



Media Release

For Immediate Release

26th Australian Cruise Association Conference and AGM commences in Adelaide, SA

Federal and State Government Ministers attend the gathering

Record event attendance reflects commitment to the cruise sector

(4 September 2024) Federal Minister for Trade and Tourism, Senator the Hon. Don Farrell has officially opened the 2024 Australian Cruise Association (ACA) Conference and AGM which is being held from 4-6 September in Adelaide, South Australia.

South Australian Minister for Tourism, the Hon Zoe Bettison MP will also participate at the event. According to the South Australian Tourism Commission, there are currently 119 cruise and expedition ship visits scheduled for the current season (2024-25). The state's cruise sector has grown by 48% compared to pre-COVID levels, with the 2022-23 season (latest data available) injecting a record \$215M into South Australia's economy.

With new opportunities and also challenges on the horizon for the cruise industry, the conference is themed "Steering Ideas to Success."

A record 156 attendees have assembled at SkyCity Adelaide to hear keynote presentations and panel discussions from a strong line-up of international and Australian speakers.

"This year's conference sessions will be all about inviting robust discussion and sharing of ideas with our membership and cruise community, that will ultimately steer us toward the next stage of our future as an industry," said Jill Abel, CEO of the Australian Cruise Association. "We look forward to developing strategies together that continue to advance cruise as a sustainable and vital pillar of Australia's visitor economy."

Highly influential cruise line executives joining the 2024 program include Jessica Ashe, Director, Shore Excursions & Future Cruises, Holland America Group and Chad Berkshire, EVP and Chief Commercial Officer, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings.

These international delegates will be joined by Gavin Smith (Royal Caribbean International), Ben Angell (Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings), Tim Jones (Celebrity Cruises) and Peter Little (Carnival Cruise Lines) and Chair, CLIA Australasia.

Individual and panel sessions will centre on current topics such as ongoing governance and regulatory issues as well as local supply chain growth opportunities. A focus will also be placed on destination development including a panel session as well as what promises to be a highly informative presentation by Mark Koolmatrie – Founder of Kool Tours. A regional outlook will be provided by Leigh Howard from Tourism Fiji building on ACA's commitment to the importance of working closely with neighbouring destinations.

The final day of the Conference will commence with a motivational breakfast by local Para Surf Champion, Chris Blowes. Blowes, who is an above-knee amputee as a result of a shark attack at Port Lincoln in 2015, has gone on to become a disability advocate, author and successful businessman. This session will be held at the Playford Hotel and will be followed by the AGM and Member Roundtable.

A pre-cruise program was held ahead of the conference on Wednesday 4 September with numerous opportunities on offer for attendees to take a deep dive into the city and surrounding regions. These included a tour of the Port Adelaide Passenger Terminal and local highlights, a gourmet food and wine e-bike tour through the historic town of Hahndorf with Bike About, an Adelaide Oval Stadium Tour and Roof Climb and a fun and lively HandleBar Food and City Tour.

The Conference is being supported by the South Australian Tourism Commission and Flinders Port Holdings.

Please download a selection of images [here](#).

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About Australian Cruise Association:

Australian Cruise Association is the co-operative marketing brand for cruise tourism in the Australia and Pacific region and represents a diversity of interests including regional ports, international, national and state tourism agencies, shipping agents, inbound tour operators and companies dedicated to marketing the region as a world class cruise destination.

Media Contacts:

Jill Collins
Barking Owl Communications
0417 654 474
Jill.collins@barkingowlcommunications.com.au