

Jo Haylen
Minister for Transport



Media Release

Cruise ships to ride a wave of momentum into NSW ports this summer

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The NSW Cruise season is off and sailing with a record-breaking \$4.41 billion 2023-24 season, up 60.4% from the previous financial year.

Data released today by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) and the Australian Cruise Association (ACA) reveals the 2023-24 cruise season saw the largest economic return to NSW that has ever been recorded - smashing even pre-COVID figures.

This growth is expected to continue over the coming summer with 1.2 million passengers and crew from 312 cruise ship visits set to sail into NSW ports.

It's not just Sydney ports set to benefit from the cruising boom. The Sapphire Coast is set to benefit as 25 cruise ship visits bring 43,000 passengers and 20,000 crew to the Port of Eden, injecting a potential \$12 million into the local economy.

Newcastle will see an increase in international visitors with 12 cruise ship visits, bringing 12,500 passengers and 6500 crew who can take advantage of the diverse array of shore excursions to explore the best of the Hunter region and nearby coastal towns.

The report also showed a 50% jump in jobs with the industry supporting employment for 13,714 full time jobs in NSW over 2023/24.

To learn more about the schedule for visiting ships, visit Port Authority's [Cruise Schedule](#).

Minister for Transport Jo Haylen said:

"NSW is Australia's Capital of Cruise, more than half of our nation's cruise spend is retained right here in the NSW economy.

"The season ahead will see even more international cruise ships visit NSW, and it shows a growing momentum for the cruise industry as passengers get back on board post-pandemic.

"This year we will see 23 maiden cruise ship arrivals to NSW ports, bringing hundreds of thousands of passengers eager to explore Sydney and our state.

"There's been some excellent growth in this industry, and our new panel will help the cruise industry continue to grow sustainably in the years ahead."

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Managing Director in Australasia Joel Katz said:

"Cruise tourism has been thriving in Australia and the economic benefits are now higher than they

have ever been. The previous financial year brought record levels of economic activity, record levels of visitor spending and record levels of employment in NSW and around the country.

“Cruise tourism is now worth \$8.43 billion a year to the Australian economy – billions of dollars more than previous years - and it supports more than 26,000 jobs in communities around our coasts.”

Australian Cruise Association (ACA) CEO Jill Abel said:

“Around the country, Australia recorded almost 4.3 million passenger visit days during 2023-24, an increase of 26.9% over the previous year.

“The result is an enormous windfall for businesses like tourism operators, hotels and restaurants, retailers, transport providers and port operators.

“In addition, passengers often return to destinations they initially discovered on a cruise, which creates added benefits for communities in the longer term.”

Port Authority CEO Captain Philip Holliday said:

“The overall outlook for the summer cruise season is positive, we will see a softening of cruise ship visits of around 5% however we will harness this opportunity to plan for the 25/26 season that already is trending upwards.

“There's never been a better time to cruise, with a diverse range of lines visiting our shores. Both Australian and international visitors are spoilt for choice with all our great state has to offer.”

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