

PRESS RELEASE

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Port St. Maarten Participates in FCCA Cruise Conference and Trade Show Safety and Security Workshop

October 02, 2016 – One of the highlights at the 23rd Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Cruise Conference and Trade Show that took place in Puerto Rico last week, was Port St. Maarten's participation in the Safety and Security Best Practices and Crisis Management Workshop that was promoted by FCCA, Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA).

Port St. Maarten's Safety & Security Manager Roberto Levenstone, was one of the panelists along with Russell Daya, Executive Director (Global Port Operations & Development, Disney Cruise Line), Stacy Pallot Shweky, Manager Care Team (Carnival Cruise Line), Rick Murrell, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) (Tropical Shipping, USA), Bud Darr, and Senior Vice President, Technical and Regulatory Affairs (CLIA).

Moderator for the workshop was Frank Comito, CEO & Director General of CHTA.

The workshop reviewed best practices for safety and security measures involving destinations and ports. The panel of experts from government officials, port agencies, law enforcement agencies, hotels and cruise lines discussed examples of successful initiatives, while exchanging ideas on how to improve and set forth protocol from the individual and agency level to an all-encompassing plan.

It also covered how to deal with crisis management, including forming a plan to provide housing and relief, evacuate, how to handle public relations, communicating with local partners, and counsel survivors and families of traumatic events.

Levenstone's presentation was from a Caribbean port's perspective with an emphasis on fundamentals of effective crisis management; lessons learned through crisis situations; and protocols for individual port actions and communications.

The three case studies used by Levenstone was the 1998 incident where a cruise ship struck a reef outside Great Bay and all 2500+ passengers had to be evacuated; the 2013 repatriation of 4300 cruise passengers after a cruise ship had developed a technical problem hindering its departure; and in 2016 the suspected acute gastroenteritis on-board a cruise vessel which was not allowed to dock at the port.

There were several law enforcement officials from Sint Maarten who were also present for the workshop: Chief Commissioner of Police Carl John, Head of the Customs Department Anthony Doran, and a representative from the country's National Security Service.

According to Levenstone, the workshop was very informative. The presentations approached safety and security

from a crisis management perspective, to world scale developments, from a cruise line angle, and lessons learned from best practices that are utilized by the various presenters.

“Port St. Maarten is in the process of strengthening its relationship with various Sint Maarten law enforcement agencies with the aim of formalizing support that would enhance each other’s abilities to respond to incidents on a consistent basis,” Port St. Maarten’s Safety & Security Manager Roberto Levenstone said on Sunday.

The 23rd annual FCCA Conference and Trade Show brought together 1,000 cruise tourism stakeholders and 100 senior cruise executives for a series of meetings, workshops and networking functions aimed at developing understanding, relationships and business. The conference and trade show took place from September 26-30.

Created in 1972, the FCCA is a not-for-profit trade organization that provides a forum for discussion on tourism development, ports, safety, security, and other cruise industry issue and builds bilateral relationships with destinations' private and public sectors. By fostering an understanding of the cruise industry and its operating practices, the FCCA works with governments, ports and private sector representatives to maximize cruise passenger, crew and cruise line spending, as well as enhance the destination experience and increase the amount of cruise passengers returning as stay-over visitors.

The Port St. Maarten delegation was headed by Mark Mingo, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and included several staff members; a representative from the Walter Plantz Square, and Port Authority National Security Team.

Other stakeholders attending were representatives from the St. Maarten Tourist Office, the Dutch Taxi Association and the Airport Taxi Association. Stakeholders within the Port St. Maarten booth include S.E.L. Maduro and Sons, Rising Sun Tours, Wind is our Friend, and Rainforest Adventures.



PHOTO OUTLINE: Port St. Maarten’s Safety and Security Manager Roberto Levenstone, addressing the audience who attended the panel discussion entitled Safety and Security Best Practices and Crisis Management Workshop.

For further questions, please contact: comments@portofstmaarten.com