



Australian Cruise Association launches national strategic action plan to drive policy reform, infrastructure investment and sustainable cruise growth

The Australian Cruise Association (ACA) has today launched its Strategic Action Plan, setting out a clear, coordinated approach to strengthen cruise tourism's contribution to Australia's economy, regional communities and visitor economy.

Representing a diverse national membership of ports, tourism bodies and service providers, the plan reinforces ACA as a unified national voice for cruise tourism and sets out a structured engagement program with Federal and State governments to drive policy reform, infrastructure investment and a coordinated National Cruise Tourism Strategy.

ACA CEO Jill Abel said the plan responds to long-standing fragmentation across policy, planning and regulatory settings that directly affect Australia's cruise competitiveness.

"Cruise tourism delivers billions in economic benefit ([2024-25 Value of Cruise Tourism | Australia Cruise Association](#)), supports tens of thousands of jobs and plays a critical role in regional dispersal - yet policy settings remain inconsistent across jurisdictions," Mrs Abel said.

Australian Cruise Association Chair Brendan Connell said the Strategic Action Plan reflects the collective voice of ACA's national membership and strives for a framework for long-term industry confidence.

"Our ports, destinations and industry partners are committed to sustainable cruise growth, but they require policy certainty and coordinated planning to invest with confidence."

"This plan represents a unified position and a constructive pathway forward to ensure cruise continues to deliver economic and social benefits across Australia," Mr Connell said.

A coordinated national approach

The Strategic Action Plan focuses on five priority areas:

- Policy and regulatory reform, including coastal trading certainty, border processing efficiency and regulatory harmonisation
- Port and terminal infrastructure, addressing capacity constraints at major gateways and enabling growth at regional ports
- Destination development, supporting sustainable cruise growth aligned with state and regional tourism strategies
- Sustainability and social licence, including shore power, emissions reduction and innovation in clean fuels
- Regional economic development, ensuring cruise continues to deliver tangible benefits to communities across Australia

The plan includes a structured engagement program with key Federal portfolios covering tourism, transport, trade, infrastructure, environment and border operations, alongside state-based engagement in all states and territories.

Supporting a National Cruise Tourism Strategy

A central pillar of the plan is ACA's call for the development of a National Cruise Tourism Strategy, aligned with state and territory planning frameworks and supported by consistent regulatory and investment settings.

"Australia needs a coordinated national approach to cruise - one that recognises the sector's economic contribution, supports infrastructure planning and provides certainty for cruise lines making long-term deployment decisions," Mrs Abel said.

"Our Strategic Action Plan provides a practical roadmap to get there."

Stronger collaboration with industry and regions

The plan also strengthens engagement with ACA's national membership, regional ports and destination partners through regular briefings, consultation forums and data-driven advocacy.

"This is about collaboration - not just advocacy," Mrs Abel said.

"ACA will continue to work closely with governments, ports, communities and industry to ensure cruise growth is sustainable, well-planned and delivers shared value."

The Strategic Action Plan will guide ACA's government engagement and advocacy activity over the next 12 months, with outcomes reported to members and stakeholders through regular updates and an annual State of the Industry report.

Media Contacts: Jill Abel, ceo@australiancruiseassociation.com +61 419511996 and Gemma Axford, gemma@australiancruiseassociation.com

About Australian Cruise Association (ACA)

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 and delivering the region as a world class cruise destination.