STATEMENT FROM THE PUERTO RICO TOURISM COMPANY REGARDING DENGUE FEVER ON THE ISLAND

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO, October 12, 2012 – In response to the Puerto Rico Health Department’s recent declaration of a dengue fever epidemic, Luis G. Rivera-Marín, Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, issued the following statement:

“The Government of Puerto Rico is taking coordinated and aggressive steps to prevent the spread of mosquito-borne dengue fever on the Island. Dengue fever is a non-contagious disease carried by mosquitoes that does not transmit from person-to-person. Aedes aegypti, the mosquito whose bite spreads the fever, is commonly found in tropical and subtropical regions around the world.

“Visitors should know that Puerto Rico remains a safe destination. Chances of contracting dengue fever are minimal but travelers can take the following precautionary measures to further minimize their chances of being bitten by a mosquito. Visitors are encouraged to use a DEET-based insect repellent when outdoors, especially two hours after sunrise and before sunset, when mosquitoes are most likely to be present. We also recommend that visitors wear long-sleeve shirts and long pants when visiting densely wooded areas.

“In the unlikely event that a visitor experiences any of the warning signs posted by the Puerto Rico Health Department, the person should seek immediate medical attention from one of our highly-respected medical centers.

“Our government is committed to keeping our communities safe and healthy for everyone, as am I personally. If visitors have questions, we are asking them to please visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at http://www.cdc.gov or contact the Puerto Rico Health Department dengue hotline, 1-866-805-7777.

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