

Northlands cruise terminal has got it right - report

The Daily News

A new report by the Council of Tourism Associations (COTA) highlights the Northland Cruise Terminal building as a successful example of balancing security and hospitality.

The report, called *Tourism at the Borders*, is the first report in COTA's new B.C. Tourism Review Series. The document offers a detailed analysis of current border crossing initiatives in Canada and the U.S. and how they are affecting the flow of visitors into Canada at this time.

"Border accessibility and international security policies are key issues for tourism operators today," said Michael Campbell, COTA's president.

Tourism at the Borders: Balancing Security and Hospitality is an important document for the industry as well as for government. It discusses critical

issues that could impair or encourage tourism development."

When it comes to allowing U.S. cruise ship visitors access to B.C. ports, it highlights the Northland Terminal as the first to be built since the 9/11 terrorists attacks and notes that it meets all the requirements of the Smart Border Declaration.

The Smart Border Declaration, and the accompanying Smart Border Action plan, was signed between Canada and the United States on Dec. 12, 2001, in an attempt to enhance security and cooperation on border and security issues.

The plan's four pillars work toward ensuring the secure flow of people and goods, as well as encouraging information sharing and coordination between the two countries. Joint programs allow them to speed the passing of low-

risk travellers and improve coordination between law enforcement, intelligence and security agencies.

Prince Rupert is unique in the province in that, besides serving out-of-country cruise ship passengers, it is also the point of entry and exit for travellers through the Alaska Marine Highway System. Outside of the Lower Mainland, Prince Rupert is one of very few communities with U.S. border security operations as well as Canadian Border Services.

COTA is a federation of organizations and businesses representing an industry of nearly 18,000 tourism operations throughout British Columbia.

Tourism creates jobs for more than 117,500 British Columbians and \$9.5 billion in economic activity in communities throughout the province.

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