

GIBRALTAR PORT AUTHORITY

**THE GATEWAY TO THE
MEDITERRANEAN**



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The Gibraltar Port Authority has worked tirelessly to ensure that the Port of Gibraltar meets the needs of an ever-increasing flow of shipping traffic

WRITTEN BY: **WILL DAYNES**
RESEARCH BY: **ROBERT HODGSON**



A super yacht berthed in Gibraltar's world famous Ocean Village complex



For centuries Gibraltar, with its strategic location at the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea, was used as a naval fortress. Today the Rock, located at a crossroads of Mediterranean and Atlantic shipping lanes, is recognised for its ability to provide a wide range of services to vessels of all sizes and types, and for being a Maritime Centre of Excellence.

With over 71,000 vessels transiting the Strait of Gibraltar each year, the Rock has become a major bunkering port, the largest in the Mediterranean, and for years the Port of Gibraltar has tapped into the opportunities offered by its proximity to one of the busiest maritime thoroughfares in the world.

Established in 2005, the Gibraltar Port Authority's strategy is to build on Gibraltar's unique geographical position and fiscal status and provide a vital link between all stakeholders to ensure a cohesive strategy aimed at achieving common goals.

The Port Authority's main functions include the monitoring and the control of all vessel movement, the provision of security controls within restricted and controlled zones, the licensing of port operations, search and rescue in British Gibraltar Territorial Waters (BGTW) and pollution control.

Gibraltar's Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) has enabled the Gibraltar Port Authority to strengthen its ability to co-ordinate vessel movements in BGTW, thereby improving

navigational safety standards whilst at the same time maintaining the efficiency of the port. The system, manned by the Gibraltar Port Authority's team of VTS staff, has been operational since 2011 and allows for constant monitoring of all vessel movements both within and outside BGTW.

The VTS operates as both an Information Service (INS) and Traffic Organisation Service (TOS) co-ordinating all ships in Gibraltar waters from the operations room in the port building. The VTS staff have at their disposal a range of sensors to assist them in their work, including Radar and

Automatic Identification System (AIS) with coverage stretching many miles out to sea enabling them to check vessel movements well before their arrival. The VTS operators can also use CCTV cameras with night-time thermal imaging capability and a radio

direction finding facility which accurately pinpoints the source of VHF transmissions.

Whilst the system's primary focus is on navigational safety, allowing VTS operators to de-conflict movements in the busy BGTW, it also provides opportunities to maximise the use of the port space for commercial benefit. In line with international requirements, vessels are required to provide pre-arrival notification giving VTS staff the ability to organise vessel movements in advance with local companies and thus ensure maximum efficiency and minimum waiting times, with real-time movement information on vessel

71,000

Vessels transiting the Strait of Gibraltar each year

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 Email:
enquiries@ngrp.com

activity in and around the port being readily available to shipping agents, pilots and other service providers.

Given the sheer volume of traffic that it handles on a yearly basis the port has made a continuous effort to improve its facilities and infrastructure in order to service a diverse mix of users.

At its North Mole the port has facilities for the loading and discharging of containers and small amounts of seaborne general cargo. The container berth is used on a regular basis by the vessels of shipping company Oldenburg-Portugiesische Dampfschiffs-Rhederei, or OPDR, who have



Ships in the Port of Gibraltar

been supplying cargo to Gibraltar since 1892.

One of the more attractive facets of Gibraltar's waters is the fact that it possesses a one metre tidal range which allows cruise ships to berth alongside the port's Cruise

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Terminal at any time of day or night within an hour of leaving the main shipping lanes of the Strait of Gibraltar.

These cruise ships, and other vessels calling for bunkers - or water for that matter - can be accommodated on both sides of the Western Arm. The outer side is 490 metres long with a maximum draught of 9.6 metres and can accommodate vessels of any length. The inner side is 450 metres long with a maximum draught of 8.6 metres and can accommodate vessels up to a maximum length of 300 metres. Vessels calling for lay-up or repairs can also berth at the Detached Mole, which is 605 metres long with a maximum draught of 9.1 metres. Two 100 metre berths are available for vessels discharging general cargo.

Gibraltar is the one of the largest bunkering ports in the Mediterranean. In 2011 alone, 4.2 million tonnes of bunkers were delivered to its port, a figure that makes the 0.84 million tonnes delivered in 1990 pale in comparison. When one considers that of the approximately 10,350 vessels that called at Gibraltar, 6,181 of these were supplied with bunkers, it isn't hard to see why bunkering has become the main activity of the port.

Among the other advantages of the island and its port are its competitive market,



Gibraltar airport runway

which comes as a result of its high turnover, its competitive port duties, the fact that the market is continuously monitored by the Government to ensure competitiveness and, lest we forget, the low costs associated with doing business here due to its unique tax-free status within European Union.

It is important to remember as well however

that even as the Port of Gibraltar has grown in size, stature and importance, its operators have maintained the belief that safety and environmental concerns associated with the port continue to be given top priority.

It is with this in mind that the port announced in March of this year its participation in the Green Award certification scheme. For its part in the scheme the port has awarded sustainable ships certified by Green Award a five percent reduction in tonnage dues since the beginning of April 2013.

Green Award's managing director Mr Jan Fransen presented a Green Award board to Minister Neil Costa, officially making Gibraltar a Green Award port. The ceremony

was hosted by the Port Authority and among guests was Minister for Health and Environment Dr John Cortes.

In his speech Mr Fransen said: "The Port of Gibraltar's view fits very well with the Green Award's Philosophy. When such a major bunker port as Gibraltar practices its Corporate Social Responsibility through participating in the Green Award scheme, it does make a difference and motivates safe and environmentally conscious shipping." **BE**

"THE PORT HAS AWARDED SUSTAINABLE SHIPS CERTIFIED BY GREEN AWARD WITH A FIVE PERCENT REDUCTION IN TONNAGE DUES SINCE THE BEGINNING OF APRIL 2013"

For more information about Gibraltar Port Authority visit:
www.gibraltarport.com



GIBRALTAR PORT AUTHORITY

North Mole

Gibraltar

GXII IAA

T +350 200 46254

www.gibraltarport.com

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