



MINISTRY OF  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION,  
TOURISM & TRANSPORT  
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

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**For Immediate Release**

## Minister of Tourism Updates Cruise Lines on Port Plans

### Cruise Lines Confirm No Tendering for Megaships

**Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands (26 October, 2015)** Tourism Minister Hon. Moses Kirkconnell took the opportunity while attending the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Conference in Mexico to update cruise line executives and FCCA officials on the latest developments regarding the cruise berthing facility.

Following Government's decision to move to the next steps on the Islands biggest infrastructure project, the Minister provided cruise executives with an overview of the findings of various related studies and reports.

"The opportunity to dialogue with the FCCA and cruise executives is mutually beneficial as it gives all parties the chance to share important information about the industry that we are partners and stakeholders in, said Minister Kirkconnell. "Although cruise line executives have been following developments in the media, I have provided more detailed explanations and answered their questions regarding the current plans and pier development proposals."

The Minister also directly addressed the concerns of persons who favour Cayman offering bigger and better tenders rather than constructing a berthing facility. "The cruise industry is transitioning to mega ships and the major lines all have vessels currently under construction. Given that in 2014 approximately 82% of our cruise business came from the Carnival Corporation and Royal Caribbean Cruise lines respectively, the Ministry of Tourism reached out to them about their future plans and have been advised that tendering is not something they are willing to consider in the future. Adam Goldstein, President and COO of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd told us *'When Royal Caribbean International launched Oasis Class ships 6 years ago it was never intended that these vessels would be tendered. Royal has never tendered these ships and we have no plans for tendering them in the future.'*"

"Giora Israel, Senior Vice President of Global Port and Destination Development for the Carnival Corporation also responded saying *'The key for a smooth operation of large ships in transit ports is the availability of piers / berthing facilities. The itinerary planning executives at our various cruise brands that will operate those ships in the future, will consider the availability*

*of piers/ berthing facilities as a key element in considering a port / destination, and are unlikely to consider tender ports for such class of vessels.’”*

*Mr. Israel continued “Carnival Corporation announced earlier this year the construction program for a series of larger ships, the first to be delivered in 2018. These state-of-the art ships will have a capacity of over 6,000 passengers and will use for the first time in the cruise industry the environmentally friendly LNG. The ships will require piers / berthing facilities that can efficiently operate in all he destinations where they will operate in the future.”*

With ships getting larger and longer, many ports in the Caribbean are lengthening and upgrading their pier facilities to accommodate the newer generation of vessels which more of the cruise lines are moving to. “As more of these megaships are introduced it is becoming clearer that if Cayman wants to seriously be considered as a cruise tourism destination into the future, we have to provide the services and facilities cruise lines require, otherwise our cruise tourism business will sail past Grand Cayman to other destinations,” stated Minister Kirkconnell.

Speaking about the financing of the piers the Minister disclosed that talks had begun and were ongoing. “Whatever agreement is reached for financing the piers will be an arrangement that is unique to Cayman and developed to suit our particular needs. Our goal is to partner with cruise lines and arrive at a formula that will not only fund the piers but will ensure that they are owned by the people of the Cayman Islands. While these discussions are complex and sensitive, we are aware of the significant interest from the community and we will continue to keep the public informed of developments as much as we can, he said.

**~ENDS~**

**NOTE to EDITORS:**

The annual FCCA Cruise Conference & Trade Show is the premier industry event for cruise executives, destinations, suppliers and tour operators to meet with key industry players to analyse trends and discuss current issues. Each year over 100 cruise executives and 1000 cruise industry partners attend this unique forum.

Attendees from the Cayman Islands included: The Minister and Chief Officer in the Ministry of Tourism, Hon. Moses Kirkconnell and Mr. Stran Bodden; Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism and Mr. Errol Bush, Chairman of the Cayman Islands Port Authority.