

Media Release

Sydney Business Chamber



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Cruise industry potential could be torpedoed by lack of facilities in Sydney

Sydney Business Chamber said today's release of a report by Access Economics on the Australian cruise industry was a timely reminder that Sydney has yet to resolve the issue of the docking and servicing of new mega cruise ships.

"Sydney, located on one of the greatest natural harbours in the world, is a popular destination for cruise ships and yet our shipping facilities haven't kept up to date with the new generation of mega cruise ships that are being built," said Patricia Forsythe, Executive Director of the Sydney Business Chamber.

"The Access Economics report is a wake up call that by 2020 85% of cruise ships will not be able to fit underneath the Harbour Bridge, which means we need to find new port facilities to the east of the Harbour Bridge or risk losing the economic benefits of these larger cruise ships."

"On a ship-by-ship basis, each turnaround brings about \$500,000 to Sydney, while international ships such as the Queen Mary 2 contribute upwards of \$1 million to the local economy.

"At the moment we have international visitors disembarking at military facilities and car yards while we work through this issue – it's not a good look for a city that prides itself on being an attractive and exciting tourist destination."

Mrs Forsythe said that Carnival Australia expected that the Australian cruise industry would carry one million passengers by 2020 but that could be undermined if holidaymakers encountered second class port facilities in Sydney.

"Passengers in Sydney are forecast to more than triple over the next ten years, with New South Wales expected to have the highest level of market penetration in Australia.

"In addition, the sector employs around 2,000 people in NSW, and its economic contribution is estimated at well over \$200 million in 2009.

"Cruising is an essential part of the tourism sector and we need to make sure we have the infrastructure in place which reflects its economic and cultural importance to the Harbour."

"The Federal and State Governments need to work together to create a solution that works effectively for both the navy and the tourism industry. The solution lies in enhanced facilities both east and west of the Harbour Bridge."

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