



502 East Jefferson Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Telephone: (850) 222-8028

Fax: (850) 222-7552

www.flaports.org - E-Mail: info@flaports.org

ORIGINAL

RECEIVED

04 APR - 1 PM 1:38

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
FEDERAL MARITIME COMM

cc: 020/030  
022  
01 10  
02 20  
03 40  
04  
05

March 26, 2004

The Honorable Bryant L. VanBrakle, Secretary  
Federal Maritime Commission  
800 North Capitol Street, N.W. - Room 1046  
Washington, D.C. 20573-0001

Re: FMC Dkt 02-1 5 (Passenger Vessel Financial Responsibility) -  
Cruise Industry Status Update.

Dear Mr. VanBrakle:

The Florida Ports Council is an organization comprising Florida's fourteen (14) deepwaterports with the purpose to support and improve the development of international commerce in the State of Florida.

As the capital of the North American cruise industry and the corporate home or administration office for 15 cruise lines, Florida derives substantial economic benefits from the cruise operations at its seaports. These benefits include the direct expenditures of the cruise lines both for administering their operations and for provisioning their ships; the indirect and induced impacts of these expenditures; and local and state tax revenues.

In FY 02/03, 14.0 million cruise passengers embarked and disembarked from Florida's ports, a 6.5 percent increase over FY 01/02. The number of multi-day cruise passengers increased by a striking 7.2 percent, surpassing the average 6.9 percent growth in the North American cruise market as a whole in 2003. Several multi-day cruise ports saw their cruise activities grow by substantial percentages, ranging from 8.7 percent at the Port of Miami to 11.1 percent at Port Canaveral and 38.9 percent at the Port of Tampa. The Port of Jacksonville entered the cruise market in late 2003 and anticipates strong growth in 2004. (See attached)

We have reviewed the March 18, 2004, submission by Royal Caribbean Cruises, LTD., providing an update as to the present state of the cruise industry. The purpose of this letter is to offer support to the requested action contained in the subject submission relating to Passenger Vessel Financial Responsibility and urge the FMC to grant the requested action and consider Cruise Industry Status Update and Exhibits provided in support of the action.

March 26, 2004

Page 2

As previously reported, the cruise industry plays a vital role in the contribution to the financial stability of Florida's major seaports. The advent of increasing maritime security costs has placed additional operational burdens on Florida's seaports and private sector terminal operators. Any action which would increase operational costs for Florida's major cruise carriers such as costly coverage of unclaimed passenger deposits coupled with increasing security costs could severely impact the continued growth and expansion of the cruise industry at Florida's ports.

We request a balanced and informed view on the subject issue before the FMC.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. LaCapra". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being the most prominent.

John R. LaCapra  
President

JRL/rds

Attachments

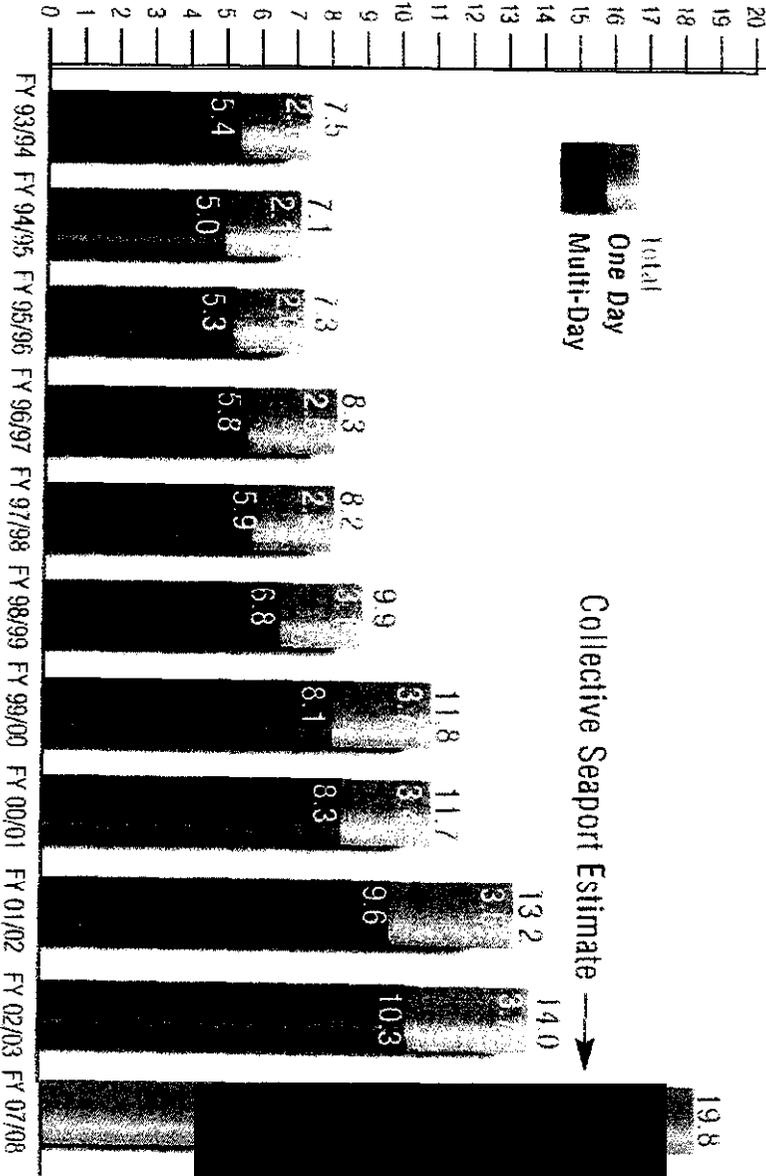
C:\MyFiles\Letter to Honorable Byrant L. VanBrakle

**FY 02/03 (with FY 01/02 Comparison)  
Embarkations and Disembarkations**

<b>Port</b>	<b>One-Day Cruise</b>	<b>Multi-Day Cruise</b>	<b>Total FY 02/03</b>	<b>Total FY 01/02</b>
Canaveral	1,941,020	2,168,450	4,109,470	3,824,240
Everglades	1,050,174	2,325,497	3,375,671	3,485,857
Fernandina**	-	64	64	454
Jacksonville	-	6,409	6,409	-
Key West**	-	1,009,456	1,009,456	927,746
Manatee	23,886	35,371	59,257	63,042
Miami	-	3,960,614	3,960,614	3,642,990
Palm Beach**	633,230	3,920	637,150	591,479
Tampa	-	810,114	810,114	583,130
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,648,310</b>	<b>10,319,895</b>	<b>13,968,205</b>	<b>13,118,938</b>

Source: Individual seaport data. \*Cruise passengers are counted twice, once when they embark on their cruise and once when they disembark. \*\*Port-of-call for passengers on multi-day cruises.

CRUISE PASSENGERS (Embarking and Disembarking in Millions)



Source: Individual seaport data