

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Looking To Secure More Flights To USVI, Bryan Administration Exploring 'Every Avenue' To Boost Relations With Airlines, D.O.T. Says

Tourism / **Published On May 13, 2019 11:02 PM /**

Staff **May 13, 2019**



As the U.S. Virgin Islands announces the return of hotels and resorts to the accommodations landscape over the next few months, the leader of the U.S. territory has committed his government to securing increased airlift to fill those rooms, the Department of Tourism (D.O.T.) has announced. Many hotels closed for renovations following Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, will start coming online by the end of 2019 and early 2020.

Speaking after what D.O.T. described as a successful meeting with Delta Air Lines' leadership team in Atlanta on Thursday, Governor Albert Bryan said a strong aerial highway policy was critically important to the territory's future, and his administration was exploring every avenue to boost relations with airline partners.



Governor Bryan and Commissioner nominee Boschulte debrief the Delta team in Atlanta.

"We have been meeting and talking with airline officials since we took office, and this session here in Atlanta was no different - getting important feedback on the performance of routes into St. Croix and St. Thomas and giving our partners at Delta an update on our tourism rebound and recovery," Mr. Bryan said.

The governor, who was accompanied by D.O.T. Commissioner nominee Joseph Boschulte, reported that Delta was generally satisfied with the performance of its routes into both of the territory's airports, and committed his teams at both the Department of Tourism and the Virgin Islands Port Authority to identify opportunities for capacity increases with the airline.

"It was encouraging to hear how confident Delta's team is about our product, and that they are keen to work with us to bolster Atlanta-St. Croix flights to pre-storm levels, when we were experiencing an uptick in demand to the 'Big Island'," the governor stated.



Governor Bryan and Commissioner nominee Boschulte with J. Walter Thompson Atlanta's Account Director Liz Olson and Jeremy Jones, Executive Creative Director.

"The St. Croix airport has been underutilized for years, so we are looking forward to exploring new ways to put people into seats to St. Croix," Mr. Bryan added, explaining that with Divi Carina Bay Resort [expected to come back online later this year](#), with the expansion in sharing accommodations, and robust business travel demand returning with the resumption of activity at the oil refinery, the conditions looked favorable for increasing flights to St. Croix.

The governor said the airline was encouraged by a very strong uptick in traffic to St. Croix this past March and was satisfied with the performance of its routes from Atlanta and New York to St. Thomas.

He told the airline executives that legislation would soon be introduced to attract investors to new hotel and resort projects across the Territory.

According to the release, Mr. Bryan will brief the investment community on the administration's business-friendly approach to hotel development at the Caribbean Hotel & Resort Investment Summit (CHRIS) in Miami next week.

While in Atlanta, the governor and commissioner nominee also met the Department of Tourism's advertising agency of record, J. Walter Thompson Atlanta, where they explored the importance of leveraging data to differentiate audiences and improve storytelling.

Feature Image: From left to right: Christine Kennedy, General Manager, Network Planning and Global Partnership Development at Delta Air Lines (center), is flanked by U.S. Virgin Islands Governor Albert Bryan Jr. (right) and Commissioner nominee Joseph Boschulte (left) along with members of her team at Delta's Atlanta headquarters last week.

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