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**OCT. 17, 2005**

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**PORT OF PALM BEACH GAINS STATE SECURITY APPROVAL**

RIVIERA BEACH, Fla. – Culminating a multiyear cooperative effort, the Port of Palm Beach has earned approval from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) for substantial compliance with security mandates.

“In expressing pleasure with the dramatic security enhancements now in place, FDLE officials commended the Port of Palm Beach for obtaining one of the highest levels of security among Florida ports,” said Blair J. Ciklin, chairman of the Port of Palm Beach District Board of Commissioners. “We are proud of all who have contributed to the port’s success with this No. 1 priority of making our port as safe and secure as possible.

“The Port of Palm Beach could not have accomplished this without the total cooperation of port operators, tenants, workers, truck drivers and others, as well as those from numerous federal, state and local agencies,” Ciklin added. “Clearly, everyone recognizes that heightened security is a necessity now and in the future.”

Security enhancements at the Port of Palm Beach have included infrastructural projects, such as state-of-the-industry gate facilities and a new security operations center, as well as implementation of advanced access control procedures and training and deployment of a fortified security workforce. The port’s security contingent has doubled, to now include some 60 port security officers and contract personnel, as well as two canines. Compliance with mandates has quadrupled the port’s total annual security-related expenses.

Security mandates include Florida Statute 311.12, passage of which preceded the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, and the post-9/11 Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA).

“The Port of Palm Beach is grateful to our state government for their assistance in funding our port’s security initiatives,” Ciklin said. “Furthermore, we appreciate the FDLE’s latest approval, which allows the Port of Palm Beach to maintain operations as a significant contributor to the socioeconomic well-being of Palm Beach County and leaves the door open for future additional security-related funding.”

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