



Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features two pages of all the latest cruise industry news.

Carnival raising

CARNIVAL Corporation has released details of a US\$900 million offering of "second priority senior secured notes" which will pay interest at a rate of 9.875% per year.

The notes, offered to institutional investors, are secured by mortgages on a "substantial majority" of Carnival Corporation's vessels, plus other assets such as trade receivables, computer software and intellectual property.

Carnival Corporation said the net proceeds from the offering of the notes would be used for "general corporate purposes" at the company.

Ruby Princess probe slams NSW Health

THE New South Wales Special Commission of Inquiry into the *Ruby Princess* has found a number of "serious mistakes" by NSW Health in handling the arrival and disembarkation of the ship in Sydney on 19 Mar.

The full 320-page report from Commissioner Bret Walker was released on Fri afternoon by NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian (CW breaking news), and confirms the assertions made at the time of the incident that Princess Cruises and Carnival Corporation followed all procedures correctly.

Based on a series of errors in assessment of the situation, the NSW Health Expert Panel concluded that the *Ruby Princess* was "low risk", a decision that Walker said was "as inexplicable as it is unjustifiable".

A key issue highlighted was a change to the definition of a "suspect case" for COVID-19,

which was updated on 10 Mar.

Had this been communicated correctly to *Ruby Princess* it would have resulted in the identification of such cases on the ship, numbering 120 by the time the ship docked.

"NSW Health should also have ensured that such persons were isolated in cabins...these were serious mistakes," the report said.

The report also cites the "inexcusable" delay in obtaining test results for the swabs taken from the ship on the morning of 19 Jun, which "should have been tested immediately," Walker said.

Princess Cruises welcomed the report's confirmation that the ship's Captain, doctor and members of the company's shoreside port agency team did not mislead public authorities.

"This finding is of great importance to us because it goes to the integrity of our people,"

said Princess head Jan Swartz.

"We have always sought to cooperate honestly and professionally with officials in accordance with the regulatory environment," she said.

The report does find that Carnival should have ensured the *Ruby Princess* doctor was made aware of the 10 Mar update to the "suspect case" definition, and also said those who met that definition should have been required to isolate in their cabins.

Walker made a series of recommendations about guidelines for granting ships permission to dock, better awareness of the roles of various authorities in relation to human biosecurity, improvements to reporting, and that the Biosecurity Act "make explicit a requirement to update superceded human health information".

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Read about how plans for cruising in local waters are progressing in the August issue of *travelBulletin*.

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UnCruise urges testing to save industry

SEATTLE-BASED UnCruise Adventures has been lobbying United States Congress for the introduction of rapid COVID-19 testing which it says would “change the game” in terms of a return to cruising.

UnCruise recently cancelled five upcoming Alaska voyages after a guest on the first departure tested positive to COVID-19 (**CW** 11 Aug) but after subsequent testing the passenger was actually found to be negative.

The company’s Chief Executive Officer Dan Blanchard said despite the fact that there was no transmission on board, strict protocols being in place and that ultimately all tests were negative, “the season will not be recovered”.

He said UnCruise had strict plans in place for COVID-19 which did pay off in this instance.

“We were able to act quickly, but that doesn’t mean this event has not been painful to our company and guests...our policies held up and may be a blueprint for future sailings and the industry,” Blanchard said.

He said accessible rapid coronavirus testing is needed for tourism to return.

“More studies are showing that small boat sanitisation is high, and in some cases poses less of a risk of viruses than an average location that individuals visit in their local neighbourhoods.”

UnCruise earlier this year helped establish a small boat coalition (**CW** 22 May) which

is aiming to educate the public and government officials on the nature of small vessels and the need for different regulation.

“We have taken proactive steps and understand our responsibility to our guests, crew, communities and the industry,” Blanchard said.

“Safety remains our focus and we will continue to accelerate protocol standards,” he promised.

The termination of the season due to the inconclusive test result has been particularly frustrating after UnCruise also received criticism on being the first United States-based cruise line to return to sailing this season.

“Small businesses like ours have taken a considerable hit during COVID and this was a big one,” Blanchard said.



TERRITORIAL waters are a hot-button issue in this part of the world, and scientists have recently used satellites to catch a fleet of Chinese fishing vessels doing what they shouldn’t have been in North Korea.

Since 2017, Chinese vessels have caught more than half a billion dollars worth of squid from the waters of their neighbours to the north, with on-water observations and machine learning catching out the unreported ships.

The illegal catches may also have contributed to the sharp decline of Japanese flying squid.

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing is a global problem which threatens fish stocks and marine ecosystems.

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Travel & Cruise
Weekly

BLC extends pause

BLUE Lagoon Cruises (BLC) has extended the suspension of operations until 30 Sep.

The Fijian cruise line said it had become clear travel from key source markets “is unlikely to resume prior to 01 Oct at the earliest”.

Funds currently held for any impacted guests are being held in credit to be used for travel any time up to 30 Jun 2022, with all original bookings and rates being honoured.

Guests who choose this option will also receive a FJ\$200 onboard Bar & Spa credit per cabin plus a full day Malamala Beach Club Day Pass for two, while new payment and cancellation deadlines also apply - bluelagooncruises.com.

Heritage updates

HERITAGE Line’s new website is now live, featuring a completely revamped design, a more user-friendly approach and a range of other interesting features.

The new website also debuts a magazine section, which aims to go “above and beyond” the usual news and updates by featuring personal stories, lifestyle pieces, and captivating travel and destination experiences.

The new website can now be accessed by visiting heritage-line.com.