Although of a crude nature, a number of rules of thumb characterise the economics of dry docks quite reliably. These economics are dominated by the pattern of ownership of the dock. Almost inevitably, either a dry docking facility is owned by a ship repairer who will have exclusive use of the dock or it is owned by the public sector and run as a common user facility. The economics of these two systems are quite different. The failure to understand these basics can cripple a proposal for a dry docking facility.