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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ISLA Lifeguard Certification becomes the First Professional Lifeguard Certification in the Dominican Republic

Seven Lifeguards from across the United States returned from the Dominican Republic after training a lifeguard team in preparation for the country's Easter Holy Week, a four-day national holiday known for hundreds of drownings every year.

(Press Release) – December 6, 2011– Huntington Beach, CA., 2011 – The International Surf Lifesaving Association (ISLA) conducted an intensive 3-day basic Ocean Lifeguard Training course in the Dominican Republic (DR) during the Thanksgiving holiday. ISLA consists of a team of lifeguards from the United States that help reduce drowning victims worldwide by providing ocean-minded educational programs and resources. ISLA and the DR's mission is to train volunteers from the country's Civil Defense organization in various lifesaving and lifeguarding techniques to create a safer aquatic environment.

The fifty course participants were from various agencies, including: Dominican Republic Civil Defense, Red Cross, and hotel staff from Viva Wyndham Tangerine. The course included a first aid CPR practical exam, written test, non-buoy and buoy rescue practical exam, and physical training. Twenty-nine of the lifeguard trainees were able to complete the rigorous training and received Basic ISLA Lifeguard certification.

Basic ISLA Lifeguard certification became the first professional lifeguard certification in the Dominican Republic, which is now required for a lifeguard to become certified. This prestigious certification is approved by the country's Civil Defense. In addition, ISLA is now part of the Dominican Republic's Emergency Management System.

Henry Reyes, President of ISLA, states, "We will carry out the second phase of the mission by sending ISLA volunteers to provide Dominican Republic Lifeguards with hands-on training and experience during the Easter Holy Week, Semana Santa."

Since 2008, ISLA has performed 108 rescues, 976 preventative actions, and 168 medical treatments in the U.S., Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Mexico, Ecuador, and New Zealand. ISLA volunteers have decades of rescue experience from involvement with several lifeguarding agencies that include Huntington State Beach Lifeguards, Los Angeles County Lifeguards, Corolla Ocean Rescue, and various other agencies.

The International Surf Lifesaving Association exists as a California Public Benefit Company (501c3). If you would like to learn more, please visit www.islasurf.org.

If you'd like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Henry Reyes, please call Raquel Lizarraga at 949-478-ISLA or e-mail Raquel Lizarraga at : Raquel.Lizarraga@islasurf.org