

DESTINATION MEDIA BRIEFINGS SOTIC 2018

The State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) got under way at the Atlantis Paradise Island in the Bahamas with a series of media briefings by CTO member countries. See highlights below. To take a look at the programme for the week please click on the following link: <https://bit.ly/2P1C6Ct>.

If you missed the briefings as they were streamed 'live' on Facebook, here are a few links through which you can take a look at your convenience to presentations from:

Dominica – Colin Piper, CEO, Discover Dominica

Barbados – Billy Griffith, CEO Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc

Belize - Manuel Heredia, minister of tourism & Karen Bevans, director of tourism

Jamaica – Donovan Whyte, director of tourism

St Lucia – Dominic Fedee, minister of tourism

BVI – Sharon Flax-Brutus, director of tourism

Antigua - Charles Fernandez, minister of tourism

Bahamas - Joy Jibrilu, director general of tourism

St. Maarten/St. Martin – Alex Pierre, VP French St. Martin tourism office

Brad Dean, CEO, Discover Puerto Rico

<https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanTourismOrganization/videos/580128242401935/?t=6>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanTourismOrganization/videos/675620439475241/?t=0>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanTourismOrganization/videos/283860248885980/?t=0>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanTourismOrganization/videos/277446346229892/?t=1>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanTourismOrganization/videos/324444531440807/?t=1>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanTourismOrganization/videos/241535319862628/?t=1>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanTourismOrganization/videos/2116736265320739/?t=1>

One year after Hurricanes Maria and Irma caused major disaster in the region, several countries are reporting progress with the recovery. A Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) organised a series of press briefings today as part of the State in the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC), at which both affected and non-affected countries update some 30 regional and international journalists at Atlantis Paradise Island, the Bahamas.

Dominica

Dominica is reporting a 57 per cent availability of hotel rooms as of July 31, 2018, the resumption of all flights to the country, including night landing, and the return of the cruise sector.

Chief executive officer at Discover Dominica Authority Colin Piper, who addressed over 30 regional and international journalists during a series of destination briefings at the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO)'s State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) in the Bahamas, also pointed to a number of investments in the pipeline, including 470 hotel rooms to be phased in by 2020.

British Virgin Islands

The British Virgin Island is also reporting tremendous progress in its recovery efforts. In fact, the director of tourism Sharon Flax-Brutus said that by the end of this year about 75 per cent of the territory's inventory should be back up.

She said the BVI is in high demand, while highlighting the increase in cruise ship arrivals, since the hurricane.

Antigua & Barbuda

Minister of tourism and investment Charles Fernandez said a year after Hurricane Irma hammered the tiny Island of Barbuda, things are looking up.

He announced that a new ferry service had been introduced while pointing out that more focus will be placed on the marketing of the non-traditional areas, as well as environmental tourism.

"That is something we think augers well for Barbuda" he said, adding that a number of new properties were in the pipeline, including the construction of a Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

St. Maarten/St Martin

St. Maarten/St Martin is on the rebound, with 30 hotels and inns having reopened since Hurricane Irma hit the Island, according to Alex Pierre, vice president of the French St. Martin tourism office.

He said 21 out of 26 airlines which serviced the destination are back and the cruise port has welcomed more than 600,000 passengers through to 31 May 2018, since its reopening.

Puerto Rico

Some 135 hotels are now operational, and the country expects a record growth in inventory next year, said Brad Dean, chief executive officer of Discover Puerto Rico.

Dean also said 4,000 restaurants and shopping areas have since reopened.

CTO member countries which were not affected by last year's hurricanes also reported growth, with Barbados, Belize, the Bahamas, Jamaica and Saint Lucia all announcing different initiatives to continue the growth in tourist arrival figures.