



Sustainable Growth Projected for Victoria's Cruise Services Industry

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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With the 2007 cruise ship schedule established representatives from the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA), Westcan Terminals, King Bros., Tourism Victoria, Gray Line West, and The Butchart Gardens are in attendance at the 23rd annual Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention in Miami.

Florida, the home of cruise industry leaders Carnival Cruise Lines, Royal Caribbean, Norwegian Cruise Lines, and Celebrity annually welcomes trade and destination delegates from around the globe to share information on trends and advancements in the industry. Over 1000 companies from 117 countries fill the Miami Convention Centre occupying over 14,500 square meters. There is a message of continued confidence in the industry this year and this is no exception for Victoria which is gaining a reputation as a leading cruise ship service centre. In addition to the port and destination partners, several other Victoria businesses are in attendance as exhibitors and delegates including Greggs Marine Interiors, Peninsula Waste Water, Hydroxyl Systems, and Victoria Shipyards. The latter, the largest ship repair company on Canada's Pacific Coast is particularly enjoying the growth in the industry with five large cruise ships already scheduled for service in 2007.

The message for the cruise industry and for Victoria is clear. The industry is growing in a sustainable way with new ships integrating advanced technologies and environmental systems. Many of these new vessels are destined for the Alaska market including the Norwegian Pearl which sails into Victoria from San Francisco for the first time on May 10.

"Alaska could hit 1 million passengers this year after reaching 950,000 in 2006. The addition of Princess Cruises' post-Panamax Golden Princess and a longer season by Celebrity Cruises' Mercury are driving the growth" says John Hansen, president of the North West CruiseShip Association.

Continued growth in the Alaska market is evidenced in Seattle with a new cruise terminal to open for the 2008 cruise season with 210-215 vessel calls scheduled for that season up from 195 scheduled for 2007; in Ketchikan where two new berths are under construction; and by the expressions of interest from other cruise lines including Disney who plan to have a vessel in the Pacific by 2012.

The Greater Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA) was incorporated as a not-for-profit society in February 2002, and began operating its four port facilities (Wharf Street, Ship Point/ Government Street, Fisherman's Wharf and Ogden Point) divested from Transport Canada in the spring and summer of 2002. The GVHA's Board is comprised of Directors representing the Authority's Member governments and organizations (Esquimalt Nation, Songhees Nation, Provincial Capital Commission, City of Victoria, Township of Esquimalt, the Victoria/Esquimalt Harbour Society, Tourism Victoria, the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, and the Capital Regional District), and four Community Directors.

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