



**Ministerial Statement to the House of Assembly**

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***Red Ensign Group Conference 2015***

**By**

**The Hon. Shawn G. Crockwell, JP, MP  
Minister of Tourism Development and Transport**

***Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2015***

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**Mr. Speaker,** I am pleased to inform this Honourable House of the 2015 Red Ensign Group Conference that was held at Grotto Bay Resort last week from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> June. This annual conference was hosted by the Department of Maritime Administration and the preparatory work for the conference was started in June 2014 with the arrival of the Red Ensign Group Millennium Bell from Gibraltar which hosted the last year's conference.

**Mr. Speaker,** the conference was attended by delegates from the United Kingdom, its Crown dependencies and Overseas Territories which include Isle of Man, Guernsey, Jersey, Gibraltar, Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, Montserrat, and Turks and Caicos Islands. Collectively, the previously mentioned jurisdictions operate the prestigious British Shipping Registry and the ships which are registered under the British Registry fly the 'British Red Ensign' as the common flag of the Group.

However, the members of the group have the option of using its own national flag on its own ships, as an alternative to the Red Ensign, having received a warrant from the UK. The Red Ensign is synonymous with the British nationality of the

ships that fly it, in the high seas, and it is well respected and recognized as a reputable flag having a legacy of high quality ships with excellent safety standards.

**Mr. Speaker,** the conference is a forum designed for the self evaluation of the performance and progress of the British shipping registries as a group over the past 12 months, and for deliberating and developing strategic policies and plans that would help develop the growth of the REG registries, while maintaining high standards and meeting the expectations of the customers. The 2015 REG conference started with face to face, bilateral meetings held between each of the member Administrations and the delegation of the UK Government, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, ahead of the formal conference proceedings. These bilateral meetings provide opportunities for each member to discuss its own performance over the last year, and also discuss any particular interest or subjects, in confidence with the UK delegation. The formal start of the conference was on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June, at 10:00 am with the Opening Ceremony which was held at the St. Georges Town Hall. In traditional Bermuda fashion, all the national and international delegates were dressed in the unique Bermuda shorts and jacket attire for the opening ceremony and the official photograph.

The delegates were received in the Town Square by the Town Crier who guided them and the invited guests to the Town Hall. The Right Worshiper Mayor of St. Georges Quinell Francis welcomed the REG delegates to the Town Hall and it was my pleasure to provide the opening remarks and declare the conference opened by ringing the REG Millennium Bell.

Following the opening ceremony a reception was held with refreshments for the delegates and the invited guests. The working sessions started in earnest at 11.00

am at Grotto Bay and continued as per agenda until the closing of the conference at 5.00 p.m. on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Speaker, conference was co-chaired by Sir Alan Massey, the Chief Executive Officer of the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency, and Capt. Pat Nawaratne the Chief Marine Surveyor of the Bermuda Maritime Administration. The conference agenda contained a wide variety of important topics such as Strategy and International Relations, Ship Registration that included IMO Instrument Implementation Code, future IMO Audits, Maritime Security, Rescue of Maritime Migrants, Hydrography and Navigational Charts, Search and Rescue at Sea, Prevention of Marine Pollution, Marine Casualty investigation, Seafarers Training and Qualifications, International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions, Fishing Vessel Code and, Survey and Certification of ships. There were also two guest speakers who presented excellent up-to-date technical information on ship vetting and marine insurance. Mr. David Peel a manager of the company Right Ship provided an in depth analysis of safety related data collected from ships around the globe and Mr. Nicholas Taylor the Senior Vice President of British Marine Insurance spoke on the maritime insurance in general, the Nairobi Convention, Athens' Convention and their effect on REG ships.

**Mr. Speaker,** I would like to acknowledge the Bermuda contingent that included Mr. Edward G. Robinson (Registrar of Shipping), Survey Manager Mr. Simon Hill, Senior Surveyors Mr. Taran Card (Bermuda Office), Mr. Mike Barnett (DMA UK Office), and Mr. Chris Boreham (DMA UK Office). The communication and secretarial services for the conference were provided by the Department's Quality Assurance Manager Ms. Maggie Benn and their Secretary Ms. Savone Green. The Department of Communication and Information Services also ably assisted with

the conference, in providing printed material and the photographic and media services.

**Mr. Speaker,** in addition to the conference proceedings, the DMA worked very closely with their Bermuda Maritime Industry partners in organizing a number of social events to provide the opportunity for our Bermuda business partners and interests to meet with the REG delegates to develop relationships and networking opportunities. I must also mention that the local shipping industry partners were very forthcoming and willing to contribute towards promoting the Shipping Registry and Bermuda in general as a high end tourist destination.

**Mr. Speaker,** in closing I would like to thank His Excellency the Governor for inviting the REG delegates and invited guests to Government House for a reception in the evening of 23<sup>rd</sup> and I also would like to acknowledge and thank the industry partners for their participation and they include Bermuda Business Development Agency, Conyers Dill and Pearman, Shoreline Managers Ltd., and Concordia Maritime (Bermuda) Ltd.

**Mr. Speaker,** the conference was truly a success and the delegates that I had the opportunity to meet and speak with provided very complimentary remarks and comments on the organization of the conference and social events and they were very impressed with the Island as a tourist destination; and some of them are already making plans to return with their families.

Thank you.