



MAIDEN ARRIVAL OF P&O CRUISES AUSTRALIA'S BEAUTIFUL PACIFIC ENCOUNTER COMBINES A SALUTE TO 'HERO TUGS' AND OTHER MARITIME CHAMPIONS

August 2, 2022

Pacific Encounter, the latest addition to the P&O Cruises Australia fleet to continue the revival of Australia's \$5 billion a year cruise industry, today sailed into Sydney Harbour offering a salute to 'hero tugs' and other maritime champions that help keep our waters safe.

Amid big jets from water cannon tugs, the gleaming ship entered the harbour led by the Port Authority of NSW fire tug and flanked by three privately operated tugs that were involved recently in an amazing ship rescue off the coast of Sydney.

As Pacific Encounter entered Sydney Harbour, the words 'HERO TUGS!!!' flashed up on the ship's top deck big screen.

Pacific Encounter's 'encounter' with Sydney will be relatively brief as the ship is destined to be home ported in Brisbane following a long P&O tradition of basing ships there to enable Queenslanders to cruise from their doorstep.

Three tugs operated by Engage Towage — Diamantina, Martinique and Fitzroy — were part of the escort for Pacific Encounter. All three and their stalwart crews were involved in the operation to save bulk carrier Portland Bay after it lost power in stormy weather last month.

"We are very proud to welcome Pacific Encounter to begin her P&O Cruises cruising career to offer our guests fantastic and memorable cruise experiences," said President of Carnival Australia and P&O Cruises Australia Marguerite Fitzgerald.

"It is wonderful that we can also use today's arrival as an opportunity to salute the hero tugs of Sydney and everyone who does so much to support cruise shipping and the maritime sector in general.

"It is very exciting to see the rebuilding of cruise tourism in Australia and its economic benefits as we look forward to its revival in the wider Pacific region along with a near-normal summer cruise season here.

"It is fitting that with its heritage of 90 years of cruising from Australia, home-grown cruise line, P&O Cruises Australia, is leading the renaissance of cruising in this region."

Pacific Encounter's time in Sydney will also be of economic benefit to the city with local marine engineering and technical services coming on board and more than half a million kilograms of locally sourced produce being loaded to begin the ship's cruising program.

Referring to the tribute to maritime heroes, Philip Holliday, CEO of the Port Authority of NSW said he was proud of the work of his team in leading the multi-agency response that saved the vessel in trouble from running aground off Sydney.

"Port Authority of NSW has a strong capability and history of responding to marine incidents such as this and working with a number of key agencies who stand ready day and night to spring into action when needed," Mr Holliday said.

Mark Malone, Director of Engage Towage, said: "We are proud to assist with the maiden arrival of the Pacific Encounter into Sydney, demonstrating our ongoing relationship with P&O Cruises Australia and continued support of the return of cruise ships into Australia. The salute to our 'Hero Tugs' is a welcome gesture and a well-deserved credit to our crews".