

P R E S S R E L E A S E



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PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA DEDICATES ITS NEW FINGER PIER AND HOLDS GRAND OPENING OF MARITIME SECURITY OPERATIONS CENTER (MSOC) AT GLOBALPLEX INTERMODAL TERMINAL

RESERVE, LA.

Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development’s (LA DOTD) Secretary Sherri LeBas joined Port of South Louisiana (PSL) Executive Director Joel T. Chaisson and Commission President P. Joey Murray III at a dedication for the new Finger Pier at Globalplex Intermodal Terminal during a ceremony held on April 9, 2013. The \$19.5 million project, an extension of the general cargo dock, was funded in part through the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development’s Port Construction and Development Priority Program in the amount of \$15 million.

Built by Continental Construction Company, the Finger Pier adjacent to and downstream from the general cargo dock, is 700-foot long and 65-foot wide extension that can facilitate berths of additional vessels at Globalplex. It enables barges to moor on the inboard side as well as both vessels and barges on the outboard side, improving efficiency of ship-to-barge and truck-to-barge operations by allowing simultaneous operations on both sides of the Finger Pier. Estimates of approximately 47 new vessel calls per year are expected and increasing by 70 vessels by the second year of operation. The project also included the demolition and reconstruction of the downriver mooring dolphin.

“We knew if we built it that they would come,” said Joel T. Chaisson, Port of South Louisiana’s Executive Director, while pointing at the berthed vessel, the *Pine 2*. “[But] without our partners -the Governor and his administration, the State Department of Transportation and its Port Priority personnel who worked so hard on this project- we would not have this great addition to the Port of South Louisiana.” Commission President P. Joey Murray acknowledged the current commission board members (Raymond Fryoux, Louis A. Joseph, Joseph Scontrino, Robert “Poncho” Roussel, Paul Robichaux, and Stanley Bazile) and former port commissioners (Sheila Bonnette, Russell Gaudet, Blaise Gravois, the late Gregory Gravois, and the late Lawrence Jackson) who were involved in the planning stages of this project.

The keynote speaker, Secretary LeBas reiterated the importance of our nation’s ports. “Ports serve a vital role in our state, as you all know, and they create and support 73,000 jobs, contribute approximately \$4 billion into the state’s economy and this project is going to help move that forward with an estimated 36 new jobs. So I just want to congratulate all of you for the vision, for the work that you do because [with] projects like this...you’re making this port facility the best that it can be.”

Following the Finger Pier dedication, the Port of South Louisiana held a ribbon cutting for the new Maritime Security Operations Center (MSOC), also located within Globalplex Intermodal Terminal. Established as a command and control center to manage emergencies within the Port of South Louisiana's jurisdiction, the MSOC is a 2,000 square-foot hardened concrete and steel building with impact-resistant glass, built to withstand 150 mile-per-hour winds. Equipped with the latest in communications and surveillance equipment, it is linked to MSOCs at four other deep-water ports on the lower Mississippi River, as well as federal, state, and local emergency response agencies. The \$1.2 million project was funded in part by \$965,000 in grants from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Louisiana's Department of Transportation and Development provided funding for the remainder.

The establishment of MSOCs at the five lower Mississippi River deep-water ports is a network system that gives full maritime domain awareness over the Mississippi River, something Captain Peter Gautier of the U.S. Coast Guard New Orleans Sector lauded during a speech at the event. "We have a linked system of communications for the first time, together with sensors that can tell us very early on if we are having an incident on the river," said Captain Gautier. "Really what it does is it ups our game in terms of responding faster and better to maritime incidents and to protect the people and the property and the environment of this most important river and in this economically-vibrant region." He went on to say that "...when you think in terms of maritime security in the modern sense, it's hard not to think of September 11, 2001. And, in that sense, it's designed to confront new threats presented by a new adversary and one that seeks to exploit our weaknesses and the gaps and seams. And the main gap and seam we have is the maritime environment. This seeks to close that gap and seam."



Finger Pier Dedication

Pictured L-R: PSL's Deputy Director Henry Sullivan, Jr., Associated Terminal's David Fennelly, Continental Construction's Charles Jones, PSL's Commissioner Raymond Fryoux, URS' Michael Patorno, PSL's Commissioner Joseph Scontrino, PSL's Commission President P. Joey Murray III, LA DOTD's Secretary Sherri LeBas, PSL's Executive Director Joel T. Chaisson, PSL's Commissioner Paul Robichaux, PSL's Commissioner Louis A. Joseph, and PSL's Commissioner Stanley Bazile



LA DOTD Secretary Sherri LeBas addressing attendants at the Finger Pier dedication



Globalplex Intermodal Terminal's Finger Pier (photo courtesy of Continental Construction)



MSOC Ribbon Cutting

Pictured L-R: PSL's Commissioner Louis A. Joseph, PSL's Commissioner Joseph Scontrino, PSL's Commissioner Paul Robichaux, PSL's Deputy Director Henry Sullivan, Jr., LA DOTD's Secretary Sherri LeBas, Vanguard's Mike Gullo, U.S. Coast Guard's Captain Peter Gautier, PSL's Commissioner Stanley Bazile, PSL's Executive Director Joel T. Chaisson, Lamar Contractors' Steve Louque, PSL's Director of Operations Mitch Smith, and PSL's Commission President P. Joey Murray III



U.S. Coast Guard New Orleans Sector Captain Peter Gautier speaks at the MSOC ribbon cutting ceremony as PSL Commission President P. Joey Murray III (left) and PSL Executive Director Joel T. Chaisson (center) look on



Port of South Louisiana's Maritime Security Operations Center (MSOC)

The Port of South Louisiana, a 54-mile port district on the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, is the largest tonnage port in the Western Hemisphere. The cargo it handles accounts for over 50 percent of all Louisiana imports/exports.

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For more information about the Port of South Louisiana or this particular topic, please contact Alexandra "Alex" Hernández, Public Information Director, at (985) 652-9278 or ahernandez@portsl.com, www.portsl.com.