

Jamaican made vehicle to be exported to Turks and Caicos

Excel Motors Limited, the only local car manufacturing company in Jamaica, is currently preparing to export three models of its Island Cruiser motor vehicles to the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Director of the Westmoreland-based Excel Motors, Patrick Marzouca, has indicated that the vehicles would be leaving the island in the next two to three weeks, once all the necessary mechanical and body work is completed, announced Jampro in a press release on Friday. A model of one of the Island Cruiser motor vehicles to be exported to the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Marzouca created local history in 2003 when he launched the Island Cruiser — a comfortable two-door vehicle mounted on a fibreglass chassis and equipped with a 1.5-litre Japanese-made engine. The Island Cruiser was first exported to the Bahamas in August 2003 and Marzouca noted that the quality of the vehicle was the main factor that continues to spark great interest from overseas. "The buyer said he saw the vehicle being driven around in Turks and Caicos for the past seven years and he was impressed by its quality and durability. When he contacted us we quickly began the preparatory work on three cars from our existing fleet," said Marzouca. Marzouca pointed out that the vehicles were sturdily built to stand up to the conditions of the Jamaican road and the conditions of coastal areas in the region, adding that the fact that the vehicles were undergoing light refurbishing at a fraction of the cost of new vehicles is evidence of its endurance and value. He disclosed that an evaluation conducted by the Revenue Protection Division (RPD) quantified the value-added features of the Island Cruiser at an impressive 64.5 per cent. He also noted that the Island Cruisers come in both manual and automatic transmission with hard or soft tops and optional air-conditioning. Marzouca built the first body of the island Cruiser in 1999, and in 2000 he produced a line of vehicles. For the 2003 line, he secured the expertise of senior German automotive engineer Hans Fleischer with the help of JAMPRO through the Senior Experten Service (SES) of Germany. SES is a non-profit association that promotes vocational and technical training, continuous training and qualification of experts at the national and international level. With the help of Fleischer, the Island Cruiser was able to meet the very stringent requirements for certification from the Bureau of Standards of Jamaica. JAMPRO also provided vital assistance to Excel Motors through the European Union-funded Trade Development Project (TDP), in the form of grant funding and technical support. "I must thank the staff of JAMPRO for supporting me through the years. Also, if not for the German government, the Island Cruiser would not be what it is today. We benefited from a lot of technical assistance and they stood behind it. The result is an excellently manufactured vehicle," said Marzouca.