

LOUISIANA INTERNATIONAL TRADE BULLETIN

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November 2009

MEETING WITH BRAZIL'S GREEN BUILDING INDUSTRY

The World Trade Center, in cooperation with the Embassy of Brazil and the Honorary Consulate in New Orleans, will hold a meeting at the WTC from **10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon on November 13** where representatives of **six major companies in Brazil's green building industry will describe their services** and the opportunities for partnerships with Louisiana firms.

The Brazilian companies are seeking to meet Louisiana counterparts interested in investing in Brazilian real estate development projects, as well as to meet potential suppliers of green building materials. Other interests include Engineering, Architecture, and Civil Construction, possible Joint Ventures, and relationships with Service Providers (lawyers, architects, engineers, real estate brokers).

The meeting will be held in the 29th-floor Executive Offices of the World Trade Center. There is no charge for participating but advance registration is required. To register call Karla Canedo at (504) 529-1601, ext. 227 or send an e-mail to eschreiber@wtcno.org.

NOVEMBER 13 PROGRAM ON THE CURRENT CRISIS IN IRAN

The World Affairs Council of New Orleans is sponsoring a program on the current crisis in Iran on **Friday, November 13** featuring **Dr. Reza Aslan speaking on "The Future of the Iranian Dream."** Dr. Aslan is a celebrated author of "No God but God" and "How to Win a Cosmic War" and a contributor to CNN, MSNBC, Daily Beast, Oprah, and other major international media networks. The program will be held at the University of New Orleans Performing Arts Center Auditorium at 6:30 p.m. The presentation will last approximately two hours. **For additional information and to purchase tickets, visit <http://wacno.org/ss1>.**

LOUISIANA TRADE SHOWS

As a follow-up to the October 27-19 **Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exposition (LAGCOE) held in Lafayette, Louisiana**, information and copies of the international presentations given during the event will be available soon on the U.S. Commercial Service New Orleans website - www.buyusa.gov/neworleans. Also this year's **Annual Workboat Show in New Orleans will be held December 2-4.**

The U.S. Commercial Service **expects foreign delegations from Nigeria and France to attend the show.** Please visit the USCS booth at the event for details on these delegates.

NOVEMBER 17 BRIEFING ON ASIA PACIFIC REGION

On Tuesday, November 17 the World Trade Center will host a breakfast briefing at 8:00 a.m. on **"Developments and Opportunities in the Asia Pacific Region"** featuring **Patrick B. Fazzone**, Partner, Butzel Long Tighe Patton, PLLC, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Fazzone's presentation will cover:

- **Status of the major economies in the Asia Pacific region** in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis (mainly China, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, and Australia)
- **Some recent developments and trends**
- **Potential areas of opportunity for U.S. companies**
- **Issues to be aware of in doing business in the region**

Patrick Fazzone is a partner at the Washington D.C.- based law firm Butzel Long Tighe Patton, PLLC, which has a network of offices in the United States as well as in China and Australia, and affiliated firms in all of the major commercial centers in the Asia Pacific region. **He has been involved on matters involving the Asia Pacific region for over 20 years.** To register for the breakfast briefing, **call the WTC at (504) 529-1601, ext. 220, or register on-line at www.wtcno.org/programs.**

NOVEMBER 19 BEAUJOLAIS NOUVEAU WINE RELEASE EVENT

The French-American Chamber of Commerce, Louisiana Chapter, is celebrating the worldwide release of the **2009 Beaujolais Nouveau** from 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. on **Thursday, November 19** at the Southern Food and Beverage Museum at the Riverwalk Market Place at #1 Poydras St. in New Orleans. By tradition, on the third Thursday of November, the Beaujolais Nouveau wine is shipped immediately from vineyards and flow to cities across the world.

The New Orleans event features delightful delicacies prepared by: Cafe Degas, Chateau du Lac, Maurice's French Pastries, La Boulangerie, Flaming Torch, Commander's Palace, Coquette, and Cafe Adelaide. The cost is \$45 per person for FACC members, and \$44 for non-members, which includes both wine and food. **For ticket reservations, call Karen Martin at (504) 523-5281 or e-mail beaujolaisnouveau@gmail.com.**

WORLD CULTURAL ECONOMIC FORUM ATTRACTS 30 COUNTRIES

Representatives from 30 countries convened in New Orleans in late-October for the third World Cultural Economic Forum. WCEF was created by Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu to build cultural economic development opportunities through convening of cultural ambassadors and leaders from around the world.

WCEF focused on creating ties between international delegates and Louisiana leaders. More than 100 one-on-one meetings were arranged between delegates and Louisiana stakeholders creating opportunities for the development of cultural, educational and commercial partnerships. Lt. Governor Landrieu met with more than 15 heads of delegation in bilateral discussions.

The WCEF program featured roundtable discussions focusing on four key themes: the creative economy, the business of carnival and festivals around the world, the role of culture and society, and the exploration of alternative sources of energy.

MIAMI CONFERENCE ON CARIBBEAN & CENTRAL AMERICA

Caribbean Central American Action (CCAA) has announced that a special plenary session highlighting the new role of multilateral and regional development banks in the region will be held at the 33rd Annual Miami Conference from November 30-December 2 at the InterContinental Hotel in Miami.

The session will feature the major institutions working in the Caribbean and Central America and will review how countries in the region are positioning themselves to survive the turmoil in global markets.

The session also will address how these institutions have responded to increased public and private sector requests for funding. Confirmed are senior representatives from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Inter-American Development Bank, Caribbean Development Bank and Central American Bank for Economic Integration.

CCAA's Miami Conference on the Caribbean and Central America continues to be the premier trade and policy forum for the countries of the Caribbean Basin. Titled "Responding to Global Challenges: Surviving and Prospering in Today's Economy," the 2009 Conference will highlight how the governments and the private sector of the Caribbean and Central America are addressing the multiple economic and political events that have dominated the past year and how the region's international partners are working through the challenges with them.

To access the current Miami Conference Agenda, visit www.c-caa.org/pdf/09Mc_agenda.

HISPANIC CHAMBER TO HOLD JOINT NETWORKING EVENING

The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana is holding a Joint Networking Evening on Wednesday, November 18 from 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. with the East Jefferson Business Association, the Jefferson Chamber, the Jefferson Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Kenner Professional Business Association. The event is sponsored by Whitney National Bank and will be held at Whitney's branch in Metairie at 4845 Veterans Blvd. (between Transcontinental and Clearview). Free admission, food, refreshments, and music. RSVPs are required at events@elba.org or calling (504) 828-0500.

ANNUAL "AZUCAR BALL" SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER

On Saturday, November 21 the New Orleans Hispanic Heritage Foundation will host its 19th annual fund raiser "The Azucar Ball." This year the theme of the event will be "Cabaret Tropicana." It will be a wonderful night of dancing, fun and celebration of Latin heritage.

The black tie affair will take place at the InterContinental Hotel in New Orleans New Orleans with non-stop music from 8:00 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. by Julio y Caesar and Rumba Buena. There will be a silent auction for those wanting to bid on some very special items and trips. As always, there will be delicious food.

Ileana Suquet and Darleen Carlisle are co-chairing the event and are working with their committee to make this "Azucar Ball" another memorable experience. The recipient of this year's Galvez Cup will be Eugene Schreiber, Managing Director of the World Trade Center of New Orleans.

The proceeds from "The Azucar Ball" will provide much-needed revenue for the Foundation's scholarship fund. For the past 19 years, the New Orleans Hispanic Heritage Foundation Scholarship Fund has provided outstanding Hispanic students with scholarships to attend public, private and parochial high schools in the city. Last year 37 scholarships were awarded.

Individual tickets to "The Azucar Ball" are \$100 a person. Tickets to the patron party and the ball are \$150 each. For ticket information please call Rosa Rodriquez or Hannagan Johnson at (504) 523-2600.

LIST OF CONSULATES AND EMBASSIES ON WTC WEBSITE

The World Trade Center receives numerous inquiries about the contact information for the foreign consulates in New Orleans and the embassies in Washington, D.C. This information is readily available on the WTC website at http://wtcno.org/site/?page_id=110, as well as a link to the list of consulates located in Houston that cover Louisiana.

CBP OUTLINES POLICY ON IMPORTER SECURITY FILING RULE

Note: The following article is reprinted from WorldTrade\ INTERACTIVE with the permission of Sandler, Travis, & Rosenberg, P.A.

According to press reports, **Assistant Commissioner Thomas Winkowski** told a November 4 meeting of the Commercial Operations Advisory Committee that **U.S. Customs and Border Protection will “take a common sense approach” to imposing penalties** for violating the 10+2 importer security filing rule once the current period of informed compliance ends January 26, 2010.

Winkowski assured the trade community that CBP’s focus will be more on aiding compliance with the rule than penalizing minor violations and stated that as a result all ISF penalties will be first be reviewed at CBP headquarters.

Under the ISF rule, importers and maritime cargo carriers must submit additional cargo data to CBP before vessels are permitted entry into the country.

Importers have to report 10 data elements on each ISF, including information that identifies the manufacturer, supplier, seller, buyer and consignee; the country of origin and tariff classification number; where and by whom the goods were stuffed into the container; and the party responsible for compliance with applicable import requirements.

Five data elements are required for shipments consisting entirely of freight remaining on board cargo or goods intended to be transported in-bond as an immediate entry or transportation and exportation entry, including who is paying for the transportation of the goods and where the goods are headed.

CBP’s goal is to have all data elements filed 24 hours prior to lading, but it has allowed for some flexibility either in timing or interpretation for six of the data elements.

The ISF rule took effect January 26, 2009, but full enforcement will not take effect until January 26, 2010, following a year of education, outreach and informed compliance efforts. As of that date, importers will be subject to fines of \$5,000 each time an ISF filing is late or inaccurate.

At the recent COAC meeting, however, Winkowski said “it’s not about penalties” or “nitpicking” for CBP, which will seek to avoid levying penalties for minor ISF filing mistakes and instead continue efforts to inform filers of the rule’s requirements.

Those efforts have thus far included the issuance of ISF penalty mitigation guidelines and the posting of a list of answers to frequently asked questions on the CBP Web site, and Winkowski said enforcement guidelines are also being developed.

Importers are legally responsible for the accuracy and timeliness of their ISF filings, regardless of whether a customs broker or other intermediary does the actual filing.

SOSA NAMED TRADE FINANCE SPECIALIST AT SBA OFFICE

Carlos Sosa has been appointed as Regional Manager of the Export Solutions Group with the **U.S. Small Business Association’s Office of International Trade in New Orleans**.

In announcing the appointment, **Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu, Chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship**, stated that “Increasing staff in Export Assistance Centers throughout the country, and especially in New Orleans - the artery of much of our nation’s commerce - is critical for small businesses, especially in these tough times. Because of the recession small businesses are seeing fewer sales at home while encountering more competition from international firms. Exporting is now a practical solution for these entrepreneurs and having experienced, guided help from people like Carlos is critical to their success.”

Mr. Sosa grew up in New Orleans, attended Jesuit High School and has a BS degree in Finance and an MBA from the University of New Orleans. Prior to joining the SBA, he served as Vice President of JPMorgan in Cincinnati for four years and spent the previous 10 years as Vice President and Trade Finance Manager with Fifth Third Bank in Cincinnati. He started his banking career in New Orleans in the international departments of Whitney National Bank, Hibernia National Bank, and FNBC. **Mr. Sosa can be reached at (504) 589-2757 or via e-mail at Carlos.Sosa@sba.gov**

EX-IM BANK HITS RECORD HIGH FOR EXPORT FINANCING

The U.S. Export-Import Bank reported October 13 that **in fiscal year 2009 it authorized more than \$21 billion in financing for U.S. exports and \$4.36 billion for small business exports**, both record highs. The \$21.02 billion total for all loans, guarantees and export credit insurance was a **massive jump from the \$14.39 billion authorized in FY 2008**, and Ex-Im Bank Chairman Fred Hochberg attributed the increase in part to the Bank’s role in helping to “fill the gaps in trade financing created by the international economic crisis.” **The \$4.36 billion total in support of small business exports was also a significant gain from FY 2008 (\$3.19 billion)** and represented nearly 21% of total Ex-Im Bank financing. Overall, the Ex-Im Bank **supported 2,891 financing transactions in FY 2009**, of which small business accounted for 87.9%.

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LOUISIANA TAX FREE SHOPPING CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

The Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Program (LTFS) will celebrate its 20th anniversary on November 17 at 9:30 a.m. at Lakeside Mall, 3301 Veterans Memorial Blvd. In addition to the 20-year anniversary celebration, there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony to announce the opening of a new redemption center within Macy's Lakeside.

Louisiana was the first state to initiate a program of this type, offering international visitors tax-free shopping while traveling within the state. The LTFS Program gives international visitors the opportunity to make tax-free purchases at more than 800 participating retailers throughout Louisiana. Visitors enjoy the convenience of applying for the sales tax refund in cash at four locations in the state.

Since 1989, more than 600,000 international customers have taken advantage of Louisiana Tax Free Shopping and recorded over \$500 million in international tax-free sales. Hotel, restaurant, and service sales taxes are not refundable. In February of 2008 the University of New Orleans conducted a study to determine the economic impact of LTFS on Louisiana's economy. It determined that LTFS generated \$1.4 million in new state sales tax revenue in 2007. In addition, the program's total economic impact on the State of Louisiana was \$45.1 million. The figure includes both direct and indirect spending by international visitors. "There is no doubt that Louisiana Tax Free Shopping has been a boon for our state's economy," said Cynthia Bridges, Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Revenue. "The program's 20-year record of success speaks for itself."

The Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Program was created by Act 535 of 1988, introduced by state senators Hank Lauricella, Ben Bagert, and Ken Hollis, and by state representatives Jim Donelon, Woody Jenkins and Charles Lancaster. LTFS Refund Centers processed the first sales tax refunds for international visitors in November 1989.

"This groundbreaking program promotes both tourism and retail trade globally for the state and has become one more reason for international travelers to visit Louisiana," said Eugene Schreiber, Managing Director of the World Trade Center of New Orleans and chairman of the Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Commission since its inception.

CARNIVAL TRIUMPH CRUISE SHIP DEBUTS FROM BIG EASY

The 2,758-passenger Carnival Triumph arrived in New Orleans on November 11, a day later than anticipated due to Tropical Storm Ida. Carnival Cruise Lines' ship represents a 34 percent increase in capacity, as it replaces the 2,056-passenger Carnival Fantasy, which will now sail from Mobile, Alabama.

"Carnival Cruise Lines' commitment to New Orleans underscores the City's attractiveness as a top destination for cruise passengers," said Gary LaGrange, President and CEO of the Port of New Orleans. "Cruising from the Crescent City is literally two vacations in one. Passengers typically stay a few days before or after their cruise to take in the sights, sounds and cuisine of New Orleans."

Carnival Triumph will launch a year-round schedule of four, five and seven-day Caribbean departures on November 14. On its New Orleans-based program, four-day cruises depart on Thursdays and call at Cozumel, while five-day voyages depart Mondays and Saturdays and visit Progreso

REGNARD ELECTED TO ASSEMBLY OF THE FRENCH ABROAD

Mr. Damien Regnard of New Orleans was recently elected to the Assembly of the French Abroad by the French people living in Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Louisiana (more than 15,000 individuals) as their representative. The last representative elected from Louisiana was in the early sixties.

The Assembly is the third Assembly in France, after the National Assembly and the Senate. It is comprised of 150 elected individuals from all over the world, representing 2.5 million French citizens living abroad. The Assembly is presided over by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and its meetings are held in Paris four times a year (two General Assemblies and two Commissions). Created 61 years ago, its mission is to advise the French Government and the French Parliament on matters and issues related to French living abroad. In the United States, there are 11 such elected representatives: five on the East Coast, four on the West Coast, one in Chicago for the northern states, and one (Mr. Regnard) for the south-central states.

In addition to being the link between the French residents of the states noted above and the French Government, Mr. Regnard also has become a member of the Electoral College to elect French Senators and to allow candidates to run for the Presidency of France. As a French elected official, he also is a member of all and any commissions of the Consulate in New Orleans, and is involved in all aspects touching French living abroad: Social Security, retirement, schools, French media, security, taxes, cultural and some business aspects. He and the other elected members of the Assembly of French Abroad have regular contacts and meetings with the French Ambassador in Washington.

The Consulate General of France remains open in Louisiana, and the Consul General remains the representative of France for Louisiana authorities.

Mr. Regnard said he intends to use his six-year term to reinforce and develop the excellent relations between France and Louisiana. He also serves as the President of the French-American Chamber of Commerce, Louisiana Chapter, and can be contacted at damien.regnard@grouppdirect.org

and Cozumel. Seven-day cruises depart on Saturdays, with exotic western Caribbean itineraries visiting Belize City, Isla Roatan (Honduras), and Cozumel. Eastern Caribbean cruises call on Key West, Freeport and Nassau.

In addition to a diversity of "themed" bars, lounges and nightspots, Carnival Triumph features myriad full-service and casual dining choices, an on-board health and fitness facility, complimentary children's programs in three different age groups, and a comprehensive golf program offering golf excursions and personalized lessons. Cell phone service and ship-wide Wi-Fi access is also available. Of its 1,379 staterooms, 60 percent offer either an ocean view or balcony.

According to the Port of New Orleans, the cruise industry is vital to Louisiana's economy, supporting 3,617 jobs, which result in \$108.8 million in wages. Industry spending totals about \$149 million annually, which produces \$23.7 million in state and local taxes, and cruise passengers account for more than 180,000 room nights in area hotels.