



Overview

CTO/CRSTDP **standardized, certificate Tour Guide** training programme

The EU-funded Caribbean Regional Sustainable Tourism Development Programme (CRSTDP), has been launched with the primary focus of contributing to make the tourism sector of the Caribbean, and in particular the CARIFORUM countries, more competitive and more sustainable and contribute to the economic growth and poverty reduction in the Caribbean. To this end, the CRSTDP HRD component, being implemented by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), is in the process of developing a **standardized, certificate Tour Guide** training programme, among others.

The CTO embarked on this activity in recognition of the fact that some countries in the region did not have a strong tour guide programme in place and were still using CTO's training programme entitled "Presentation Skills for Tour Guides" which was a basic programme, which needed expanding, updating and upgrading. The CTO is now at the stage where it has hired a short-term consultant, Ms. Iris Barry from the United Kingdom, to develop a standardized, certificate Tour Guide programme.

The standardized tour guide programme will be offered at two levels:

The Level 1 course has been designed as an entry-level programme for newcomers to tour guiding or as a refresher course for existing tour guides. The course corresponds to the Institute of Tourist Guiding, London, U.K. Level 2 tourist guiding qualification. This course leads to a qualification, which will enable graduates to:

- Offer fixed route tours on a moving vehicle, e.g. coach, boat etc.
- Conduct fixed route tours on foot
- Have in-depth knowledge of the sites and tourist attractions visited
- Demonstrate a range of communication skills essential for the delivery of an effective commentary and presentation

The Level 2 course will be a more advanced course, corresponding to the Institute of Tourist Guiding, London, U.K. Level 4 (Blue Badge) tourist guiding qualification. It is designed to train guides to:

- undertake the widest possible variety of work
- be able to research and prepare not only sightseeing coach tours but also tailor-made tours for special interest groups and themed walks

The knowledge base is therefore far more extensive, including core knowledge of the geography and geology, history, social fabric and natural history of the guide's country, together with detailed knowledge of its tourist attractions.

The CTO/CRSTDP's intention is to share the materials developed with interested countries so that they can offer a certificate programme in Tour Guiding, and CTO/CRSTDP also intends to gain international recognition for the programmes by seeking accreditation from the World Federation of Tourist Guides Association (WFTGA). In an effort to have local, regional and international input into this programme, the CTO's short-term Consultant, Ms. Iris Barry, will be working closely with the Institute for Hospitality & Tourism School for Graduate Studies & Research, University of the West Indies, Mona campus. We are also exploring the possibility of collaborating with HEART/NCTVET in Jamaica regarding the award of NVQJ's/CVQ's to graduates of the programme.

While generic course content will be developed by the consultant, Ms. Barry, it is expected that each country will be responsible for providing the country-specific information for the programme. More specifically, the Consultant has developed a trainer's manual and a participant's manual as one of the outputs of her work.

It is proposed that the CTO-developed standardized Tour Guide training programme, at Levels 1 and 2, be offered at the local community colleges, which already have travel, tourism and hospitality studies departments or any locally recognized hospitality/tourism training institutions. Generic modules, with the exception of practical guiding and communication skills, should be delivered by community college staff, augmented by specialists, where required. The practical guiding and communication skills component of the course **must** be taught by persons who will be trained by the CTO.

In this regard, the CTO conducted a Training of Trainers workshop for experienced professional tour guides who the training institution will be required to use for the delivery of the communication seminar, walking tour, site tour and moving vehicle tour modules and to lead the practical guiding sessions. This Training of Trainers course took place at the Garraway Hotel, Roseau, Dominica, from the 6th to 14th November 2007, where a total of 12 persons were trained across the region.

Persons participating in this workshop have been identified by their country as professional, experienced tour guides, who will be willing and available to conduct the practical component of the training with the college, on an ongoing basis. These persons will be required to undertake written assignments and practical exams, and be successful, before the CTO approves them as formal trainers for the course. The CTO, through EU funding, supported the attendance of the participants to this workshop.

In preparation for this workshop to be held in Dominica, the CTO partnered with the Discover Dominica Authority (DDA), which kindly provided assistance in the organization of the Opening Ceremony, local workshop logistics and provided a complimentary island tour to showcase the Indian River, Fort Shirley, Carib Indian Territory and Emerald Pool to the regional participants.

The Dominica State College (DSC), having already adopted the CTO-developed Common Core Curriculum Hospitality & Tourism Associate degree programme has indicated keen interest in providing this Certificate Tour Guide Training programme as one of its course offerings.

With its current membership of 32 Dutch, English, French and Spanish speaking member countries, the CTO continues to play an important role in identifying training gaps in the region and helping to address these training gaps through the development and delivery of specific training programmes across the region, targeted at both the tourism public and private sector. CTO's mandate focuses on regional initiatives that benefit its individual member countries. As such, CTO in conjunction with the interested countries will seek to organize, where deemed necessary, tour guide-related support training workshop(s) at the national level. CTO will share the CTO-developed materials with the specific country, link the country in question with a relevant CTO-endorsed Master Trainer and the country in question will seek funding to implement the workshop. It is hoped that as discussed, Dominica will position itself to organize a similar workshop to continue to build capacity in this area.

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