



## **Cruising To Play a Key Part in Queensland Tourism's Recovery Post Cyclone Debbie**

April 11, 2017

**Carnival Australia Executive Chairman Ann Sherry today pledged that cruising would play a significant part in Queensland's economic recovery from Cyclone Debbie's onslaught.**

Ms Sherry's comments followed an inspection of cyclone affected areas of the State with Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk and State Tourism Minister Kate Jones as well as Federal Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Steven Ciobo.

Her remarks also coincided with the embarkation of 2000 passengers on P&O Cruises' Pacific Dawn in Brisbane today, with the 70,000-tonne ship set to become the first cruise ship to visit Airlie Beach since the cyclone when it calls at the Whitsundays town on Thursday.

Pacific Dawn's visit will be the first of three P&O calls to the Whitsunday coast this month. A total of 34 ships from across Carnival Australia's cruise brands are scheduled to visit the region this year -- eight more than in 2016 -- while 48 visits are scheduled next year.

The largest cruiser operator in Australia, Carnival Australia represents seven iconic cruise brands -- P&O Cruises Australia, Princess Cruises, Carnival Cruise Line, Cunard, Seabourn, Holland America Line and P&O Cruises World Cruising.

"As a proud Queenslander, I am delighted that our cruise lines such as P&O Cruises can play a part in Queensland's economic recovery following Cyclone Debbie," Ms Sherry said.

"Coastal areas are heavily dependent on tourism for jobs and the visitor economy generally so the communities need visitors to return to help them rebuild.

"The sight of cruise ships returning to cyclone affected destinations is a signal to people around Australia and internationally that tourism is bouncing back and that they should consider holidaying in Queensland.

"We know it is going to be an emotional moment on Thursday when Pacific Dawn arrives at Airlie Beach for the first time since Cyclone Debbie and the first passengers start coming ashore from the ship's tender vessels."

Ms Sherry said \$10,000 from the P&O Pacific Partnership would be devoted to cyclone relief and would be presented to civic leaders at Airlie Beach on Thursday.

Cruising's role in post cyclone recovery comes at a time when Queensland has recorded massive growth as a cruise market.

In 2015-16, cruising contributed \$976 million to the Queensland economy -- a stunning increase of 53 per cent on 2014-15.

Nearly 300,000 Queenslanders took a cruise holiday in 2015 -- around a third of the more than one million Australians who cruised that year.

Ms Sherry said Brisbane was also emerging as a major cruise hub with three ships in Carnival Australia's fleets -- Pacific Dawn, Pacific Aria and Sun Princess -- currently homeported in the city.

Ship turnarounds from Carnival Australia brands in Brisbane would increase from 124 this year to 142 in 2018.

"Record cruising growth in Queensland is perfectly timed for cruise tourism to play a significant role in the post cyclone resurgence of local tourism," Ms Sherry said. "We are proud to be part of it."

### **Media information:**

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