

Diaz Pastor flanked by MTA's Carlo Micallef (left) and Valletta Cruise Port's Stephen Xuereb



Lively panel discussion



Airam Diaz meets the first MedCruise president Joe Grioli



L-R: Craig Milan, Frederique Patry, Stephen Xuereb



Over 140 members attended the GA

In a golden age

In May, addressing the 52nd MedCruise General Assembly in Malta, his first as president of the port association, Airam Diaz Pastor remarked, 'We are living in a golden age.'

Over 140 member ports, destinations and service providers from across the Mediterranean and its adjoining seas gathered in Valletta heard Diaz Pastor list capacity growth, closer collaboration between MedCruise and the cruise lines, and with the EU, the amount of investment being spent on new port infrastructure across the Med, as positives.

'However it can only be a golden age if it is golden for everyone and currently that is not the case for the ports in the East Med, Black Sea and North Africa,' he reminded.

There are positive signs that the Eastern Med is slowly starting to return to the map, noted Diaz Pastor, with some cruise lines planning calls to Turkey for 2018/2019 and more commitments beyond.

Michel Nestour, vp global ports & destination development, Carnival Corp also reiterated the 'golden age' theme but asked ports if they are ready for the huge hike in capacity that is coming?

'If you remove all newbuilds under 600

lower berths from the equation you are left with 68 ships arriving between now and end 2027: that is one new medium to large ship every 47 days and whilst we are seeing investments in new terminals ranging from Lisbon and Barcelona, to Civitavecchia and Limassol, it takes a long time from planning a new facility to becoming operational,' Nestour reminded, citing the example of the company's recently opened Helix terminal in Barcelona which took six years from starting discussions to opening.

In a separate panel, Ana Karina Santini, director commercial development EMEA at Royal Caribbean cited the example of Civitavecchia which took only 18 months to construct but eight years from starting discussions to finishing. 'It's not the construction period - it's all the rest of the procedures that slows it all down.'

Carnival Corp has nine new ships in five years and the delivery of these large ships is out-pacing the port investment commented Karin Plettner, head of port ops & experience Carnival Maritime.

Without committing to any deployment plans for Virgin Voyages' newbuilds arriving in 2021 and 2022, Craig Milan vp itinerary planning & destination development said the Med is a viable option for the brand both for the appeal of its marquee and

secondary ports and 'it is likely we will come to the region at some point.'

A return to Black Sea cruising is only likely when Istanbul comes back on the scene, panelists agreed.

Pastena said 11 day cruises from Genoa and Venice which sailed also to the Black Sea were very popular and 'we will go back.'

Diaz Pastor praised the resilience and patience of Black Sea port members despite having limited or no calls in recent years: 'they have never stopped coming to our meetings and we have 14 Black Sea representatives at this GA in Malta promoting the region.'

He gave a nod to Istanbul, Odessa and Burgas, 'for spending money during the lean times to improve their facilities.'

2018 is a year with no ocean cruise ships sailing in the Black Sea, notes Constantza Port's Theodor Patrichi, MedCruise board director for the Black Sea

A working group of representatives from Constanta, Odessa, Burgas and Varna ports are meeting in Odessa to create an action plan. 'We are convinced that the major cruise lines are attracted to the Black Sea region, an unexplored enough region, and we expect ships to return again in 2020.'

See also next page

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Cruise Review

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TOWARD A GREENER FUTURE

Carnival's 'Mr. LNG' Tom Strang



Sibenik – accepting ships up to 210mtr in length

Multi-million Euro spend

By Mary Bond



Messina – planning a new terminal

Port infrastructure investment abounds in the Med and its adjoining seas. In addition to a handful of major cruise terminal projects that have reached fruition this year (see separate article) multiple millions of Euros are being spent on berth extensions and dredging works to cater to larger cruise ships either currently sailing or due to come on stream. Below are just some of the expansion projects that Seatrade Cruise Review is aware of.

In Italy, Port of Salerno, part of the Central Tyrrhenian Sea network, is widening the entrance of the port basin, an ambitious project which consists in raising the head of the inner breakwater (up to 100mtr length) and a 200mtr extension of the outer breakwater.

As well as improving safety conditions and usability of the whole harbour it will provide safer navigation and manoeuvring for ships arriving and departing in and out of port.

Meanwhile the restyling of Manfredi Pier, including the area in front of the passenger terminal and berth where it is located, is part of a larger modernisation plan for the Port of Salerno and waterfront to create a dedicated cruise and ferry facility.

Golfo dei Poeti – Cinque Terre Cruise Terminal Port of La Spezia is now open covering an internal surface of about

1,500sq mtr for passengers in transit and for boarding and offering wider spaces for operations and logistic services.

La Spezia Port Authority is also involved a new urban waterfront project, which will include, in the next years, a new dedicated cruise area with the construction of a new quay offering two berths of 393mtr and 339mtr, and at the same time, work is taking place on designs for a new cruise terminal.

Messina is planning a new terminal in two years' time and straightening of its cruise berth.

The Port Network Authority of the Ionian Sea is investing in the upgrade of Taranto port and, in particular, the areas destined to handle cruise traffic. Currently construction works are undergoing on the St. Cataldo Pier – which is the oldest part of the port and, at the same time, the closest one to the old town/city centre – for the new Falanto Port Service Center. It will be the first step in the process of port waterfront requalification and of city-port integration, creating a continuity between public spaces and pedestrians interconnections from the old town to the port.

Comprising two buildings with three floors each, the Falanto Center will



Burgas Congress Center

feature a passenger terminal and all related activities, offices for the port authority, maritime promotional activities: multipurpose auditorium, conference room, and information point, lounge area, bar, restaurants and restrooms for completion this year.

In the meantime, the port has a tensile structure to provide cover for cruise passengers.

In Catania, the old terminal is undergoing an important restoration, with the aim of starting, as soon as possible, the construction of a new building plus new paving on the quays and conversion of quays 13-14.

In Sardinia, a contract for improvement work on the access channel to the port of Olbia was recently signed and in Porto Torres, the High Fund Wharf was re-opened to ferry traffic in July and once excavation works have been carried out to large cruise ships.



LNG truck bunkering at Hamburg's Steinwerder terminal

has ordered nine 22,000teu box ships using LNG.

Strang says no bunker barges with enough capacity for cruise ship needs are currently operating in the US. However, Shell has finalised a long-term charter with Q-LNG Transport for a 4,000cu mtr LNG bunker barge to supply marine customers along the southern East Coast.

A supply chain is in place in South Florida, where the candidate ports are Miami, Port Everglades and Port Canaveral. And, potentially, LNG bunkering could be done in the Bahamas, as well. There also may be possibilities in the Caribbean, like Jamaica and Trinidad.

Some day LNG cruise ships might also sail from Gulf of Mexico and West Coast homeports, though it's difficult to say when. Galveston, for one, has many supply vessels but their capacity is too small.

'We'll continue to talk to all ports to persuade them to become bunker-ready,' Strang says.

'Hamburg is LNG-ready,' states Sacha Rougier, managing director, Cruise Gate Hamburg. The Hamburg Port Authority worked in close cooperation with relevant authorities like the river police and environmental and energy officials, creating a basis to enable the first bunkering process in the port.

'We appreciate the incentives taken and the efforts invested in Brunsbüttel to promote an LNG import terminal which would provide Hamburg with the opportunity to

significantly shorten the supply chain for LNG,' Rougier says.

Since 2017, beginning with AIDAprima, LNG truck bunkering has been a reality, allowing for the almost complete reduction of particulate matter and sulphur oxide and a sustained reduced level of nitrogen oxide and carbon dioxide when alongside.

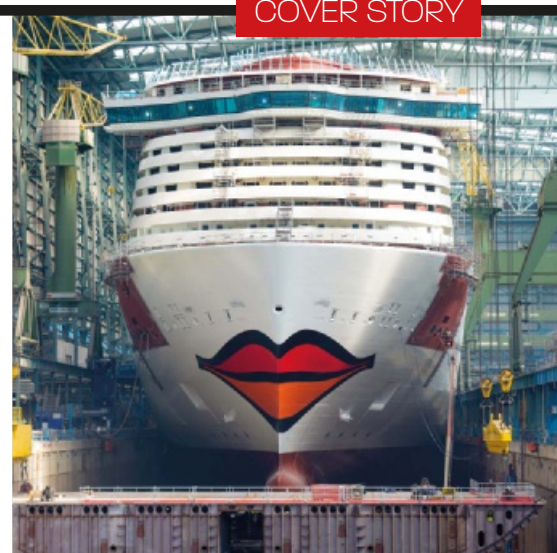
Hamburg is excited about AIDAnova as the first cruise ship with LNG propulsion. It arrives November 19, and on December 2 will sail its maiden voyage to the Canary Islands, where it will remain based.

Hamburg looks forward to receiving further LNG-driven vessels, and talks are under way with MSC Cruises and other lines about shore power or LNG bunkering.

Initiating the shore gas supply system took vast preparation. Since no storage vessel is installed on the ship, the gas is transferred continuously from an LNG truck at the berth. AIDA requested a risk analysis to identify potential threats and hazards related to the system in each of the five considered ports (others were Southampton, Zeebrugge, Le Havre and Rotterdam).

For LNG truck fuelling the berthing configuration was discussed with the relative locations of the gangway since a fenced safety and security zone had to be established around the truck. Operation boundaries were defined during the fuelling process, and firefighting equipment was arranged. The port's emergency procedure was updated to include scenarios related to the LNG supply station.

'Over the past years, we have put a lot of effort into making Hamburg attractive to



AIDAnova - first LNG-propelled cruise ship

cruise lines and passengers,' Rougier says, pointing to investments in modern infrastructure and supplying alternative energy. The shore power facility at the Altona terminal



Sacha Rougier, md
Cruise Gate Hamburg

contributes significantly to improve air quality, and the LNG fuelling via truck at the Steinwerder terminal is also a big success.

'One of Hamburg's trump cards is the population's enthusiasm for cruise ships. In order to maintain this enthusiasm, we care about environmental issues like air and noise pollution, black carbon, etc.,' Rougier says. If this attracts more ships, it's a win for everybody.

In Southern Europe, MedCruise has an LNG working group. The association has been surveying its members about availability, volume, mode of delivery and their interest in supplying cruise ships, secretary general Jordi Caballé Valls says. The results were planned to be presented at Seatrade Cruise Med in Lisbon, and will be added to the association's website in an easy-click format by port on the MedCruise map.

'In the Mediterranean, I assume there will be LNG in enough ports' to supply cruise ships, Caballé says. Besides major ports like Barcelona and Marseille, places like Madeira, Cartagena and Huelva have LNG, as a few examples.

Caballé surmises only the bigger ports can afford the effort and have the space. Yet in the future it's not just big cruise ships that