Third Consecutive Nomination as the Caribbean's Leading Cruise Destination

Montego Bay, March 05, 2007

Jamaica has once again been nominated as the Caribbean's Leading Cruise Destination in the World Travel Awards, recognised as the Oscars of the travel industry. Jamaica won the awards in 2005 and again in 2006. The destination was also named the World's Leading Cruise Destination in 2006.

The nomination caps off a record breaking year for cruise shipping in Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Port Antonio, in which a 10.8% increase in ship calls resulted in a 17.7% upswing in number of passengers, far outpacing the Caribbean average of 4.5%. At the end of January 2007, cruise arrivals numbered 143,728, a 7% increase over last year's figures.

"Once again we are thrilled at this affirmation that we are on course with our objective of positioning Jamaica as a complete cruise destination," said William Tatham, Vice President, Cruise Shipping and Marina Operations at the Port Authority of Jamaica (PAJ). In recent years Jamaica's strategy has been to distinguish the destination through the number and variety of attractions available to cruise guests. Montego Bay in particular has growing reputation of being the perfect cruise destination, with an extensive range of attractions, adventures, shopping and dining in close proximity to the port. "Our advantage stands in how easy cruise guests can get off the ships and right into shopping or an eco adventure. It's practically seamless here in Jamaica, and not so in other Caribbean destinations. In fact, Montego Bay is one of the few Caribbean ports in which the 160,000 GRT Freedom of the Seas can dock directly alongside," said Mr Tatham.

The PAJ markets the destination under the Cruise Jamaica brand, and maintains an intensive campaign to keep Jamaica top of mind with cruise executives and travel agents around the world. Last November, the PAJ formalized a US$16.5 million contract with Royal Caribbean Cruises, which will guarantee a minimum of 2.2 million visitors to the island over a five-year

period. “We are confident in our strategy, as evidenced by the increase in cruise arrivals, but also in the fact that Jamaica is on the itinerary of some of the world’s important cruise ships,” said Mr Tatham. In addition to the Freedom of the Seas, the world’s largest cruise vessel and the luxury Queen Mary 2, last year Jamaica secured calls from Norwegian Jewel and Costa Magica. All indicators point to continued growth in the industry for 2007 with scheduled calls from Norwegian Pearl, the newest ship in Norwegian Cruise Lines fleet and Liberty of the Seas, the sister ship of the Freedom of the Seas.

Later this year, Montego Bay will serve as the homeport for two vessels: Ocean Village One from UK-based Ocean Village Cruises and the Sea Princess from Princess Cruises Lines. “We cannot overstate the significance of home porting, as this is a signal that the cruise lines have complete faith in Jamaica both as the place from which cruises will originate, and more traditionally as a pre-eminent stop on their itineraries,” said Mr Tatham.

Plans are in place for the expansion of the port of Montego Bay to commence at the end of 2007. Budgeted at US$67 million, the plans includes the construction and renovation of three of berths, two of which will be able to accommodate two Ultra Voyager-size vessels like Freedom of the Seas, with the third hosting vessels in the 900-foot

Vision-class. A second terminal building and additional retail and entertainment facilities are also part of the expansion.