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CRUISE INDUSTRY WELCOMED BACK

Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA) CEO Michael Johnson has welcomed the first international cruise ship to arrive at an Australian port in more than two years.

Mr Johnson said accommodation providers across the country desperately need the tens of thousands of cruise passengers who will soon begin disembarking at ports around Australia.

“The cruise industry is a critical component of Australia’s tourism and accommodation sector and its return sends a very strong signal we are nearing the end of the pandemic,” Mr Johnson said.

“The cruise ship industry contributes billions of dollars each year to the Australian economy and supports thousands of jobs in the accommodation sector.”

Mr Johnson was on hand to watch the P&O Australia flagship cruise liner Pacific Explorer arrive in Sydney Harbour yesterday, with almost 600 staff on board.

“These staff will train and prepare for the ships first departure in late May. This will be the first of many cruise liners to return which are great for CBD hotels which have been doing it tough for so long but the benefits are much more wide spread,” he said.

“The visitor economies of other parts of NSW, like Eden and Newcastle, also benefit each and every time one of these liners docks.”

Mr Johnson said the last full year of cruising statistics, 2018/19, saw nearly one in every 17 Aussies, or 5.8 per cent of the population, taking a cruise.

He said NSW represented more than half the Australian ocean cruise market and hotels were huge beneficiaries in pre and post accommodation.

He said cruise ships were docked in Sydney for 357 days of 2018, providing 1.37 million passenger visitor days and 147,000 crew visit days, with a combined spend of more than \$1.2billion on food, drinks, retail and accommodation.

“It will obviously take a while to return pre-pandemic levels of passengers but this is another great step on our road to recovery.”

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