

stopovers drastically reduced once the race reached Europe, this didn't make the logistics challenge any easier for GAC Pindar. The challenge shifted to staying ahead of the race boats themselves, so that each stopover port was ready for their arrival.

"Once the race arrived in Europe, no air freight was possible, creating a significant challenge, with vast amounts of equipment needing to be transported long distances to tight deadlines by road," Andrew explains. "The transfer of the race village from Lisbon in Portugal to Lorient in France was particularly difficult, requiring triple-manned trucks to travel 900 miles in just 26 hours to meet the tight deadline."

Did GAC Pindar have any issues with dealing with the host cities? Was there anything the organisers could have done to make GAC Pindar's job easier for the bump-in and bump-out? "In hindsight, we should have worked harder on pre-planning and preparation with Volvo Ocean Race organisers, principal shipping line Maersk and the host cities," Andrew adds. "Based on what we now know, that's a must for the next race. We're always learning and looking to make improvements to our logistics services."

**A very proud moment**

GAC's Gothenburg born and bred group president Bengt Ekstrand says the end of the Volvo Ocean Race was both a triumph for the seven competing teams and its

*The Team Vestas Wind boat aground on the Cargados Carajos Shoals – all the crew were safe and uninjured*



Photo by Brian Carlin, courtesy of Team Vestas Wind and the Volvo Ocean Race

organisers, and a true testimony to the power of GAC, its partners and the company's global reach and resources.

"We worked tirelessly with our employees at each venue to ensure the delivery of everything needed, regardless of the challenges that arose. Watching the boats sail into Gothenburg was a very proud moment for everyone involved," he says.

Andrew Pindar concurs. "The Volvo Ocean Race organisers benchmarked us against previous logistics providers and took

soundings from host city event teams, from the sailing teams and the 'dry' teams responsible for the pavilions, to rate our performance. Timeliness and accuracy of our billing were also critical. Fortunately we got good marks in almost every regard," he says. Tom Toubert, Volvo Ocean Race chief operating officer, says the Volvo Ocean Race epitomises life at the extreme and the organisers will always be confronted with the unexpected. "In those circumstances it is vital to have a logistics partner that is not only

able to stick to their promise, but also able to change the promise swiftly and deliver the new one," he says.

"Working with the professionals at GAC Pindar was a very good experience. A solid basis for mutual trust has been built between our operations team and the GAC Pindar logistics team. And if we have learned one lesson, it is that the people we have worked with at GAC Pindar have made the difference."



Photo by Brian Carlin, courtesy of Team Vestas Wind and the Volvo Ocean Race

*The Team Vestas Wind boat is secured to a trailer and prepared to be transported by GAC Pindar from the port in Genoa, Italy, to Bergamo in the foothills of the Alps*



Photo by Ainhoa Sanchez, courtesy of the Volvo Ocean Race

*A new mast arrives for the Dongfeng race team – GAC Pindar had just 20 days to deliver the US\$345,000 dollar mast to Itajaí so that the Dongfeng team could start leg six to Newport*

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aviation strategy that will reset our airfreight operations for the next ten-plus years.

We have formed a two-party collaborative business arrangement to double the overnight airfreight volume that needs to be moved between the North and South Islands. In turn, this has enabled a

fleet of eight aircraft (across two airfreight operations) to be replaced by three 737-400 freighter aircraft, operating through three main hubs at Auckland, Palmerston North and Christchurch airports. This strategy represents a significant step-change that will deliver an optimum airfreight network for both entities, financially

and operationally. I will remain working in logistics while I can see that I'm effecting change and making a difference, our operations consistently perform at a world-class level, and there is a legacy of continuous improvement left in my wake. I expect this would be the same for all logistics professionals.

Overall, I have a lot to thank my diploma in logistics training for.

*The CILT-UK Professional Diploma in Logistics and Transport is offered in New Zealand by the Logistics Training Group; for further information, visit [www.ltg.co.nz](http://www.ltg.co.nz)*