



## Press Release

### **TRANSPORT DISPATCHING SERVICE BEGINS AT T.B. LETTSOME AIRPORT**

**Road Town, Tortola, December 3, 2009** – On Tuesday, visitors to the British Virgin Islands began utilising the service of a transportation dispatcher at the Terrance B. Lettsome International Airport.

Chairman of the Tourist Board, Myron Walwyn said the service is long over due. “For several years the Board has heard complaints from visitors and industry partners about the need to better organise transportation services at the main ports of entry. Dispatching services will allow our visitors to have a better arrival experience which we know sets the tone for their stay in the Territory.”

Walwyn added that the service also benefits the Territory’s taxi drivers. “Dispatching services are used throughout the Caribbean and the world. While it gives visitors a better experience on arrival, it also allows our taxi drivers to maintain the practice of being hired vehicles for a particular party. Based on the rotation of drivers by the taxi association at Beef Island, we anticipate this will also give more drivers the opportunity to service visitors.” Walwyn noted, “This is just the first entry point in which this service has been established but the Tourist Board hopes to expand the service to all ports of entry within the coming year. ”

According to the Managing Director of the BVI Airports Authority, Denniston Fraser, “The BVI Airports Authority is delighted to work in collaboration with the BVI Tourist Board on this important venture.” Fraser adds, “This new initiative will ensure that arriving passengers at the airport are met by a friendly staff who will assist with a smooth transition of taxi transfers. We believe that



together, along with the assistance of taxi drivers, we can reform the welcoming experience for persons arriving at the T. B. Lettsome International Airport.”

Product Development Manager, Natasha Chalwell said the service will allow the Territory’s transportation industry to be more transparent. “At most ports of entry there are no signs posted with transportation fees which result in inconsistent taxi fares being charged to visitors and residents alike. A dispatcher allows the Territory to properly manage the hiring of taxis, charging of fares and giving receipts to users for services rendered.”

Taxi Liaison Officer, Arvan Hodge, explained how the dispatching service will work. “The assignment of the taxi service is conducted by a dispatch officer who discusses with the client their needs and formally transfers the client to the driver along with the payment agreement which will be a receipt in a triplicate format. The client receives a copy, the driver and the dispatch officer keeps a copy of the transaction. Funds are paid directly to drivers.”

Dispatchers have gone through training provided by the Board. In order to provide transportation services at the ports of entry, all taxi drivers must be identifiable. In the near future the Board will also be assisting drivers with a standard uniform which will have their name embroidered on shirts as well as their taxi association.

Along with continuous training and these additions, it is anticipated that transportation services provided to visitors will be improved, adding a greater level of accountability and professionalism in the transportation industry while making the arrival experience of all visitors more pleasurable.

The dispatching service is one of many initiatives on the Product Development Department’s work plan for 2009. Under its portfolio, the department works with industry partners to improve the Territory’s attractions, transportation services, and tourism related informational and promotional materials.

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**Note to Editors:**

Caption for attached photographs:

**Dispatching Service** – Dispatcher Shana Johnson coordinates taxi service for a visitors arriving at the Terrance B. Lettsome International Airport. (photo courtesy BVITB/S. Barnes)