

31 October 2011

Cruise Ship Access Review Secretariat

R1-4-B163

Russell Offices
Department of Defence

PO Box 7901
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Re: Submission to Cruise Ship Review

The NSW Business Chamber welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Cruise Ship Access Review. The NSW Business Chamber represents the interests of around 30,000 businesses across NSW and the ACT, ranging from owner-operators to corporations and from manufacturers to service providers. NSW Business Chamber's members include cruise ship operators and the defence industry through respectively, Sydney Business Chamber and Australian Business Defence Industry Unit, both of which are part of NSW Business Chamber.

This submission responds to the Review's terms of reference (d) and (e), namely the suitability of existing Garden Island facilities to support more regular cruise ship visits during peak periods (with the degree of advanced notice sought by industry), and secondly, the economic benefits of enhanced cruise ship access to Sydney Harbour.

NSW Business Chamber participates in two of the NSW Government's recently established Industry Advisory Groups – manufacturing (including defence industry) and the visitor economy. Together with the NSW Government the Chamber is keen to see strategies developed to safeguard the growth potential of both sectors.

With the tourism sector currently experiencing a difficult trading environment because of the high value of the Australian dollar and uncertain global economic conditions, growth in cruise ship visits will undoubtedly deliver tangible benefits to the NSW economy.

NSW Business Chamber acknowledges the economic and employment contributions made by Navy and other defence suppliers at Garden Island. These arise through direct employment at Garden Island but also through defence industry suppliers located around Sydney and NSW. Aside from the wide range of skills and capabilities available to the Navy, location in Sydney benefits Naval staff retention through wide education and employment opportunities for naval families.

NSW Business Chamber incorporates

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The policy objective should be to achieve the collaborative use of infrastructure to harness the full economic contribution of both the cruise ship industry and Navy/defence industry. Whilst perhaps very different industries, it is their collective economic contribution to the state of NSW which is significant, and upon which NSWBC encourages decision makers to concentrate.

Current infrastructure constraints within Sydney Harbour require a more flexible approach to managing assets. The efficiency and capacity of existing cruise ship terminal space both east and west of the Harbour Bridge needs to be improved while at the same time making the most efficient use of Garden Island facilities. This could include improvements to the overseas passenger terminal to take bigger ships, building a multi-berth facility at White Bay and exploring options for naval vessels to use Sydney Ports' berths when cruise ships are at Garden Island. Joint examination of these options by the NSW Government and the Navy is suggested.

Annual cruise ship peak operations are roughly from December to March. NSW Business Chamber recommends that access to Garden Island be facilitated during this peak time. Such an arrangement should take into consideration the ongoing needs of the Navy and other important defence operations, such as the Thales Australia dry dock at Garden Island which is an important piece of infrastructure to both the Navy and the cruise ship industry.

Whatever the form of access arrangement finally agreed to, industry should be consulted in sufficient time to collaboratively negotiate shared access. Only through a collaborative and planned approach, can an outcome be guaranteed which both maximises cruise ship access, and minimises disruption to regular Naval activities.

NSW Business Chamber recommends that a tri-partite Defence, NSW Government and Industry working party be established to develop strategies to address the issues related to shared access of Naval facilities at Garden Island by cruise ships. The previous experience of berthing the Queen Elizabeth II and Queen Mary II cruise ship at the Naval facility may be instructive for future arrangements.

Please contact me on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] should you have any queries about this submission.

Yours sincerely



Paul Orton
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