



Ministerial Statement

By

The Premier of Bermuda

Friday, 5th December, 2014

The America's Cup Bid Journey

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share the journey of Bermuda's successful bid for the 35th America's Cup. Winning the bid to host this prestigious event is quite a remarkable moment for Bermuda and its people.

Since the very first race, only four nations have won what is often called the "oldest trophy in international sport." And in its 163-year history, The America's Cup has been held in just 8 locations. Bermuda is honored and proud to join this distinguished group.

Being the home of the America's Cup is an extraordinary opportunity that aligns perfectly with the heritage, profile, spirit and future of our island.

Mr. Speaker, The Government of Bermuda was invited by the America's Cup Event Authority (ACEA) to submit a response to a Request For Information to Host the 35th America's Cup to be held in 2017. The deadline for submission was 21st, March, 2014.

A small team of public and private sector representatives were engaged to assess the viability of a Bermuda bid. This group, was led by the Minister of Education and Economic Development

supported by Jasmin Smith, Director of Transport, and private sector representatives Michael Winfield and Peter Durhager.

Mr. Speaker, ironically the team initially determined that Bermuda should concentrate its efforts to prepare a bid to host the World Series which was deemed within Bermuda's reach. However, during a conference call with the ACEA, its representative advised that ACEA was not prepared to accept a bid for the World Series at that time. Against this backdrop and with the support of Cabinet, the Bermuda team reconsidered its approach and focused its efforts on the bid for the AC Finals.

Mr. Speaker, the ACEA received twelve submissions and of these six locations were short-listed. By September 2014 Bermuda and San Diego were the two remaining venues competing to host the Cup Finals. The Bermuda Team continued to engage with the ACEA to highlight the benefit of the Finals being held in Bermuda as well as to demonstrate Bermuda's ability to host the event.

As a part of the process, the Bermuda Team explored site infrastructure and logistics issues, concessions and legislative framework, as well as commercial sponsorship all with a view to making Bermuda's bid as competitive as possible.

Mr. Speaker, both Bermuda and San Diego were required to enter into individual Host Venue Agreements with the ACEA setting out responsibilities and commitments relative to our respective jurisdictions. These agreements were executed prior to the ACEA making its final choice of venue.

During the bid process Bermuda hosted several site visits wherein multiple venues were considered. From the very start, Bermuda's bid was designed around our many strengths.

These include:

- our near perfect sailing conditions
- our temperate year-round climate for team training
- our optimal location and time zone for visitors and television viewers alike

- the intimate and unmatched setting offered by Bermuda's Great Sound
- our maritime legacy and innovation; and
- the spirit and hospitality of our people.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, 1st December, I travelled accompanied by Dr. Grant Gibbons, Minister for Education and Economic Development and other members of the Bermuda AC Team to New York City. And on Tuesday, 2nd December, 2014 at the Crosby Hotel, Harvey Schiller, America's Cup Commercial Commissioner, announced Bermuda as the host for the 35th America's Cup event. The Royal Naval Dockyard, with its magnificent setting and rich maritime history, had been selected as the venue to base the 2017 America's Cup.

Mr. Speaker, a purpose-built event village will be developed in the South Basin of Dockyard, offering an unparalleled viewing experience, along with infrastructure to support and service the sailing teams and spectators.

Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity today, to again thank the America's Cup Event Authority for their confidence in Bermuda - and for their vision to evolve the experience for spectators and participants alike. There is no better vivid and hospitable setting than Bermuda to stage an event of this nature and for the next evolution of the sport.

Mr. Speaker, we are mindful that all developments associated with the America's Cup must be sustainable and in the best long-term interests of Bermuda and Bermudians. The work to develop the event village will dovetail with the investments made by the Bermuda Government in the restoration and evolution of Dockyard.

Mr. Speaker, our vision for the America's Cup in Bermuda is to deliver an unforgettable experience that will be nothing short of spectacular for the teams, sponsors, spectators and all Bermudians.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.