



Media Release  
For Immediate Release

## **Australian Para Surf Champion Chris Blowes to keynote ACA Conference breakfast**

(20 August 2024) Shark attack survivor, Chris Blowes, has been confirmed as the keynote speaker at this year's Australian Cruise Association Conference breakfast on Friday, 6 September.

The breakfast session is the final event on the Annual Conference program being held this year in Adelaide from 4-6 September. It is scheduled before the members break for the Annual General Meeting, and always proves to be a favourite among attendees as it attracts locally based motivational speakers passionate about their chosen subject.

Chris' story is inspirational. On the morning of ANZAC Day in 2015, Chris was surfing near Port Lincoln when he was attacked by a great white shark. Chris had lost a leg, his heart had stopped and he was at the bottom of a cliff 35km from the nearest country hospital on the Eyre Peninsula and a further 600km from the nearest trauma centre in Adelaide. Chris should have died – but he didn't.

As an above-knee amputee, learning to walk again was just the first step. But Chris had other goals including getting back to work as a builder, but more importantly surfing.

Chris is now a disability advocate, constantly challenging the stereotypes associated with disability. He is the managing director of his own successful building business and is back surfing. He is the co-author of the book 'Caught Inside' and was named one of the Top 10 Inspirational People in South Australia by The Advertiser in 2015.

He is the Australian Para Surf Champion 2022 and represented Australia at the World Para Surf Titles in California.

During his keynote presentation Chris will demonstrate how limiting mindsets can prevent people from reaching their full potential and how true growth ultimately lies in pushing boundaries and stepping outside of your comfort zone.

"Chris' story is truly remarkable, and he is living proof that anything is possible if you put your mind to it," said Jill Abel, CEO of the Australian Cruise Association. "His incredible resilience to walk again and get back on his surfboard and become an Australian Adaptive Surfing Champion will undoubtedly be an inspiration to us all. It is also a highly relevant topic for our industry given the focus on accessibility across the cruise sector."

The breakfast is being sponsored by Austrade, the Australian Trade and Investment Commission, and is being held at The Playford Adelaide, a member of the exclusive MGallery Sofitel Collection.

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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.

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