

# **News Items and Public Crime Summary for Week Ending April 23, 2011**

## **Curacao – Mexican Oil Rig Moored at Caracasbaai**

Mexico-based GRUPO R has transported their oil rig SDR BICENTENARIO by the self-propelled heavy lift carrier Blue Marlin from South Korea to Curacao for maintenance.

A German company will assist during the trials and on completion will escort/tow the SDR BICENTENARIO to her final destination in Mexico on or about May 5<sup>th</sup>. (Various media)

## **Curacao – USFOL: Community Church Paintjob by Volunteers**

Iglesia Adventista de Shete Dia Mundu Nobo shines brighter in the beautiful Curacao sun thanks to its fresh new paint, compliments of volunteers from the 429th Expeditionary Operations Squadron, located at the U.S. Forwarding Operating Location (USFOL). On Thursday morning, April 14, 26 USFOL service members plus several members of the congregation spent all morning repainting the exterior walls of the church. Military Chaplain Capt. Dennis Gnueu and his assistant, Msgt Adam Hurlbert, directed the volunteers while church Pastor Emerick Angela and several of the church's elders assisted with the effort. (Various media)

## **Curacao - USFOL: Two Consecutive Days of Community Outreach**

On April 8th and 9th, 2011, approximately 30 volunteers from the U.S. Forward Operation Location (USFOL), along with key staff members from the Holiday Beach Hotel (HBH), began renovations on a baseball field adjacent to the HBH. The baseball field has been used very heavily, yet the meticulous care needed to keep it nice has been neglected for a period of almost five years. Local schools and other groups within the Curaçao community have used the field but no one picks up trash or does the landscaping necessary to maintain its functionality. The vegetation overgrowth and overall dilapidated state was tackled vigorously over a two day period. (Various media)

## **St. Maarten – Insel Air: Three Weekly Flights to Puerto Rico**

Curacao-based Airline InselAir increased its flight schedule between St. Maarten and Puerto Rico on April 5. InselAir now offers three weekly flights week on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday. (Various media)

## **St. Maarten – Regina Labega New Airport Director**

Regina Labega is the new St. Maarten Princess Juliana Airport Director. She replaces Eugene Holiday who is now the St. Maarten Governor. (Various media)

## **Curacao – Twin Cities Star Tribune: Curacao Lets Freedom Ring**

An article about Curacao by Andrea Sachs of the Washington Post featured in the Twin Cities Star Tribune. See link for details.

<http://www.startribune.com/lifestyle/travel/119908769.html> (Antilles Post)

## **Curacao\Aruba - Arcos Dorados Raises \$1.25B In IPO at NYSE**

Arcos Dorados Holdings has raised US \$1.25 billion in an initial public offering (IPO), Bloomberg reports. The Buenos Aires-based McDonald's operator and owner of the Curacao and Aruba establishments sold a total of 73.5 million shares at \$17 per unit. Bank of America, JPMorgan Chase, Morgan Stanley, Citigroup and Itau Unibanco Holding led the sale. Arcos Dorados will list the shares on the New York Stock Exchange. (Various media)

## **BES Islands – Trafficking in Persons Victim Assistance Training**

Training organized by the Dutch Caribbean Police Corps strengthened the capacity of the BES-Islands' Victim Assistance Bureaus. A Dutch Victims Assistance Bureau specialist provided training for the participants on helping victims of trafficking. (Various media)

## **St. Maarten – New Legislation: More Legal Brothels Allowed**

The St. Maarten Government's policy regulating sex businesses and strip clubs has been amended to increase the number of brothels from six to eight as of February 26, coupled with a "long term approach" to enact legislation that will bring tighter control to the adult entertainment industry.

Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication Franklin Meyers said the amendment does not affect the number of strip clubs allowed, which remains at four. The regulations on premises will specify the minimum size of working areas and govern safety, fire precautions and hygiene. For instance, every working area must be equipped with a panic button and there will be improved medical and safety requirements, according to Meyers.

Also, the government will regulate the position and status of prostitutes, protect their physical and mental integrity, and review the quotas allowed per establishment. A complete copy of the policy and amendments is available on the government Website [www.sintmaartengov.org](http://www.sintmaartengov.org) (Daily Herald).

## **Aruba – One Case of H1N1; No Reason to Panic**

Aruba has recorded one case of the contagious influenza virus H1N1 in 2011 but it is no reason to panic, according to an Aruba Health Department spokesperson. The world is in the post H1N1 pandemic period, according the World Health Organization (WHO). The person diagnosed with the H1N1 flu virus is reportedly recovering from the illness. (La Prensa)

## **Aruba – New TIP and Human Smuggling Campaign Launched**

“Open your eyes” is the name of the information and awareness campaign launched by the Aruba government in an attempt to curb Human Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons. People can now dial the 24-hour Aruba hotline at 592-3231 to report possible cases. During the coming weeks officials will distribute posters and flyers to inform the public. Most citizens are not familiar with the topic and even government has no idea of the extent of the problem on the island, according to Jeanette Richardson, national Human Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons coordinator. (Daily Herald)

## **Aruba – U.S. Deports More Than 2,000 To Caribbean This Year**

The United States has deported more 2,000 criminals back to the Caribbean in the past six months, according to figures released by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The figures show that from the start of the 2011 fiscal year in October last year to the end of March this year, 88,497 criminal "aliens" or migrants were deported to their country of birth in the Latin America and the Caribbean.

A "criminal alien" is defined under US immigration laws as a migrant who is convicted of a crime. The number sent back to Latin America alone stood at 86,469 while 2,028 were sent back to the Caribbean. So far this fiscal year, 50 migrants have been sent back to Aruba, but the other Dutch Caribbean islands have received none, according to the article. (Aruba Post)

## **Curacao – Aqualectra Seeks Consultancy Aid In The U.S.**

Curacao Utility Company Aqualectra Board of Commissioners President Oswald Van der Dijks traveled to Houston for a meeting with Purvin & Gertz consultants.

Purvin & Gertz is an international energy consulting firm providing services to the crude oil, petroleum refining, natural gas, LPG, NGL and power generation industries. The firm's headquarters are located in Houston, Texas, with an international network of offices in the U.S., Canada, Europe, South America, Russia, Asia and the Middle East. Dutch Company Ecofys, specialists in energy saving and renewable energy solutions, has together with Purvin & Gertz conducted an environmental and optimality study at the Venezuelan state-owned Oil Company PdVSA leased and operated Isla Refinery. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

## **St. Maarten - Carnival Official: Crime Becoming Commonplace**

The backlash from three recent robberies/attacks committed against Carnival Corporation cruise ship passengers has led cruise line officials to label the country's crime situation as being "commonplace."

Carnival Corporation Vice President Caribbean Relations Gordon Buck addressed the two crimes involving cruise passengers of Carnival Victory that occurred on Saturday in an e-mail to St. Maarten Harbor Group of Companies CEO Mark Mingo on Monday. Mingo fears St. Maarten might lose vital cruise business, if the government does not address crime adequately. (Daily Herald)

## **Curacao - USFOL Volunteers Continue To Make A Difference With Fuik Youth**

US Forward Operating Location (USFOL) men and women have developed a “Big Brother/Big Sister” mentoring program that is continuing to make a difference in the lives of many students who come to FUIK for their after school mentoring program. On 12 April 2011, 10 volunteers from the USFOL participated with FUIK students, helping them with homework and mentoring as positive role models.

One of the FUIK program leaders commented, “We are glad that you came today to help our children and we look forward to you coming as often as possible. We truly need more adults as mentors and role models for our children.” A USFOL volunteer observed, “We need to stay in touch as there is more work needed here. We can help facilitate a quiet environment and desire to continue to learn.” Also on this visit, the USFOL, courtesy of the Chaplain Team, donated eight kickballs and a box of clothing for the children. Mr. Eman and Mrs. Emma Cesar, founders of FUIK, were overwhelmed with the generosity and thanked the volunteers for their time as well as future visits to help their eager FUIK students. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

## **St. Maarten – Five Human Smugglers Sentenced**

In July 2010, the St. Maarten Police, Kingdom Detective Cooperation Team RST and Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard started the “Cerberus” investigation into an organization suspected of trafficking in persons.

Four of five persons arrested were sentenced by a Court of First Instance judge for their involvement in smuggling nine Cubans into St. Maarten. One person was acquitted. The sentences ranged from 10 months to six years and 10 months. The men organized at least five smuggling operations between St. Maarten and the U.S. and British Virgin Islands last year.

The men were arrested after law enforcement officials intercepted the illegal Cubans in a bus. It is unclear whether St. Maarten was their final destination. All nine alleged Cuban victims reportedly submitted a request for asylum. Reportedly, one of the smugglers owns and operates a mini-grocery store in Florida. (Daily Herald)

## **Curacao – Second U.S. Made Fire Truck Arrived**

Hato International Airport in Curacao recently took delivery of a new Oshkosh Striker 3000. Curacao Airport Partners (CAP) purchased two fire trucks from Oshkosh Airport Products, a division of Oshkosh Corporation, last year. The first truck arrived in September 2010. The USFOL reportedly uses similar trucks which make the exchange of knowledge, support, and training exercises easier, a CAP press release stated. (Various media)

## **Aruba – OECD Released Legal and Regulatory Framework Peer Review Report**

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes has released its Aruba Legal and Regulatory Framework Peer Review report. The Global Forum is the multilateral framework in which work in the area of tax transparency and exchange of

information is carried out by over 90 jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction participates in the Global Forum on an equal footing.

The report summarizes the legal and regulatory framework for transparency and exchange of information in Aruba. The international standard, set out in the Global Forum's Terms of Reference to Monitor and Review Progress Towards Transparency and Exchange of Information, is concerned with the availability of relevant information within a jurisdiction, the competent authority's ability to gain timely access to that information, and in turn, whether that information can be effectively exchanged with its information partners.

While Aruba has a developed legal and regulatory framework, the report identifies a number of areas where Aruba could improve its legal infrastructure to more effectively implement the international standard. The report includes recommendations to address these shortcomings. For more details: <http://www.bfsb-bahamas.com/international/095978200.pdf> (Amigoe)

### **Aruba – Central Bank Monthly Report: U.S. Tourism Drops**

Tourist arrivals increased by 1,195 (1.8%) in February 2011, in part due to a higher number of stay-over tourists arriving from Canada (1,343), Venezuela (+422) and The Netherlands (+204). There was a decrease in arrivals from the United States (-1,505) and Brazil (-532). The number of cruise passengers grew by 13.6% to a total of 90,384 during February 2011, compared to the same month in 2010, according to an Aruba Central Bank report. (Various media)

### **Curacao – 2012 FCCA Congress on Curacao**

The Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) announced it will organize the Nineteenth Annual FCCA Cruise Conference & Trade Show in Curacao next year. The FCCA expects more than 1,200 participants will attend the event.

The FCCA is a not-for-profit trade organization composed of 14 member cruise lines operating more than 100 vessels in Floridian, Caribbean and Latin American waters. Created in 1972, the FCCA's mandate is to provide a forum for discussion on legislation, tourism development, ports, safety, security and other cruise industry issues. By fostering an understanding of the cruise industry and its operating practices, the FCCA seeks to build cooperative relationships with its partner destinations and to develop productive bilateral partnerships with every sector.

The FCCA works with governments, ports and all private/public sector representatives to maximize cruise passenger, cruise line and cruise line employee spending, as well as enhancing the destination experience and the number of cruise passengers returning as stay-over visitors. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

### **Curacao – Insel Air Offers Service to Charlotte, NC Starting June 22**

Management of local airline Insel Air announced they will start service to Charlotte, NC on Wednesday and Saturday starting June 22, 2011. Insel Air currently offers daily flights to Miami. US Airways operates hubs in Charlotte, NC, Philadelphia and Phoenix, and a focus city in Washington, DC, at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport making the Northeast more accessible, according to Insel Air. Also, Insel Air signed an interline agreement with US Airways in 2009. (Various media)

## **Aruba – Joint Court Rules: Three Prisoners In A Cell Allowed**

The Aruba Court of First Instance ruled in favor of 150 prisoners who filed the lawsuit that led to an unprecedented decision to reduce the KIA prison system significantly, last February. A few weeks later, the Joint Court of Justice suspended the Court of First Instance decision which mandated the government to reduce the number of prisoners per cell. Most prisoners are packed three to a cell.

In its final ruling this week, the Joint Court of Justice allows three prisoners per cell but the judge also gave prison management six months to improve the health and hygiene circumstances which led to unrest among prisoners.

The Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) of the Council of Europe criticized the Aruba prison system in 2007, but their report is just a recommendation, the Minister said. The current policy is aimed at re-socialization and day programs instead of creating more cell space. (Various media)

## **CURAÇAO**

### ***Crime April 15 – 20***

On April 15, a home owner in Mundu Nobo was robbed by several men. The following day, home owners in Veeris were robbed by four masked men. The suspects demanded drugs and money. One victim was shot and injured during a struggle after which the suspects fled the area. On April 17, a female pedestrian in Heintje Kool was beaten and robbed. Other robberies took place in Welatina, Buena Vista and Montagne, but police did not provide details. (Amigoe, Extra, La Prensa, Antilliaans Dagblad)

## **ARUBA**

### ***Crime April 15 – 20***

On April 15, a pedestrian was beaten and robbed (location not provided). The same evening, the driver of a vehicle in Madiki was robbed by two drug addicts. The next day, a bar in Oranjestad was robbed. (Diario Aruba, Amigoe).

## **ST. MAARTEN**

### ***Crime April 15 – 20***

On April 16, two cruise ship passengers were robbed in Philipsburg. The same evening, a man was shot and killed outside a bar in Mary's Fancy. The victim in this crime was charged in 2005 with death by neglect for shooting and killing a friend in February of the same year, and he spent 18 months in jail. There were two armed robberies on April 18. A Chinese store in St. Peters and a gas station in Cole Bay were robbed. Police later apprehended the two suspects who had

robbed the store. There were two armed robberies on April 19 as well. A Chinese supermarket in Simpson Bay was robbed by three men. The same evening, three other men attempted to rob an elderly couple in their home in Pelican Keys. When the suspects realized they were unable to complete the robbery, they fled the area. The suspects in both cases were arrested by police. On April 20, a man in Dutch Quarter was shot and injured by the driver of a vehicle. (Daily Herald, St. Maarten Island Time, Amigoe)

### ***Murders, robberies solved***

Three murders, two violent robberies and one rape committed by the „gypsy taxi bandits“ between February 26 and March 4 have been solved in a cooperative effort among the St. Maarten Police Department, the Public Prosecutor’s Office (PPO), the Curaçao, Aruba and Dutch Caribbean Police Departments, and other law enforcement agencies. The solved crimes include the death of megayacht *Cheetah Moon* French chef Ludovic Guillevin, who was found on Mullet Bay Beach on February 26, and the March 4 murders of F. Louis and E. Nova Valdez. Three nationals of Dominica were arrested on April 7, and are the main suspects in these crimes. The three men pretended to operate a „gypsy taxi“ to pick up potential victims. If the victims did not want to get in the car, they were sometimes forced to do so. They were ill-treated in the car and taken to a deserted place to be robbed and sometimes raped or murdered. The PPO and the police investigation team have concluded that the suspects’ confessions had “enough corroboration” based on the statements of the co-suspects and on the findings at the various crime scenes. Chief of Police Peter de Witte said authorities had reason to believe the „gypsy taxi bandits“ were responsible for more violent crimes than those to which they had already confessed. (Daily Herald, St. Maarten Island Time)

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*“The Weekly Press Summary is a compilation of stories running in the Dutch Caribbean press that is intended to alert readers about items of interest to them. There is no interpretation or verification of the facts contained therein.”*