

Transnet's Navis

system gives SA an electronic headstart

BY Gavin Barfield

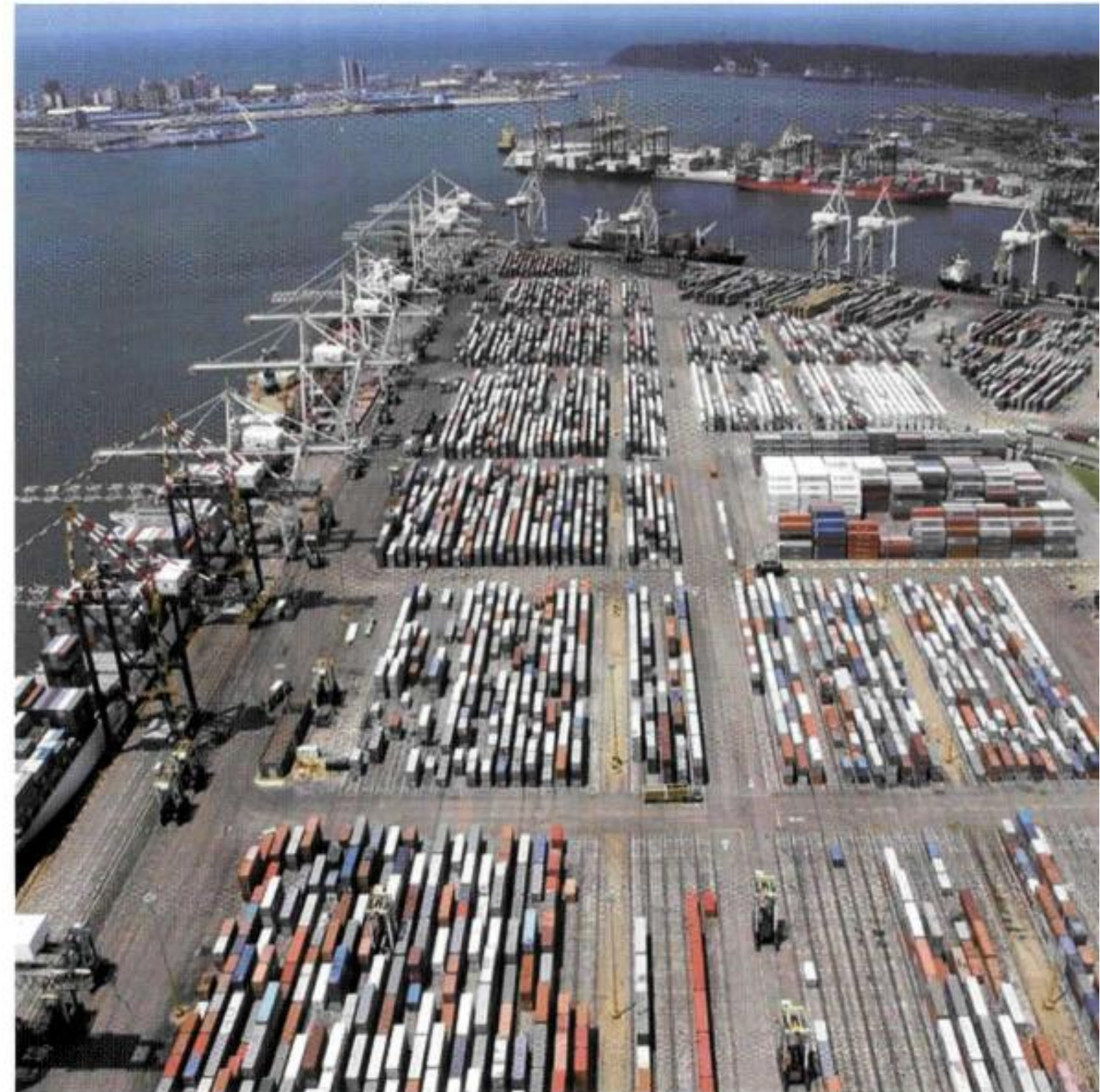
The investment by Transnet in the latest state-of-the-art IT platforms should make South Africa equal to anywhere in the world in terms of ease of handling shipments, in the view of Ocean Africa Container Line CEO Andrew Thomas.

"Transnet's NAVIS (Navy Automated Video Information System) system is a significant move from the cumbersome paper-heavy CTO (Container Terminal Order) system we've all been used to towards completely paperless processing," he told FTW.

Transnet Port Terminals will be the first organisation of its size worldwide to control the [container] system from one location, in this case from Durban. In

operation at Durban's key Pier 1 container terminal since mid-2007, the NAVIS-based SPARCS N4 system (Synchronised Planning and Real-time Control System) was extended soon afterwards to Port Elizabeth and East London.

Replacing the COSMOS container management system used until its inception three years ago, NAVIS will cover seven marine and fourteen rail terminals by the end of 2010. Container industry sources agree that the SPARCS system enables operators to manage and use their time more efficiently – drivers need no longer wait in frustrating, time-consuming queues at terminals to pick up containers, as the web-based system now permits operators to release containers from terminals on their desks.



Durban's Pier 1 terminal where Transnet's NAVIS system has been in operation for several years.