

Cruise Britain welcomes new COVID-19 Framework for cruise operators

A new COVID-19 Framework for cruise operators is published today (02 October) by the UK Chamber of Shipping. The trade association for the UK shipping industry has worked closely with the cruise industry for over six months developing new Framework documents for cruise ship operators to implement new measures with enhanced public health protection.

The Framework, which has been shared with the UK government, and was produced in collaboration with the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), is the culmination of months of collaborative work between cruise operators, industry partners, and health experts.

It will help inform the restart of the cruise industry when the time is right and public health conditions allow. There is currently no restart date for the industry but the UK Chamber of Shipping, CLIA, operators and the industry will continue to work with the government on future plans.

James Stangroom, Chair Cruise Britain said: "Cruise Britain welcomes the publication of this Framework which is an essential initial step towards the safe resumption of cruise operations in the UK when the time is right. Ports and service providers throughout the UK are ready and waiting to work with cruise operators and we look forward to playing our part in rebuilding an industry which has been so successful over the last decade.

The cruise industry has always placed health and safety at the top of the agenda, and the enhanced detailed measures outlined in the Framework, in conjunction with any additional localised measures identified and implemented, will give confidence to all who work in the industry, both on board and ashore, and also to the passengers from the moment they book their cruise holidays," added Stangroom.

Launching the Framework, UK Chamber of Shipping Chief Executive Bob Sanguinetti said: "The cruise sector is a vital part of the UK economy. This new UK Chamber of Shipping Framework gives the government, passengers, crew and operators the confidence that the very latest science and medical advice has been included in the industry's planning process. A huge amount of time and effort has gone into this work and the new documents, which are fully supported by the sector, is a testament to the commitment of all concerned to protect the health and well being of cruisers, seafarers and the public. We are not talking about restarting the sector tomorrow, but it is a vital first step in the process to get cruises sailing again when conditions allow and government guidance changes."

Maritime Minister Robert Courts welcomed the launch of the new guidance saying: "Our cruise industry has been hit hard by COVID-19 and the government has worked alongside the sector to prepare for a safe and successful restart. This industry framework puts passengers and workers at its heart and is an important step forward to allow cruises to prepare to set sail when safe to do so."

Andy Harmer, Director, CLIA UK and Ireland, said: "This is the culmination of extensive dialogue and collaboration by representatives from across the maritime sector working together with Government and national health authorities. The rigour and detailed planning that has gone into these Framework documents demonstrates the commitment of the cruise industry to caring for public health and upholding a robust and uniform set of safety measures. This is an industry that supports more than 88,000 jobs and generates £10 billion to the economy each year and the industry is taking the necessary steps to be ready to restart in the UK when the time is right."

Notes: The new Framework, which has been shared with the UK government, is based on published guidance from national and international authorities including World Health Organization, International Maritime Organization, European Maritime Safety Association, the European Centre for Disease Control and EU Healthy Gateways.