

BUSINESS Maritime

* Destination inspection firm starts operation Jan 2

Stones: Isiaka Adams

ALL the necessary arrangements have been completed for the take-off of destination inspection in the country on January 2, 2004, as two mobile X-ray scanners, the main equipment for the scheme, which were procured by Cotecna Destination Inspection Company Limited, arrived the ports this week.

Speaking with correspondents in Lagos on Tuesday, at the presentation of the equipment, the Regional Vice President and Head of the Nigerian Project of Cotecna, Mr. Dermont Jennings, said that the company had put in place all the arrangements to ensure the smooth

take-off of the scheme.

The Heimann Cargo Vision mobile scanner is a high-energy fully mobile and autonomous vehicle for the inspection of fully loaded trucks, vehicles and containers equipped with x-ray emission unit, detection and operation rooms.

It also has inbuilt self-propelled system on any kind of road and could conform to standards road regulations as well as forward and reverse scanning modes with 3.8 million electron volts.

Dennings noted that the company had been busy working behind the scene through recruitment and training of the technical and administrative staff, ensur-

ing that the offices were well equipped as well as perfecting the knowledge transfer procedure to the new Nigerian recruits through extensive training.

He stated that these behind the scene activities might have given the sceptics of the programme the wrong impression that the company was not ready with the take-off of the scheme in January.

According to him, each of the HCV-Mobile scanners cost \$4 million and was equipped with all the latest technology to ensure a smooth operation as well as

adequate technical experts, who would be in the country to ensure that any breakdown was quickly rectified without undue delays in the operation.

"These scanners represent Cotecna's investment in the future of Nigeria and the company's commitment to that future and its confidence in that future. These machines are very powerful machines in the right hands and with the necessary backups and the right information technology and expertise," he noted.

Jennings stated that the arrival of the machines was

a demonstration of the company resolve to move the destination inspection scheme on a fast track without any delays, adding that the mobile scanners are the first stage in the fulfilment of the contract.

He disclosed that at the company's head office along Engineering Close on Victoria Island, Lagos, the firm has installed the systems, the analysis system, the risk management systems, data inputs and data processing, staff training and all the necessary infrastructure, for the success of the scheme.

"The reports we read tend to suggest that this is a scanning exercise. But the project is a lot more. It is a total system, including documentation, reception, data processing inputting analysis, risk management assessment, scanning and research," he noted.

He, thereafter, presented some of the destination inspection staff, among whom are expatriates from Switzerland, Ghana, Kenya, as well as Nigerians, who would operate the project after the contract period lapses.