**Media Release**

For Immediate Release

**Broome to host Australian Cruise Association Conference in 2018**

(7 September, 2017) The Australian Cruise Association (ACA) will hold its annual conference and AGM in Broome in September 2018, reinforcing the region’s enormous potential in the further growth of the West Australian and Top End cruise itineraries.

The successful bid by Tourism Western Australia was announced at the completion of the 2017 Conference held in Mooloolaba, on the Sunshine Coast.

Making the announcement, Jill Abel, CEO of ACA said: “We are seeing the regional ports becoming increasingly critical to the growth of the cruise tourism sector in Australia. We wanted to recognise that in our selection of the destination for our 22nd annual conference next year and look forward to working with Broome on creating a highly successful event.”

It is anticipated that around 120 people will attend the Conference to be held from 12-14 September 2018. This includes leading national and international cruise executives and representatives from the supply side of the cruise sector - shore excursion operators, port authorities, providores, shipping agents and tour businesses. The conference, AGM and associated functions will be held at the award-winning Cable Beach Club Resort & Spa, situated on the world-famous 22km-long Cable Beach, offering a stunning backdrop to the event.

Commenting on the successful bid, Tourism Western Australia Chief Executive Officer Steve Wood said the State’s popularity as a cruise destination meant it was fitting for Broome to host this important national conference in 2018. Broome welcomed 18 cruise superliners carrying more than 20,000 guests and 10,000 crew in 2016/17, and there are currently 15 scheduled visits for 2017/18, including a maiden call by Crystal Symphony in February 2018.

“Broome offers the opportunity for conference delegates to engage with colleagues in an enticing destination with unrivalled, natural beauty. Affectionately known as the ‘Pearl of the North’, Broome is the home of South Sea pearls. Their discovery in the 1800s fueled a mass migration almost as epic as the gold rush, creating a melting pot of cultures that makes Broome the multicultural town it is today,” said Wood.

Broome is rich in Aboriginal history and famous for its unique heritage, pristine beaches and its many pearl showrooms and galleries to be found in the Chinatown precinct. Broome is also the gateway to the magnificent Kimberley region of Western Australia, renowned as one of Australia’s last frontier wilderness areas.

Peter Taylor, President of Broome Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), said: "In 2016 the BCCI formed ‘Cruise Broome’, a committee of local business representatives with the Kimberley Ports Authority focused on the future development of Broome as a destination for cruise ships. Cruise Broome works closely with local partners to help provide high quality services and amenities for cruise visitors and I am delighted to learn that the 2018 ACA Conference bid has been successful.”

Taylor said Federal Government funding has been secured to purchase an all-tide gangway system for the port that will enable more efficient passenger disembarkation. In addition, the Western Australian State Government is currently working toward solutions that will improve access to the ports of both Broome and Exmouth.

With multiple airlines servicing the region, Broome can be accessed by several Australian capital cities; during the peak season (April-October) direct flights are available from Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane as well as from Perth all year round.

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**About Australian Cruise Association:**

Australian Cruise Association is the co-operative marketing brand for cruise tourism in the Australia and Pacific region and represents a diversity of interests including regional ports, international, national and state tourism agencies, shipping agents, inbound tour operators and companies dedicated to marketing the region as a world class cruise destination.

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