

logo not found or type unknown

## Bryan, Boschulte Report Strong Start at Seatrade 2025 in Miami as USVI Pursues Cruise Growth and Berthing Agreements

**Tourism Commissioner Boschulte and Governor Bryan met with cruise industry leaders at Seatrade 2025 to discuss berthing, performance, and future expectations as the territory prepares for a cruise season with double the visitors of 2024.**

Tourism / **Published On April 08, 2025 04:21 PM /**

Janeke Simon **April 08, 2025**

Image not found or type unknown



**Governor Albert Bryan Jr., left, and Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte at Seatrade 2025 in Miami, Florida.**

“I’m pleased to report that Seatrade 2025 is off to a very resounding and successful start for the United States Virgin Islands,” said Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte, speaking at a joint

press conference with Governor Albert Bryan Jr. on location at the leading annual cruise industry event in Miami, Florida.

“This week has already been productive,” said the governor, noting that officials from the Legislature and several government and independent agencies were also at the conference. Meetings with senior leadership at various cruise lines have already begun, “to discuss how the territory is performing and with regards to expectations when the lines bring their visitors to the territory,” Mr. Boschulte explained.

Along with the contingent from the territory, “the competition is real and is here, and they are defending their turf,” Governor Bryan declared, underscoring the need for smart negotiations. However, he noted that cooperation among destinations is just as important as competition between them. For example, “while we’re fierce competitors with the likes of St. Martin and some other places, we still have strategic partners within St. Martin,” the governor explained. Strategizing the launch of 3-day cruises alongside the British Virgin Islands, utilizing Puerto Rico’s homeporting advantages, is another area where collaboration would be advantageous, Governor Bryan explained.

Talks with the cruise lines are centering around berthing arrangements at the various ports in the Virgin Islands among other contractual and technical details, said Mr. Boschulte, and time is also being spent reviewing past performance and future expectations for the seasons ahead.

Mr. Boschulte said that he looked forward to another bumper cruise season in calendar years 2025 and 2026, with over twice as many cruise visitors each year than in the 2024 season. With an average spend rivaled by only Panama in the region, visitors to the U.S. Virgin Islands are expected to contribute significant revenue to the territory’s bottom line.

As Mr. Boschulte explained, the nature of visitor spending has changed as well. “Decades ago, spend would be defined by boxes of liquor,” he noted. Now, however, “people are spending money on experiences...when we see people moving around the island, they are spending,” the commissioner continued. “Whether that’s with our local taxi drivers or whether that’s just walking around and shopping in our stores, people always are spending around.”

The good news regarding interest in, and demand for the USVI as a cruise destination was somewhat tempered by Governor Bryan’s disclosure that the Charlotte Amalie harbor dredging project would have to go back out to tender, as no bids were received during the last request for proposals issued by the Virgin Islands Port Authority. “That project will be a little delayed, but it works in our favor because we’ll be able to combine it with other dredging,” he remarked.

Nonetheless, officials were optimistic about what is being accomplished through the various discussions and negotiations that make up the bulk of the Seatrade activity. “We continue to examine all opportunities to get the best deals,” said Mr. Boschulte, noting that “we expect to have those berthing agreements finalized sometime within the next several months.