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Container Transfer, Transport and Sorting System

Defining the Need:

The future of FREIGHTTRANSPORTATION mandates that those in charge must stay informed and continually modify infrastructure toward state-of-the-art applications. Aviation and shipping PORTS using increasingly expensive CARRIERS, for which demand for service is ever increasing by volume, require CARGO equipment costing many millions of dollars. So it is important the right choices are made to satisfy the needs of SHIPPING COMPANIES, GOVERNMENT, and PASSENGERS that directly affect PROFITABILITY and SAFETY of both the carriers and route development.

Integral to Freight movement are design solutions 1) preventing terrorism, 2) abating climate change 3) to withstand nature's fury, and 4) enhancing public safety. The Sky Train Monorail (picture) is the answer to these challenges by being comparatively inexpensive, quick to build, able to move Cargo Container handling in a far more efficient manner saving billions annually. We can also meet the expectations the government demands to screen containers for contraband and terrorists threats. We, as a people, cannot put a value on prevention of terrorism. The Sky Train Freight Handling Monorail can insure proper screening before material enters our borders.



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Introduction:

In order to Implement the government's new law to scan all containers proactively, it is time to introduce automated high speed freight movement which can be parallel to lines that haul passengers using the same support structure, signaling, and high performance monorail vehicles. We cite as an example the Sea and Air Port connections suggested at Fort Lauderdale, in their ongoing studies. During high volume periods, nighttime transport of freight could use both lines justified by the sharing of costs. The factors: Energy consumed, road wear, driver pay, and pollution (truck transport of containers) will be REDUCED BY AROUND 90%; transfer time to load the trains or trucks in double stacked fashion reduced by a quarter.

Saving millions over the duration the system can pay for itself. Sky Train can further abate some of the estimated costs that assessments for a passenger monorail have concluded. So, Sky Train's advantage is that it will save on the passenger aspect as well as offer parallel use with freight. No other monorail organization has considered our depth of freight handling option in monorail development. Sky Train's concepts stands out as a major innovation over other systems and should be supported and built.

After STC's 18 years development with overhead supported Light Rail Transport System; use was both visualized and calculated quantifying savings and advantages. Recent disclosure for international patent protection, referencing our exclusive U.S. patent number 7,124,692 with 63 approved claims, allows us to take the next steps. Our consulting engineers and Associates are premier, world-recognized designers in container handling, design, build, operate and manufacturing of automation equipment and include a licensed instructor in the application of Methods Time Management with training in Chemical Biological Radiological Warfare (along with security clearances). Our partner ARC International Associates is a pioneer in Airport Container handling and inspection and has completed many contracted projects including those at Fort Lauderdale, Hong Kong, Miami, and Dubai. We are in negotiation which other significant international partners who have expressed enormous interest in our company.

The application to the above-mentioned seaport/airport plan is to increase the ability of Port Everglades and other essential ports to meet the demands of more container business expected when Cargo ships will double in size and when the Panama Canal will be widened in the next decades. The May 2007 publication "Global Logistics & Supply Chain Strategies" on page 12 indicates the projected change of Asia-US TMU is expected to continue a vibrant growth of 8 % to 12% for 2007 and 2008. Change, by 2020 affected by the Panama Canal expects that the West Coast TEU capacity will decline from 86% to 72%. We also see projections that Port Everglades plans to greatly expand its container operations including a "Future

Intermodal Container Transfer Facility” while maintaining its world status as a cruise port. Sky Train can be a major contributor to this process there and at other locations.

Since the number of containers controls profit, increasing capacity is the first mission to address. The second is the logistics of operating personnel and cruise port customers to have easier access to port operations. The third is the reassignment of existing land to better uses as has been suggested in previous studies. The Sky Train system when connecting to a location remote from the port for processing will also allow workers to have access to these locations. This would free up parking at the main port, potentially allowing increased use of public transportation and reduce the time to get to work.

Another bonus feature is the refinement of the existing security system to allow increased throughput speeds easily doubling security scanning of existing equipment. Also the addition of incorporating strain gauges to the lift points, previously investigated by one of our associates provide the following: The technique allows comparing, manifest with standard density of materials to match the characteristics of this product; this will expose hidden product or shrinkage prior to loading on to a truck or rail vehicle. This scanning technique was performed by equipment manufactured for Barry Wehmler’s Inex Vision Systems Division by this firm, which was renamed Sky Train. Further if weight varies disproportionately to the scanned load at the lifting points, a warning can be issued to the client indicating this for repair or discontinued use. Identification of severely damaged lift points could possibly prevent an accident in handling or suggest alternate means of handling for instance, modifying the operation sequence to use truck transport when lift points show damage.

In discussing the ability of weighing each container “on the fly” coming off the ship with other professionals, discussion of the possibly to save the state DOT’s Millions of Dollars in preventing damaged highways due to overweight containers. Furthermore it could potentially also increase the State highway revenues, or possibly demand the use of special multi-axle vehicles for over limit containers to reduce highway damage as they do in some of the EU partner Nations. Toll road privatization and competition would possibly compete for reasonable, certified weight ranges of trucks with special discounts, speeding freight to destinations.

Background:

As international trade expands between nations, container or bulk handling becomes more and more of an issue concerning competitiveness. Worldwide Container Port activity is projected to go from 69.9% in 2001 to 80.1% utilization in 2007. 2003 data projects the movement of 360 million TEU (equivalent volume of standard 20’ long containers: *1 twenty-foot equivalent unit* or 1 TEU). At these levels ports in South East Asia and South Asia should now be at over 100% capacity. Another important development is the present construction of super-container ships that will soon also be able to traverse a widened Panama Canal. It follows that just as destination Airports have had to lengthen runways for larger aircraft, we will have to modify new cranes that can span the wider beams (decks) of super ships on priority ports, not just improve container throughputs to meet shipping schedules.

Component costs; such as ship loader cranes at over \$4 million/US per crane, with normally four sitting next to each other used for speedy unloading of ships costing more then \$80 million each, with dockworkers in the US earning over \$100,000 in annual wages: These require increased container through put-rates to meet increasing capacity while reducing the costs of operations saving millions per year. Sky Train Corp’s mechanical handling does not add cost when facilities are idle while increasing capacity.

Another issue of interest including the logical evolution of most ports is the formation of a surrounding city of services like the City of Miami. Even though rail connections are available, community leaders have banned the movement of freight trains through the city due to the disruption of traffic. Our plan abates increased truck traffic, congestion, road damage and pollution already at the area. Sky Train is a Smart Growth solution. The addition of a transfer operation at a remote point, loading onto a train at loading yards further creates freight delays, adding to original costs by unnecessary repeated handling, with product spoilage increasing the amount of, and cost of product in transit. The utilization of parallel people and freight transportation, which on the ground now operates in segregated trains but with mixed use, will become an efficient elevated transfer mechanism using similar efficient rail technology, reducing overall costs.

Description of Loading:

In order to organize container scanning PRIOR to loading onto a ship (new law requesting a Proactive National Response) or from a ship (presently utilized; random/select scanning) new Customs oversight Procedures (technologies) are demanded. This would be to isolate the input of containers to a holding area and then transport through a transit scanning conveyor type system which picks up from a destination. After processing the system places them into a loadable position for the boat loading or unloading. We see this to be initiated in the U.S. Ports and then exported to key import or Trans-shipment Ports for inspection prior to shipment; fulfilling the law’s mandates and protection of threats to our nation.

Many crane areas have rail tracks so that as the container, when lowered from a ship can be placed directly to a specialized container rail train. They are loaded, could be double -stacked, then moved by a tug arrangement to mutual location. The innovation would allow a Sky Train Over-head Suspended Rail system (OSLR) that can swing over them to obtain the containers. The train loads itself or by guidance from an operator to full capacity with use of a specialized Grapple which moves the containers.

As the lower-train is moved, it will be replaced by another; off loading continues without interruption. The unloaded lower-train is then returned to positions for loading. An alternative is that the containers offloaded be moved to waiting trucks as is common present practice using lift-trucks for removal. Presently, an inefficient method is used; around 24 trucks and drivers toil and spew diesel fumes while the ship is processed.

With the Sky Train innovation, the containers are quickly transported past scanners (able to scan twice as many), brought to a new location/positioning directly onto rail container trains or trucks. A new method for sorting emerges: specified destinations from the manifest allows sorting to different rail cars for future rearrangement at hump rail yards saving in repeated loading and unloading activities.

If the remote transfer yard is designated for truck movement, containers would be deposited directly onto the vehicle. Another efficiency option would be to redirect containers (especially if they are empty); they could be staged under the track for reloading or returned for reuse to the existing ship before departing the loading yard. The return containers, staged under the monorail duct are reacquired to return them into loading zones. Another future feature that may save fuel and staff at weigh stations is that by using interacting databases DOT can allow future random or specified cargo to bypass weigh stations reducing transport time. Also tolls for loads based on accurate weight might ultimately be charged differently and subsequently could even be allowed on alternate faster routes.

Summary:

The Sky Train improvements herein described will significantly modernize the passenger and freight components of truck, rail, airport and ships. Also, inspection scanning and transit use can be matured to satisfy new Custom/Homeland Security mandates insuring the safety of countries. Concerning Fort Lauderdale International Airport and Port Everglades mixed-use and growth, the selection of sensing, safety and identification software and related equipment must be classified to meet new demands of automation. The container grapple considered standard is redesigned with lighter materials adapted to connect with the monorail chassis that is connected to the duct structure. A feature that could be added is regeneration, the ability to allow the pickup of two 20-foot (6 meter) containers saving loading and transfer time, pollution, man-hours, these factors alone will pay for the systems. Another feature of knowing the weight of a lifted container allows a variable speed of lift feature incorporated into systems thereby increasing the throughput.

Embodiments of the present design as herein described may provide a system at a relatively lower cost when compared to typical systems, while providing superior performance characteristics. The elimination of grade crossings removes the threat of accidents and allows greater uninterrupted average speeds for container and passenger flow to and from remote staging areas at major toll roads, rail yards and freeways. Double stacking of containers reduces container distance moved, saving crane time, speeding the processes.

An improvement in capital infrastructure and operating cost results from the absence of this installation at ground level. This low cost, overhead rail system requires only easements over existing property rights and does not occupy expensive rights-of-way on the ground except for footings for the supporting columns. There is less utility relocation, no land separations, no changes to existing land uses, no problems from fences and drainage. Operation during disasters using an alternate energy grid also feeds to reduce greenhouse emissions and operation when the normal electrical grid is down. There is no risk of intrusion by trespassers (Terrorists), animals, vehicles or vehicles on tracks, is quite frankly 100 times safer, and saves millions in potential lawsuits. The rails, power supplies, and signal systems can be substantially protected against rain, snow, sand intrusion, noise and ice by covers. Also we consider multiple uses of the structures for carrying utilities, for mountings for street lighting, CCTV, and system lightning protection. The Monorail system by its raised nature reduces land requirement and added expense of clearing ice, snow, and debris; from tracks, switches, or from weed abatement requiring herbicides.

As you know, Sky Train and some of its partners are located in Florida. We would consider a Florida port location for our assembly operation on the Port property, keeping tax dollars within the location. We can provide this robust, energy saving system, to what is a world-class destination for passengers and freight. We urge you to set in motion communications and funds for this system; it will set an example, be envied, especially as the new super ships seek qualifying ports.

Please return notice of your response to these ideas. We wish to meet with you shortly to further clarify the attributes of the Sky Train design and answer all your questions.