

Fleet workers day becomes a holiday for the entire town of Kingisepp

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On the first Sunday of July, Russian ports celebrated their professional holiday - the Marine and River Fleet Workers' Day. It has also become a holiday for many residents of Kingisepp. We have learnt more about its celebration from the personnel of one of the first terminals in the port of Ust-Luga – Multipurpose Reloading Complex (MRC), which celebrated its 10th anniversary in December 2018.

90% of MRC personnel live in Kingisepp. Many of them including dock workers Vladimir Smirnov, Sergey Petrenko, Anatoly Shumak and Aleksey Timofeyev have been employed from the company foundation. With their and their colleagues' contribution, the company improves its performance from year to year. And that is not just a high-flown talk: in 2017, Multipurpose Reloading Complex was acknowledged as the best stevedore by the Association of Commercial Sea Ports and also won the 'Industry Leader' competition of the Federal Marine and River Transport Agency in the 'Marine Stevedoring Company' nomination.

– The terminal's success is based upon its team. With the efforts of our specialists, the company maintains high pace of development, – emphasized Sergey Chelyadin, Managing Director of MRC, when speaking at the ceremony on the occasion of the professional holiday.

It has emerged that, unlike representatives of other professions, port workers prefer celebrating their professional holiday with the colleagues. The main part of that celebration is awarding the best ones. For example, this year, Managing Director of MRC awarded a commendation to five workers: records manager Yuliya Abalemova, tallyman Aleksandr Deikun, scheduler Dmitry Kapyshev, dock worker Pavel Stepanov and mechanics specialist Sergey Arkhipetsy. Certificates of appreciation and bonuses were given to four employees: electric/gas welder Yury Phillipov, chief accountant Natalya Nikofova and dock workers Roman Sanzhak and Leonid Karbanovich. One more MRC employee received a special award - commendation from the Minister of Transport of the Russian Federation

It was received by Vyacheslav Petukhov, Production Director. He was among those who came more than a decade ago from Saint-Petersburg to found MRC and who have stayed here having replaced the Northern capital with the life in a district center. Notably, Vyacheslav Petukhov came to the company having left a good position at the port of Saint-Petersburg held for more than 30 years! He has received many professional awards during working in the industry for over 45 years.

Having started as a Shift Supervisor of the cargo storage yard at Commercial Seaport of Leningrad back in 1973 he succeeded in mastering new positions: Stevedore, Chief Railway Operations Dispatcher, Deputy Supervisor of cargo storage yard, Deputy to Chief Operating Officer, Deputy General Director of Saint-Petersburg port. From 2009, he has been holding the position of MRC Production Director. Vyacheslav Petukhov has been awarded with Silver and Golden Badges "Sea Port of Saint-Petersburg".

We have asked Vyacheslav Petukhov several questions.

- What was the interest in Ust-Luga that made you change the career?
- The new place where everything was just in the beginning offered an opportunity to bring something to the

table, to achieve some results. Initially, MRC throughput was low. The personnel employed from the neighborhood had no experience. We were planning new storage facilities to accommodate more cargo, were training people and developing encouraging activities. In the result, we started working faster and reached a level of 5.5 million tonnes of cargo per year.

– Not only did you change your job, you also changed the place of residence. Weren't you pity to leave Saint-Petersburg?

– I moved at once. It was too far for commuting to work every day. Kingisepp is a compact and clean town without any hustle and bustle. Of course, it was not that good earlier. Now, new blocks of flats and stores are under construction. The town gets look more like a district center.

– It is not easy to build a company from scratch and to raise it to a high and stable performance. What was the most interesting and the most challenging phase?

– The beginning was the most challenging period: to set working on the right track. There were no specialists, the discipline was lax. People used to leave for a cup of tea during the working day, to come later, to leave earlier. They got accustomed to work as tractor operators in a collective farm accompanied by engineers picking up potatoes. That was the approach to work. We used to react in different ways. Both by word and by rouble. The situation is different now. Former tractor men and freight handlers having undergone high quality training operate a variety of equipment and serve as high class dock workers ...

With good reason, dock workers are considered as a big league of blue-collar jobs. Those employed by MRC earn about RUB 60,000 per month on the average, twice as much as the average wage in Kingisepp. Although experienced specialists of the company are being hunted by personnel departments of other terminals, staff turnover is very low here, less than 1%, confirming that people like being employed here.

– As of today, we have no open vacancies, – tells Irina Dolgova, Senior Human Resources Officer. – However, in the future, with the development of the terminal, we will need dock works, engineers, mechanics and railway operations specialists. To enter the base, the applicants should send their CVs to the corporate email: upk-terminal@seaport.spb.ru marked “For Personnel Department”.

Having started with low-key performance, MRC have picked up stream without forgetting the town of Kingisepp. During the recent years, the port helped to create a municipal library of family reading, acquired stage equipment and decorations for town celebrations. In 2018, the company allocated resources for the development of a project aimed at improving a pedestrian zone along the Vostochnaya and Vorovskoi streets. That is one of the largest recreational areas in the town where the residents spend their leisure time. By the end of this year, MRC is going to complete its development and to build an Alley of Port Workers there.

That is an increasingly high integration of the town and the port, particularly Multipurpose Reloading Complex. Therefore, it is quite possible that the professional holiday of port workers will spread beyond their inner circle and start being celebrated on a municipal level. That can become a rare example of positive effect from changing traditions.

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