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NBAM
NATIONAL BOATING ASSOCIATION OF MALDIVES

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NBAM Calls for Impartial Investigation into Incident Involving Diving Teams of Maldives Legend Liveaboard and Infinity X

The National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM) expresses its serious concern regarding the recent incident involving members of the diving teams associated with Maldives Legend Liveaboard and Infinity X, footage of which has circulated widely across social media and international platforms.

NBAM considers the incident a serious matter that requires an impartial and thorough investigation. Any wrongdoing, misconduct or negligence by any party must be properly established and addressed in accordance with the laws of the Maldives.
The Association strongly urges all parties to refrain from premature conclusions, public accusations and internal blame games within the Maldivian boating and diving community. Responsibility must be determined through verified evidence and a fair investigative process.

At the same time, NBAM wishes to emphasise that the actions of individuals involved in an incident must not be used to discredit the entire Maldivian boating and diving industry or portray the Maldives as an unsafe diving destination.

The Association reiterates that accountability must be upheld, legitimate Maldivian businesses must be protected, applicable regulations must be enforced consistently and fairly, and the reputation and integrity of the Maldivian boating and tourism industry must be safeguarded.

Call for a Thorough and Impartial Investigation

NBAM calls upon the Maldives Police Service, Ministry of Tourism and other relevant authorities to conduct a thorough, impartial and transparent investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident.

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The investigation should establish the facts, identify any individuals or parties responsible for misconduct or negligence, and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

The Association emphasises that accountability must be based on verified evidence and that no individual, business or sector should be unfairly judged before the facts are established.

Foreign Vessel Operations and Genuine Local Participation

Beyond the immediate incident, NBAM wishes to highlight its longstanding concerns regarding foreign-operated vessels conducting tourism-related activities in Maldivian waters through locally registered corporate structures without meaningful local ownership, participation or operational involvement.

The Association understands that Infinity X previously operated as a foreign vessel and subsequently transitioned to a locally registered company structure following regulatory developments concerning the localisation of vessel operations.
However, concerns have been raised regarding the extent of genuine local participation and operational control within the current arrangement.

NBAM stresses that the mere registration of a business under a Maldivian company does not, in itself, establish genuine local ownership, participation or operational control. The substance of the ownership and management arrangements must be examined to ensure compliance with applicable laws.

Local registration should not become a mechanism through which foreign interests indirectly operate businesses while bypassing the intended protections afforded to Maldivian enterprises.

The relevant authorities must therefore examine the actual ownership, beneficial interests, management, administrative arrangements and operational control of such businesses.

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Compliance with Vessel Capacity and Operating Requirements

NBAM wishes to draw attention to discrepancies identified between the official information published by the Ministry of Tourism and the accommodation and guest-capacity details advertised on international booking platforms for Infinity X.

According to the Ministry of Tourism's registered facilities directory, Infinity X, registered under Golo Maldives Pvt Ltd, is listed with 20 rooms and 40 beds.

However, international booking platforms, including LiveAboard.com, advertise the vessel with 19 cabins and a maximum guest capacity of 30.

These discrepancies raise important questions regarding the vessel's registered accommodation capacity, approved bed capacity and permitted passenger capacity.

NBAM calls upon the Ministry of Tourism and relevant authorities to clarify these differences and verify the vessel's approved accommodation capacity, licensed passenger capacity and compliance with the applicable regulatory requirements.

The Association further emphasises that all tourist vessels operating in the Maldives must adhere to the applicable requirements governing registration, licensing, passenger capacity, seaworthiness and maritime safety.

Accurate and consistent information must be maintained across official records and commercial platforms to ensure transparency and effective regulatory oversight.

Regulations must be enforced consistently and fairly, without exceptions based on the ownership structure or commercial interests of any operator.

Protection of Maldivian Businesses and Fair Competition

The Maldivian boating industry has been built through the investment, dedication and hard work of local entrepreneurs and professionals.

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NBAM strongly believes that Maldivian-owned businesses must be protected from unfair competition arising from arrangements that may circumvent foreign investment restrictions or other applicable regulatory requirements.

The Association calls for stronger monitoring, transparency and enforcement to ensure that all operators compete on a fair and lawful basis.

Protecting local businesses is not merely a commercial concern; it is also about safeguarding local economic participation, employment opportunities and the long-term sustainability of the Maldivian tourism industry.

Protecting the Reputation of the Maldives as a Diving Destination

NBAM strongly rejects any attempt to portray the Maldives as an unsafe diving destination based on an individual incident or the actions of particular individuals.
The Maldives has established itself as one of the world's leading marine tourism and diving destinations through the professionalism, hospitality and commitment of its local diving and boating professionals.

While legitimate safety concerns must never be dismissed, unverified allegations and sweeping generalisations targeting the entire Maldivian diving and boating industry are unfair and risk causing serious damage to the livelihoods of local businesses and industry professionals.

The Association urges all stakeholders to act responsibly when communicating about the incident, ensuring that verified facts are distinguished from speculation and that the reputation of the destination is not unnecessarily undermined.
Commitment to Industry Safety and Professional Standards

NBAM reiterates the importance of maintaining high professional standards across the boating and diving sectors. Appropriate medical fitness, professional competency, safety procedures, crew preparedness and responsible conduct must remain essential requirements of the industry.

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The Association remains committed to working with relevant government authorities and industry stakeholders to strengthen safety standards, improve regulatory oversight and address weaknesses that may compromise the integrity of the sector.

Our Position

NBAM firmly believes that the protection of tourists, the accountability of operators, the enforcement of Maldivian laws and the protection of local businesses must go hand in hand.

We cannot allow regulatory loopholes, unfair business arrangements or irresponsible public narratives to undermine the hard-earned reputation of the Maldivian boating and diving industry.

The Association therefore calls for a unified and responsible approach from all stakeholders to ensure accountability, protect genuine local enterprises and preserve the Maldives' standing as a leading international marine tourism destination.

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