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Harbormaster Tórbjørn Jacobsen; offshore supply base activities (right); discharging fishing vessels (bottom left); view of the shipyard (bottom centered); cruise ship Deutschland (bottom right).



Port of Runavík

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Situated on Skálafjørður, the longest fjord in the Faroe Islands. Biggest and most developed harbor on the fjord, one of the country's leading fishing ports. Faroe Islands' only offshore supply base. All types of vessels served.

Total length of quays approx. 1,700 m, maximum depth 12 m.

Services, industry include: Fish handling, processing and related business; shipyard with 116m long dry dock and 1200-mt capacity slipway; mechanical workshops, electrical engineering, marine electronics; warehousing, cold storage, stevedoring, transport; provisions.

MAPPING OUT MASSIVE PLANS FOR PORT OF RUNAVÍK

Runavík has asked an engineering firm to turn its blueprint for future harbor development in the Skálafjord into a detailed masterplan, allocating areas for seafood industry, container shipping, offshore oil and gas, and cruise tourism.

THE MUNICIPAL Council of Runavík, the port authority for the Port of Runavík, is for the first time working out a detailed masterplan to guide future harbor development in the Faroe Islands' longest fjord.



According to harbormaster Tórbjørn Jacobsen, the Council's draft development plan has been taken to an overseas engineering consultancy which has been commissioned, with a 2012 deadline, to produce detailed documentation of how the Port of Runavík best can accommodate the seafood industry, cargo shipping, offshore oil and gas, and cruise tourism.

One of the main elements of the plan is the allocation of an area for a new offshore supply base close to the shipyard at Skála. This will require land reclama-

tion that is likely to be linked with the construction of the Skálafjord Tunnel, a giant submarine tunnel that will connect both arms of the fjord with Tórshavn, with landfill material consisting of excavated rock from the tunnel works.

Meanwhile, fishing and aquaculture represent by far the largest source of business for the Port of Runavík, making it the leading Faroese port in terms of both wild-caught whitefish and farmed salmon. More than 40,000 tonnes of saithe and mixed groundfish are landed on an annual basis at Runavík-Saltan-

gará while the volume of farmed salmon exported from Glyvrar a few hundred meters up the fjord from exceeds 30,000 tonnes.

"A very considerable proportion of all saithe, cod, and similar species caught in Faroese waters is landed fresh at Runavík and much of it is processed here as well," Mr. Jacobsen said. "Also, the aquaculture business in the area has been very successful and their export volumes have been rising steadily."

In spite of the fact that, following Faroe Ship's closure of its local base at Runavík, freight carriers currently don't call at the port on a regular basis, the port authority is confident that container traffic will pick up again in time.

"A dedicated container terminal is part of our development plan, as are a number of other items," Mr. Jacobsen said. "The good thing about the new masterplan is that it takes a bird's eye view over the entire Skálafjord, which is something that wouldn't have made sense prior to the annexation of Skála to the Municipality of Runavík. Now that these localities are under the same port



authority, development can more easily be coordinated over a much larger area with a long-term perspective."

'DRAMATICALLY UPGRADE': The Port of Runavík is home to the Atlantic Supply Base, the Faroe Islands' only offshore supply base, which became operational a decade ago when oil and gas exploration activities commenced on the Faroese Continental Shelf. A new terminal was built for the purpose in 2001 and a second added one year later, including a 4,000m² open storage area.

Some of the facilities currently used by the supply base could be reallocated to container traffic in the future if the supply base were to move across the fjord to Skála. The allocated area for a future offshore supply base is situated along the coastline to the northwest side of the village of Skála, adjacent to the Skála shipyard.

"Offshore services are already playing a growing part in the local economy," Mr. Jacobsen said. "Our plan for harbor development of course allows for a degree of flexibility and we do consider more than one possible outcome of the search for oil and gas off the Faroes. But the idea is that should this industry take off seriously in the future, which some of us find plausible, we should be well positioned to dramatically upgrade our offshore services. For that purpose we need a large area which we will try to prepare as much as possible beforehand

without busting the budget. The strip of non-residential land along the shoreline at Skála that we have in mind looks like a perfect match, the water depth alongside is excellent, and there is already a well equipped shipyard."

Another facility, the Kongshavn quay, has been used to accommodate cruise ships calling at the Port of Runavík.

"Cruise tourism is still marginal with only a few calls per year," Mr. Jacobsen said. "But we're seeing some progress and depending on the level of this progress, investments can be made to extend the Kongshavn terminal."

