

Marseilles Fos cruise numbers ease impact of economy

Cargo handled at Marseilles Fos totalled 34.57 million tonnes to the end of May – down 14% on the first five months last year – but cruise traffic provided a notable bright spot in the current economic climate.

Container throughput was only 1% lower at 363,762 teu after a 13% rise to 286,863 teu on east-west trades via Fos, but the relative performance was distorted by last year's industrial action over French port reforms.

Including container tonnage of 3.6MT (-4%), general cargo fell 13% to 5.8MT. Ro-ro finished 8% worse on 1.6MT despite 2% growth in May on Mediterranean/North Africa trades, while continuing low volumes of steel products saw conventional traffic halved to 0.57MT.

Meanwhile the slump in steel industry demand for raw materials left dry bulk throughput 57% down on 2.4MT. Liquid bulks, affected by falling production in the chemicals sector, ended the period 23% worse on 1.1MT, although biofuels remained buoyant with 45% growth to 0.3MT.

The leading French cargo port's bedrock oil business dipped 4% to a total of 25.3MT. Crude imports for domestic and pipeline-served foreign refineries fell 8% to 17MT but refined products were stable on

GRAND PORT MARITIME DE MARSEILLE

Press contact: *Claire Battédou*

+33 (0)4 91 39 42 01

claire.battedou@marseille-port.fr

www.marseille-port.fr

PORT NEWS FROM MARSEILLES FOS

5.4MT. LPG remained 4% down on 0.9MT but LNG improved 17% to 1.9MT.

Passenger throughput over the five months slipped 4% to 476,000 despite outstanding results in the cruise sector. While Corsica and North Africa ferry carryings fell 12% to 318,000, cruise lines delivered a 19% increase with 158,000 passengers.

This included 91,000 passengers and 40 cruise calls in May alone, which featured five calls by the 3,500-passenger MSC vessel Fantasia.

For port images, see Espace presse/Phototheque at www.marseille-port.fr