



# **MINISTRY OF TOURISM & TRANSPORT**

**The Hon. Zane DeSilva, JP, MP**  
Minister of Tourism & Transport

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**SUBJECT:           Superyacht Pandemic Policy**

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22 May 2020

**Today, Mr. Speaker,** the Ministry of Tourism and Transport is implementing a “superyacht tourism economic recovery plan” to attract superyachts to our shores this summer. This plan introduces superyacht “Isolation Charters” and owner trips, with specific superyacht pandemic policy guidelines during Phases 2 and 3 of Governments reopening strategy. It also provides for a soft reopening of Bermuda’s borders for visitors until the airport commences commercial flights in Phase 4 – the New Normal.

**Mr. Speaker,** by way of some background, the Superyachts and Other Vessels (Miscellaneous) Bill 2019 became law on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January this year and provides for three types of vessel permits, they are: i) transit ii) cruise and iii) superyacht charters.

**Originally, Mr. Speaker,** this season for superyacht charters was thought to be a casualty of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, in April, local port agents received inquiries from owners, captains and brokers about ‘safe harbouring’ and chartering in Bermuda while the pandemic situation unfolded in Europe, the east coast of the United States and the Caribbean”.

**Mr. Speaker,** the “superyacht tourism economic recovery plan” demonstrates a direct response to local stakeholder recommendations who have expertise in this area. In addition, the unfolding superyacht scenario revealed a new economic recovery opportunity for Bermuda vendors while ensuring quarantine and mitigating measures remain in place before commercial flights commence.

**Mr. Speaker,** working in consultation with the Ministry of Health, the Bermuda Tourism Authority and local marine stakeholders, the Superyacht Pandemic Policy Guidelines were approved by Cabinet to operate during Phases 2 and 3, as follows:

## Until Phase 4

1. All superyachts arriving in Bermuda must appoint a local port agent.
2. Owners and guests of superyachts arriving by private jet or charter aircraft who join the superyacht are required to fill out the Traveller Screening Form.
3. Owners, guests and crew arriving by superyacht must complete and submit the Pre-arrival form and Traveller Screening Form **prior** to their departure for Bermuda.
4. Owners, guests and crew must have adequate health insurance that includes medevac in the case a person is found positive for COVID-19 after arrival or during their stay in Bermuda or for any other reason a person takes ill and requires hospitalisation.
5. Any owner, guest or crew can be denied entry into Bermuda, and will have to return to their port or origin at their expense, at the discretion of the Ministry of Health if persons do not meet the above requirements or are deemed not to be fit to enter Bermuda.
6. Normal procedures (Passenger Ships and Other Vessels Act 1972) for application of superyacht transit, cruising or charter permits apply.
7. All vessels' owners, guests and crew are subject to 14-days of quarantine aboard the superyacht beginning on the day of arrival in Bermuda. If the superyacht arrives prior to the owner or its guests, the 14-day quarantine commences again from the day of arrival of the last person who joins the vessel.
8. During the 14-day quarantine, all commerce will be contactless and will be delivered to the ship via its port agent, including stores, provisions and personalised shopping for guests.

9. If deemed necessary by the Ministry of Health, during or following the 14-days of quarantine, COVID-19 (PCR) testing will be performed in Bermuda. The fee for testing is \$300.00 per person and will be billed via the port agent.
10. Once the 14-day quarantine period has ended or if testing was deemed necessary by the Ministry of Health, and, owners, guests and crew received negative test results, they will be permitted to come ashore and must follow all social distancing and mitigation regulations.
11. If Bermuda goes back to mandatory Shelter in Place orders, all owners, guests and crew will be required to shelter aboard the vessel.
12. If Bermuda enters Phase 4 during the transit, cruising or charter permit term, Phase 4 protocols will apply.

**Mr. Speaker,** the Bermuda Tourism Authority's pre-pandemic report by Superyacht Intelligence, the 'Potential of the Superyacht Industry for Bermuda', suggested that the estimated weekly spend could be between \$8,123.00 and \$317,031.00. These estimates took into consideration the smallest superyachts at 24 to 30 meters with just crew, or crew with approximately ten guests. As well as, the largest superyachts at 80 to 90 meters with just crew, or crew and approximately twenty guests.

**In addition, Mr. Speaker,** the Government of Bermuda would benefit from the new 6% "charter fee" for each charter.

**Mr. Speaker,** local port agents currently use a combination of small and medium sized vendors to fill requests for their provisioning needs. Produce and stores can vary on the occasion and the day for crew, and, get more elaborate if the owner or charter guests are onboard. One thing is for certain, superyacht chefs are eager to find made in Bermuda products and ‘local farm to table’ fresh vegetables, fruits, fish and dairy products. Quite often I am told, crew take a taxi on their own and visit local farmers and purchase fresh fish along the side of the road. For wine and liquor the yachts are usually extremely specific about what they are looking for and only certain merchants carry these products.

**Mr. Speaker,** as part of this initiative, we have encouraged local port agents to collaborate with the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation to design “isolation shopping” opportunities on-line. This initiative is specifically designed for made in Bermuda products to include art, crafts, jewelry, keepsakes and clothing to name a few. Delivery arrangements for samples and purchases will be made during the quarantine period, and beyond. We see this novel idea expanding in the future.

**Mr. Speaker,** in addition to the locally made products, this initiative also brings some economic recovery hope to wholesale, retail, restaurant and marine service providers during the coming weeks and hopefully months. As we charter our way through these uncertain times, we are hopeful that a few interested superyachts will come to Bermuda during the quarantine period in Phase 2 and 3, and ideally several more will follow during the summer months as this initiative gains momentum.

The guidelines will be posted on [www.marineandports.bm](http://www.marineandports.bm), [www.rccbermuda.bm](http://www.rccbermuda.bm), and on local port agent websites shortly.

**In closing Mr. Speaker,** economic recovery is something that the Ministry of Tourism and Transport strives for every day. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my Government colleagues and industry stakeholders who have worked diligently with us to get our island reopened in phases, and we look forward to slowly and carefully welcoming our visitors back to Bermuda.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker.**