

**CONVERSION FROM HYDROCARBONS
TO NATURAL GAS STORAGE AT MANOSQUE**

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At the beginning of the sixties, the French oil companies had to face to the 90 days reserve obligation. They therefore set up a specialist subsidiary, GEOSTOCK, 25 years ago, for the feasibility, design and construction management of underground storage facilities in all types of rock for gaseous and liquid hydrocarbons and other gaseous and solid materials. GEOSTOCK also acts as permanent consultant and manager for everyday operation of their facilities and undertakes the engineering studies necessary when existing cavities are required to store products for which they were not originally designed.

The Manosque site was selected in 1967 as the salt was at suitable depth relatively close to the refineries (Berre site near Marseilles at approx. 100 km - see Fig. A.1). The first liquid hydrocarbons were stored in 1969. Since then about 33 million m³ have been handled.

The availability of Lavera capacity caused by the drop in oil consumption in recent years and the need for natural gas storage in South-East France led GEOSTOCK and GAZ DE FRANCE to create the joint venture company GEOMETHANE.

In this project, seven cavities out of the 25 in operation at the Manosque site are to be converted to gas for a capacity of 240 millions standard m³ for commissioning in 1992.