



NZ community celebrates P&O arrival

AN EARLY morning start to greet the arrival of P&O Cruises Australia's *Pacific Explorer* into Auckland Harbour today couldn't wipe the smiles off the faces of those who turned out to celebrate the restart of international cruising in New Zealand (**CW** breaking news).

The first passenger ship to sail into Auckland in more than two years was enabled by the reopening of New Zealand's maritime borders (**CW** 14 Jul), with *Explorer* met with a traditional Maori welcome after berthing at Queen's Wharf.

Among those greeting the vessel were a number of local business operators which have been languishing during the



cruise hiatus, along with Carnival Corporation President Australia Marguerite Fitzgerald, Mayor of Auckland Phil Goff and New Zealand Cruise Association head Debbie Summers (**pictured**).

The welcoming party also included Julie McEwen, a Kiwi who has been building an international reputation as a cruise director with P&O, while restaurateurs, providers and accommodation operators also hailed the expected economic contribution of cruising's return.

Fitzgerald paid tribute to the country's Government for "enabling cruising to be a part of New Zealand's move to reconnect with the world following the challenges of the pandemic".

"*Explorer's* arrival in Tamaki Makaurau, Auckland today is a signal that cruise tourism is poised to make a significant contribution to the restoration of the tourism economy," she said.

"Looking further afield to the reopening of maritime borders in other parts of the Pacific, it is entirely appropriate that *Pacific Explorer* is on an itinerary that includes calls in Fiji.

"We are looking forward to our ships also being able to return

to beautiful destinations in New Caledonia and Vanuatu and to the progressive return to New Zealand ports of ships from our other cruise lines as the tourism sector continues to rebuild," the Carnival chief added.

Fitzgerald noted P&O Australia was also preparing for *Pacific Explorer's* return to Auckland next year, where she will undertake her first homeported cruise season in three years.

"This is an exciting day for P&O and an exciting day for cruising and we thank New Zealand for today's warm welcome," she said.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Managing Director Joel Katz said the New Zealand cruise community could now begin rebuilding an industry that was previously worth almost NZD\$570 million a year to the country's economy.

"We now have an opportunity to revive a sector that previously supported many thousands of jobs in communities right around the New Zealand coast," he said.

Explorer will continue to make history next week, when she becomes the first international cruise ship to visit Fiji since the pandemic.

Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features two pages of all the latest cruise industry news.

Making an Icon

ROYAL Caribbean International has introduced its 'Making an Icon' series, giving viewers a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the cruise line's newest ship through a teaser trailer.

The soon-to-premiere online monthly series showcases *Icon of the Seas'* industrial engineers, interior designers, architects, artists, and teams across entertainment, food & beverage, design, and construction.

Icon will set sail next year, and will be Royal Caribbean's first ship to be powered by liquefied natural gas.

View the teaser **HERE**.

Celebrate this!

CARNIVAL Cruise Line has announced *Carnival Celebration's* senior officers, just three months before she joins the fleet.

Captain Vincenzo Alcaras, Chief Engineer Fabien Gervaise and Hotel Director Pierre Camilleri will lead more than 1,700 crew members aboard *Celebration*.

"We're proud to assemble this team of talented and knowledgeable maritime professionals to lead a dedicated crew on our next innovative Excel-class ship, *Carnival Celebration*," said the cruise line's President Christine Duffy.

"We can't wait to welcome guests to vacation with all this ship has to offer, and this team will ensure a great onboard experience for our guests."

Celebration is currently under construction at Meyer Turku in Finland.

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NCL EMBARK series

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has announced another EMBARK with NCL video series, in the form of a three-part showcase of its history.

Titled *'The Evolution of Innovation'*, the first episode premieres today, chronicling NCL's "groundbreaking" firsts over its 55 year history.

"Since 1966 Norwegian Cruise Line has set industry leading standards for the ultimate vacation experience," said CEO Harry Sommer.

NCL's next major evolutionary moment will be the highly anticipated debut of *Norwegian Prima* in Reykjavik later this month.

To view the latest EMBARK episode see ncl.com/embark.

CCCBI saves the (cruise) day



THE collapse of Crystal Cruises could have left a TravelManagers client significantly out of pocket, but fortunately the group's Credit Card Charge Back Insurance (CCCBI) platform came to the rescue.

Melbourne-based Cath Graham (**pictured**), came to rely on the CCCBI when Crystal Cruises was placed in liquidation this Feb

(*CW* 10 Feb), and is sharing her experience with the program.

"One of my clients was booked on a cruise operated by Crystal Cruises that was scheduled to embark from Athens on 14 Jun 2020," Graham explained.

"The cruise was initially postponed and eventually cancelled because of COVID and my client's funds were held in credit by Crystal Cruises to use when cruising resumed.

"However, Crystal Cruises eventually failed, which could have left both me and my client out of pocket by thousands of dollars."

TravelManagers' National Partnership Office team stepped in to assist Graham in lodging a CCCBI claim to recoup her client's funds, and within 10 days of applying, the request had been processed, approved, and paid.

"The process was smooth, the support from NPO was invaluable, and what could have been a really stressful situation for both me and my client was turned into a positive experience," she said.

"All up, 13 clients have been impacted by five supplier failures over the course of the pandemic. "As a result, to date TravelManagers' CCCBI has saved close to \$50,000."

TravelManagers' CCCBI is part of the group's 'Consumer Peace of Mind' promise, which was extended yesterday with the launch of the final piece in the puzzle, the new Travelmanagers Compensation Fund (TCF) which ensures customers are fully protected in the event of supplier failure.



THE United States Navy has recovered a fighter jet from the bottom of the ocean, after it was blown off an aircraft carrier.

The jet was recovered from a depth of almost three kilometres down in the Mediterranean Sea, after it was blown off *USS Harry S. Truman* during "unexpected heavy weather" last month.

The F/A-18F Super Hornet costs almost USD\$100 million and weighs 14,500 kilograms.

The aircraft was recovered using a remotely operated vehicle to attach "specialised rigging and lift lines" to the jet while it was underwater.

No one was aboard the jet during the gigantic oops, but one sailor suffered minor injuries, the Navy said.

It is unclear whether the aircraft is still in working order.

Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly's fortnightly consumer magazine called *Keep Dreaming* is specially designed for agents to send their clients - giving you a reason to reach out to your database.

Keep Dreaming is full of destination articles, cruise stories and more to inspire.



Click here to view *Keep Dreaming* magazine

Click here for a toolkit to help you share it with clients

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HAL crash lawsuit

THE family of four cruise passengers who sadly died in a floatplane crash during an Alaskan Holland America Line (HAL) shore excursion last year are suing the cruise line, alleging that it was negligent in not warning of the dangers.

The lawsuit notes they booked the trip through a third party travel agency, with other parties cited in the claim including the estate of the dead pilot and operator Southeast Aviation.