

Scenic's MKM welcomed to shipyard

THE Scenic Group's newly created MKM Yachts shipbuilding operation has been formally welcomed to the 3. Maj shipyard in Rijeka, Croatia.

An official signing ceremony earlier this month granted MKM, wholly owned by the Scenic Group, a "sub-concession" of the facility, where it will be the contractor for Scenic's new-build projects in Croatia.

Current works include the construction of *Scenic Eclipse II*, with the company also recently confirming the construction of four more custom-built ultra luxury six-star Discovery Yachts through until 2026.

"This is a very exciting development for the Scenic Group to build on the experience gained with the construction of *Scenic Eclipse*," said Scenic Chairman Glen Moroney.

He said MKM would utilise



the team that delivered *Eclipse* in difficult circumstances, with plans "well advanced" for future projects which would be shared at the appropriate time.

The ceremony was attended by the Croatian Minister of Transport Infrastructure and Sea, Oleg Butkovic and MKM Yachts Managing Director Sasa Cokljat and 3. Maj General Manager

Eddie Kucan (pictured).

MEANWHILE, Scenic has also confirmed *Scenic Eclipse* has been accepted as a member of the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO).

The company said as a member of the organisation its guests can be assured that Scenic's operations will "meet and exceed industry standards".

Cruise Weekly today

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

NCLH upbeat

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) may be seeing calmer seas ahead, after auditors PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) removed the phrase "substantial doubt about NCLH's ability to continue" from its filing to the United States' Securities and Exchange Commission.

PwC updated the statement after assessing the company's management plans, which had seen the company successfully raise more than US\$2.2 billion since the previous filing (CW 07 May) as well as undertaking significant planning for a restart of cruising.

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Read how cruise has the opportunity to be the safest way to holiday in the July issue of *travelBulletin*.

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Indigenous eco-cruise



ILLEGAL vessels are a big problem for any seafaring nation such as Australia, and the government is now turning to eco-friendly drones to help it patrol our seas.

The unmanned, remotely piloted drones will be launched next year to help detect illegal vessels entering Aussie waters, and will patrol the Indian Ocean off the Northern Territory.

The technology will detect unauthorised vessels, alert authorities and approach the vessel for further investigation, potentially removing our defence force from harm's way.

"A robot that is persistent and unmanned and does not need fuel or get bored, is ideally suited to do that dull and dangerous work," said Chief Executive of the developer, OCIUS, Robert Dane.

The company's final prototype, nicknamed Bob the Bluebottle, completed a trial earlier in Jul.

SUNSHINE Coast operator Saltwater Eco Tours has launched a range of new Indigenous eco-cruises.

Debuted in Queensland's Year of Indigenous Tourism, the itineraries are designed to connect "culture to coast", and celebrate the region's Indigenous heritage and spectacular coastline.

Operating from Mooloolaba, Saltwater is using a century-old historic timber sailing vessel, *Spray of the Coral Coast* (pictured), to showcase the Sunshine Coast's Indigenous heritage and marine beauty.

Each tour will have an Indigenous storyteller on board to share stories, traditions and culture of the Sunshine Coast's original inhabitants, the Kabi Kabi people.

Saltwater's signature is the cultural tour, which takes passengers to sites of significance and shares the origin of Dreamtime stories and songs.

The two-hour cruise

incorporates turtle and dolphin spotting and entertainment provided by Indigenous guides, bush-tucker inspired catering and local craft beer or sparkling wine.

Operating three times daily each weekend, adult tickets cost \$120, and children aged five to 16 are \$79.

Also available is a two-hour sunset acoustic tour, operating on Sat and Sun evenings, combining soft acoustic music, a selection of grazing platters, a local craft beer and nocturnal wildlife viewing, leading in at \$55 per adult.

Private charters are available for two-to-four hours, with Saltwater able to incorporate custom catering, live music and storytelling.

The *Spray of the Coral Coast* can cater for 35 pax, but is currently restricting numbers to 20 to adhere to COVID safety plans.

Queensland Minister for Tourism Industry Development Kate Jones lauded the product's launch, and noted demand for authentic eco-tourism.

AQSC celebrating

AMERICAN Queen Steamboat Company (AQSC) is celebrating the 2021 debut of its new paddle steamer *American Countess*.

New discounts of up to US\$1,800 per couple are available for Mississippi River journeys in Oct 2021, when booked through Cruise Traveller by 30 Sep - **CLICK HERE**.



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Carnival changes

CARNIVAL Corporation has named Carnival Cruise Line Chief Operations Officer Gus Antorcha as the new Holland America Line (HAL) head.

Replacing the new HAL boss will be Costa Cruises President Neil Palomba.

Antorcha will report directly to Stein Kruse Holland America Group and Carnival UK Group Chief Executive Stein Kruse.