



**Victoria, BC concludes busy cruise ship season with more than 550,000 passengers
Greater Victoria Harbour Authority anticipates more than 240 cruise ship calls during 2017
season**

Nov. 3, 2016, Victoria, BC – This year, the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA) welcomed more than 550,000 passengers and 212,000 crew from 224 ships to Ogden Point, Canada’s busiest cruise ship port of call.

As part of the 2016 season, Royal Caribbean International’s *Explorer of the Seas* made 21 daytime calls to Ogden Point, making it the largest cruise ship as a regular call on an Alaskan route. The *Explorer* was the first Voyager-class cruise ship to make regular stops in Victoria, bringing 3,626 visitors during each call.

“We are incredibly proud to have welcomed these visitors to Victoria throughout our 2016 season,” says Ian Robertson, CEO of the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority. “We’re anticipating an increase in ship calls for 2017, mostly as a result of repositioning cruises during the shoulder season. With these types of voyages, cruise lines may select any Canadian west coast port of call, and the fact that they are choosing Victoria signals to our team and our member agencies that we are a preferred destination for cruise lines and their guests.”

In 2017, GVHA estimates more than 240 ship calls, reflecting the growing popularity of Victoria as a destination, and of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska routes for cruise passengers. The 2017 cruise call schedule will be available early in the new year at gvha.ca.

“Congratulations to the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority for a very busy cruise ship season,” says the Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour. “I was delighted to be on hand at the start of Victoria’s cruise ship season to welcome the *Explorer of the Seas* to Victoria in May. With an 11.5 per cent increase in international visits so far this year, the cruise ship sector is helping grow our tourism industry and keeping B.C.’s economy leading the way in Canada.”

The 2016 season kicked off on April 3 and wrapped up on October 17. It is estimated that the overall economic impact of cruise for Greater Victoria is more than \$100 million; each cruise ship call brings in an average of \$400,000 in direct spending to the region.

In 2016, ships from Royal Caribbean International, Norwegian Cruise Lines, Princess Cruise Lines, Disney Cruise Lines, Holland America Line, Crystal Cruises, Celebrity Cruise Lines, Oceana Cruises, Carnival Cruise Line, Silversea Cruises, and Regent Seven Seas each made calls to Ogden Point.

Additional highlights from the 2016 season:

- Along with the *Explorer of the Seas*, Ogden Point welcomed two additional inaugural calls, the Holland America Line *Nieuw Amsterdam* and the *Maasdam*.
- Crystal Cruises became a regular monthly caller to Victoria.
- The arrival of North America's first fully-electric double-decker bus, in partnership with CVS Tours and GreenPower.
- Second consecutive year with no elevated readings of sulphur dioxide from the James Bay air monitoring station.

About Greater Victoria Harbour Authority

Greater Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA) is a not-for-profit organization governed by a local Board of Directors. It owns and operates deep water, marina and upland holdings throughout Victoria's harbour including the large vessel Ogden Point port facility where a dynamic cruise tourism industry contributes over \$100 million annually to the regional economy; Victoria's renowned Fisherman's Wharf float home community and small business hub; and the Inner Harbour's luxury yacht and marine tourism facility at Ship Point. GVHA's vision is a harbour where people live, learn, work and play; a spectacular gateway into Victoria's past and into its future, monumental in look and feel, linking communities and all people together. www.gvha.ca

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