



CLIA pushes CDC to lift restrictions

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) overnight called for the lifting of the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention’s (CDC) Framework for Conditional Sailing Order, after the national public health agency significantly relaxed restrictions on other types of travel for vaccinated passengers.

Calling out inconsistencies in the CDC’s approach, CLIA said new cruise requirements issued by the agency on Fri are “unduly burdensome, largely unworkable, and seem to reflect a zero-risk objective rather than the mitigation approach to COVID that is the basis for every other US sector of our society”.

The new phase of the CDC order provides technical instructions for increasing the reporting frequency of coronavirus cases from weekly to daily, updates criteria for the traffic-light colour-

coding system used to classify the status of vessels, and details requirements for simulated voyages populated by volunteer “passengers” aimed at training crews and ports on new operating procedures prior to conducting revenue sailings.

However, the CDC has at the same time detailed new recommendations for fully vaccinated travellers, who are now able to resume both int’l and domestic travel at what the agency is calling “low-risk”.

Vaccinated travellers do not require a COVID-19 test before and after travel within the United States, but still need to wear masks and take other precautions, as well as have a negative test to board an int’l flight to the country.

“On the same day CDC issued new onerous requirements for the cruise industry, five months

after the original order, CDC issued relaxed guidance for domestic and international travel due to vaccination progress and recognition of the improved public health environment,” CLIA said.

The association also noted nearly 400,000 passengers had already safely sailed from Europe and parts of Asia “following stringent, science-based protocols that resulted in a far lower incident rate than on land”.

“The irony is that today an American can fly to any number of destinations to take a cruise, but cannot board a ship in the US.

“This deprives US workers from participating in the economic recovery and does not recognise the public health advances that have been made over many months,” CLIA added, urging the lifting of the CDC order to allow planning for a controlled return.

Cruise Weekly today

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

Get vaccinated!

WINDSTAR Cruises has announced its guests will be required to be vaccinated against coronavirus to sail.

The announcement is in response to Windstar’s new Beyond Ordinary Care program - a multi-layered strategy based on a number of hospital-grade elements.

Riviera Travel River Cruises also announced guests on its cruises must be fully vaccinated against coronavirus, or present a negative test prior to travel.

Any guest who has not had both doses of the vaccine will be offered a complimentary test by Riviera.

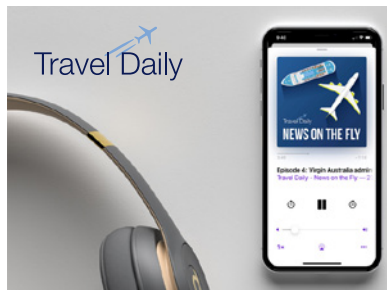


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PORTHOLE

THE name of the New South Wales far south coast town of Narooma is said to be derived from the Aboriginal word meaning "clear blue waters", but according to a University of New South Wales study, those waters are hot spots for global ocean warming.

The study analysing over more than 10 years of water temperatures found those off the coast of the town have warmed at more than three times the global average.

Narooma's waters are warming at an average 0.48° celsius per decade, more than double the rate of temperature rises at other Australian hotspots such as North Stradbroke Island and Coffs Harbour.

Scientists believe warm water is deposited from the Coral Sea along the continental shelf in spots like Narooma, and Maria Island on the east coast of Tasmania.

RCI extends and receives

QUANTUM of the Seas' Singapore season has been extended until Oct.

The ship has now welcomed aboard more than 50,000 guests safely, having resumed sailing in Dec (**CW** 04 Dec 2020).

Royal Caribbean International (RCI) first extended the season for three months through Jun (**CW** 11 Feb), and is doing so again for an additional four months, thanks to its partnership with the Government of Singapore.

"When we started pilot cruises in Singapore, our aim was to regain the confidence of guests by endorsing cruise operators with rigorous hygiene measures," said Singapore Tourism Board Director Cruise Annie Chang.

"Singapore's CruiseSafe standards have set a clear benchmark for our cruise partners, who have been diligent in ensuring the measures on board are adhered to.

"Thus far, we have completed more than 90 sailings with over 120,000 passengers and no reported cases of COVID-19 spreading on board.

RCI Vice President & Managing Director APAC Angie Stephen said the cruise line has seen guest satisfaction ratings jump since *Quantum* started sailing in Dec.

This extension of the ship's Singapore stint does not affect her Australian season, currently scheduled to begin on 30 Oct (**CW** 11 Jun 2020), with Royal Caribbean saying it continues to work with govt authorities on a safe return to cruise.

MEANWHILE, Royal Caribbean's *Odyssey of the Seas* has officially become the 25th ship in the cruise line's fleet, following a virtual ceremonial ship launching.

Odyssey will debut from first-time homeport Haifa in Israel in May (**CW** 08 Mar), which will also mark the first time the cruise line has visited the Middle Eastern nation.

Royal Caribbean Group Chairman & Chief Executive Officer Richard Fain, RCI President & Chief Executive Officer of Michael Bayley and *Odyssey of the Seas* Captain Per Kristoffersen received the new ship from Meyer Werft Yard's Managing Partner Bernard Meyer & Managing Director Jan Meyer as part of the handover.

"Receiving *Odyssey of the Seas* into the Royal Caribbean family is a welcomed breath of fresh air," Bayley enthused.

"The ingenuity, passion and hard work our dedicated crew, teams on land and partners at Meyer Werft put into building a new ship always deliver, and to pull it off so well during a time unlike any other is incredible".

ATG positive on Kimberley

APT Travel Group (ATG) Managing Director Chris Hall says while the company is disappointed at the NT Government's ruling against ships with more than 100 people on board (**CW** 29 Mar), it will not stop the company from operating its upcoming Kimberley season.

Hall told **Cruise Weekly** the initially published APT itineraries are between Broome and Wyndham, WA, meaning the company can operate exclusively within WA waters if necessary.

However, at the same time, ATG is continuing to work closely with the NT Government, with Hall citing "very positive conversations".

"Hopefully the vaccine rollout will give officials more confidence about the safety of cruise operations," he said.

APT's *Caledonian Sky*, with capacity for 99 passengers, is exempt from the current Australian Government ban on foreign cruise ships, which is in place until 17 Jun.



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Disney UK restart

DISNEY Cruise Line is set to offer staycations from ports in the United Kingdom in the northern summer.

The cruise line will operate from Liverpool, Newcastle, Southampton and Tilbury aboard *Disney Magic*, sailing two and three-night voyages, as well as a limited number of four-night sailings.



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