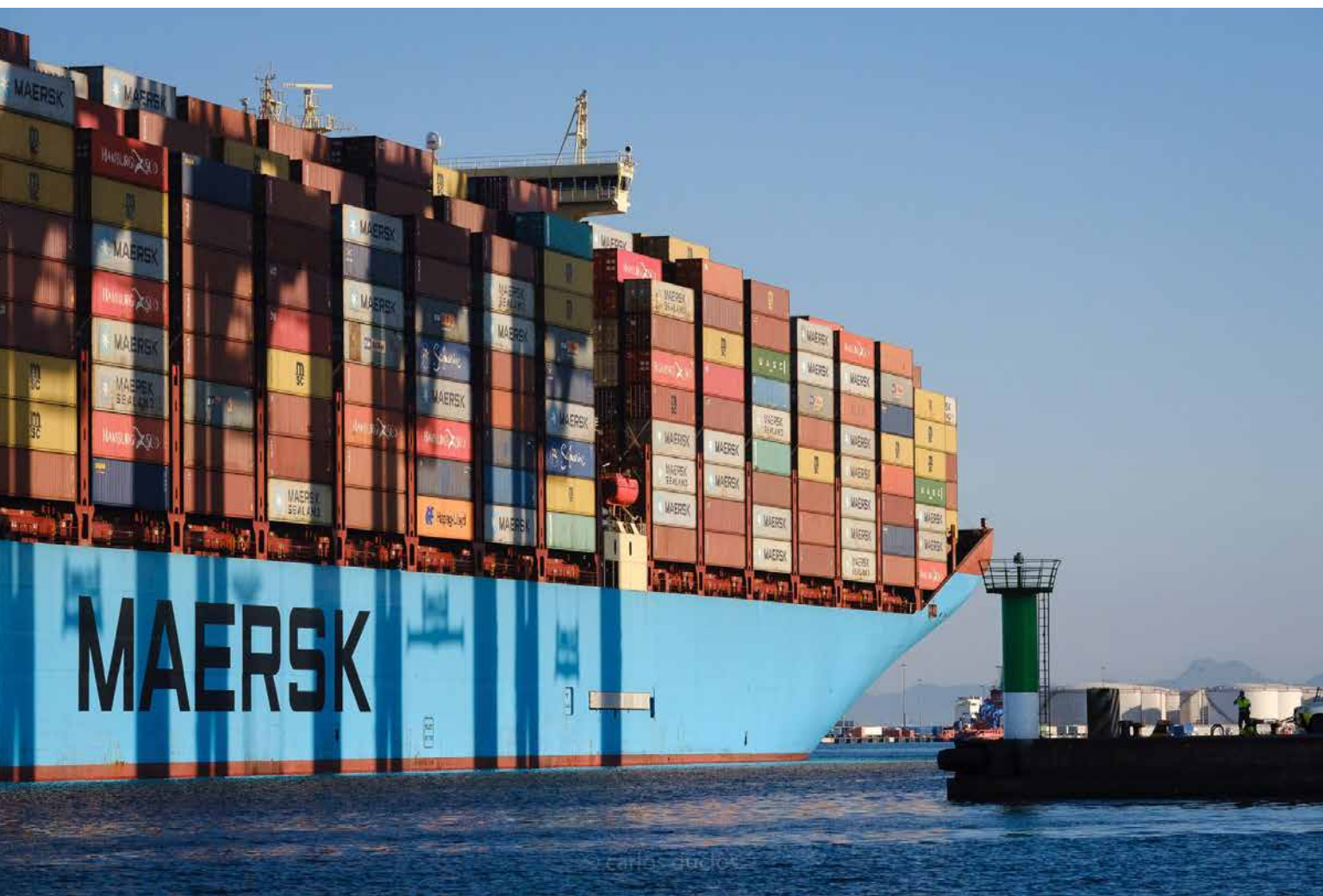


Port of Algeciras

EUROPE'S GATEWAY TO AFRICA



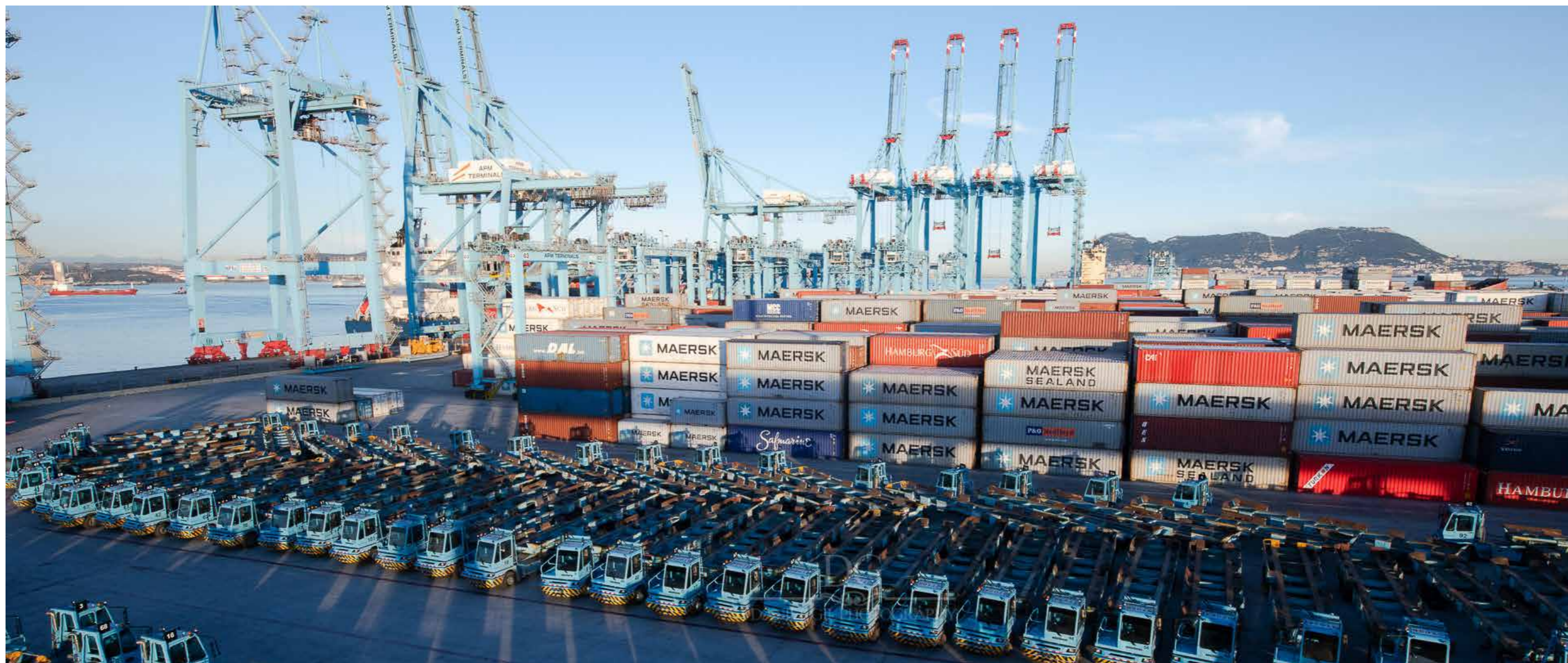


Port of Algeciras

EUROPE'S GATEWAY TO AFRICA

Business Excellence has profiled many port authorities over the years, but perhaps none during a climate that comes close to what the coronavirus pandemic has brought to this industry

RESEARCH BY *Fernando Ruiz*



Few episodes have struck home the importance of ports quite like the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Even as businesses of all manner have closed shop because of government regulation, certain organizations, among them ports, have remained open throughout - underlining their importance to the survival of economies. One such port is the Port of Algeciras in the Bay of Gibraltar - Europe's closest port to Africa.

Business Excellence has profiled many port authorities over the years, but perhaps

none during a climate that comes close to what the coronavirus pandemic has brought to this industry. For this, and a number of other reasons, the Algeciras Port Authority (APBA) is a fascinating subject matter. Furthermore, its president, Gerardo Landaluce, was himself infected by the virus back in March of this year. Thankfully, he made a full recovery and ABPA has continued its operations largely unhindered. So, if anyone knows that the show must go on, it is the ABPA.

“Originally a Roman settlement, the port had to be rebuilt by the Moors in 733 after it was destroyed by German barbarians and vandals.”

Overview

As is befitting a port with its location, Algeciras has an extremely colourful history. Originally a Roman settlement, it had to be rebuilt by the Moors in 733 after it was destroyed by German barbarians and vandals. It is widely recognized as the first port built by the Moors in Europe and provided a springboard into Iberia, where they remained for several hundred years. The name given to the port 'Green Island' is still used by its Spanish owners today.

Thankfully, Algeciras is now a centre of



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▶ Peninsula was established in Gibraltar in 1996 and is a leading global marine service, storage and supply business. Due to its origins and continued presence in the Strait, Peninsula has built a strong relationship with Algeciras Port which has helped position the Bay as a stalwart for vessels entering or leaving the Mediterranean. Peninsula currently holds the largest storage position in Algeciras Port making it a fully integrated part of its operation.

Algeciras is Spain's busiest port and a key transshipment hub for the Iberian hinterland. Its strategic position encouraged Peninsula to expand into the Algeciras market in 2013 where it quickly grew into a leading physical supplier. Paired with its global network, Algeciras has enabled Peninsula to offer the best loading options and barge fleet in the area as well as quality supply flexibility.

Active cooperation between different players in the Bay has led to the development of an ecosystem of operators and supply options. Together they have created a world class hub which collectively benefits from developments made by all the individual parties. Recently, Peninsula has introduced a series of upgrades to its fleet including a new build 8,000 dwt supply vessel, and the largest dedicated marine fuel shuttle tanker in the market. These constant upgrades support Peninsula's Algeciras operation as an integral marine fuel blending, storage and distribution hub servicing key locations such as Barcelona, Malta and Las Palmas. It also helps develop and evolve the Bay area making it a very attractive hub in the Mediterranean.

As Peninsula looks beyond bunkering to further develop its services, it has bolstered its physical storage, shipping capabilities and quality control. The company has been implementing a long-term business strategy to develop its offering to meet ever changing client and industry demands. All of this has been done in line with the company's conservative risk management strategy which has put Peninsula in a very strong position to continue

to integrate and offer smart solutions.

Peninsula saw the IMO 2020 low sulphur marine fuel cap as an opportunity, rather than a hurdle, to highlight its exceptional supply chain platform and offer customers comprehensive solutions across multiple locations. For the last year, Peninsula has been successfully supplying VLSFO in Europe, the Americas and Asia to its customer base. Peninsula's focus on the importance of supply chain control and logistics has seen the group increase its strategic storage positions globally, which today includes almost one million cubic meters of terminal capacity worldwide.

Owner and CEO John A. Bassadone said, "The Bay will always take pride of place in Peninsula's history. Not only is it Peninsula's original home, it is also mine. Having a strong relationship with the Port of Algeciras has allowed us to create one of the most engaging marine fuel hubs in the world. It is testament to the ports and the operators in the area that Algeciras is best in class when it comes to marine fuel supply and services."

Peninsula's vision is to lead the marine energy's transition to a sustainable future. It has already navigated many industry milestones and tailored its strategic direction accordingly to continue its journey of growth to become the leading marine service, storage and supply business globally. Peninsula is in a unique position to proactively identify the signs of change in the industry and the economy and quickly implement pioneering solutions.

Bassadone concludes: "We are incredibly fortunate to have the facilities and structure of Algeciras Port on our doorstep and we look forward to continuing our relationship with the Port Authorities to ensure the continued success and development of the Bay." ■

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trade and prosperity for the Iberian peninsula. In 2019, it handled a total of 5.1 million TEUs, a new record for the port. Of these figures, Mr. Landaluce says: "Our total throughput was 109.4 million tonnes. In 2019, our imports and exports of containers grew by 14% and 8% respectively." The annual total also includes the milestone of 10 million tonnes of throughput in May, the highest figure any Spanish port has ever achieved.

It's not just cargo, either. Algeciras has also become a primary European cruise ship port. Regular routes now traverse the strait with North Africa, and combined, the Algeciras-Ceuta, Algeciras-Tangier Med and Tarifa-Tangier regular lines together resulted in a total of over 6 million passengers in 2019 - the first time that the milestone has been broken and hinting at an even more vibrant future tourism trade in Andalusia.

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Our job is to advise and execute the project. We updated their current email infrastructure to an online model, we migrated their applications and services from Microsoft SharePoint 2013 to Microsoft SharePoint Online.

This change will allow the Bahía de Algeciras Port Authority to update its systems, better adapt to the new needs for integration with external systems, to make costs more flexible and, of course, to have a more collaborative environment where it can execute its daily work.

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Bay of Algeciras Logistics Area

INCREASED CONNECTIVITY

A 300 Ha Logistics Activity Area - including a fully integrated rail terminal connected to the TEN-T Network- set to bringing companies closer to the markets they serve and reinforcing the role of the Port of Algeciras not only as a transshipment centre, but also as a strategically well-located Gateway Port for Asia, Africa and Latin America trades.



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LOGISTIC NETWORK ANDALUCIA

Increased connectivity

A resolute commitment and a well-founded business strategy from the Andalusian Government to offer logistics zones to provide added-value services that promote consolidation and integration of transport & logistics industries in order to support a better efficient movement of cargoes beyond shipping Terminals.

Split in two sectors - El Fresno and San Roque- these State of the art infrastructures perfectly line up with the latest shipping companies, terminals and logistics operators strategies to enhance supply chain efficiencies by reducing dwell time and costs, easing terminals congestion, roads risks, fewer emissions and levels of pollution, so cargo owners save on storage charges.

In addition, the recent agreement between the public entities -Logistics Network of Andalucía SA & Cadiz Free Zone Consortium- signed on 1st of April 2018 sets the basis to develop a new Free Trade & Tax Zone on sector I El Fresno where the companies willing to establish their facilities will take advantages from customs and tax benefits.

Finally, Sector II San Roque - 10km away from the port- with 125 ha of high-quality logistics land divided into three separate areas that exclusively deal with logistics, intermodal operations and other transport-related and auxiliary services, will host a Great Intercontinental logistics and distribution platform in Southern Europe.

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“We were in completely unknown territory [at the start of the pandemic], where there were no protocols in place and we just acted as events unfolded. But the port has continued operations from minute one, with no break in traffic.”

Business Continuity in The “New Normal”

The personal resilience shown by Mr. Landaluce back in March, when he continued work in quarantine, is reflected in his general attitude to how the shipping industry needs to respond to coronavirus. He says: “We were in completely unknown territory [at the start of the pandemic], where there were no protocols in place and we just acted as events unfolded. But the port has continued operations from minute one, with no break in traffic.”

That’s not to say that the port has remained completely unaffected. As Mr. Landaluce notes, the closure of Spain’s

borders has led to a 5% fall off in traffic over the course of the year, but says: “things are beginning to stabilize again and we’re ready for whatever comes our way, preparing ourselves for what we have to achieve in the coming days and months,” before noting that 140 people usually working at the port have been able to work from home during the pandemic.

Growth generating growth

The expansion of Algeciras container traffic - now being a destination of the world’s 23,000 TEU super container ships - means that it has reached a point where investment



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ports to aim for. As part of this program, Mr. Landaluce has ordered all buildings under his organization’s management to install photovoltaic solar panels to generate renewable electricity in-house.

Strategic Partnerships

Any port is only as useful as the reliability of its throughput and for that, ABPA calls on a number of partners and stakeholders, almost all of whom are local owing to the port’s extensive history. Many of these maintain close relations with the port, having



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will be required for it to continue growing. On this, Mr. Landaluce is unequivocal: “the progress of the port depends on its southern expansion,” he says, referring to the planned expansion of the anchorage to the south of the existing port.

He continues: “For this, we’ll need to raise 300 million from our own funds or from external investors. We’ve grown twice as fast as most other docks over the past few years and we’re reaching the stage where we need expansion.” For this, the port has developed a master plan with a time horizon of 2030. Among the plans outlined in the master plan in addition to those mentioned by Mr. Landaluce, is a maritime lagoon in the north of the port to continue its tourism growth in line with that of cargo.

Thankfully, the aim is for this growth to be as sustainable as possible. Under Mr. Landaluce’s management, the port has signed up to the AIVP (the world authority for port cities) 2030 agenda, among which is a range of 10 sustainability targets for

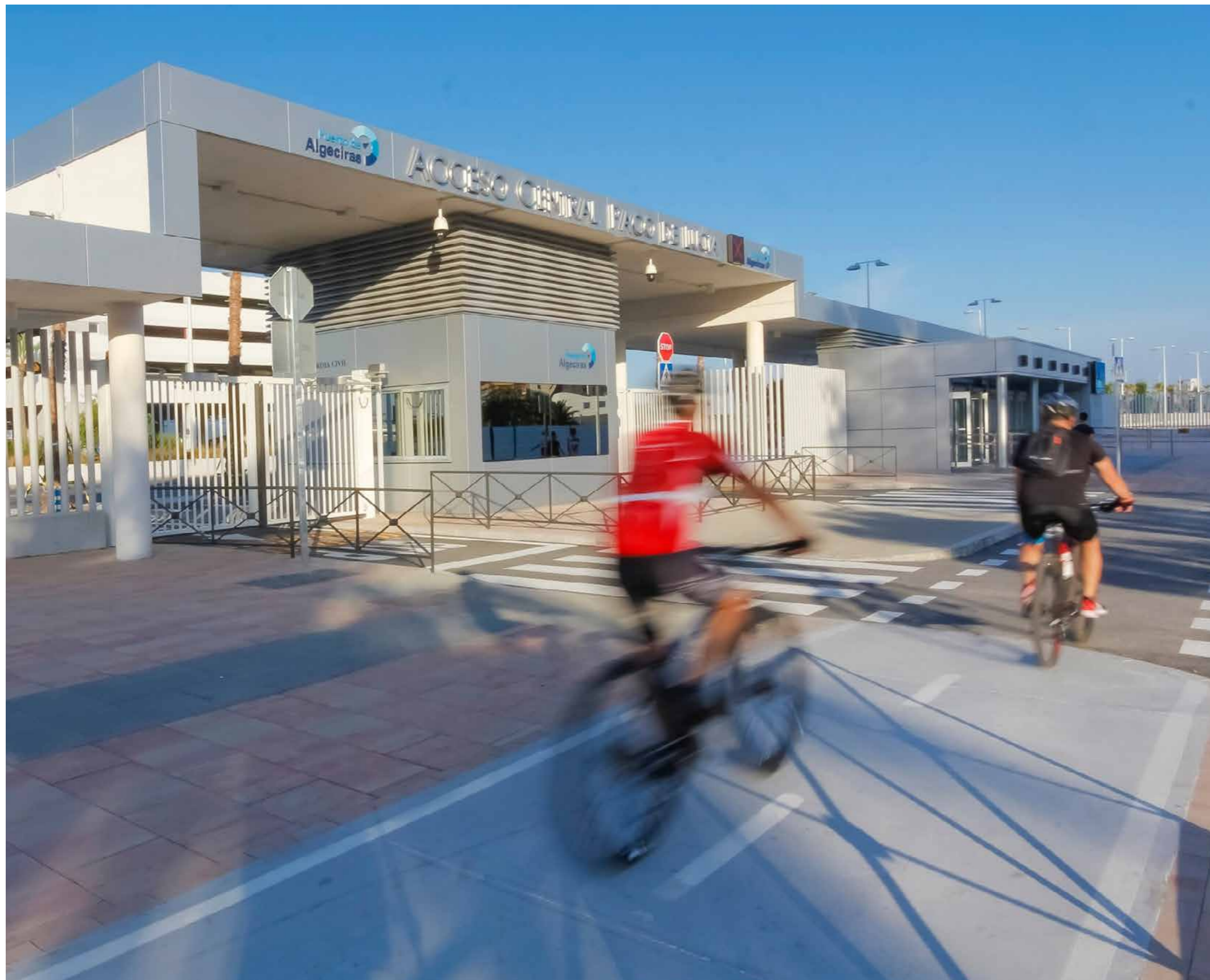
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SLOP DISPOSAL
RETIRADA DE SLOP

SERVICES IN:
 Strait of Gibraltar (Algeciras and Tanger Med) and Canary Islands



been founded by locals whose families have been employed in various parts of the organization over the decades.

Examples include Gabarras y Servicios S.A., a diversified shipping services company founded in 1981, whose founder members were former employees of the port authority. Other local firms which are offshoots of the port authority are Grupo Piedra, a logistics company founded in the port just under 25 years ago in 1996, Algeciras Mooring Services, S.L, Area Logistica Bahia de Algeciras and finally, Global Logistic Algeciras Port S.L

However, there is also a sizable international contingent of partners, as one might expect of a port of this size. These include APM Terminals Algeciras, the Dutch global container operating company, CMA CGM, the French shipping logistics company, and Peninsula Petroleum, the UK-registered firm which is the world's largest physical bunker supplier.

The winds of change

As trade logistics improves on the continent of Africa over the coming years - and all indications are that it is improving at lightning speed, we can reasonably expect to see significant growth in trade between the continent and Europe. As Europe's closest port to Africa, Algeciras is likely to be one of the big beneficiaries of this trade. Nobody knows this better than its port authority President, Mr. Gerardo Landaluce, who regularly refers to the port by its African name, Green Island. For Mr. Landaluce and the ABPA, business is very much a case of full steam ahead. **BE**

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