioned that this took around five hours.

The CEO of BPS has ambitious plans. He said that «by the end of 2011 we want to treble the volumes that are conveyed by our scheduled services to/from Spain. The success of our high-frequency truck service between Switzerland and Spain is due in part to the sophisticated deployment of staff. We use two HGVs and three drivers to operate two of the legs of our unique shuttle system.»

Wilf Seifert

[www.bps-spedition.ch](http://www.bps-spedition.ch)