

## Marseilles Fos seeks drydock and cargo terminal bids

Two major tender calls are being issued this week by the port of Marseilles Fos – one for the use of number 8 and 9 drydocks and the other for the development of a conventional cargo terminal.

The drydocks, located in the Marseilles harbour area, have become available following the recent closure of shiprepairer Union Naval Marseille. The port authority is seeking bids from repair specialists with recent experience of handling high added value ships such as car ferries, cruise vessels and LNG carriers. Applicants must demonstrate that they have a workforce of appropriate size and quality, capital of more than EUR200,000 and annual turnover of at least EUR15 million.

In return the port is offering a 15-year concession that also covers offices, workshops and two afloat repair quays with a total length of 450 metres. The winning bid is due to be confirmed early next year. Meanwhile the drydocks will be made available to occasional users such as sub-contractors or shipowners with technical control capacity.

The proposed conventional cargo terminal would be developed on the site of the fruit terminal vacated by Agrexco in March. Preference will be given to bidders intending to use the existing facilities for handling fruit, vegetables and other food products.

The site consists of a seven-hectare plot with 18,800 sq m of refrigerated storage – for which guaranteed annual throughput of 200,000 tonnes is required – and a further plot of three hectares with a warehouse and scope for a new ro-ro berth, which would be required to generate 10,000 trailers per year. A concession of ten years is being offered, with an option to extend in line with the level of investment. The winner of this bid is also due to be announced early next year.

## Malaysian ports strengthen Marseilles Fos links

Marseilles Fos has hosted a visit by Malaysia's minister of transport and senior port managers from Port Klang and Tanjung Pelepas.

Currently the French port's tenth largest market for container traffic, Malaysia is aiming to consolidate Marseilles Fos as its Euro-Mediterranean distribution hub, notably for halal and palm oil products. The delegation also discussed training initiatives and took part in a demonstration of the port's crane simulator.

After twinning with Port Klang in 2001, Marseilles Fos is to sign a similar agreement with Tanjung Pelepas in October during a trade mission to Malaysia.

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