



Evolving France's petroleum product supply chain

➤ Created to satisfy France's strategic oil reserves obligation, Géosel offers storage solutions for a diverse range of customers and is now looking to enhance its range of services, pipeline connections and increase the products it stores

With more than nine million m³ of storage capacity for petroleum products, Géosel is one of the largest operational and strategic petroleum product storage sites in Europe.

Located in the heart of the regional park of Lubéron in the south of France, Géosel owns 30 salt caverns spread over eight hectares of land and each cavern is dedicated to storing specific quality grades including naphtha, gasoline, ultra-low sulphur diesel, gasoil 0.1% and crude.

In addition, it also owns three pipelines from Manosque to Fos/Lavera area, which transport and supply hydrocarbons to its various customers.

The company, originally a joint venture between oil refiners, was established in 1967 to satisfy France's strategic oil reserve obligations.

Since then it has evolved to become a leading independent storage operator for petroleum products, serving both French and wider European markets. Transport Stockage Hydrocarbures – a consortium between EDF and Ardian – became the majority shareholder of the company in 2015 alongside Petroineos and Total.

Its pipelines network is well linked and this allows the stored product to be widely supplied. Products can be sent to SPSE and SPMR pipeline, DPFos Fos/Lavera harbour as well as petrochemical facilities located in the same area.

In an interview with *Tank Storage Magazine* Elodie Zausa, business development manager at Géosel, says that the company has broadened its business strategy in recent years.

'In addition to its business with strategic oil reserves agencies, Géosel's business has broadened over the last five years.

'While demand for storage capacity used to mainly come from refineries and strategic agency, demand now comes from all kinds of oil operators for both medium to long-term storage.

'Géosel is perfectly integrated into the European logistics network and as an independent storage operator Géosel aims to be a key player in the evolution of the refined product supply chain in France.'

The last of its current storage caverns were released in 2013 and the company acquired its third pipeline between Manosque and the Fos/Lavera oil port in 2018



01 Géosel's facility is one of the biggest operational and strategic petroleum storage unit's in Europe

02 It owns three pipelines from Manosque to Fos/Lavera area, which transport hydrocarbons

03 Demand for storage comes from a variety of different oil operators for both medium & long-term storage

04 Elodie Zausa, business development manager

05 François Billard, general manager

GÉOSEL AT A GLANCE:

The company operates 30 caverns spread over eight hectares

The caverns store crude oil, ultra-low sulphur diesel, gasoline, gasoil 0.1% and naphtha with 40% of the caverns dedicated to crude oil and 60% dedicated to refined products

Almost 3.5 million m³ of refined products are transferred per year

The caverns are directly connected to Géosel's three pipelines, allowing for the transport of product to other connected pipelines, petrochemical facilities or Fos/Lavera oil ports at a rate of up to 2,000 m³ per hour



“As an independent storage operator, Géosel aims to be a key player in the evolution of the refined product supply chain in France”

GROWING TO MEET DEMAND

Given the easy access to the sea as well as to nearby refined product pipelines, such as SPMR and NATO, and crude oil pipelines, such as SPSE, Géosel's client base is varied, with demand for storage coming from refineries, petrochemical industries, stockpiling agencies, operators and traders.

As its customer base continues to grow to meet the evolving supply and demand, Géosel's has several projects planned to further enhance its attractiveness in the market, increase its storage capacity and improve its network.

Land is still available for the company to increase its storage capacity through the leaching of new caverns, which can take between two to

four years to complete depending on the size and whether by creating new caverns or by expanding existing ones.

'Géosel's assets are well integrated into the French and European networks and we have a wide experience in managing operational and strategic stocks,' says general manager François Billard.

'Our ambition is to continually improve our customer satisfaction by offering our value proposition to a wider panel of customers and providing first class services related to our core business activity.

'Our target is to continue to develop connections with other third parties, increase the range of products stored, offer various product services such as additives and blending as well as developing other services.