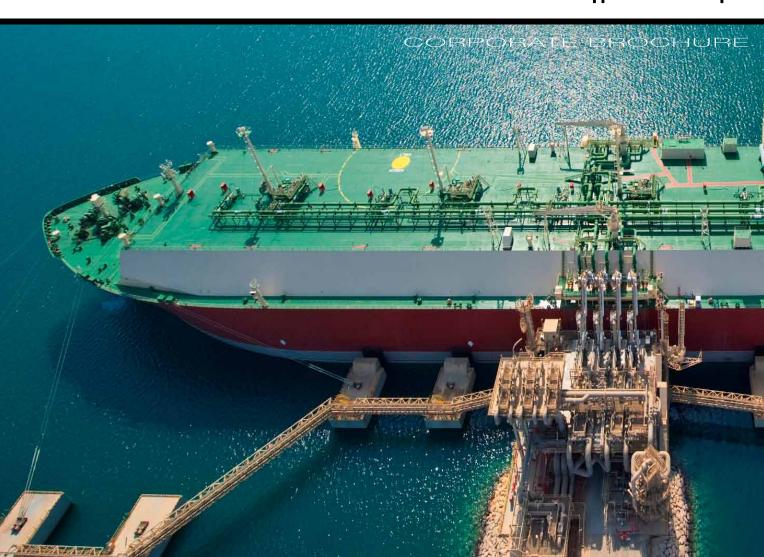


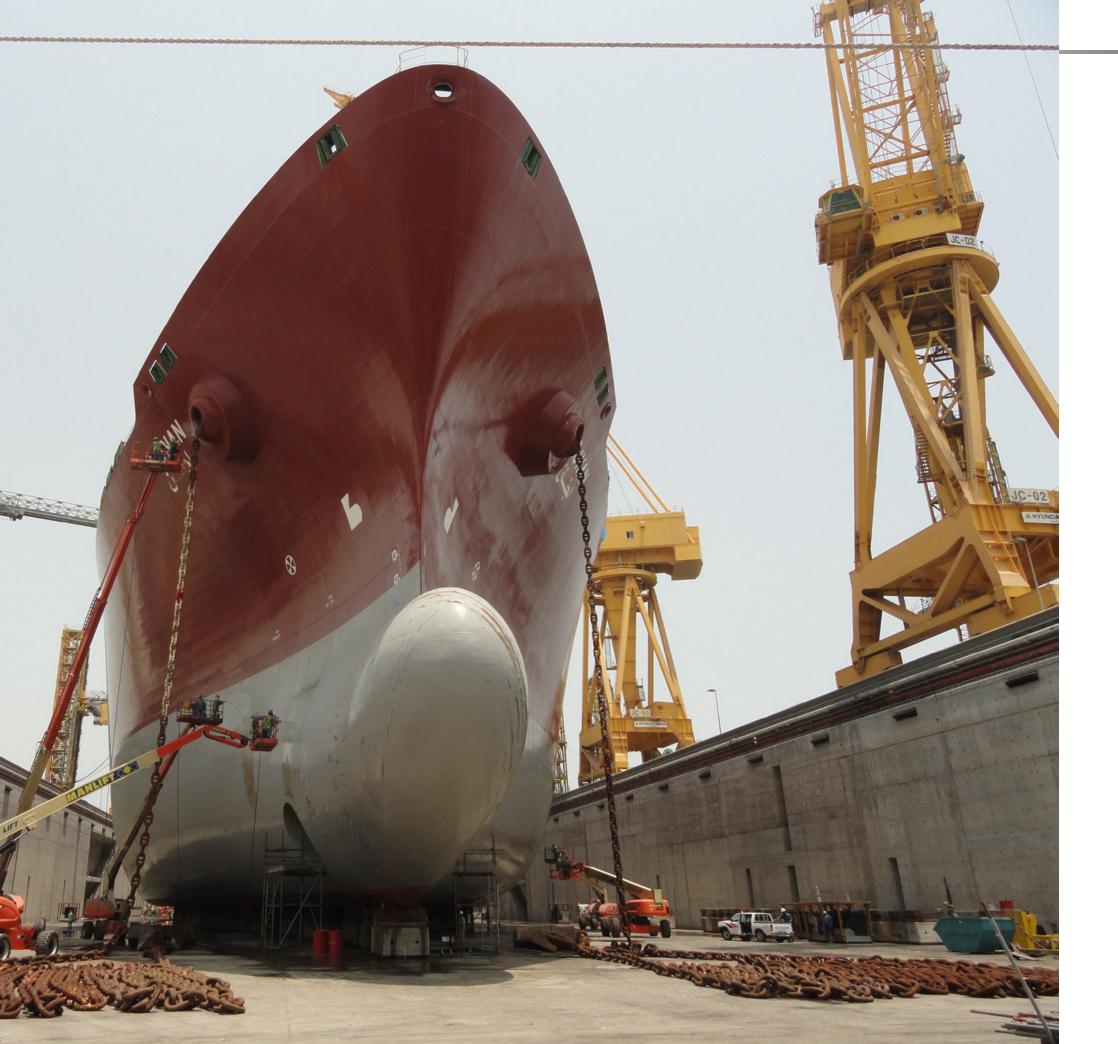
# RAS LAFFAN PORT

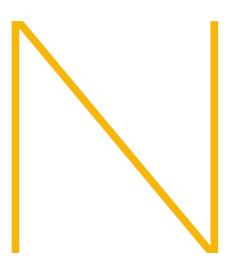
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It has already won the bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup; and when it comes to liquefied natural gas (LNG), Qatar is the undisputed world leader. Ras Laffan City has scored a hat trick over the last year by achieving 77 million tons of LNG production capacity, 5,000 LNG tanker calls, and the loading of six massive LNG tankers at the same time





ow that the dust has settled and the losers licked their wounds, there is just one emotion predominating in Qatar—euphoria. Like the rest of the Arab world, Qatar is obsessed by football and when it won the bid to host the FIFA World Cup in 2022 (the first Arab nation to do so), the country didn't sleep for days.

If any country in the world can afford to put on a great show it is Qatar, which has the highest GDP in the world, thanks to its oil and gas resources. It may have fewer than half a million citizens but that means mobilising its efforts to prepare for the event (in barely a decade's time) will be easier than in a larger economy. As a young state that gained independence as recently as 1971, it is still building its infrastructure and will simply have to compress its existing programme to be ready to welcome the world in 2022.



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## Ras Laffan Port



It's a tall order nevertheless, says the manager of Ras Laffan Port, Capt. Feisal Saad. As every scrap of raw material has to be imported, Qatar will rely heavily on the ports of Mesaieed and Doha in the south (the latter of which is being shifted to a new site to give it room for expansion), and Ras Laffan in the north. "Qatar already had a 20-year plan for its infrastructure, and that has now become a 10-year plan! A huge number of people will be coming in so we are going to have to have not only the buildings to accommodate them but water from desalination plants, energy from additional power stations and more roads. Every single person in the country is being asked to get involved in making the World Cup a success."

While the new \$7 billion Doha commercial port will not be ready until 2015, most of the work on Ras Laffan is now complete. Established in 1996 under the national petroleum company Qatar Petroleum to handle the LNG from Qatar's North Field, the port grew incredibly quickly once the Ras

## **SPIE OGS Qatar**

SPIE OGS Qatar has just commenced a second consecutive five-year contract to operate and maintain the Common Seawater Cooling Facility, serving all the industrial plants in Ras Laffan City. Designed to 99.7 per cent reliability and 100 per cent availability, and capable of delivering 1,000,000M3/ hour of treated seawater through a network of 60plus kilometres of large diameter pipe, the system has been described as "unique".

Laffan masterplan was implemented in 2006. Now within 12 kilometre-long breakwaters it has specialised berths for every type of activity, and plenty of room for expansion with space for around 25 more berths in total. It already has six LNG berths (twice as many as its nearest competitor), six liquid product berths and six dry cargo berths. Two container berths are under construction and there are a further 13 berths reserved for offshore supply vessels.

Disruption in the world energy markets









over the last year has if anything benefited Qatar. The home of Al Jazeera satellite news station, the country is certainly a nerve centre but it is ahead of its neighbours in political reform and economically,

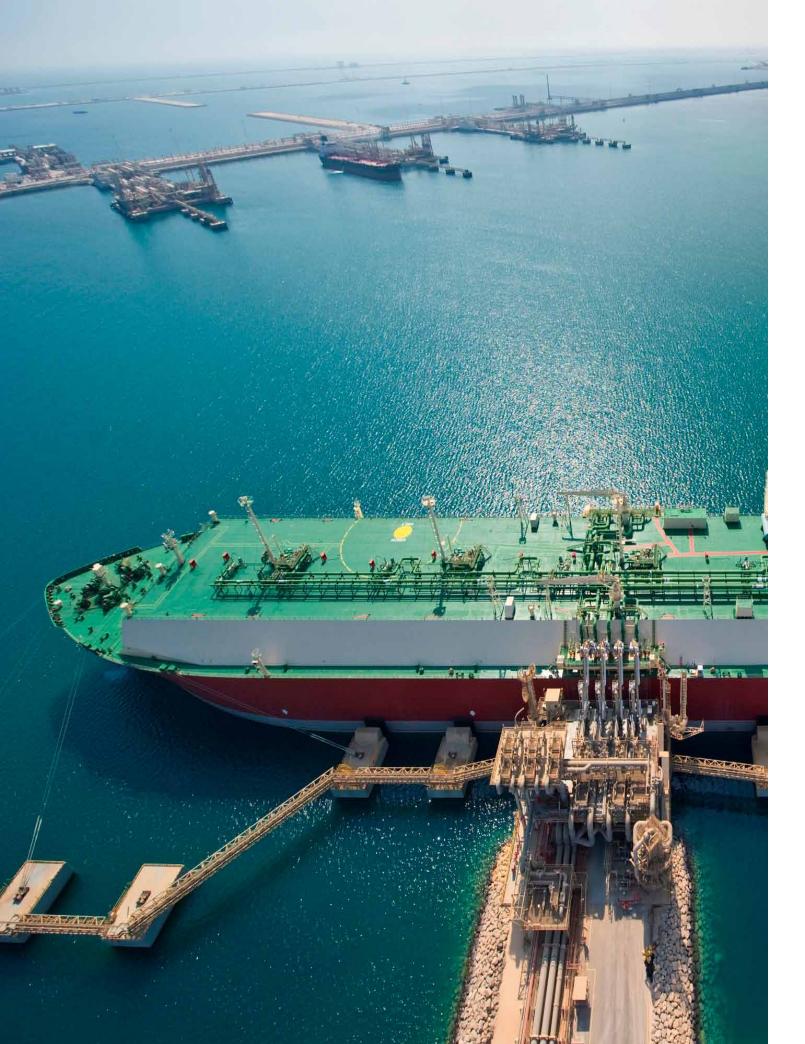




all the news is good. The LNG market has improved, Saad believes: Japan, one of the main customers for Qatari LNG, has needed more of it following the disastrous earthquake in March 2011 and consequent loss of some of its nuclear capacity. And in June the largest customer of all, the UK, received the first delivery under a new £2 billion deal with Centrica. Over three years, 7.2 million tonnes of supercooled gas will be brought by 266,000 cubic-metre Q-Max tankers into the Isle of Grain terminal in the Thames Estuary, reducing the UK's dependency on North Sea resources.

Another bonus is that prices have firmed again after dropping early in 2010 when the US moved from being a net importer of LNG. "Qatari LNG has found a lot of customers to the east," explains Saad. China, Thailand, India and Bangladesh are growing markets, and with increased demand from Japan and the knock-on effect of Germany's decision to stall its nuclear programme, the prospects for what is the world's cleanest fossil fuel are looking distinctly promising, he says.

Ras Laffan's facilities are just about complete now. The new \$2.2 billion dry dock and ship building facilities jointly being operated by Keppel Offshore & Marine Limited of Singapore and Damen Shipyard Group of the Netherlands with Qatar Gas Transport Company Ltd (Nakilat) were inaugurated in November 2010 by the Emir of Qatar HH Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. Since then it has handled more than 20 vessels including container ships, Nakilat's Q-Max LNG tankers, and drilling rigs. "We were a little nervous at first as to how quickly the dry dock would attract work but it has been busy from the start," says Saad. The yard has signed a three-year fleet servicing agreement with Shell International Trading and Shipping Company Limited for ship repair services and



has struck deals with a number of leading drilling and shipping companies to provide shipyard and dry dock services for their vessels.

Ras Laffan has been clocking up unassailable records. By the end of 2010 it had achieved its production goal of 77 million tonnes per annum of LNG. In February 2011 it witnessed a scene that Saad expects to become commonplace, when all six LNG berths were occupied. "It's something you will never see anywhere else in the world. Only Qatar has Q-Max LNG vessels, and we have 14 of them." The 345-metre long ships operate with something like 40 per cent lower energy requirements and carbon emissions than conventional LNG carriers, he adds.

May 2011 saw another major event—the arrival of the port's 5,000th LNG vessel. "When you consider we have only been exporting for 14 or 15 years that

milestone was passed a lot quicker than we expected." The milestones are going to come up even faster now that the port has hit the 77 million target—if that is sustained the 10,000th vessel will be clocked in well before the end of 2016. "We expect to average more than 1,000 ships a year going forward, handling 30 per cent of the world's LNG traffic."

The big outstanding project now is directed at the high end of the leisure market. A new facility will be added for building, outfitting and refurbishing superyachts. The US\$60 million project details are currently being thrashed out; but the new yard will be in operation in plenty of time to use the World Cup as a marketing backdrop for luxury yachts. www.qp.com.qa



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