



Cruise bill to widen federal powers

EXCLUSIVE

THE proposed new legislation governing biosecurity arrangements around cruise ship arrivals (**CW** 05 Jan) will give the federal government the ability to enforce multiple pre-arrival reporting requirements, as well as creating a “human biosecurity group direction” mechanism allowing for examinations and body sample collection of affected passengers.

The *Biosecurity Amendment (Enhanced Risk Management) Bill 2022* is currently before the federal parliament, with the explanatory statement saying it is anticipated the changes to the *Biosecurity Act* “will be made prior to resumption of cruises, so that transitional arrangements will not be required”.

The bill has been developed in part as a response to the *Ruby Princess’s* spread of COVID-19 almost two years ago now (**CW** 27 Mar), aiming to strengthen the legislative framework for international arrivals with new requirements for pratique and pre-arrival reporting “to specifically support the safe recovery of tourism and related industries”.

Among a range of measures, the legislation would allow federal authorities to impose a delay of a maximum 12 hours on the unloading of passengers from a ship in order to allow risk assessments to be undertaken.

These assessments could require the provision of contact



details and past location information for travellers, as well as mandate their “examination... relating to the assessment and diagnosis of a listed human disease”.

A new section of the *Act* would also detail the circumstances under which individuals who have undergone an examination would also be required to provide specified body samples.

In order to become law, the bill must be debated three times in each of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Currently it has been read and debated twice in the House of Representatives, with a third reading agreed to; however the Senate has only had the bill introduced and read a first time.

Parliament does not meet again until 08 Feb, and as has previously been noted the government has released an indicative timetable for sittings which only sees the Senate convening for five days in total

before the end of Mar.

As well as requiring passage in both houses of parliament, the bill would require assent from the Governor General before becoming law.

Several industry pundits have noted Minister for Health Greg Hunt’s comments in mid-Nov (**CW** 16 Nov) that “we would like to see cruising back on before Christmas,” with some describing these stated intentions as “grossly unrealistic”.

When he extended the current ban on cruising through until 17 Feb (**CW** 13 Dec), the minister also began reviewing the cruise ban on a monthly basis, meaning a further update on progress should be expected within the next week or so.

The proposed amendments to the *Act* are under the purview of Minister for Agriculture David Littleproud, who wasn’t able to comment on the anticipated progress of the new bill before *Cruise Weekly’s* deadline today.

NCL to continue RAT testing

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has confirmed it will continue to conduct rapid antigen testing of all embarking passengers through until the end of next month.

Previously NCL had planned to discontinue the measure for sailings effective from next Mon 17 Jan.

Under the stringent procedures, which are paid for and administered by NCL, any positive RAT is also subsequently confirmed with a PCR test.

NCL’s SailSafe protocols also strongly recommend that guests self-test at home prior to departure.

Fiji cruise deal

BLUE Lagoon Cruises (BLC) is offering discounts of 50% on three, four or seven-night cruises through Fiji’s Mamanuca and Yasawa Islands.

The one-week flash sale is valid for departure dates from 11 Feb-25 Apr, with BLC noting the simple and easy Fijian border entry requirements and pricing from just \$802 per person including all meals, selected beverages and activities.

Dates are fully changeable at no extra charge, and fares are fully refundable or changeable should travel be disrupted by COVID-19, BLC said.

Bookings can be confirmed via 1800 007 129 (Australia) or 0800 293 766 (New Zealand) or via cruisecentre@bluelagooncruises.com.

With the reopening of Fiji’s borders, BLC said “it’s been very exciting to finally be able to welcome our returnee guests and all our new friends on board now that we are back cruising these beautiful islands again”.

CroisiEurope’s first Aussie webinar

TWEET World Cruises will later this week host a special webinar for the local travel trade in partnership with European river cruise specialist CroisiEurope.

It’s the first time the operator has been showcased in this form to the industry, bringing CroisiEurope’s latest offerings and product portfolio to the fore as international travel restrictions begin to lift.

Participants will have the opportunity to win a six night river cruise in Europe, by completing a pre-webinar survey **HERE** and registering for the session by **CLICKING HERE**.

Royal cancels four

SEVERAL voyages aboard four Royal Caribbean Florida-based vessels were cancelled on Fri due to COVID-19-related circumstances, with the impacted ships including *Symphony of the Seas*, *Jewel of the Seas*, *Serenade of the Seas* and *Vision of the Seas*.




PORTHOLE

ATRIO has been rescued from a croc-infested NT river after their message in the sand was spotted by a search plane crew.

After their boat capsized in rough weather on the Daly River, a well-known crocodile haunt, the trio made it back to the riverbank, where they scrawled "all 3 safe" in the sand.

A helicopter rescued the group after its message was spotted, and the three were flown to Darwin for medical assessment, where they were found to be inflicted with minor levels of exposure.

RCI Europe 2023



ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) has opened its lineup of European adventures for the northern summer 2023 season.

Nine ships will sail to more than 25 countries in the Holy Land, the Mediterranean and Scandinavia.

Beginning in May 2023, vacationers of all ages can experience Europe's beauty on a variety of cruises that range from five to 12 nights, and visit iconic locales, such as the Adriatic islands of Croatia, the Amalfi Coast, the British Isles, the Canary Islands, the Greek Isles, Reykjavik, and Tel Aviv.

Travellers can choose from 35 unique itineraries and a diverse set of ships, such as *Odyssey of the Seas* (pictured), which will be based in Rome following her debut last year, and *Anthem of the Seas*, based in Southampton.

From Rome and Barcelona, Oasis-class ship *Symphony of the Seas* will bring all types of vacationers together with thrilling experiences across seven distinct RCI neighborhoods.

Other itinerary highlights include *Brilliance of the Seas*

cruising from Rome, Venice, Athens, and Barcelona; *Explorer of the Seas* cruising from Venice; *Jewel of the Seas* cruising from Amsterdam; *Rhapsody of the Seas* cruising from Haifa and Limassol; *Serenade of the Seas* cruising from Barcelona; and *Voyager of the Seas* cruising from Copenhagen and Stockholm.

Ponant package

CRUISE Traveller has released a new Kimberley 2023 adventure package with Ponant, with savings of up to \$14,850 per couple.

The package includes no single supplement and a free hotel stay on the luxury, all-inclusive Kimberley Expedition Cruise in 2023, when booked by the end of the month.

The 12-night Kimberley Celebration package is available on four sailings from Jun to Sep 2023, with guests cruising on a 10-night expedition voyage from Darwin to Broome aboard *Le Soal*.

The voyage includes guided excursions on Zodiacs, and ashore, as well as a wilderness adventure from Wyndham - to book, **CLICK HERE**.

RSSC World Cruise

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) has modified its 120-night 2022 World Cruise on board *Seven Seas Mariner* to create four separate sailings, with the cancellation of Lisbon-Cape Town and Tokyo-San Francisco segments.

The quartet of cruises will follow the initially planned 18-night Panama Canal Voyage from San Francisco to Miami, which departed on Thu, and will include a 21-night and 31-night Grand Caribbean Voyage round-trip from Miami departing 23 Jan and 13 Feb; a 25-night Amazon Voyage round-trip from Miami departing 16 Mar, and a 25-night Panama Canal Voyage from Miami to San Francisco, departing 10 Apr.

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