

Cruise Weekly today

CRUISE Weekly today features three pages of the latest cruise industry news, plus a full page from **Silversea**.

Williams joins Explora



EXCLUSIVE

AMY Williams (pictured) has been appointed as commercial director for Explora Journeys, **CW** can exclusively reveal.

Williams, who has served as Cunard Line's sales & marketing director for the past year and a half, will now lead the Explora commercial team out of the brand's Sydney office.

She started with Explora this week, reporting to Katrina McAlpine, managing director for MSC Group's cruise division.

Williams will be entrusted with driving continued growth for Explora and strengthening relationships with trade partners.

"We are delighted to confirm the appointment of Amy Williams as commercial director," a statement from Explora said.

"We warmly welcome Amy to

the team and wish her every success in her new role."

Williams spent 10 and a half years with the Cunard brand, spanning the cruise line's head office in the United Kingdom, as well as its Australian HQ in Sydney, where she previously worked with McAlpine.

She spent almost 20 years with Carnival Corporation in total, beginning with the company in Feb 2007 as a reservations consultant based at its British headquarters in Southampton.

Williams' addition marks the latest appointment in a hiring spree for MSC's cruise division, as McAlpine builds her team in her first year in the job.

This has seen Megan Toni recently hired as MSC Cruises' head of sales, joining the line's leadership team (**CW** 10 Jun). *MS*

Selling and sailing

AGENTS who book a minimum of two Silversea 2027 Asia voyages between now and 31 Jul will be in the draw to win one of nine spots on a famil voyage to Japan and South Korea.

While on board, agents will be educated and inspired with ports of call including Tokyo, Kobe, Jeju Island, and Seoul.

The promotion is available exclusively for individual agents and only eligible on fares that are all inclusive or all inclusive plus.

Spots will be awarded based on the highest gross revenue generated from bookings during the promotional period.

Winners will be announced on 28 Aug and notified by email from Silversea.

See more on the **back page**.

Virgin credit offer

VIRGIN Voyages is offering up to \$300 onboard credit on select Caribbean voyages during the 2026/27 northern hemisphere winter season for bookings made before 21 Jul.

Travellers can put the credit towards spa treatments, alcoholic beverages, 'Shore Things' excursions, onboard shopping, and much more.

Eligible departure dates are available between 15 Nov 2026 and 26 Apr 2027.

The promotion is combinable with the cruise line's balcony upgrade offer, which allows guests to stay in a Sea Terrace for the price of a Sea View.

Discover more details **HERE**.

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Cruise border processing to improve?

THE cruise sector will continue to work with the Australian Border Force as the federal government begins to roll out digital passenger cards.

Rolling out to all seaports and airports over the next 12 to 18 months, the Australia Travel Declaration (ATD) will render paper forms a thing of the past for cruisers entering the country.

A successful trial of the digital cards commenced in Oct 2024, with almost 500,000 passengers on eligible inbound flights testing the initiative.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) said it has been working with government agencies during the trial to ensure the ATD meets the needs of the sector.

"As plans progress, CLIA and cruise lines will continue to work with Australian Border Force and other government



agencies to ensure the needs of cruise passengers and the cruise industry are considered a key priority," the association told **Cruise Weekly** in a statement.

"Australians and overseas visitors who enter the country by sea are currently required to complete the same paper declaration as most air travellers, and will need to be included in the wider transition to digital declarations," CLIA said.

Cruisers are currently required to fill out a physical Incoming Passenger Card, a system which

is widely considered antiquated and contributes to slow entry processing into Australia.

Former Border Force commissioner Michael Outram was a strong proponent of including cruise in the trials, advocating for the sector at the Tourism & Transport Forum's Outlook Tourism Conference two years ago (**CW** 17 Jun 2024).

Outram said if Australia did not further digitise in the next decade, the risk profile presented would be far harder to manage.

"We're never going to get thousands more officers [and] government budgets are tight, so how are we going to manage that increase in travellers?" he said.

Although Australia doesn't publish a single official national statistic for unique cruise arrivals, it is estimated the country receives around 1.5 to 1.8 million passenger arrivals annually. *MS*

Solos looking good

MURRAY River

Paddlesteamers is offering solo travellers \$400 savings and no solo supplement on three-night sailings aboard *Emmylou* departing before 31 Aug.

This means that fares for solo travellers from \$1,700 are as much as fares for couples.

All fares include onboard meals, daily shore excursions, select alcoholic beverages, mid-cruise coach transfers, and free return train trips between Melbourne and Echuca or free parking at Echuca until 31 Aug.

The offer is in response to growing demand for solo travellers, the cruise line said.

Solo guests, mostly female, say they enjoy the freedom, flexibility, space and self-discovery that solo travel offers, Murray River Paddlesteamers said.



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Vive la France!
Raise a glass, say santé, and celebrate Bastille Day with Scenic as we showcase the very best of France this month.



PASSENGERS on board an AIDA cruise in Germany recently enjoyed a rare behind-the-scenes experience when they got to stay on board AIDamar during her dry dock.

Guests observed from a temporary viewing platform as the 14-year-old ship underwent her annual hull inspection in Rotterdam.

As a memento of the unique experience, which was part of a five-night sailing from Warnemunde, guests received a souvenir bag with Dutch gifts, including clog-shaped keyrings and stroopwafels.

"The technical scope of the project was very straightforward," Damen Shiprepair project manager Edwin Steijaert said.

"What made this an exceptional occurrence - and also a considerable logistical challenge - was the presence of passengers," he added.

Rome port build held up

AN ITALIAN court has halted construction of Royal Caribbean's new cruise port near Rome (pictured), overturning the previously granted environmental approval for the project.

Judges have ruled that the proposed €600 million (A\$987 million) cruise port was improperly reviewed and must undergo a new approval process.

They said the 'Fiumicino Waterfront' development should have been reviewed as a commercial port rather than a tourist marina.

Plans for the project include a single-berth cruise terminal, as well as a marina with more than 1,200 recreational berths, commercial space, restaurants, a hotel, shops, public waterfront parks, and other infrastructure.

The proposed port is located near Rome's Leonardo da Vinci International Airport, allowing cruise passengers to board ships much closer to the airport than at the city's current cruise port at Civitavecchia, which is about an hour away.

Fiumicino Waterfront's proposed cruise terminal is



expected to handle more than one million yearly pax across about 200 cruise days annually.

Chief executive officer of Fiumicino Waterfront Galliano Di Marco said the developers will appeal the decision.

The setback is the second such disappointment Royal Caribbean has suffered this year, after its Perfect Day Mexico mega-resort project in Costa Maya was cancelled altogether by national environmental leaders (CW 21 May), and will now not go ahead.

Mexico's decision came from its Secretariat of Environment & Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), following backlash from local residents and environmental groups over the US\$600 million (A\$836 million) development's ecological impact.

The project was slated to begin opening next year in the tourist village of Mahahual. MS

Back to school, HX

HX AND the University of Tasmania have launched a free Svalbard educational course, the third such program to be introduced in the past year.

The new HX + UTAS Svalbard Course is designed to deepen guests' understanding of one of the Arctic's most iconic destinations, while also celebrating 130 years since the cruise line first sailed to the destination in 1896.

Participants will gain insights into Svalbard's unique wildlife, ecosystems, history, and the principles of responsible exploration through a series of expert-led modules.

This will help them to arrive in Svalbard better informed and ready to get the most from their expedition, and award those who complete it with an attendance certificate.

The launch builds on the success of HX and UTAS' Antarctica pre-departure course, which was introduced in Sep (CW 15 Sep), and the Arctic destination-specific learning programs, brought in last month (CW 30 Jun).

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL THAT MAKES AN IMPACT

HX Expeditions' **Amber Wilson** on inspiring travellers to take action.

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 **TRAVEL DAILY**

 **Pharmacy
Daily**

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HOW TO ENTER

Book a minimum of two Asia 2027 voyages between 1 May and 31 July 2026 to be eligible for entry.

ELIGIBILITY

This promotion is open to individual agents only and applies to bookings made on All Inclusive or All Inclusive Plus fares. Bookings made on net rates, interline fares, friends and family rates, or any other special fare types are excluded.

WINNER SELECTION

Suites will be awarded based on the **highest gross revenue** generated from eligible bookings during the incentive period. Winners will be announced four weeks after the incentive period concludes (28 August) and notified by email by the Silversea Sales Team from salesaunz@silversea.com.

LEARN MORE

Contact your Silversea Sales Manager or Reservations on +61 2 9255 0600 silversea.com/trade

Terms and conditions: Incentive open to selected and accredited travel agents in Australia/ New Zealand only. Starts 01/05/2026. Closing date 31/07/2026. 9 winners receive each a 12-day cruise for one person only departing from Tokyo based on a Classic Veranda suite stateroom, including a standard meal, beverage package, taxes, fees, gratuities and 2-night pre cruise hotel accommodation. Full T&Cs: https://issuu.com/silverseacruises/docs/terms_conditions_-_sell_sail_incentive_aunz?fr=xKAE9_zMzMw. Promoter: Silversea Cruises Ltd. of Level 15, 101 Miller Street, North Sydney NSW 2060.