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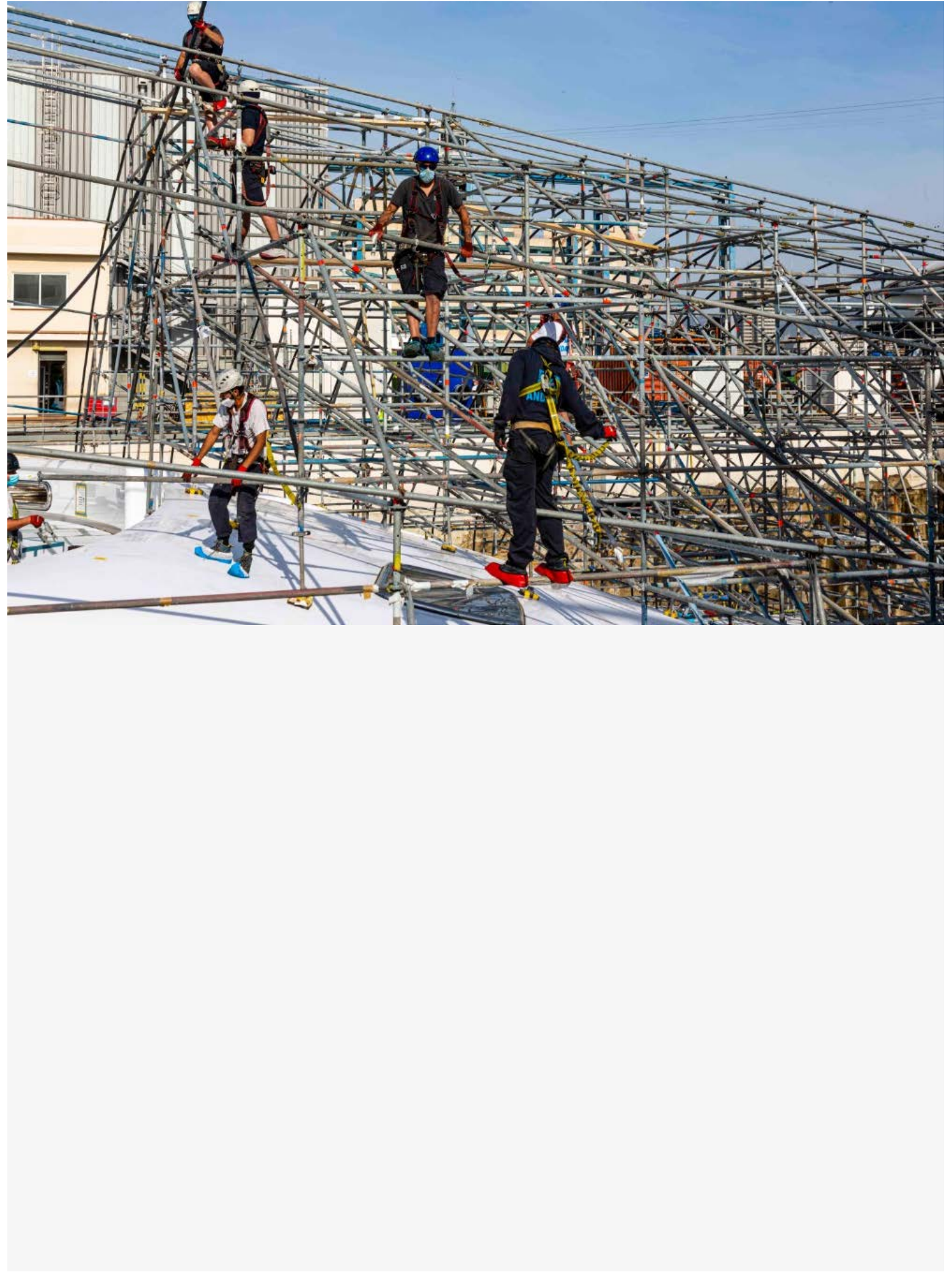


BY WILLIAM MATHIESON

17 APR 2020

MB92 Barcelona and La Ciotat sites reopen

An exclusive interview with Group President and CEO Pepe García-Aubert...







The MB92 Group has reopened its Barcelona and La Ciotat sites. Works recommenced on 14th April, under strict protective parameters, and in line with both Spanish and French government regulations. The group's management team are working on a timeline that will gradually increase activity, while respecting the safety measures outlined by legislators and the health of all those on site.

SuperyachtNews spoke exclusively to MB92 Group President and CEO, Pepe García-Aubert about how this unprecedented period of transition was evolving in practice, just days into the recommencement of works.

WM: Please could you clarify what this announcement means for the official status of both sites.

PG: Firstly, that this is a welcome sign of progress and that the restrictions put in place are having a positive effect. During this period of confinement, we have collected as much information as possible in preparation to return to work progressively, safely and efficiently. This has been undertaken while always considering the limitations that the pandemic situation itself is creating, as well as the restrictions established by authorities nationally and internationally. The considerable work done by our teams during this confinement period, working closely with our clients and collaborators, has enabled us to minimise any disruption and facilitate a smooth transition back to operational activity.

WM: You have always placed great emphasis on workers' safety. What steps will you be taking to ensure this, now works have recommenced?

PG: Working closely alongside our clients and collaborators throughout this period, our Health, Safety and Environment Departments have assessed the most effective measures as well as sourced the

necessary protective equipment - through the correct channels. As a result of this investigatory work, our team has developed a strict set of protocols to be followed by everyone operating in the facilities. These include strict controls for personnel accessing the facilities, the mandatory use of personal protective equipment, and effective work planning so that social distancing measures are enforced while on board and around the facilities.

Therefore, staff who can work from home continue to do so and works on board are orchestrated in such a way as to reduce contact to a bare minimum. We are currently testing a new technology developed by MB92 in La Ciotat, via a project management software, that automatically tracks works in the facilities. Not only will this enable us to minimise contact between workers, but also provides real-time knowledge to MB92 and [our] clients, of who is doing what and where in real-time.

This innovative new system of live tracking of works is already proving to be extremely popular amongst clients in La Ciotat and will be rolled out across the Group for long-term use. We will continually evaluate our measures and implement the necessary action to provide everyone in our facilities with the necessary peace of mind to carry out their work effectively.

WM: Will you be allowing subcontractors to return to site? Or is the initial phase just in reference to core staff?

PG: We have been working together with our collaborators [subcontractors] and clients to establish the best strategy possible, taking into account restrictions, such as the closure of borders that affect those coming from abroad, as well as the type of work to be carried out on board. For this initial period, we will be prioritising external works and arranging shifts to adhere to the safety protocols in place, while aiming to deliver project goals. We very much appreciate the continued effort and commitment from all our working partners during this challenging time. We remain in constant communication with all our collaborators and monitor the national and international picture so that we can advance towards full working capacity.

WM: How will this phased approach to the recommencement of work impact your schedule and ongoing capacity at both sites?

PG: Schedules have inevitably been affected by the global pandemic. We have kept our clients fully informed and they have been very understanding and supportive of all our actions to date. We remain committed to recovering as quickly as possible over the coming weeks as we move towards 'business as usual.'

WM: Will you be accepting new enquiries immediately?

PG: As we steadily start to emerge from this crisis, our principle focus is on our clients currently in our facilities, those who were scheduled to arrive while we were closed down and the clients who are already booked in for the next few months. That said, we always welcome new enquiries and will continue to provide solutions for clients while we have availability.

WM: And what are your expectations of the refit market for the remainder of 2020?

PG: We still lack visibility on how this crisis is affecting our market in terms of turnover. And in the short term, the situation will depend heavily on our clients’ availability and sailing plans over the summer season. Once again, companies that are well prepared and equipped to adapt to a critical situation such as the current one, will come out of this in a healthier position.

Profile links

MB92 Barcelona

MB92 La Ciotat

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