

# Johor Port marine services pushing the barrier

*Its services include pilotage, tugboat, lay-ups, marine services for ship-to-ship, special marine jobs and hydrographic survey*

JOHOR Port Bhd (Johor Port) began its operations as a modest two-berth port with a handful of ex-ships master licensed pilots. Today, it has grown into a team of 44 professional and competent marine pilots.

Johor Port marine services is deemed as an important support business unit for Johor Port, a subsidiary of Malaysia's largest port operator MMC Port Holdings Sdn Bhd.

The team under Johor Port provides a full range of marine services to all vessels within the Pasir Gudang Port Limits. They include pilotage, tugboat, lay-up services, marine services for ship-to-ship operation, transshipment operation at anchorage for all vessels and hydrographic survey. This is no mean feat for a busy port that Johor Port is now the largest palm oil terminal in the world, as well as being the southern gateway multi-purpose port in Malaysia.

The role of Johor Port marine services is further heightened as its pilotage area covers two countries: Malaysia and Singapore. Piloting in International waters has its own set of demands and challenges, requiring for pilots competency level to be of the highest standard.

To enhance vessel navigational safety within the Pasir Gudang Port Limit, its water area is now monitored by the vessel traffic management system.

This system is designed to ensure that vessels navigate safely through the Pasir Gudang Port Limit. It provides complete information on vessels calling at the port; destinations and its movement, as well as effective communication system and information sharing between ground stations and vessels.

"Marine services are compulsory for all vessels to berth and unberth at the port and any vessel movement within the Pasir Gudang Port Limit.



Johor Port marine services plays a major role in the overall port operation of Johor Port

Their services allow other business units to create revenue," said Johor Port CEO Shahrull Allam Shah Abdul Halim.

In its early days, Johor Port marine services was mainly involved in providing pilotage services to support the Johor Port Bulk and Break Bulk Terminal, as well as the Johor Port Container Terminal.

Over the years, its scope of work has diversified and has started seeing more action in areas such as special operation (towing of jack-up rig, submersible rig, deadship), lay-up and marine services for ship-to-ship operations. By 2010, Johor Port marine services has generated more than RM82 million in revenue per annum.

The Johor Port marine services scope also includes a number of private facilities within the Pasir Gudang Port Limit.

These include the TLP Terminal

Sdn Bhd, Independent Deepwater Pengerang Terminal, Material Off-loading Facilities (MOLFs), Pengerang Integrated Complex's (PIC) Solid Product Jetty (SPJ), Malaysia Marine and Heavy Engineering and Idemitsu.

The marine services for MOLF job came into the picture in 2016. In September 2016, Petronas Refinery and Petrochemical Corp Sdn Bhd (PRPC), a subsidiary of national oil company Petroliaam Nasional Bhd (Petronas) and Johor Port, signed the official port operatorship agreement for MOLFs at Teluk Ramunia and Tanjung Setapa for the PIC.

In the following year, the SPJ came on board. In June 2017, Johor Port and Petronas wholly owned subsidiaries signed an agreement for operatorship of the PIC's SPJ.

The agreement — between Johor Port's subsidiary SPT Services Sdn Bhd and PRPC Utilities and Facilities

Sdn Bhd — was for SPT Services to provide the operating equipment and system for SPJ, as well as to manage the operations and maintenance of the terminal.

Johor Port had also signed a marine services agreement with Petronas LNG Ltd (PLL), a subsidiary of Petronas, in conjunction with the gassing up and cooling down (GUCD) services at the Regasification Terminal Pengerang (RGTP).

GUCD, a specialised service to bring the storage tanks on LNG vessels to a natural environment and cool it down to cryogenic temperature (minus 160°C), is required for LNG vessels, typically post vessels' dry dock, before the vessels can load their next LNG cargo.

The marine services agreement between Johor Port and PLL is for the provision of specialised marine services to vessels subscribing the GUCD services from PLL at RGTP.

## Regional Player

Over the years, Johor Port marine services has certainly raised the bar when it comes to their services.

Being an integrated multi-purpose port facility, Johor Port marine services plays a crucial role in the overall port operation of the Johor Port.

"We have well-trained and experienced pilots to handle all types of vessels. We also have the supporting resources like tug boats, mooring boats and mooring gang which are at par with other developed ports in the region," said Shahrull Allam Shah.

On the Port Pilots, he said their professional competency levels are maintained through internal on-the-job and classroom training, as well as simulation exercises at approved simulation centres.

On top of that, the Johor Port Authority (JPA), which licenses the pilots, is also at work. The JPA's Pilotage Committee has set up a Pilotage Training Matrix which requires all pilots to complete related training programmes.

With all these, Johor Port Pilots now have first-hand experience when it comes to towing and positioning of off-shore vessels such as jack-up and submersible rigs, as well as shifting and towing of large deadship such as very large cruise carriers (VLCC) in confined spaces.

The scope of services starts from the planning stage right up to the deployment of the resources, taking into consideration all the necessary precautions including the contingency plans.

Keeping abreast with the latest state-of-the-art technology, Johor Port marine services is in the middle of establishing the use of pilot handheld devices for navigation and billing purposes.

Moving forward, the Johor Port is already eyeing its next leap for its marine services. In the area of piloting, it is looking at going beyond the Pasir Gudang Port Limit, accepting and providing marine services to private jetties outside of Johor.

Johor Port marine services is also planning to move towards providing Malacca Straits Pilotage Services as a value-added service for VLCC calling at the Pengerang Terminal to join the search effort.