

Washington Approves Ferry Service Licenses for Cuba



Havana, May 6 (RHC) — The U.S. Treasury Department announced on Tuesday the approval of a group of licenses for ferry services to Cuba.

Treasury's spokesperson Hagar Chemali made the announcement of the authorization, the first to take place in over half a century and which follows the thaw in relations between Cuba and the U.S.

The passengers to use the service must do it under one of the twelve categories included in the general license to travel to Cuba, including family visits, academic, cultural, sports or religious trips, and others, said the official as cited by teleSUR TV.

According to Reuters news agency, one of the approved licenses was issued to a company named Baja Ferries, which is part of a shipping group for passenger and cargo operations.

The agency cites Washington-based lawyer Robert Muse, who represents Baja Ferries, announcing that "the ships are ready to go."

Reuters also quoted the U.S. Treasury Department spokesperson as saying that he could "confirm that OFAC has issued certain specific licenses for passenger ferry service, but we cannot provide additional details as to whom or how many." The official said that Cuba regulations have not changed and no

general license was issued for passenger ferry services to the island and only specific licenses may be issued on a case-by-case basis.

However, the ferry companies need the approval of the Cuban government before they can begin the operations, which were cut off in 1960.

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