Nichola Silveira says the commercial pressures of handling multimillion dollar contracts in her previous role as CEO of DP World’s Yarimca terminal in Turkey has made her a stronger and better leader and was ideal preparation for her latest role as General Manager for Logistics at DP World’s London Gateway.

“Building a team from four people to running a fully operational terminal, leading and managing that terminal with different departments – from legal teams and finance to HR and civil engineering to name but a few – helps you to understand how critical the supply chain functions are to reach the end customer,” she explained.

The strategy for London Gateway is, appropriately; referred to as ‘Beyond the Gate’ and Ms Silveira’s role includes “unlocking additional revenue streams, building logistics and supply chain solutions for such clients as retailers and manufacturers to carriers and third-party logistics companies (3PLs), launching the first UK export train from London Gateway to Yiwu city in China, leasing warehouse space to distribution and fulfilments centres and ensuring London Gateway fully participates in the end-to-end supply chain”.

Her leadership style, she told SMI, ranged from the “visionary” to the “directive, pace-setting and delegating – and at times being a transformational manager and leader.” “Coming from a strong operational background there are occasions when you need to be completely hands-on which includes coaching and mentoring the team,” she said.

The Gateway is still in its embryo stages which she said she finds challenging particularly as its logistics arm begins to evolve. “I thoroughly enjoy being with customers, hearing about their challenges and being able to use my knowledge and experience to help them become more efficient,” she said.

“I’ve been able to look at things from a different perspective and now use my shipping line and port background of over 33 years to build the logistics arm. This will outline the management of planning, implementation, process and controls the physical flow concerned with raw materials and finished products from their point of origin to the point of usage and associated information,” she said.

Much of Ms Silveira’s role is focused on warehouse and supply chain process services including inland container depots, container freight stations and general warehousing, storage & distribution, inventory control, pick & pack services, e-commerce and, in the packing and light assembly sector; palletising, barcoding and labelling, and kitting.

As a successful maritime executive, it’s not surprising perhaps that Ms Silveira has forthright views on the role of women in shipping. “Women need to break through the glass ceiling now – the stereotypes no longer exist. Being fearless, taking up the reins and moving up is vital. The industry is as equally attractive a proposition for women as it is for men, and women in the industry now should be more proactive in supporting more women to both join and stay in this industry,” she told SMI.

In the short span since she has been in this country, Ms Silveira has understandably had little time for leisure and hobbies, however she said she has managed to fit in some yoga, gym visits and ‘lots of walking’ to and from her home in London’s East End.