



(OECS Secretariat, Castries, St. Lucia, Wednesday May 19th 2011) Chairman of the Council of OECS Ministers for Tourism Honourable Richard Ricky Skerrett says the OECS is considering strategic mechanisms to stimulate intra-regional travel, so as to facilitate easier movement of persons across the region.

Speaking to the media at the end of the 10th Council of OECS Ministers for Tourism meeting, Minister Skerrett indicated that discussions were held on the possibility of reducing departure taxes as an incentive for encouraging intra-regional travel:

“Ministers actually spoke to matters to do with “incentivizing” intra-regional travel which was a term used, and one of the ways of such incentive is to reduce the departure tax regime for intra-regional travel, in other words looking seriously at the possibility of having lower taxes for intra-regional travel so that we do everything we can to lower the actual cost of air travel. We are very, very serious about the concern that there has been a decline in intra-regional travel and the need to do everything we can collectively to stimulate such travel back up to pre 2008 levels and above.”

This plan is in response

to Ministers’ grave concern over the recent downturn in intra-Caribbean travel, which has been in the range of 40% to 50%, and which has negatively impacted the viability of the indigenous small hotel sub-sector in the OECS.



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