



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR MEMBERS

### REPORTING PERIOD OCTOBER 2020

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The month of October can be defined as a period of exceptional partnerships and collaboration between the Tourism Private Sector, other stakeholders and representatives of the public service. Engagements with long standing allies such as the Embassy of China (Taiwan). The Travel Foundation, the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, honorary members and the Caribbean Society of Hospitality Executives all provided various opportunities to strengthen alliances and share best practices. Engagements with other Private Sector Associations helped form coalitions to address our economic challenges and create a multi stakeholder task force to action longstanding recommendations for community enhancement and private sector activity.

Within the SLHTA the secretariat encouraged members to take advantage of numerous training and development webinars offered by the CHTA on a complimentary basis. We also advanced discussions on protocols for specific sectors and along with our honorary SLHTA member Boo Hinkson moved the Eat What We Grow Campaign to an advanced level. Along with sector representatives we have lobbied for reopening of business activity for Destination Management Companies, Independent Restaurants, Duty Free Retail Shops, Small Hotels, Luxury Villas, Large and Boutique Properties, Dive Operators, Yachting Sector, Tourism Transportation Providers, Sites and Attractions and general Hospitality members.

Unfortunately, COVID -19 related shocks from source markets continue to affect arrival numbers and the reopening of the wider economy. The negative impact of extended closure of businesses which benefit directly from the Tourism Industry are now having a ripple effect on non-direct Tourism Operators. Whilst we welcome the positive economic impact the reopening of Royalton will have on local suppliers, we also note with excitement, the corollary improvements in employment within the Travel Trade.

Other key highlights of this month include negotiations with policy makers on the COVID-19 Prevention and Control Bill, VAT reduction rate on Accommodation, Tourism Levy and St Lucia Tourism Authority Amendment Bill.

Regrettably confidential information meant only for members' consumption was leaked into the public domain upon circulation to members. This action created significant discomfort with the ongoing negotiations with policy makers and as a result an executive decision was taken to create an enhanced protocol for information sharing with members. While summaries of various issues will be circulated for member awareness, source documents and proof literature will not. I wish to take this opportunity to remind members that the SLHTA makes every effort to champion policy and actions in the interest of member companies. As such it is in our best interest to remain Apolitical and to assure policy makers the highest courtesies at all times. I wish to thank all members for their ongoing support and invite you to continue to engage the SLHTA regarding your concerns, interests and ideas.

## UPDATES -

	ISSUE	UPDATE
1	Head Tax Update	<p>The SLHTA has concluded discussions with government on the implementation of the Tourism Levy and related instruments. We expect that all related bills will be tabled in Parliament in November to facilitate the introduction of the Tourism Levy on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020. See links here:</p> <p><a href="http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Final-revised-Tourism-Levy-Bill-.pdf">http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Final-revised-Tourism-Levy-Bill-.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Final-revised-SLTA-Amendment-Bill-pdf.pdf">http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Final-revised-SLTA-Amendment-Bill-pdf.pdf</a></p>
2	HR and Employment	<p>SLHTA Job Bank – In October the SLHTA Introduced a Job Bank email (<a href="mailto:slhtajobbank@gmail.com">slhtajobbank@gmail.com</a>) which will be used to collect resumes from members of the public seeking employment within the Hospitality and Tourism Sector. Over the first 2 days since it launched, we received over 618 applications from persons around the island, as well as persons out of Saint Lucia seeking employment.</p> <p>We have been assisting Resort members with sourcing applications for various departments as they reopen. To date over 248 applications have been processed.</p>
3	Protocols	<p>The month of October brought about continued lobbying to allow the Luxury Villas sector to re-open in a safe and protected way within phase one. Certifications continue to be carried out on the Luxury villas many of whom have submitted their action plans and are ready to begin accommodating guests.</p>

		<p><b>See link here:</b> <a href="http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Protocols-for-Alternative-Accommodation-October-2020.pdf">http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Protocols-for-Alternative-Accommodation-October-2020.pdf</a></p> <p>The SLHTA along with the Independent restaurants sector have successfully launched a pilot program in collaboration with the Ministry of Health to allow International Hotel guests to be able to dine in at certain restaurants. This is in line with stringent guidelines which have been put in place to ensure the safety of our staff in these restaurants and the safe and secure transportation of these guests from their certified accommodation to the restaurant and directly back to the certified accommodation. <b>See link here:</b> <a href="http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/COVID-19-Restaurant-protocols-for-hotel-guests-only-dining-experience-021020.pdf">http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/COVID-19-Restaurant-protocols-for-hotel-guests-only-dining-experience-021020.pdf</a></p> <p>The protocols for the Destination Management Companies were approved during the course of October – another stamp of progress made thus far. <b>See link here:</b> <a href="http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Protocols-for-DMC-Sector-261020.pdf">http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Protocols-for-DMC-Sector-261020.pdf</a></p> <p>Protocols were submitted for weddings to take place in a safe and secure environment and we are currently awaiting approval of these protocols: <a href="http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Covid-19-protocols-for-Weddings-161020.pdf">http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Covid-19-protocols-for-Weddings-161020.pdf</a></p>
4	Pointe Seraphine / Duty Free Retail Sector	<p>The Duty Free Retail sector along with tenants at the Pointe Seraphine outlet have in conjunction with the SLHTA continued to advocate for a rent moratorium and also explored avenues to be able to open to some extent albeit the cruise ships will not be returning until into 2021. We have sent correspondence to Invest St Lucia and SLASPA for their response as can be seen here:</p> <p><a href="http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Roderick-Cherry-correspondence-Pointe-Seraphine-tenants-211020.pdf">http://www.slhta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Roderick-Cherry-correspondence-Pointe-Seraphine-tenants-211020.pdf</a></p>
5	Strategic Partnerships	<p>Meetings are being held with the St Lucia Employers Federation, St Lucia Manufacturers Association and St Lucia Industrial and Small Business Association to explore avenues for collaboration which will redound in benefits to members of Associations signatory to the Agreements.</p>

6	Membership	The SLHTA are happy to welcome all new members that have joined over the past month. Indeed since August we have had some new 20 members join the SLHTA.
7	Hyperbaric Chamber	The SLHTA has assumed ownership and responsibility for the Hyperbaric Chamber. Under this arrangement SLHTA's President Karolin Troubetzkoy has assumed Chairmanship of the St Lucia Hyperbaric Society Inc (SLHS) and SLHTA's CEO Noorani Azeez currently functions as Executive Vice Chair of the Society, Mr Richard Peterkin former SLHTA Director also sits as a Director of the SLHS. Over the coming months the Board will seek to complete the legal requirements for the transfer of ownership, establish strategic alliances with International Organizations, CO-OP local support from beneficiaries of the Chamber and institute a radical HR Development and Infrastructural enhancement of the facility.
8	Tourism Stakeholders meeting with Deputy Chairman of Sandals	<p>The SLHTA met with a group of stakeholders from a number of organizations and communities to receive a presentation from Mr Adam Stewart – Deputy Chairman of Sandals resorts. The gathering received a presentation from Mr Stewart on Best Practices used in JA to build linkages with other Sectors and engender community involvement in the reopening of the Tourism Industry. The presentation was followed by a Q&amp;A exercise. Stakeholders discussed at length the application of some of these Best Practices to a St Lucian context.</p> <p>Emerging from the meeting was a commitment to establish a steering committee to vet ideas and brainstorm a sequence of actions to compliment public sector efforts to rekindle and expand the St Lucian Economy.</p>
9	SLHTA/ GEF SGP UNDP Collaboration	<div data-bbox="435 1339 792 1801" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>As a part of this collaboration the SLHTA and the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme United Nations Development Programme Fund (GEF SGP UNDP) printed 500 booklets for sale by the Belle Vue farmers' Cooperative. The revenue from the sale of the books will go towards the cooperative and its members. The book entitled "An introductory Guide to Organic Fertilizer and Pesticides A Safer and Healthier Alternative for All" was prepared by the Belle Vue Farmers' Cooperative and funded by the GEF SGP.</p> <p>The book has received an ISBN number from CARICOM and with this number it will hopefully be sold on Amazon.</p>

10	Eat What You Grow Campaign	<p>In July 2020, the SLHTA announced the launch of an “Eat What We Grow” campaign aimed at promoting the consumption of locally grown agricultural produce. The initiative was conceived in collaboration with SLHTA’s Honorary Member Ronald “Boo” Hinkson and is designed to encourage healthier lifestyle practices among Saint Lucians. Healthier eating habits has been a key consideration in the global fight against the Coronavirus given its ability to strengthen the immune systems.</p> <p>The “Eat What We Grow” campaign follows a number of SLHTA interventions over the past few years to promote linkages between agriculture and tourism. As the principal private sector agency that is charged with the responsibility of supporting the tourism sector development in Saint Lucia, the Association has long been mindful of the paramount role that the agricultural sector plays in the hospitality industry.</p> <p>After the successful launch of the jingle, the Association has now complemented the previous initiatives with the creation of the first of a number of Eat What We Grow videos aimed at raising public awareness to various segments of the society. The video will be launched in the month of November. This launch will be accompanied by a series of other interventions which the Association hopes will promote awareness of the health benefits of eating locally produced fruits and vegetables and enhance the economic impact on farmers and producers.</p>
11	Saint Lucia EnGenDER COVID-19 Response / Tourism Small Grants Programme	<p>The EnGenDER “Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean” Project seeks to further integrate gender equality and human-rights based approaches into disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change (CC) adaptation and environmental management frameworks and interventions and identify and address some of the gaps to ensure equal access to DRR and climate change and environment solutions for both men, women, boys and girls in nine Caribbean countries including Saint Lucia.</p> <p>Under the EnGenDER Project, Global Affairs Canada has repurposed funds for COVID -19 Response through Un Women Multi Country Office in the form of small grants for the Tourism and Agriculture Industry. The funds will be offered as a source of relieve to persons within the industries who has been affected negatively by the pandemic. The funds available under the project is US\$22,000.00/ EC\$59,771.80.</p> <p>The Department of Gender Relations held a meeting with key representatives from various organizations namely SLHTA, SLTA, Ministry of Tourism and the Vendor’s Association. Topics discussed at the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which groups of tourism workers should be chosen for this programme?</li> <li>• How many beneficiaries?</li> <li>• What criteria should be place for beneficiaries?</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How should it be rolled out?</li> <li>• Preparation of proposal.</li> <li>• Discuss best payment methods.</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>Stemming from that meeting the SLHTA submitted a proposal to the Department of Gender Relations encompassing the necessary requirements needed to help secure the grant funding from the EnGenDER programme.</p>
	Social Media / Website / Newsletter	SLHTA continues to stay connected with members and followers through several mediums, whether through Advertisements, vacancies or just public sensitization. Over the past month we have reached over 65,000 people through our daily posts on Social Media, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We also continue to update the SLHTA website with our weekly Newsletters and other press releases.