

The Virgin Islands Consortium

As The Virgin Islands Readies Itself For Cruise Tourists, USVI Officials Meet With Mainland Journalists To Promote Territory

VIC News / **Published On November 02, 2017 12:15 PM /**

Staff **November 02, 2017**



Government officials shared a message of resilience and recovery last week with travel stakeholders and influencers in Mérida, Mexico and Dallas, Texas, the Department of Tourism (D.O.T.) said on Wednesday. Above, an Adventure of the Seas cruise ship docked at the Frederiksted Pier on St. Croix.

Participating at the 24th annual Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Cruise Conference and Trade Show in Mérida, a delegation from the territory, led by D.O.T., the Virgin Islands Port Authority (V.I.P.A.) and The West Indian Company Limited (W.I.C.O.),

updated cruise executives and industry partners on the islands' status for the return of cruise ships in November following back-to-back Category 5 hurricanes in September.

D.O.T. Commissioner Beverly Nicholson-Doty and the leadership of W.I.C.O. and V.I.P.A., including W.I.C.O. CEO Clifford Graham and V.I.P.A. Executive Director David Mapp, engaged in one-on-one meetings with executives from cruise industry partners, including Carnival Corporation, Disney Cruise Line, MSC Cruises and Royal Caribbean International, according to the release.

In addition to attending panel discussions and sessions related to the state of the cruise industry, USVI representatives also attended a special FCCA session on crisis management that addressed aspects of the recent hurricanes such as pre-disaster preparation, communications, housing and relief.

"As we move from relief to recovery following September's storms, the U.S. Virgin Islands is grateful for the partnership, engagement and support of FCCA and its member lines in helping to restore cruise industry business to our destination," Mrs. Nicholson-Doty said. "Attending this conference was an important step in our plans to rebuild."

She continued, "We know that our cruise product will not be restored to pre-storm conditions when the first ships return to the Territory this week, but we are making tremendous progress. We are counting on our partner agencies and the business community to ensure we are ready for the first calls."

A meeting with American Airlines' Caribbean leadership team in Dallas provided an opportunity to review the company's planned service to the Territory from key U.S. cities in the coming months, as well as to share the Department of Tourism's feedback related to recent operations.

"American Airlines has been a strong air transportation partner with the U.S. Virgin Islands for many years, and we want to continue working together to ensure that residents and visitors have many, reliable options for travel to and from the destination," the commissioner said.

While in Dallas, Mrs. Nicholson-Doty had the opportunity to connect with members of the media, including a live television interview on the syndicated KDAF-TV (CW33 Dallas) "morning dose." show, where she shared post-hurricane travel and tourism news about the destination.

"Meeting the needs of Virgin Islanders, business leaders and leisure visitors from the Dallas area is one of the top priorities of the Department of Tourism," noted the commissioner, adding that travel to the USVI from Dallas, one of the largest metropolitan areas in the United States, has grown steadily in recent years.

Mrs. Nicholson-Doty also sat down with Scott McCartney, Travel Industry Editor of the Wall Street Journal's Dallas Bureau, to provide information about the impact of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on the territory's tourism industry, infrastructure and economic activity.

The Dallas-area listening public was able to hear news of the territory's recovery during the Commissioner's broadcast interview with David Rancken on CBS Radio in Dallas.

