

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Administration Officials Hold 'High-Level' Talks With Cruise Line Executives At Seatrade

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ST. THOMAS -- Mapp administration officials held high-level talks with cruise line executives in South Florida on Sunday aimed at improving the visitor experience for cruise ship passengers, Government House made known Wednesday.

Following a reception hosted by the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) and the Ports of the Virgin Islands at The Boatyard restaurant in Fort Lauderdale, Governor Kenneth Mapp and Dept. of Tourism Commissioner Beverly Nicholson-Doty had what was described as productive discussions with FCCA Chairman and President of Royal Caribbean Cruises Adam Goldstein, and FCCA President Michele Paige, along with cruise executives representing Holland America and MSC Cruises, to address

opportunities for partnership and product development.

Earlier, Mr. Mapp shared his administration's commitment to developing a comprehensive program focused on customer service, education (history and culture), business development and other critical areas designed to enhance the efficiency and profitability of the taxi industry. The program will be operated through the University of the Virgin Islands' Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning (CELL) Center in consultation with the Department of Tourism and the Taxi Commission, according to Government House.

Mr. Mapp told more than 100 attendees at the reception that discussions were being planned between FCCA's leadership and the business community with a goal of strengthening the overall product and experience offered to cruise passengers.

The Ports of the Virgin Islands, an alliance which includes the Virgin Islands Port Authority, the West Indian Company and the Department of Tourism, will soon stage town hall meetings with the hospitality sector, members of the business community and public sector stakeholders on improving the visitor experience, according to Government House.

"The government is working to enhance the infrastructure to make the U.S. Virgin Islands a more competitive and wonderful place to visit," Mr. Mapp said. He indicated the territory was honored to become the first Presidential Partner of the FCCA as part of an initiative to foster growth of the cruise industry.

According to Government House, on Monday, the governor addressed the media, meeting planners and members of local government in South Florida. On Tuesday, he attended Seatrade Cruise Global's State of the Industry plenary session at the Greater Ft. Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center.

Mr. Mapp returned to the territory late Tuesday evening.

Feature Image: Governor Kenneth Mapp with Arnold Donald, president and chief executive officer of Carnival Corporation. (Credit: Government House)