



CLIA seeks “tangible progress” for restart

THE approval of a pathway to the careful resumption of domestic cruising would be a key way of helping Australia’s hard-hit tourism sector, according to Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA).

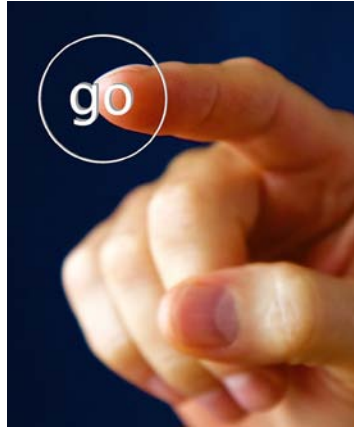
Speaking in the wake of last week’s announcement of a \$1.2 billion tourism assistance package which provided support for cut-price flights, airline operations and a second round of the \$128 million COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support grants program for travel agents, CLIA MD Australasia Joel Katz said while the stimulus measures were a step forward, “it provides only limited relief while little progress is made towards the resumption of cruising”.

Katz said the approval of a pathway for a cruise restart would help drive a meaningful revival in Australia’s travel and tourism economy.

He stressed the sector was not seeking any financial assistance from the Government, but just wants “the opportunity to resume business safely and for the benefit of the wider tourism economy”.

Katz added last week’s package will not benefit many other businesses which rely on cruising, including farmers, food producers, winemakers, transport companies, port workers and other service providers who supply the cruise industry.

These groups, along with



regional destinations, had been severely impacted by the cessation of cruise tourism, “but they could see their livelihoods resuscitated through CLIA’s carefully laid-out plans for a phased resumption of local cruising while international borders remain closed,” he said.

“The cruise industry supports more than 18,000 jobs across Australia, all of which are at risk while the cruise suspension continues.

“Around \$5 billion has already been lost to the Australian economy over the past year since the cruise industry stopped operating, and the losses continue to mount,” Katz added, noting the sector had committed to extensive new health protocols in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and has outlined detailed plans that would allow a carefully controlled resumption of domestic cruises for Australians.

“It is vital that governments now finalise these plans so that travel agents and other cruise suppliers can have greater certainty to work towards a longer-term revival,” Katz said.

New Seabourn

SEABOURN Cruise Line has announced its Extraordinary Expeditions itineraries for the northern summer & fall 2022 seasons aboard the new *Seabourn Venture*.

Between early May and late Oct 2022, the ship will visit destinations throughout the Arctic, the Caribbean, and Central & South America, with 16 immersive voyages ranging from 10- to 15-days.

Select voyages may also be combined to create sailings of up to 29 days in length.

Venture’s Arctic summer season will begin halfway between Norway’s North Cape and the North Pole, as the ship embarks on a series of eight Arctic Svalbard summer cruises between Tromso and Longyearbyen, which include a return flight to Oslo.

The ship will then make its way south in Oct 2022, stopping at various locales in Bermuda, the Caribbean, the Panama Canal, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile.

Call Seabourn Cruise Line on 13 24 02.

RCI Caribbean

ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) has revealed its 2022-2023 long Caribbean sailings, inviting vacationers to venture off the beaten path.

A variety of six-night western Caribbean and eight- to 11-night southern Caribbean sailings will include evening and late-night stays in the ABC Islands and Puerto Rico, and visits to Perfect Day at CocoCay in the Bahamas.

Royal Caribbean’s newest ship *Odyssey of the Seas* will return to South Florida in Nov 2022 for its second northern winter season, which opened for bookings on Fri.

She will visit visit destinations such as Oranjestad, Willemstad, La Romana, Falmouth, George Town, and Royal Caribbean’s private Haitian destination, Labadee.

Vision of the Seas will sail 10- and 11-night southern Caribbean itineraries from Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale, visiting ports such as San Juan, Philipsburg, Basseterre, Castries, and St. Johns.

Jewel will sail from Port Canaveral on eight-night southern Caribbean cruises.

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Package is “ridiculous”

MURRAY River Paddlesteamers Director Craig Burgess (pictured) has called the Australian Government’s tourism support package “ridiculous”, expressing his disappointment at the disproportionate distribution of locations being supported.

Burgess lashed out at the decision, which he said seemingly supported locations that only attract international guests.

“As we see with most government announcements, it is just another episode of utopia, all-flash and bubble with no thought or substance,” he said.

Burgess’ calls came off the back of the Murray Region Tourism Board Chair Wendy Greiner’s cries for help for her constituency, noting nearly 25%



of domestic overnight visitors to the region arrive through its two small airports, both overlooked by the government.

“These short-sighted and unfair subsidies, as they currently stand, will reduce visitation and net visitor spending, and only lead to an alarming increase in job losses,” she warned.

Greiner also pointed out the Murray region has endured the most disruptive lockdown measures in Australia, with over 41 weeks of interrupted trade in the past 12 months thanks to border closures enacted by the New South Wales and Victorian state governments.

Burgess implored Melbourne, or at the very least Albury or Mildura, be supported through the package, lest the Murray region once again miss out.

“I fear many smaller operators along the river may now just give up when JobKeeper ends this month,” Burgess said.

Murray River Paddlesteamers was also at the forefront of the region’s tourism advocacy in Jan (**CW 07** Jan), demanding the federal and state governments make changes to pandemic-related legislation to help save the peak season for rural Victorian tourism operators.

Avalon cleans up

AVALON Waterways has detailed waste reduction & recycling programs as part of its plans to help protect the planet, including unveiling plans for the first fully electric river cruise vessel by 2027.

By 2023, Avalon has committed to reducing paper waste to less than 1%, utilising electric bow thrusters to further reduce emissions, and piloting a program to use bio-fuel as part of its goal to reduce total carbon emissions by 50%.

Announced in time for yesterday’s International Day of Action for Rivers, Avalon also plans to invest with its partners at The Ocean Cleanup to help fulfil the mission to remove 90% of the world’s ocean plastic, and join with more destinations to generate sustainable electricity for use while docked.

Silversea appoints

NATHAN Burke has accepted the role of Silversea National Accounts Manager.

Based in Sydney, Burke brings strong sales, and commercial & account management experience with key trade partners, having been in the travel industry for over 17 years.

He has previous experience with companies such as Qantas Holidays, Etihad Airways and Cover-More.

Silversea is also looking for a Sales Manager for the Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania markets, based in Melbourne.

UNTIL

last weekend, only two men had ever tackled New South Wales’ Lion Island swim. On Saturday, that number increased sixfold, with 10 members of the Peninsula Ocean Swimmers completing the 8.5 kilometre feat.

Starting at Umina Beach, the group set off into Broken Bay to head around the Island and back - not quite as relaxing as doing it on a cruise ship!

The swim was delayed by a week due to heavy seas, but everyone who attempted the voyage completed it.

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