



## PRESS RELEASE

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# King Ocean Officials Meet Port Management and Recommits to Using St. Maarten Hub Function for Cargo Activities

**POINT BLANCHE (February 16, 2015)** – In 2013, King Ocean Services, a family of companies that specializes in cargo transportation throughout the Western Hemisphere, officially launched their services in St. Maarten at a launch party held at Divi Little Bay Resort.

Last week King Ocean management officials Franco Da Costa Gomez and Charles Gittens, met with Port St. Maarten management to discuss future strategic developments in cargo movements and trade. At the same time, the representatives from King Ocean recommitted themselves in a firm manner to increasing business ties and partnership with the port.

Port St. Maarten has seen King Ocean local imports of goods and cargo increase by 34 per cent in 2014; and their transshipment cargo has increased by a whopping 187 per cent in 2014 over 2013.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mark Mingo said on Monday that the figures speak for themselves. “Investments in the port over the years, in cargo infrastructure and operations, have resulted in positive results. By increasing efficiency in cargo port operations, we are able to handle more vessels and keep pace with economic growth of our country and that of the surrounding islands. The figures tell of the importance of our hub function in the north eastern Caribbean.

“The strategic location of the country allows us to service the four neighboring islands of Anguilla, St. Barths, Saba and St. Eustatius. Our recent meetings with government officials in Saba and St. Eustatius demonstrate Port St. Maarten’s commitment to the islands.

“King Ocean has successfully increased their local and transshipment volume immensely since joining the cargo operations section of Port St. Maarten and becoming one of the major stakeholders in the country and the neighboring islands.

“King Ocean, just like the other cargo lines that service the country and the north eastern Caribbean, recognize the strategic proximity and connectivity that our country has to offer. King Ocean has shown true commitment in developing their market share and have successfully done so based on the investments that Port St. Maarten has made in cargo infrastructure and capabilities along with a highly trained and efficient staff,” CEO Mark Mingo pointed out on Monday.

King Ocean Services offers an array of maritime transport services between ports in Florida, U.S.A. and more than a dozen of ports throughout South, Central America and the Caribbean.

The company has more than 30-years of experience with specialty in various types of cargo containerized and general including, but not limited to raw materials, food (dry goods), refrigerated cargo, vehicles and parts, construction machinery, building materials, jewelry, and clothing accessories.

King Ocean vessels make weekly connections from the Port of Jacksonville, Miami and Port Everglades in the South of Florida, with Aruba, Curacao, and Bonaire, and with the Eastern Caribbean. Costa Rica, Panama, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador in Central America, Colombia and Venezuela, are all part of the companies weekly callings.

The company has a network of 20 offices that it has opened over the 30-year period in business and is a proud participant in the CTPAT program with the United States Customs and Border Protection.

King Ocean Services was founded in 1982 by the Da Costa Gomez family.



**PHOTO OUTLINE:** L to R, Charles Gittens (King Ocean), Franco Da Costa Gomez (King Ocean), Humphrey Mezas (Chairman of Port St. Maarten Supervisory Board), Mark Mingo (CEO), Ton van Kooten (Port St. Maarten Chief Financial Officer), Roger Lawrence (Port St. Maarten Manager Cargo and Terminal Operations), and Hector Peters (Port St. Maarten General and Governmental Affairs).

Minister Connor also said he looked forward in a few years' time to marking the 2.5 million mark in cruise passengers.

Port St. Maarten has made considerable investments into infrastructure related to cruise development during the past three years with the most recent being the Down Street Cruise Heritage Development Project. This development still under construction is just one of several change community projects that will further enhance the country's tourism product.

**For further questions, please contact:** [comments@portofstmaarten.com](mailto:comments@portofstmaarten.com)