



## **Cruising Has Solid Foundation in Cairns**

May 1, 2018

Carnival Australia and Ports North have completed discussions on Cairns' potential for continuing growth as a cruise hub in far North Queensland with the continued progression of the Cairns Shipping Development Project which will improve access for large cruise vessels.

With this positive development in mind, bookings for ships to berth at the cruise terminal have already been lodged with Ports North for P&O Cruises' Pacific Dawn and Pacific Jewel that had been set to anchor off Yorkeys Knob in 2019.

This involves seven alongside calls by the two ships which will comprise two-day overnight stays providing a strong economic contribution and enabling guests to explore Cairns and the surrounding region as fully as possible.

From now until the end of 2019, Cairns will host 90 ship calls, the majority of them by Carnival Australia brand vessels, at the Cairns Cruise Terminal bringing thousands of cruise tourists to the heart of the city.

Dredging of the Trinity Inlet channel offers exciting potential for cruising in the north to grow with the ability to accommodate large cruise ships up to 300 metres in length.

Alongside calls are always more attractive for cruise operators and guests because they eliminate the need for tender operations that can be affected by the vagaries of weather and sea conditions.

Ship visits to Cairns this year and next year by Carnival Australia brands, P&O Cruises, Princess Cruises, Holland America Line and Seabourn, are already in place. Completion of the dredging project opens the possibility of the company's larger cruise ships being able to berth alongside in Cairns.

In the meantime, P&O Cruises has made adjustments to the line's forward program following the announcement that Pacific Eden will leave its fleet in April 2019. Such a significant change to the make-up of the fleet means that Pacific Aria will be needed elsewhere and its Cairns-based cruise season in 2019 will not proceed as planned.

"There might be some initial disappointment about Pacific Aria's homeporting in 2019 but the overall picture for Cairns is very positive knowing that our commitment to the region is as strong as ever," said Sture Myrmell, President of Carnival Australia and P&O Cruises Australia.

"The seven overnight calls in which our ships will spend two days at Cairns are a sign of the flexibility that the dredging will offer by facilitating alongside calls. The overnight stays also represent strong opportunities for local businesses.

"Cruise operators will view the post dredging environment in a positive light with the opportunities it will provide for alongside calls including those by larger ships that would otherwise sail past."

Ports North Chairman, Russell Beer said while it was disappointing that a Cairns-based cruise ship season would not be extended to 2019, it is pleasing to have confirmation of Carnival Australia's commitment to Cairns and its potential as a cruise hub.

"Ports North have proven that we can do effective and efficient turnarounds in Cairns with very positive feedback from all stakeholders involved.

"The channel expansion project will open up a range of opportunities to target the more efficient Vista and Grand class vessels for both transits and turnaround options in Cairns.

"P&O has been a strong supporter of the Cairns destination and we welcome the opportunity to continue working with them to grow cruise shipping in the region," Mr Beer said.

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