

Italian FLNG import terminal spends second year as emergency peak-shaving facility

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OLT Offshore LNG Toscana, Italy's third import facility located offshore Livorno, is on standby for a second year to provide regasified LNG during peak winter demand in the absence of cargo needs in Italy.

The OLT Offshore LNG Toscana said it had 100,000 cubic metres of LNG in storage, which was purchased in a tender won by commodities company Gunvor International BV of Amsterdam.

The Italian FLNG facility is jointly owned by Germany's E.ON Group, Italy's Iren and with a small stake held by Golar LNG of Norway.

It is positioned 22 kilometres offshore Tuscany between the cities of Livorno and Pisa and is able to transfer regasified LNG through a pipeline managed by the Italian network operator Snam Rete Gas.

"The LNG, stored into the terminal tanks, will be available until March 31, 2015. The offer for the regasification capacity is, however, guaranteed in conjunction with the peak-shaving service," OLT said.

The Floating Storage and Regasification vessel, the "FSRU Toscana", was formerly the "Golar Frost" LNG carrier.

"For the second consecutive year the Terminal 'FSRU Toscana' offered the peak-shaving service. The service is one of the emergency measures established by the Decree of the Ministry of the Economic Development within the 'Emergency Plan' in order to face unfavorable events for the national gas system in winter," OLT explained.

"In case of emergency, this service would allow the delivery of natural gas into the national grid - previously unloaded and stored into the tanks of the terminal - at short notice with the aim to face peak requests of the gas system for a limited period of time," the company added.

The Toscana facility was Italy's third LNG import terminal. The onshore and long-established Panigaglia terminal near Genoa has been in operation since 1969. It is owned by Snam Rete Gas.

Italy's other import facility is the Porto Levante offshore gravity based structure, known as Adriatic LNG. It has been in operation since 2009 and its shareholders are Qatar Petroleum, ExxonMobil and Edison Gas.