



Customer : Spliethoff Groep  
 Product group : Industrial Plastics  
 Market : Transport, aviation and maritime

# SUCCESSFUL ENGINEERING PROJECT WITH TAILOR-MADE SEALING PLUGS

Spliethoff cleans up with matrix-bound plastic plugs



## CUSTOMER PROFILE

*Spliethoff Groep, based in Amsterdam, is one of the biggest shipping companies in the Netherlands. The company is market leader in tramp shipping: its fleet navigates the globe, transporting virtually anything. The tweendecks ships alternately transport bulk cargo and mixed cargo, which can range from containers with pins to wind turbines and jet aircraft.*



## CHALLENGE

In the ships' hold 200 shields are placed on either side at different levels to support the between decks pontoons in horizontal and vertical positions. To transport mixed cargo, the tweendecks can be placed at different levels.

For bulk cargo, the shields are folded away. The problem had to do with the holes this creates. If the holes are not covered, they fill up with bulk cargo, like cocoa, rice or concentrates. After unloading, it would take the entire deck crew, up to ten men, half a day to clean every hole individually with an airline. China clay, which is much used in the paper industry, is even finer than powdered sugar, and gets into every nook and cranny. This used to lead to complaints, and even claims from customers about residue from previous cargoes.

## SOLUTION

After a lengthy and intensive engineering process, ERIKS and Spliethoff in close consultation found the best solution in the form of a mould-bound plastic plug with strengthening ridges on the sides, filled with high-density PU-foam.

The plug is a flat impact-resistant RX® PC polycarbonate panel, with two RX® Multilene blocks and magnets attached. Removable suction cups (glass carriers) are used as handles. The plugs are already in use around the globe on 25 ships.

## SAVINGS

- Time savings
- Cost savings
- Reduced downtime
- Innovation

## OTHER BENEFITS

- The plugs are purple, so they stand out against the cargo
- The customer no longer gets complaints and claims due to residue from previous cargoes
- The plugs have already been patented and there is a great deal of interest from shipping suppliers

## FURTHER COMMENTS

ERIKS' shields are light, very tough, flexible and transparent, so you can see if there is cargo inside. Once in place they are rock solid, but removing them is simple.

Marcel de Schot,  
 Spliethoff Operations Manager