



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL  
OF CRUISE LINES

**Capitol Hill Oceans Week  
2002**

**Connecting the WOW: Wonders of the Ocean World  
Creating an Ocean Literate Society**

Panel 4: Future of WOW: Increasing Ocean Literacy  
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**International Council of Cruise Lines  
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Ladies and gentlemen it is indeed an honor to join this panel of distinguished speakers today to discuss the role of *Creating an Ocean Literate Society* as we focus on the “Wonders of the Ocean World.” We all learn in school that three-quarters of the world is covered by water – mainly the oceans. We also learn that the oceans provide us with oxygen to survive, that the oceans are the maritime breadbasket of the populations of the world, and that the oceans are the engines that drive global weather patterns including the mightiest of storms and the most subtle changes.

We all know that ships have arrived and departed with the tides for many thousands of years. The oceans are the marine highways for ships that carry the trade products that are necessary to our everyday life. We know of the ships that carry grain, coal, coffee and bananas, ships that transport passengers from one port to another for business and still other ships that carry passengers on their dream vacation to exotic ports and far off places.

It is truly amazing to realize the number of people on this planet, or even just in the United States alone, who have never seen the beautiful oceans of the world or even just one of them. While the oceans are so critical to life on this planet, very few of us have the opportunity to learn about them in depth, to learn what it is that challenges their vitality and learn what it is to be able to take steps that protect them in the face of

growing populations and commerce. In many instances a person's encounter with one or more of the oceans of the planet comes with their opportunity to take a cruise – to see the world – to actually visit those far off ports and exotic places. Last year, ICCL cruise ship operators carried more than 7 million passengers to over 300 ports around the world on holidays at sea. That's over 7 million opportunities to create an "ocean literate society."

ICCL is a non-profit trade association that represents the interests of 16 of the largest cruise lines operating in the North American cruise market and over 73 Associate Member companies that are cruise industry business partners and suppliers. Because we have this opportunity to educate, it is incumbent upon our members to provide informative and accurate information to our passengers and crewmembers in an interesting and easily comprehended format that challenges ones imagination and helps produce an "ocean literate society."

### **Training and Education:**

In this regard, ICCL member lines have developed programs that raise the level of environmental awareness on the part of both the passengers and the crew. Each ship's crew receives training regarding shipboard safety and environmental procedures. Advanced training in these areas is provided as well. Those directly responsible for processing wastes are given specific instruction in their duties and responsibilities and in the operation of the various equipment and waste management systems. Specific actions that our member lines have taken to train employees and increase passenger awareness include:

- a. Announcements over the public address system and notices in ship newsletters that caution against throwing any trash overboard.
- b. Signage and colorful posters placed in crew and passenger areas encouraging environmental awareness and protection.
- c. Safety and environmental information booklets in crew cabins and crew lounges.
- d. Regular meetings of ship safety and environmental committees consisting of officers and crew from all departments to review methods of improving performance, including better and more effective environmental practices.

Placards warning of the prohibition of the discharge of oil are posted on all ships operating in the navigable waters of the United States as required by U.S. Coast Guard regulations (33CFR155.450). Additionally, as part of required shipboard waste management plans, both Coast Guard regulations (33CFR151.59) and MARPOL (Annex V Regulation 9) require the posting of placards that notify the passengers and the crew of the disposal requirements for garbage. These placards are to be written in the official language of the State whose flag the ship is entitled to fly. (These placards must also be written in English or French.) Oversight of compliance with these requirements is conducted by ISM audits and frequent inspections by flag states and the United States Coast Guard.

While the practices discussed above provide formal notification of environmental practices onboard ships, ICCL member operators also provide environmental education opportunities through various onboard programs. Examples include:

- Carnival Cruise Line's alliance with Turner Broadcasting's Captain Planet Foundation which promotes environmental awareness to guests, crew and the community through "edu-tainment" cartoons broadcast on Carnivals in-cabin television and during "Camp Carnival" activities.
- Holland America's special video presentation for passengers regarding their sensitivity to the special environmental conditions that exist in Alaska.
- Princess Cruises and other operators provide naturalist and park ranger presentations regarding the history and environment of the ports visited including discussion of the ocean habitat and indigenous fauna such as whales, game fish, sea otters, numerous varieties of sea birds, bears, and other wildlife.
- Companies such as Holland America Line supporting numerous organizations including the Alaska Raptor Rehabilitation Center, Yukon Wildlife Preserve, Kenai River Trust, and Seattle's Woodland Park Zoo and Aquarium that bring natural resources and the environment up close and personal.
- Royal Caribbean installing "Eco-learning Centers" where tours and environmental educational talks are provided to passengers.

### **Scientific Support:**

The cruise industry is committed to helping scientists answer some of today's most significant questions about atmospheric, ocean and climate research. Cruise ship operators have taken advantage of the new large ships being built by installing hi-tech shipboard atmospheric and oceanographic laboratories. These have been made available for use by learning institutions such as the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, which manages the facilities on Royal Caribbean's Explorer of the Seas, and by environmental organizations.

The Explorer of the Seas sails a weekly seven-night Eastern Caribbean itinerary from Miami and across the Gulf Stream, through important passage points between the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, and enters the Tradewinds region. In this region, the transport of dust and other particulate matter in the atmosphere has a widespread impact on the health of human populations and the planet. The ship's repetitive line will allow scientists from Rosenstiel, NOAA and other research institutions around the globe to collect vital information continuously during the weekly cruises, thus supplying long-running, detailed data never before possible. Scientists will use this data to identify and track pollutants in the air and sea, measure the flow of currents to understand the balance and distribution of heat on the planet, collect data to use in ocean and hurricane models, and to monitor important, but hard-to-measure, populations of organisms living in the sea.

Carnival Cruise line has also partnered with NOAA to develop a university internship program and use the cruise line's vessels and oceanographic laboratories as data collection and sampling centers. This program operates hand in hand with an internship program involving the U.S. maritime academies during which students spend four to eight weeks' onboard ship with members of Carnival's environmental, health and safety group.

### **Environmental Practices:**

It is also important to educate Federal and State environmental agencies, public environmental advocacy groups, our passengers and the public in general regarding environmental waste management practices employed by the industry to protect the environment.

Despite what some environmental groups are reporting, just because waste is generated in the course of living and ship operation from day to day, that waste is not automatically pollution. Waste that is properly handled does not become pollution. The cruise industry's commitment to protecting the environment is demonstrated by the comprehensive spectrum of waste management technologies and procedures employed on its vessels. These procedures are set forth as ICCL Industry Standard "E-01-01 Waste Management Practices and Procedures." ICCL members are committed to:

- a. Designing, constructing and operating vessels, so as to minimize their impact on the environment.
- b. Developing improved technologies to exceed current requirements for protection of the environment.
- c. Implementing a policy goal of zero discharge of MARPOL, Annex V solid waste products by use of more comprehensive waste minimization procedures to significantly reduce shipboard generated waste.
- d. Expanding waste reduction strategies to include reuse and recycling to the maximum extent possible so as to land ashore even smaller quantities of waste products.
- e. Improving processes and procedures for collection and transfer of hazardous waste.
- f. Strengthening comprehensive programs for monitoring and auditing of onboard environmental practices and procedures in accordance with the International Safety Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention (ISM Code).

As an example of the industry's commitment to improve environmental performance, some member cruise lines are field-testing wastewater treatment systems that utilize advanced technologies. These onboard wastewater treatment systems are designed to result in water discharges that are of a high quality and purity - are essentially clean water. This is just one example. Cruise industry operators are participating in the

development and field-testing plasma arc incineration, dry cleaning without the use of chemicals, printing utilizing soy based inks, ballast water treatment systems, and other exciting state of the art technologies. One company recently eliminated the use of some 99 chemicals in their inventory of onboard products. Another newly developed and tested oil water separation/processing technology, which results in water discharges that are more than three times cleaner than U.S. law requires. All of these actions are being done without the requirement of any regulation.

Cruise ships are strongly regulated with regard to the disposition of onboard-generated waste. In addition to compliance with international regulations (MARPOL 73/78) that apply around the globe, cruise ships no matter what nation they are registered with (what flag they fly) must also comply with all United States environmental regulations as applicable within US Waters and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). These laws include the Clean Water Act (CWA), Refuse Act, Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA) relating to the handling and disposal of hazardous waste, Clean Air Act and the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90). Not to mention the numerous state laws that have recently come into force. Compliance with applicable laws is being overseen by the United States Coast Guard, state agencies, internal and external auditing services that report to various enforcement agencies, and public environmental advocacy groups. Overall, compliance is excellent.

## **Conclusion**

Creating an “ocean literate society” is an important goal. Each of us as a citizen of the United States and as a citizen of the world should know and understand the importance of protecting and preserving the oceans upon which we all rely. With knowledge comes the power to shape the way things will be – the power to shape the future of our world so that it remains a world that we want our children to inherit. It is the responsibility of each of us, regulator, ship operator, trade association representative, public environmental advocacy representative, researcher, scientist, public policy formulator, manufacturer, worker, and vacationer to hold ourselves individually and collectively accountable for what we do, how we teach others to view their world and the environmental future of the planet. The cruise industry is dedicated to doing just that.

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