



Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news.

River cruise report

THE Cruise Weekly and **Travel Daily** teams have just released a new special report series, taking a deep dive into the hottest topics in travel.

To kick off, the first issue explores the world of river cruising, from the latest news and trends, to the opportunities within this growing market.

It features everything from ship guides, to in-depth features on the reinvention of river cruising and immersive experiences, and more.

A special thank you to premier sponsor Avalon Waterways for their support - **CLICK HERE** to download.

Govt silent on cruise exemption

EXCLUSIVE

THERE has been no decision made to extend the pivotal exemption to Australia's *Coastal Trading Act 2012*, which allows foreign-flagged cruise ships to carry passengers between local ports, **CW** has learned.

A spokeswoman for the Minister for Transport Catherine King (**pictured**) admitted a review into the Act, exclusively revealed by **CW** earlier this year (**CW** 28 Mar), had yet to even begin.

"The government has committed to review the *Coastal Trading Act* in response to the Strategic Fleet Taskforce's recommendation," she said.

"That review will begin shortly and will consider a range of issues relating to the *Coastal Trading Act*, including cruise ship exemptions...no decisions have been made regarding the current exemption," she added.



Cruise lines were kept waiting until the 11th hour at the end of the last exemption period in Dec (**CW** 14 Dec), with King delaying a decision on the Act until just weeks before its expiration.

The anticlimactic announcement also saw the exemption only granted for an extra 12 months, as opposed to the prior five-year waiver issued in 2018.

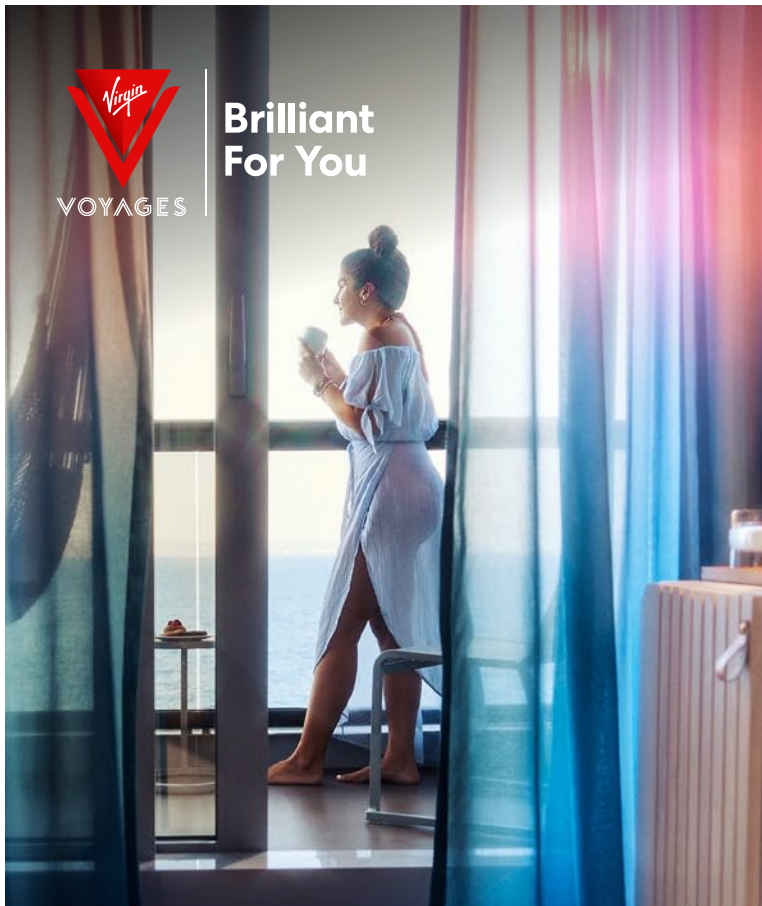
Regulatory uncertainty has

caused significant problems for the local sector, particularly in the wake of the closure of P&O Cruises Australia (**CW** 04 Jun).

Carnival Cruise Line President Christine Duffy told this masthead regulatory challenges in Australia were hampering the company's ability to do business Down Under, which played a part in the decision to retire the P&O brand.

"More regulation creates more risk and more cost, and so those are big headwinds for us, and it also creates a lot of uncertainty for the operation in the future," she said.

Cruise Lines International Association Managing Director Joel Katz also reinforced the significant costs and operational complexities lines encounter when planning operations in Australia in a recent opinion piece for **Cruise Weekly** sister title *travelBulletin* - **READ HERE**.



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TRAVEL 24
REVEALING THE NEXT 24 MONTHS IN TRAVEL

CCL's heart grew three sizes that day

CARNIVAL Cruise Line (CCL) has unveiled a host of new Grinch-inspired offerings ahead of its second year of Grinchmas in Jul sailings, kicking off this month (CW 22 Jan).

The new experiences will include the first-ever cruise ship appearance of the Grinch's furry friend Max, as *Carnival Splendor* is transformed into a magical winter wonderland for four special sailings.

Max will join the Grinch for exclusive appearances and meet-and-greet sessions, including a special *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* story time reading.

There will also be the opportunity to capture unforgettable holiday moments in photos with both the Grinch (pictured) and Max.

The Grinch-themed cruises, which are back by popular demand, bring the best of



Christmas in Jul traditions and Dr Seuss delight to sea.

Festive fans can prepare to be amazed by a new *Splendor* glittering Christmas tree which will be lit up in all its glory and feature falling snow.

This year will include Carnival's festive 'Holiday Show' performance for the first time on a Grinchmas cruise, with singers,

dancers, and a surprise guest flown in from the North Pole.

Guests will also enjoy new entertainment, activities, and parties including a Grinchmas Who-Liday Deck Party, with an all-green dress code; Grinchmas Family Games; Grinchmas Scavenger Hunt; themed arts and crafts; and a Grinchmas Long Lunch at Sea. *MS*

SH Kressley cruise

AMERICAN television personality Carson Kressley will host exclusive special events aboard *Swan Hellenic's* (SH) *Diana's* exploration of Sicily later this year.

A number of events and lush excursions will be hosted and curated by Kressley on *Swan Hellenic's* eight-night cultural expedition cruise around Sicily, which departs 20 Aug.

Highlights from the new 'Secrets of Sicily' cruise include a White Lotus Cabaret Show, a White Party Dance evening with a DJ, and an authentic Sicilian shore dining experience hosted by American chef Anne Burrell.

Kressley will also host a unique excursion to Noto and Syracuse which will include activities such as an afternoon shopping visit to the vast Sicilia Outlet Village.

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PORThOLE

THE cruise industry's "slide wars" continue, with Royal Caribbean International (RCI) set to deploy the world's largest dry slide on board its *Utopia of the Seas* when she debuts in Jul.

The record is currently held by MSC Cruises' *World Europa*, which debuted in 2022 boasting the 75m Venom Drop.

The ship actually stole the record from another Royal Caribbean vessel, *Harmony of the Seas*, which introduced the 10-deck high 'Ultimate Abyss' in 2016.

RCI is set to snatch the record back though, according to the unofficial *Royal Caribbean Blog*, with *Utopia's* Ultimate Abyss to measure 79 metres.

Guests will find 300 illuminating LED lights, transparent windows, and a brand-new feature, the "zoom booster rollers".

Le Boat investment

BOAT rental company Le Boat and nautical company Groupe Beneteau have partnered to invest more than £100 million (AU\$192 million) into its international fleet over the next 10 years.

The deal will ensure travellers have an even greater range of options to choose from when planning their private boat rental vacation.

Shore power mandate



THE Port of Seattle will become the first port in the United States to require shore power usage for all cruise ships home porting at the facility from 2027.

The order passed by the Port of Seattle Commission accelerates its previous goal of 2030, with plugging into shore power reducing diesel emissions from cruise ships by 80% on average.

The Port is finalising the electrification of Pier 66, and plans to connect cruise ships to shore power this summer.

This milestone will make shore power available at all three Seattle cruise berths, which will achieve the Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy goal to electrify all cruise berths by 2030, and make the city one of the first ports to offer cold ironing at all of its multiple berths.

"The Port continues to demonstrate how we can generate economic opportunities while minimising our impact on communities and the climate," Port of Seattle Commissioner Fred Felleman said.

"Marketing such investments should also appeal to the environmental interests of travellers who have chosen to cruise to Alaska."

The Port is continuing to work in partnership with cruise ports around the United States and Canada to explore the world's first 'Green Corridor' from Seattle to Alaska. *MS*

RCG Galapagos

ROYAL Caribbean Group (RCG) is not exiting the Galapagos Islands market, despite this week's news it is selling two of its purpose-built ships to Lindblad Expeditions (*CW* yesterday).

"As we continue to optimise our fleet, we remain committed to the Galapagos Islands, offering sailings on *Celebrity Flora* and *Silver Origin* - two ships we've purposely built to sail in the archipelago year-round," a RCG spokesperson told *Cruise Weekly* yesterday.

Cruise Calendar

Current ports of call in Australia and New Zealand.

SYDNEY	
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	14 Jun
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	17 Jun
<i>Carnival Splendor</i>	20 Jun
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	15 Jun
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	18 Jun
AIRLIE BEACH	
<i>Pacific Encounter</i>	20 Jun
<i>Pacific Adventure</i>	21 Jun
FREMANTLE	
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	15 Jun
BROOME	
<i>True North</i>	14 Jun
<i>Nat Geo Orion</i>	17 Jun
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	19 Jun
<i>Silver Cloud</i>	19 Jun
<i>Le Jacques Cartier</i>	21 Jun
DARWIN	
<i>National Geographic Orion</i>	17 Jun
<i>Coral Adventurer</i>	17 Jun
<i>Coral Geographer</i>	18 Jun
<i>Scenic Eclipse II</i>	19 Jun

Cunard sets record

CUNARD Line is celebrating record bookings following the launch of *Queen Anne* last week (*CW* 04 Jun).

The cruise line booked more guests in May than any equivalent period on record, with *Queen Anne's* Europe itineraries proving to be particularly popular.

Liverpool's cultural centre estimates more than 50,000 people attended *Queen Anne's* naming ceremony, with thousands more lining the banks of the Mersey for her arrival.