

# Cruise ship captain expresses dissatisfaction with Montego Bay port

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MONTEGO BAY, St James

GIOVANNI Cutugno, the captain of Carnival Magic, the largest vessel of the Carnival Cruise Lines, is urging the Port Authority of Jamaica (PAJ) to undertake the necessary works at the Montego Bay port in a bid to make it more accessible to large vessels.

“It would be very nice to have something done to make the port a little cleaner in certain corners and whatever can be done in the channels because with a wind that can reach 25 knots of gust, it is a challenge. In other words we cannot come in,” lamented Cutugno.

The Carnival Magic, which was calling on the Montego Bay port for the first time yesterday, experienced delays in docking at the facility due to a strong gusty wind and less than desirable passage to the docking bay.

Tourism interests, including ground transport operators who were awaiting the arrival of the ship, experienced jitters as the cruise vessel with its 4,500 passengers including 1,400 crew members, experienced a more than one-hour delay before docking at the port.

After the strong winds subsided and the ship drew into the port, players in the tourism industry who watched on in earnest, breathed a deep sigh of relief.

During a ceremony aboard the vessel to exchange plaques, the captain, who noted that the Carnival Cruise Line has been using the harbour since the early 1970’s, expressed that “if there was another vessel there, with this wind we would not have enough space to get in”.

Meanwhile, the PAJ’s vice president of cruise shipping and marina operations, William Tatham, who was onboard the vessel for the ceremony, expressed that he has already made contact with the technical department of the PAJ to address Cutugno’s concerns.

“While Captain Giovanni was talking I immediately wrote the harbour manager and alerted him to the captain’s concerns that there were depth and channel issues,” Tatham said.

“Whatever needs to be done, the Port Authority of Jamaica is committed to ensuring that the port is safe for the passengers and for the ships.”

He noted however, that in “normal circumstances” larger ships than the Carnival Magic have called at the Montego Bay port without any difficulty.

The Carnival Magic, which is 360 metres long, with a width of 50 metres, is able to accommodate a capacity of 6,000 passengers. It is scheduled to call weekly in the tourism resort capital of Montego Bay.

Meanwhile, Montego Bay mayor Charles Sinclair expressed his intent to make political representation to address Cutugno’s concerns.

“It (concerns) ought to be mentioned at the highest level. I am a member of the political directorate at the lower level and so I will ensure that it reaches to the highest level of that chain,” he explained.



Captain Giovanni Cutugno (left) accepts a painting from Port Authority of Jamaica vice-president of cruise shipping and marina operations, William Tatham during a brief ceremony aboard the Carnival Magicvessel yesterday. (Photo:Alan Lewin)