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## **Cruise NZ welcomes Auckland port study**

Cruise New Zealand has welcomed the consultant's report and recommendations of the Consensus Working Group for the Auckland Port Future Study, saying it highlights the importance of the cruise ship sector to the Auckland and national economies.

All of the options considered recommend that cruise ships continue to berth in the heart of Auckland city, says Cruise New Zealand Chairman Kevin O'Sullivan.

He says the consultant's report, made public last week, also recognises that a short-term measure is needed urgently to cope with the new generation of larger cruise ships coming on stream.

"Ships like the Ovation of the Seas cater for almost 5000 passengers plus crew and there are even larger vessels still to come. These cruise ships bring high value visitors to Auckland – but they will only keep coming if Auckland has the right port infrastructure in place.

"The risk is that they won't include Auckland in their itineraries if they have to use tender vessels to transport passengers to shore."

Mr O'Sullivan says the Study recognises this, and to accommodate the growing cruise sector is recommending expanding the berthing capability of Queens Wharf by using a dolphin – a standalone structure built in the water at a distance from the wharf that extends its effective length.

"Auckland lacks the ability of several other New Zealand ports to dock the current generation of large cruise ships scheduled to call. Building a dolphin at Queens Wharf will ensure Auckland remains a port of call for the current generation of large cruise ships.

"While Auckland Council has voted to delay implementing the Port Future Study recommendations, they must not delay resolving the short term issues for cruise. We are calling on them to give the go ahead immediately to build a dolphin at Queens Wharf and Cruise New Zealand looks forward to helping make that happen.

"If the Council adopts this approach now, it's likely a dolphin can be erected in time for the 2017-18 cruise ship season, meaning larger ships can have a secure berth in the short-term," says Mr O'Sullivan.

"Of course this is an interim measure for a current problem, so it's also very encouraging to see that the Study is recommending that the area around Captain Cook Wharf be developed for additional berths and a cruise ship terminal. This is a

realistic solution to meeting cruise ship infrastructure needs in Auckland over the medium to long term.

He says ensuring Auckland has quality port infrastructure is vital to the continuing growth of the cruise sector. It's not only a popular port of call, the city also attracts pre and post-cruise stays and more overnight stays than the other regions.

Cruise arrivals are now New Zealand's third largest holiday market behind Australia and China, with an estimated 267,800 passengers landing here during the 2015-16 cruise season, at around \$543.3 million value added. Cruise is one of the New Zealand tourism industry's fastest growing sectors.

### **About Cruise New Zealand**

Cruise New Zealand is the industry association of New Zealand's cruise sector. Cruise New Zealand has been the driving force in attracting cruise lines to New Zealand since 1994, and has played a major part in building New Zealand's world renowned reputation as a desirable and cruise-friendly destination.

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