

# Paul McLeay MP

Minister for Ports and Waterways  
Minister for the Illawarra



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M E D I A   R E L E A S E

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## **Cruise season begins, boosts Sydney tourism**

February marks peak cruise season for Sydney, as the city prepares to welcome some of the world's leading passenger liners, Ports and Waterways Minister Paul McLeay announced today.

Mr McLeay was joined by Tourism Minister Jodi McKay, Carnival Australia CEO Ann Sherry and Sydney Ports CEO Grant Gilfillan at the Overseas Passenger Terminal where the 116,000 tonne luxury liner Diamond Princess was docked.

Mr McLeay said a total of 19 cruise ship visits are scheduled for Sydney in February when Sydney will welcome more than 40,000 visitors and receive a \$30 million boost for the state's economy.

"Even in recent economic tough times, the cruise industry has enjoyed year after year of steady growth and that trend is continuing," Mr McLeay said.

"Sydney is celebrating yet another bumper season with 118 ships visiting during 2009/10, bringing in more than 250,000 passengers – that's on top of recently winning more international awards as a leading cruise port."

"The world's biggest cruise operators will be well represented during the first week which will see visits by the Pacific Jewel, Rhapsody of the Seas, Volendam, Seven Seas Voyager, Sun Princess and Nautica."

"Later in the month the city will see the majestic Queen Victoria make a return to our port (February 19), while on February 24 Sydney will welcome the Seabourn Odyssey on its maiden voyage into Sydney Harbour, escorted by a Sydney Ports Corporation Fire Tug Water Display."

Tourism Minister Jodi McKay said the cruise industry was a major contributor to the NSW tourism sector, with Sydney outperforming other Australian ports as a major cruise tourism destination.

"The cruise industry is important to Sydney and to the State", Ms McKay said.

"The figures alone tell an impressive story when you consider that tourism related cruise activity injects an estimated \$221 million into the state's economy every year."

"Cruising remains the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry around the world and Sydney and NSW are well positioned to reap the benefits of bigger ships carrying more passengers," Ms McKay said.

Ann Sherry, CEO of Australia's largest cruise operator, Carnival Australia, said the 2009-10 cruise season was the largest on record for the company, with Sydney again starring as the cruise gateway to Australia.

“Sydney has always been a desirable destination on the world cruise map, but as the international and local cruise industry continues to boom so too does the city’s popularity.

“Seven of our ships will be making 10 visits to Sydney in February, between them carrying more than 20,000 holidaymakers in and out of the city.”

“The economic benefit of these visits is greater than ever as some of the ships, Queen Victoria, Arcadia and Seabourn Odyssey, will be making overnight stays,” Ms Sherry said

Mr McLeay said Sydney is the only Australian city to operate two dedicated passenger terminals with facilities at Darling Harbour and the Overseas Passenger Terminal.

“The NSW Government continues to invest in services and infrastructure to support the industry through world-class facilities. We recently announced plans for a new purpose-built cruise terminal at White Bay.”

“The new terminal will secure Sydney’s future as a world leading cruise passenger destination. The investment in this world-class infrastructure will ensure Sydney remains one of the world’s leading cruise destinations for decades to come,” Mr McLeay said.

Mr McLeay pointed to the recently installed \$3 million self supporting gangway to improve safety and comfort for boarding and disembarking passengers as another step Sydney Ports are taking to ensure all ports have the highest standards of security, vessel management and gangway supervision services.

Mr McLeay said that Sydney has had a long tradition in international cruises.

“This December, the city will celebrate its golden anniversary of International Cruising when the Overseas Passenger Terminal turns 50.”

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