



NEWSLETTER

PORT AUTHORITY OF GUAM

FEBRUARY 2023

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Vice Chairperson

Dr. Judith P. Guthertz
Board Secretary

Conchita S.N. Taitano
Board Member

Port Management

Rory J. Respicio
General Manager

Dominic G. Muna
Deputy General Manager Operations

Port Wins Another Transparency Award



The Port Authority of Guam was awarded the First Place Platinum Award for the Fiscal Year 2021 Citizen-Centric Report (CCR).

This is the second time the Port has received the First Place “Excellence in Citizen-Centric Reporting Award” from the Association of Government Accountants (AGA), Guam Chapter.

The award was presented during the 2023 AGA Guam Professional Development Conference held at the Westin Resort Guam.

“Receiving this prestigious award for a second time shows our team’s commitment to elevating transparency and comprehensible reporting,” said Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio. “We will continue to be guided by the vision of Governor Lou Leon Guerrero and Lt. Governor Josh Tenorio, who are firm believers in a direct and transparent government.”

In September of 2020, the Port Authority of Guam was awarded,

for the very first time, the national “Certificate of Excellence in Citizen-Centric Reporting Award” by the National Association of Government Accountants” for the agency’s Citizen-Centric Report published in July 2020.

In December of that year the Port then won the First Place Platinum “Excellence in Citizen-Centric Reporting Award” for the fiscal year 2019 report and the “Accountability and Transparency in Citizen-Centric Reporting Award” for issuing and posting the agency’s Citizen-Centric Reports on the Port website for fiscal years 2010 through 2019.

The Citizen-Centric Report initiative, adopted through Guam Public Law 30-127, assists in advancing accountability and transparency in our government. This report provides information about the agency’s goals, performance measures, audited financial statements, challenges and outlook of operations, and most

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importantly, how taxpayer or ratepayer dollars are spent in a manner that is easily understandable and accessible to our citizens.

“Congratulations on this well-deserved achievement,” wrote AGA Guam Accountability Director Dr. Doreen Crisostomo to Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio.

The Port’s Citizen-Centric Report is produced

by the Financial Affairs Division under the direction of Financial Affairs Controller Jose B. Guevara, III with the assistance of the Port’s Marketing Division. The award-winning Port Authority of Guam Citizen-Centric Report may be viewed at the Port’s website at https://portofguam.com/sites/default/files/fy2021_ccr.pdf.

Guthertz Recognized for CCR Contributions



Port Board of Directors Secretary, Dr. Judith P. Guthertz, received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Association of Government Accountants Guam Chapter for her sponsorship of Bill 263-30, which proposed that Government of Guam agencies adopt the Citizen-Centric Report (CCR) Initiative to promote the importance of transparency and accountability in the operations of government and the use of taxpayer money.

Bill 263-30, which was co-sponsored by our very own General Manager Rory J. Respicio and Senator

Judith T. Won Pat, was unanimously passed and became Public Law 30-127, *“An act relative to adopting the AGA’s Citizen-Centric Report Initiative on April 2, 2010.”*

When the bill was first introduced, Dr. Guthertz’s sponsorship was based upon the premise that “The foundation of a democracy is based on governments being answerable to their citizenry and as having a responsibility to provide information regarding government operations, most noticeably in regards to how taxpayer dollars are spent.” Her support for transparent reporting by sponsoring the bill has today become the driving force for each Government of Guam’s timely production of their annual Citizen-Centric Report.

“Financial reports are often too lengthy and too technical for the average person. Poor performance has created a problem of trust between citizens and their government,” continued Guthertz. “The AGA Citizen-Centric Report Initiative is designed to help remedy this situation. The CCR is a new approach of presenting financial and essential information on the activities of government instrumentalities to the citizenry and other interested parties.”



PAG Meets With Congressman Moylan and MARAD Partners



From the onset of the Leon Guerrero Tenorio Administration, General Manager Rory J. Respicio has been taking every opportunity to strengthen the Port's relationship with federal partners and aggressively pursuing federal monies to make the Port of Guam a more resilient and sustainable facility. The network and relationships that have been established during the past several years has resulted in the Port's messaging now being heard and addressed by policymakers in Congress and federal agencies' leadership in Washington DC.

"Our message is getting out there – if the Port isn't ready, then the military will not be ready to move critical assets to and from Guam's only commercial seaport," said Respicio. "With increased military presence in the region and the geopolitical landscape in Asia, Guam's maritime posture is critically important to DOD's Pacific Deterrence Initiative."

On a recent trip to Washington DC, Respicio and Port Board member Conchita Taitano visited newly-elected Congressman James Moylan who serves on the House Armed Services Committee

and the House Natural Resources Committee - both of these Committees address issues that are vital to Guam.

Respicio and Taitano briefed Congressman Moylan of the Port's challenges with the grant requirement to the Buy American Act, which has been an obstacle for the Port in acquiring new Ship-To-Shore (STS) gantry cranes and acquiring steel for the rehabilitation of Hotel Wharf with the use of federal funds. Recognizing the urgency of this matter, Congressman Moylan has pledged his support and is ready to assist the Port in pushing the Port's concerns in Congress.

The Port team also paid a courtesy visit to Rear Admiral Ann C. Phillips, US Navy (Ret.) Administrator of USDOT's Maritime Administration (MARAD). As head of the MARAD, Phillips advises

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and assists the Secretary of Transportation on commercial maritime matters, to include the movement of goods, supply chain, as well as the U.S. maritime industry, environment and compliance, ports and waterways infrastructure, and strategic sealift. She engages public and private stakeholders in the maritime industry and oversees the U.S Merchant Marine Academy.

Phillips also oversees MARAD's programs to improve and modernize the nation's maritime network by administering the unprecedented investment in ports and waterways made possible by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, including \$2.25 billion to be awarded over the next five years through the Port Infrastructure Development

Program and \$25 million for the America's Marine Highway Program.

This visit was essential in bringing light to the Port's struggles with the Buy American Act restrictions. GM Respicio and Director Taitano explained the Port's dilemma with implementing two critical projects due to the restrictions of this regulation. Having served on Guam while in the Navy, Phillips empathized with the Port's position and gave her support to bring this issue up the chain of command. As a former Admiral, Phillips recognizes Guam's strategic importance to the nation's indo-pacific strategy and security, particularly now with China's aggression in the region.

Port Meets with INDOPACOM and US Army Corps of Engineer

While in Hawaii to attend the Association of Pacific Ports Winter Conference, General Manager Rory J. Respicio and Port Board member Conchita Taitano took the opportunity to meet with key federal partners to discuss vital matters relative to the implementation of core developments in the Port's Modernization Program.

On February 14, 2022, the Port team met with Major General Joshua M. Rudd, Chief of Staff, United States Indo-Pacific Command at Camp Smith. The meeting was arranged to discuss the Port's efforts in obtaining federal funding for three new gantry cranes and purchasing steel for the shovel ready project to rehabilitate Hotel Warf. Respicio explained that a major challenge faced by PAG is the Buy American Act, which requires that all iron, steel, and construction materials used in infrastructure projects are to be produced in the United States.

Currently there are no ship-to-shore (STS) manufacturers in the United States and the cost of purchasing steel in the US is significantly higher than purchasing steel made in Japan, South Korea or other Asian countries. Respicio explained that this has been a major obstacle in moving forward with these two critical projects – gantry crane replacement and Hotel Wharf rehabilitation.

"We are knocking on every door to seek assistance with the hurdles we are facing in executing our facility upgrades. I am very pleased that our federal partners recognize the urgency of our circumstances and are willing to assist in



Board Member Conchita Taitano and General Manager Rory J. Respicio met with US Army Corps of Engineer Chief for Civil and Public Works, Rhiannon Kucharski.

anyway possible and bringing our concerns to Congress," said General Manager Respicio.

MG Rudd was very receptive to the Port's plea for assistance in seeking a waiver to the Buy American requirement as he recognizes Guam's defense is imperative as a key strategic hub and

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vital to America's security and prosperity. MG Rudd understands that Guam's only commercial sea port must be ready to move military assets at a moment's notice, most especially now with aggression from China and North Korea. He was open to other options and means in obtaining the ship to shore cranes.

Also present at the meeting were MG Rudd's uniform team leaders for Transportation, Logistics, Finance and their Legal Counsel.

General Manager Respicio and Director Conchita also met with officials from the United States Army Corps of Engineer (USACE) while in Hawaii. They met with Rhiannon Kucharski,

Chief for Civil and Public Works, and her team who have been working with the Port's Planning Division on several projects. They discussed the Guam/USACE Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which outlines USACE support to the Port through engineering, professional, technical, and environmental assistance for upcoming projects.

The Agat Marina maintenance dredging project and the Agat Bay Regional Shoreline Assessment were also topics of discussion as well as opportunities for federal funding through USACE, civil work support, assistance with permitting process, and discussions on the Mangroves Watershed Strategic Plan for Guam.

Port attends AAPA Powers Summit and APP 2023 Winter Conference



The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) hosted a newly created Port Opportunities with Energy, Resilience & Sustainability (POWERS) Summit & Exposition that took place January 24 through 26, 2023 in Tampa, Florida. Attending this first-time summit was Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio and Port Board member Conchita Taitano.

The POWERS Summit & Expo brought together port executives, energy leaders, environmental experts, and other key stakeholders for deep-dive conversations on emerging sustainability solutions in the port industry.

Ports sit at the epicenter of energy transformation both in the United States and abroad and, according to an AAPA survey, are poised to build nearly \$50 billion in green infrastructure over the next ten years but they need funding assistance from the government to make it happen.

This conference launched vital conversations on the industry's plans for the future, including energy expertise, energy exporting, pragmatic decarbonization, technology for renewables, and environmental sustainability.

Today, Ports are ambitiously pursuing new projects to mitigate emissions and strengthen resiliency, but they have unmet and technological needs to ensure cargo efficiency improves alongside energy security and environmental protection.

The Port team also attended the Association of Pacific Ports (APP) 2023 Winter Conference held in Honolulu, Hawaii from February 8 to 10, 2023. As a longtime member of the association, General Manager Rory J. Respicio and Director Conchita Taitano attended the annual event where members shared best practices, lessons learned, peer-to-peer networking, and professional development.

"As a member for more than 25 years, the Port has experienced the benefits of being a part of the association, engaging in timely port industry issues and economic trends, hearing first hand perspectives from key port industry leaders, learning what's new at other ports, and sharing our Port experiences with constituents," said General Manager Respicio.

The Winter conference covered a range of maritime issues to include Logistics Optimization and Security, Ports and Technology, Upgrading and Improving Port Operations, Legal Issues Affecting

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Business, Sustainable Asset Management and Maintenance of Infrastructure, Grant Application Tips, Bunkering/Micro grid Program to name a few and a panel discussion on environmental sustainability.

Director Taitano participated as a panel member for the Environmental Sustainability forum and gave a presentation about the Port of Guam called, *“Our Road Toward Port Sustainability & Resiliency.”* The panel dialogue focused on impacts from climate change and the potential adaptation and mitigation strategies for Ports. In addition, the panel discussed the potential reuse of dredged materials, improved environmental sustainability through infrastructure development, and maintenance methods and funding opportunities associated with sustainability, environmental resiliency and restoration.

Director Taitano’s presentation shared some of the sustainable and resilient opportunities the Port is incorporating and pursuing in its modernization projects. She highlighted the Port’s ongoing efforts to protect the marine environment during the rehabilitation of Hotel Wharf. The environmental assessment of H-Wharf showed that the construction project will have no

significant impact on the environment with the Port’s implementation of its mitigation plan and best management practices.

She reported that, to date, 258 coral colonies were successfully relocated and monitoring over a 36-month period show that the coral survivorship was 93% for reference corals compared to 79% for the relocated corals. This difference was due primarily to the deaths of a larger number of relocated *Pocillopora damicornis* colonies at the shallow reattachment sites.

The Port is committed to protecting Guam’s natural resources through silt and sediment control, stormwater management, sea turtle conservation and construction debris removal. The Port will also remove other non-construction-related debris found within the area.

In support of transitioning toward a net carbon zero facility, Director Taitano shared the Port’s success in securing DERA funding from US EPA to replace 4 terminal tractors with 16 Tier-3 ultra-low sulfur diesel terminal tractors. She added that the Port’s Solar Feasibility Study was completed and under review with the Guam Power Authority, and that the next step is to conduct a greenhouse gas emission inventory to further identify other viable opportunities to reduce the Port’s carbon footprint.

Director Taitano reiterated the Port’s support of the island’s recycling efforts. She said the Port will conduct an assessment on the most practical location for the Recycling Enterprise Zone, which was authorized by a Public Law, sponsored by our Port General Manager when he was a Senator.

In her presentation, Director Taitano also recognized the importance of Guam’s mangroves and promoted the concept of investing in nature-based solutions to address climate change impacts, such as shoreline erosion, tidal flooding and storm surges through living shorelines.

“It is my mission to assist the Port in taking a leadership role in preserving our natural resources and developing sustainable programs that will benefit not just our port but the island community,” said Director Taitano.

Present at the conference were members from Alaska, American Samoa, British Columbia, Canada, California, Fiji, Guam, Hawaii, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Oregon, Saipan, Taiwan, and Washington.





The first cruise ship to come to Guam since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic sailed into Apra Harbor in the early morning hours of February 24, 2023.

The MS Amadea had 523 passengers and 302 crew members on board and were disembarking by later morning for tours of the island returning by the evening for their scheduled departure.

“We have been looking forward to receiving cruise ships following a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic,” Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio said. “We are excited to welcome these international luxury cruise ships back to our shores as our island continues to recover from the pandemic.”

Respicio added that there are a total of five cruise liners set to arrive throughout the year. “This is great news as our tourism industry continues to see a steady increase of visitor arrivals to Guam thanks to the leadership of Governor Lou Leon Guerrero and Lt. Governor Josh Tenorio,” he

added.

The MS Amadea, sailing under the Bahamas flag, is a 567-foot-long vessel which arrived from Pohnpei and will be dockside at the Port until its estimated departure time of 9:00 p.m.

Passengers spent the day experiencing Guam’s hospitality, malls and restaurants which helped boost our economy and further establish Guam as a world-class destination.

“The MS Amadea was docked at wharves F5 and F6,” Respicio said. “However, once the rehabilitation of Hotel Wharf is complete, cruise liners will begin to be docked, processed and welcomed at the expanded facility allowing for uninterrupted STS gantry crane loading and off-loading operations.”

The last cruise liner that called on the Port Authority of Guam was the Crystal Symphony which occurred in February of 2020.

More cruise ships are scheduled to arrive throughout the year.



Happy

INTERNATIONAL

Women’s Day

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Meeting with Major General Reventlow Regarding Marine Corps Move



The Port Authority of Guam officials met with Major General Keith Reventlow who is the commander of Albany's Marine Corps Logistics Base to discuss the Port's infrastructure, capacity, current and future projects as well as the Port's Readiness plan and sustainability initiatives.

This meeting allowed both organizations to come together to discuss the Port's current capacity as it relates to the deployment of military assets and future capacity when ongoing projects come to term.

The Port's Deputy General Manager of Operations Dominic G. Muña, Operations Manager Glenn Nelson and the Port's planning team lead the meeting, which highlighted the need to replace all three of its aging gantry cranes as well as the steps taken toward identifying funding sources, roadblocks met to include the Buy American Act, and management's current push toward garnering support for an exemption to this act as its impact may hinder the Port's capabilities for the region at such a critical time.

WSP Visits to Finalize the Port's Master Plan



The Port's Owner's Agent Engineer (OAE), WSP, visited the Port Authority of Guam during the week of Feb. 20-24, 2023. The meetings included a review of the Master Plan draft report, current and upcoming engineering projects, facility maintenance, Hotel Wharf, Agat Marina, tariff simplification, military readiness, IT Master Plan (TOS), HABS-HAER Study, Golf Pier, grant strategies, STS Gantry Cranes, Land use, EH&S status and the Port Security Plan.

Port Hire In-House Legal Counsel

The Port Authority of Guam has hired Attorney Jessica L. Toft, enhancing its in-house legal team.

Specializing in procurement, Attorney Toft has had nearly 20 years of experience practicing law, 19 of which have been in Guam with more than 10 years specializing in procurement.

“Having Attorney Toft join our team focusing on procurement will push our outstanding items forward,” said Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio. “Her extensive knowledge in procurement, as well as Open Government Law and Freedom of Information Law reinforces our commitment to transparency under the leadership of Governor Lou Leon Guerrero and Lt. Governor Josh Tenorio.”

Originally from Wisconsin, Attorney Toft graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Behavioral Science and Law. Furthering her studies, Attorney Toft continued on to attend the University of Wisconsin Law School where she received her law degree.

The year after graduating from Law School, Attorney Toft was hired by the Office of the Attorney General of Guam in 2004.

Attorney Toft was then hired by the Judiciary of Guam as a Law Clerk in 2006. It was in this position that Attorney Toft found her affinity for procurement law.

As an Assistant Attorney General, Attorney Toft honed her knowledge of procurement law and appeals by advising executive agencies of the Government of Guam in procurement and procurement appeals. Additionally, her responsibilities included advising in Open



Government Law matters, Freedom of Information matters, and reviewed Guam Administrative Rules and Regulation under the Administrative Adjudication Law.

When asked what she enjoys doing in her spare time, Attorney Toft responded, “I love the outdoors! I like to hike, dive, and play sports. Originally from Wisconsin, I am an avid Packers fan and I own stock in the team. It goes without saying, I also love cheese.”

Attorney Toft joins us shortly after Attorney Claveria left to work for a private law firm. We wish Attorney Claveria well in her endeavors.



Tamuning Elementary School Tours the Yard



The Port Authority of Guam had the pleasure of hosting Tamuning Elementary School students on February 17, 2023 for a tour of the Port. The 120 second grade students were escorted by their teachers and aides.

The students were greeted with welcoming remarks by General Manager Rory Respicio in the CFS Warehouse. The students were afforded the opportunity to know how more than 90 percent of the goods they have are received on the island. The students were provided a flow chart to see first-hand how cargo is processed, moved and transported into the community.

“As General Manager for the Port, I welcome the opportunity to help educate and share the Port roles with our island’s school students at every level,” Respicio said.

After Respicio met with students, they were escorted back onto their buses for a tour of the yard. The Port’s tour guides for the students were Anthony Evangelista, Raymond Santos, George Duenas and Kevin Sanchez. The students were

able to get a close-up view of the gantry cranes, pay loaders, and cargo containers in the yard. The guides provided a brief explanation of the primary operations, movement of equipment, types of equipment used and the different uses for the various containers. Students were able to see the new GPA generators that are currently being transported for the new power plant.

In preparation for the tour, students were given an assignment. Riley Aguon, daughter of Christopher Aguon in Planning, provided her answers to the questions. Riley reflected that her favorite part of the trip was to drive around to see the machines, and to see her dad. Riley also reflected that she thinks she wants to work here when she grows up. She understands how more than 90% of all the goods and supplies coming into Guam come through the Port.

Schools and organizations interested in a tour of the Port can visit our website at www.portofguam.com/school-tours or email tours@portofguam.com for more information.

February Photo Highlights



General Manager Rory J. Respicio and Former Senator Robert Klitzkie share a laugh as they reminisce of days when they were colleagues in the Guam Legislature. Although they may have disagreed on certain issues in the past, today Klitzkie recognizes the progress the Port Authority has made under the leadership of Respicio.



February Photo Highlights Continued



Employees of the Transportation and Terminal Divisions attended the Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) Training on February 2, 2023. The HAZWOPER training course is a set of guidelines produced and maintained by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration which regulates hazardous waste operations and emergency services in the United States and its territories.



ANTOINETTE M. MAFNAS
FRANKIE C. ROSALIN
ANTHONY J. EVANGELISTA
JOHN J. LEON GUERRERO
ERNESTO D. MADAHAN
RITA B. CARBULLIDO
MELISSA F. AGUERO
ALEXANDER J. AFLAGUE
CURTIS R. ETTLEMAN
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PATRICK E. ALVAREZ
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