



## Press Release

### **TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY RESPONDS OVERWHELMINGLY TO CURRENT TOURIST BOARD WORKSHOP**

**Road Town, Tortola, October 23, 2009** – Taxi drivers and tour operators from around the Virgin Islands (UK) have responded overwhelmingly to the British Virgin Islands Tourist Board's (BVITB) current training.

Commencing on Tuesday, October 20, BVITB began a second round of training for professionals in the transportation industry with consultant Richard Blades of Blades and Blades Consultancy on Tortola. On Wednesday, drivers on the Sister Island of Anegada benefited from the training and yesterday the Tourist Board team and the consultant were on Virgin Gorda at the Ashford Waters Community Centre training drivers. Today they will be on Jost Van Dyke at Rudy's Restaurant and drivers on Tortola that did not take advantage of Tuesday's session will have an opportunity to participate in the workshop as it is hosted at the Moorings Conference Room on Saturday, beginning at 9a.m.

BVITB's Deputy Director and Business Development Manager, Malcia Smith Hamilton said the response from workshop participants has been overwhelming. "A total of 99 drivers on Tortola came out to the first workshop on Tuesday which surpassed our expectations. Just like the Tourist Board, professionals in the transportation industry want repeat customers to our islands. We are pleased with the interest drivers have taken in improving their operational standards which they realise helps to improve the experience of visitors."

Participating in Tuesday's session was Beef Island Airport Taxi Association driver, Collin Maynard. A veteran driver, Maynard echoed the importance of continuous training for his industry. "It is a good thing for everybody in the transportation industry to continue training. Once you are a taxi driver you need to know certain things that will help your business and help the people that you are transporting. The points Mr Blades brought up about personal health, ensuring your vehicle is properly maintained, and knowing how to handle emergencies when transporting people, those were all important things that he made me realise are very serious responsibilities."

Geared at improving operational standards in the industry, the workshop covers topics such as; ensuring the health and safety in the transport industry, managing emergencies and incidents during a journey, providing transport service for passengers who require assistance, driving community transport safely and efficiently and legal issues in the transport sector.

Lorna Christopher from the Licencing Department was also on hand on Tuesday to answer driver's questions about the new vehicle licensing legislation. Drivers on Tortola can still register for Saturday's training by contacting Business Development Coordinator, Jamila Vanterpool at 494 3134 or by email at [jvanterpool@bvitourism.com](mailto:jvanterpool@bvitourism.com).

# # #

**Note to Editors:**

**Caption for attached photograph:** The BVI Tourist Board received an overwhelming response to its latest transportation industry workshop this week geared at improving operational standards. Started on Tuesday, day-long training sessions are ongoing on all major islands for taxi drivers and tour operators.

