

For Immediate Release

Prince Rupert Cruise Industry Holding Steady in 2010, Focused on Enhancing Visitor Experience

Prince Rupert, B.C.; April 8, 2010 – The Prince Rupert Port Authority is projecting a similar volume of cruise ships and passengers calling on Prince Rupert for the 2010 season compared to 2009. Prince Rupert will host an estimated 54,500 passengers from 25 large and pocket cruise ship calls in 2010. The season begins May 13 with the call of the 2,500-passenger Norwegian Star.

“While down from in excess of 100,000 passengers hosted in 2008, the cruise ship industry remains a strong development opportunity for the community, contributing significantly to the local and regional economy,” says PRPA Vice President Marketing & Business Development **Shaun Stevenson**.

Since Northland Terminal opened in 2004, it is estimated that guests and crew have spent \$38 million in the community including tours, restaurants, attractions, supplies and services.

Overall, the Alaska cruise market will contract by an estimated 140,000 passengers in 2010 due to the loss of 4 cruise ships from the British Columbia – Alaska cruise theatre. The decline in the Alaska market, despite growth in the cruise industry worldwide, has been attributed to regulatory and taxation regimes introduced by the State of Alaska over the past 3 years, which have dramatically increased the operating costs for cruise lines and negatively impacted the competitive position of Alaska as a global cruise destination.

“Considering the globally competitive nature of the cruise business and the issues cruise lines are grappling with in Alaska, we are pleased to be maintaining our current level of business,” says Mr. Stevenson. “We have a strong partnership with the cruise industry and have demonstrated the viability of Prince Rupert as an attractive and profitable cruise destination over the past five years. We should be well positioned to participate in the growth and expansion of the industry if the current barriers to growth in the Alaska market can be overcome. The key will be to continue to develop capacities and services to contribute to improving the guest experience in Prince Rupert.”

The priorities for the 2010 season is to build on the success of the tour excursion program and work with Prince Rupert stakeholders to enhance independent guest experience in and around the city. Highlights for the 2010 cruise season include:

- Enhancement of services and content in and around the Northland Cruise Terminal to better engage cruise ship visitors and improve the guest experience.
- Introduction of the 65-foot war canoe, longest of its kind in North America, by Metlakatla's Seashore Charters as a tour excursion. The experience of paddling in this traditional First Nations sea-going canoe is anticipated to be a major attraction for cruise guests.
- Enhancements at North Pacific Historic Fishing Village, a National Historic Site that is one of the oldest and best preserved canneries of its kind, as a result of extensive and ongoing site conservation and restoration work.

"All cruise business stakeholders need to work together to ensure we capitalize on our opportunities to grow the cruise tourism sector in Prince Rupert," notes Mr. Stevenson. "We need to continue improving our capacities and strengthening our competitive position as an attractive port of call in the Alaska Cruise Theatre."

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