The shipping agents GIE “Pointe de Bretagne”

**Access to transport networks, infrastructure and nodes; Freight consolidation and transhipment; ICT (e.g. routing, guidance), transport optimisation; Business to business (B2B) solutions, cooperation; Competitive aspects; Innovative operational solutions; Business models**

The GIE, the ‘groupement d’interêt économique’, which means mutual economic interests collective, groups the producers together by pooling their shipments to the clients they have in common. Its purpose is:

- to negotiate logistics contracts on behalf of its members
- to ensure the common use of material resources
- to put in place solutions for optimising logistics

The GIE’s mission is to conceive, negotiate and implement mutual logistic solutions on behalf of its members. More specifically, this pooling involves delivery of all the pool of agro-food producers’ orders, to the same destination on the same day, by the same transporter in the same lorry.

- A response to the requirements of the clients, in particular supermarkets. The supermarkets are moving towards a zero-stock policy, which would mean parcel deliveries for almost all of the orders. For the supermarkets, delivery pooling is advantageous insofar as it meets their need for just-in-time delivery and can halve the number of deliveries arriving at their depots. As long as this requirement is met, it is possible to align the days and times of deliveries from each producer to each depot.

- A guarantee of independence for the producers - such a system allows the producers to be forearmed as competition with the distributors increases.

The policies of the distributors, like those of the carriers, now significantly increase the disadvantage west Brittany’s ‘remoteness’:

- The distributors are moving towards very low or even zero stocks. They now require those who supply them to send produce more frequently and in small batches.

This high rate of shipments, imposed on the ultra-fresh market by the very nature of the products, now applies also to the canned and pre-served food sector. These producers also have to reorganise their shipments and find almost daily delivery solutions to comply with the time limits insisted upon by the distributors.

- The carriers are in a position to force their pricing policy on isolated producers, whose peripheral location is not profitable, so carriers impose additional costs per lorry. The additional cost applies to all shipments, regardless of the quantity of goods involved. This obviously weighs heavily on the profitability of the company and encourages some of them to look at a possible relocation of their pick up points.

Each producer previously used a different type of transport. Faced with the increase in transportation costs and the implementation of the just-in-time policies by supermarkets, the agri-businesses of Cornouaille were becoming less competitive and were threatened with relocation. The location of these companies means that they are faced with particularly heavy transport constraints since their customers are located throughout the country at relatively long distances away. This therefore has a heavy impact on their transportation costs.
The GIE does not manage the lorries, just the flow of goods. It involves putting more merchandise into the lorries, a similar principle to that of car sharing.

The object of this pooling process is to optimise the deliveries with respect to the frequencies, deadlines and days and times of deliveries requested by and agreed with the clients. The GIE is responsible for the negotiation and the organisation of the logistics services as well as customer relations, follow-up of transport contracts and measuring performance.

The GIE is open to all businesses in Brittany, small, medium-sized and large, delivering to the depots and the shops of the GMS (Grand et Moyenne Surfaces, or the supermarket sector) and to the RHD (Restauration Hors Domicile, or restaurant sector).

Businesses wishing to join the GIE have to describe the nature of their products, the destination depots, the frequency of deliveries per depot, the tonnage involved and their seasonal requirements.

All members of the GIE apply the same internal policy, as well as sharing the same philosophy and the same methods.

Two advisory committees have been formed to manage relations with the producers, the transporters and the clients:

1. The dry goods committee: Grocery products, biscuits, crisps, preserves, drinks etc.
2. The fresh produce committee: Butter, eggs, cheese, meat, cooked and cured meats, ready-cooked food etc.

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