

# Marseilles Fos seeks operator for giant drydock

The Marseilles Fos port authority is launching a tender for the use of its drydock No.10 – the largest in the Mediterranean – as a repair facility for the latest generation cruise ships, container carriers and gas tankers. The winning bidder is due to be selected by the end of the year and will be expected to demonstrate recent experience of handling ships more than 250 metres long.

Dock 10 is 465m long and 85m wide, making it capable of accepting the 330m-long cruise ships now frequenting the port. With 65% of the world fleet of large cruise vessels concentrated in the Mediterranean – and no comparable facility in the vicinity – the port authority sees cruise sector repairs as a key market sector. Container vessels of more than 360m have also become regular callers together with giant gas carriers, creating further possible markets.

The No. 8 and 9 drydocks currently in use at Marseilles measure 320x50m and 250x37m respectively. The operating concession for them was awarded last year to Genoa-based San Giorgio del Porto's specially created subsidiary Chantier Naval de Marseille.

Number 10 drydock entered service in 1975 aimed at the tanker repair market, which gradually shifted to regions such as Asia. Until 2000, the dock was being used as a back-up resource docks 8 and 9. In 2007 containership company CMA CGM won a tender to operate dock 10 but did not proceed with the project due to the global economic crisis.

## African port executives train at Marseilles Fos

A group of 25 port executives from nine French-speaking African countries has completed the latest course hosted by Marseilles Fos under a port training initiative agreed with the United Nations trade and development body. The two-week course, which supplements on-job training, was presented by personnel from Nantes St Nazaire, Dakar and Valencia as well as leading French port Marseilles Fos, which has trained some 90 African port professionals from 12 countries since signing up to the UN scheme six years ago. The agreement was renewed last September and is seen by the port authority as an important step in expanding technical and commercial cooperation.

In another well-established initiative, the Marseilles Fos training institute is helping to train future professionals in partnership with academic faculties. Enrolment is now under way for 25 places on each of the two 2011-12 courses – international transport and port logistics, run in association with the National Conservatory; and a higher level professional licence course in management and maritime transport law run with the University of Aix-Provence III.

*For port images, see Espace presse/Phototheque at [www.marseille-port.fr](http://www.marseille-port.fr)*

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