

Saturday, 13 June 2009

### **A BETTER WELCOME FOR CRUISE SHIP PASSENGERS**

Cruise ship passengers to Adelaide already receive one of the friendliest welcomes in Australia and now they will also have access to better facilities at the Outer Harbor terminal.

Flinders Ports has today announced that it is contributing \$250,000 towards an upgrade of the terminal facility and site, with work to be completed before the new cruise ship season.

In support, the State Government will provide \$252,000 to establish a new retail area, visitor information desk and a 'welcome to South Australia' wall mural within the facility

The changes come as South Australia prepares for a record cruise ship season in 2009-10, including four passenger liners offering 'Southern Ocean' cruises out of Adelaide.

South Australia's well-renowned 'meet and greet' program, where a welcome band and trained team of volunteers meet passengers as they disembark, will continue.

While strict national security requirements for ports will remain in place, Flinders Ports will introduce a number of access changes, including:

- A new entry point with vehicle access for the first time, allowing cars to drop off passengers with luggage at the terminal, similar to airports.
- A proposed new direct route to the railway station, cutting the walking distance to the train by more than half (about 150 metres).

Tourism Minister Jane Lomax-Smith says the improvements will be especially good for the increasing numbers of passengers joining cruises in Adelaide and improve the facilities with a purpose-built visitor information desk.

"We thank Flinders Ports, as the private operator of the terminal, for their willingness to work with us, in the face of strict Federal security requirements, to improve the experience for people holidaying on cruise ships.

"These changes will be very timely, with a number of new itineraries being offered by cruise ships who are recognising the potential of the Southern Ocean Cruising concept, including the *Athena*, *Pacific Sun*, *Dawn Princess* and the exclusive *Queen Victoria*.

"The *Athena* offered four cruises in 2008-09, the inaugural year of operation, and will expand to six cruises in the 2009-10 season.

"Adelaide-based tourism operator Proud Australia has reported a 40% increase in bookings for cruises from Adelaide compared to the same period last year.

“Arrivals have increased by 300% during the past two years and we are expecting a record 27 cruise ship arrivals next season, bringing an estimated 35,000 passengers to South Australia.

“South Australia’s reputation as a safe and welcoming port helped attract a record 21 cruise ships during 2008-09 and represented \$5.7m in direct expenditure to the State’s economy.

“South Australia will also host the 2009 Cruise Down Under Conference in August, giving us an extensive advantage in promoting South Australia as a leading cruise ship destination to cruise ship companies, inbound tour operators, other State tourism bodies and national ports.

“As outlined in the South Australian Tourism Plan 2009-2014, increasing access to South Australia is a key strategy in achieving our goal of \$6.3 billion in visitor expenditure by 2014.”

The upgrades are expected to start by late June and will be completed by early November 2009, in time for the first cruise ship arrival.

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