**Development and Expansion of PSA’s Panama hub port at the Former Rodman Naval Base**

**By**

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# Abstract

The opening of the new, third lane of the Panama Canal, and the projected increase in shipping traffic in the region, presented PSA with the opportunity to expand their single berth facility at the former Rodman Naval Base. Two new, deep-draft berths (-18.5 meters mean low water spring [MLWS]) were built to accommodate the largest future container vessels. However, the planning did not stop there. A new high-capacity/high-volume container yard for transshipment was developed using rail-mounted gantry (RMG) cranes. There are 12 container blocks (4,200-TEU [twenty-foot unit] ground slots) fitted with 20 semi-automatic RMG cranes. The RMG cranes can later be converted to fully automatic, self-stacking cranes (ASCs), as cargo throughput increases. There are also six container blocks (990-TEU ground slots) fitted with rubber-tyred gantry (RTG) cranes to service refrigerated containers (reefer) and import/export container cargo. Other improvements included advanced information technology (IT) services and multiple redundancies to allow the facility to operate seamlessly and continuously.

The benefits of the former Rodman Naval Base are that it is ‘across the bridge’ from Panama City and hence does not present the same restrictions and traffic conflicts experienced at the other port facilities and also provides easy access to the hinterlands in the rapidly growing western provinces of Panama.

The terminal was developed rapidly on a site with difficult and diverse geology. This terminal sets new standards for modern container terminals in Panama and the region.

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