

Mega Transports (Series 2)

6 x 60'

EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

1. Oil Rig

A brand-new oil rig, worth 500 million dollar, has to go from South Korea to Europe. The problem: It is too gigantic for a heavy transport vessel. The solution: it's being towed. By one single tug. It's a true Mega Transport, halfway around the globe – all that in just 90 days. The Mega Transport starts in Ulsan, South Korea. West Bollsta was built here for 6 years – and is now ready to get to its operation site. But how should this beast be delivered? It's 123 meters long and 76 meters wide. Its maximum drilling depth: incredible 12 kilometers! Way to bulky to be transported in a common way. Surprisingly, a rather small kind of boat is best for the job: the ALP Striker – one of the strongest ocean tugs in the world. The ALP Striker will pull the oil rig across the oceans on arm-thick steel cables. They are so heavy that only the ship's own crane can move them. Connecting tug and rig alone takes a whole day. Once the oil rig is towed to the tug, they're embarking on a journey never before seen: around the cape of good hope. Navigation, pirates, wind and waves – there are many unpredictable challenges along the way. Once they have managed them all, the destination is in sight: the Canary islands.

2. Chile

South America. The chelonian Atacama Desert is home to the world's largest radio telescope: "Atacama Large Millimeter Array Observatory", also known as: "ALMA". In an altitude of 5,000 meters above sea level, astronomers find perfect conditions for observing the universe: almost no pollution, no artificial lights and very thin air. The most powerful telescope in the world can see an incredible ten billion light years. To the edge of the observable universe. Good for the scientists, bad for the engineers: working conditions are extreme on Chajnator Plateau, where the 66 antennas are located: low oxygen levels, fluctuating temperatures from 20 degrees Celsius above zero to 20 degrees Celsius below zero - and strong wind. Every time the telescope sets its sights on a new target, 50 of the extremely sensitive and valuable antennas have to be moved. A major effort! And a battle against the weather, a lack of oxygen and a race against time – with a schedule set by the stars. To adjust the world's largest telescope array, you need high-tech equipment! "Made in Germany"! Or more precisely: Two transport machines unlike any other machines in the world. Their names are "Otto" and "Lore". They have been specifically designed for the job. Both vehicles are twenty meters long. Ten meters wide. And six meters tall. Two 680-horsepower diesel engines drive these 135-ton monsters. Despite their size, they can perform millimeter-precision work, even with a one hundred-ton-antenna on top. Our hero Alfredo and his team have to complete the relocation of one antenna in an 8-hour-time-frame. If they stayed longer on the Plateau, health issues could arise very quickly. But the weather has its own plans, and a blackout forces the crew to change their mission...

3. Autoliner

A transport to the other side of the globe. The “Höegh Trapper” is the largest automobile transporter in the world. Two hundred meters long, thirty-six meters wide. But the major attraction is actually behind the steel hull: A gigantic cargo area: In total over seventy-one thousand square meters. Enough room for eight-thousand-five-hundred cars. And hundreds of the so-called “High-and Heavies”: Gigantic machines of any kind. Her journey takes the fully loaded “Trapper” on a journey covering 28,000 kilometers. The starting point: Antwerp in Belgium. Here, Port Captain Per Henningsen has to load 1,000 cars in record time – only 16 hours. Next stop: Bremerhaven, in Germany. Besides 2,000 cars here, Per has to load 200 high and heavy units – one of which has him worrying more than usual. He doesn’t know the exact measurements of the mysterious cargo – will it fit into the Trapper? From Bremerhaven, the journey continues to England, France, and Spain, and then out onto the expanse of the Atlantic Ocean. From there across the pond to ports in the US and Jamaica, through the Panama Canal onto the Pacific and all the way to New Zealand and Australia...All that in just fifty days! The Panama Canal is the bottleneck of the journey. The canal is over a hundred years old and was designed for the largest ships at that time. Maximum width: 32.3 meters. For behemoths like The Trapper, that’s not enough. Canal authorities began construction on newer, larger lock systems in 2007. Since its opening in 2016, ships belonging to the so-called Neopanamax class can now transit the canal and that includes the Trapper. But even though the new lock chambers are fifty-five meters wide: For the Trapper this means not even ten meters clearance on either side - a special challenge for Captain She and his crew...

4. Wind Parks

A wind park needs to get from Europe to Asia. Over two thousand tons of highly sensitive and valuable cargo. On one of the world’s largest heavy lift vessels.

The team has only 37 days for loading in two ports and travelling once around half of the globe. To be able to transport the entire cargo, the crew even has to build another level altogether – in the middle of the deck. It’ll be an ongoing battle for five straight weeks. Against time. And against weather. The load: Five gigantic nacelles, each as heavy as a Boeing 747 and nine 75-meter-long blades. All these wind park components have been specially designed to fit together – and can only be replaced with a huge effort. Any damage to the cladding or the electronics could delay construction of the whole wind park project by months. The loading process is extremely complicated and has been developed especially for this transport! So no one has any experience with it. The crew has to trust the plans of the engineers. And they don’t have ANY margin of error. Just a couple centimeters too far to the left or right would mean: everything out again. A project never before undertaken – anywhere in the world. And no one knows if the risky plan will prove successful in the end. A mega transport in the superlative. Over two thousand two hundred tons of cargo on three levels. Below deck, on deck, and above deck.

5. Ice Roads

A Mega Transport on one of the most dangerous roads in the world – the Siberian Ice Road. It doesn't forgive mistakes. It's treacherous. And unpredictable. A life-threatening adversary that has left many fractured and broken. The Kolyar mountain range in eastern Russia - an inhospitable

frozen landscape. With temperatures as low as fifty degrees below. Only in winter, when the snow buries the underlying mudflats, is this region accessible at all – over the Ice Road. One of the biggest businesses in the area involves transports to gold mines! Sometimes what they need is a colossal machine-like Komatsu D four hundred and seventy-five A. It's one of the biggest bulldozers in the world. It weighs in at a hefty eighty-six tons – far more than the world's heaviest tank. The mega transport route leads from the Russian Magadan through the tundra of Siberia for a total of one thousand kilometers. Over snow-covered mountain passes, temporary bridges and unpaved ice roads. There the truckers are on their own. Spare lines, workshops, rescue services of any kind – you won't find any of these on the Ice Road! In order to reach the destination in time, the men will drive most of the way without breaks. Day and night. The mine is basically still "hibernating." But in a few days, this year's digging will begin. And, if the transport and bulldozer don't make it there in time, the mine could lose an estimated ton of gold this season! For the drivers an icy, brutal battle: "Man against Nature's cold heart".

6. Generator

A three hundred and ninety ton giant on a daring journey: A team of german heavy-lift-specialists have to transport a generator from a disused coal plant to its new operation site – 120 kilometers away. Sounds easy – but the weight and dimensions of twelve-million euro generator pose a gruelling challenge for everyone involved.

The gigantic, modular transport structure that hauls the colossus, requires constant modification while en route in order to overcome the distance to the next power plant. First obstacle to tackle is the small, winding country roads from Voerde. Then, a pontoon is taking the stator a smooth eighty kilometers down the Rhine. But after that comes the most difficult part of this already challenging route: with ramshackle bridges, tight roundabouts and steep curves ahead. It's a race against time. The necessary permits are only valid for ten days which gives our team just long enough to deliver this 390-ton beast...but that's under ideal conditions and Mega Transports are rarely ideal! The team has to fight against heavy rain, technical problems and unexpected changes of plan. Nine months of planning. Ten nerve-wracking days full of tension. And a budget of one million euros...