

International Council of Cruise Lines
Press Room

- Who we are
Learn more about ICCL
- Press Room
Follow the latest ICCL news
- Cruise Industry FAQ's
Answers to questions
- Resources
Operators & Lines
- Cruise Industry Policies
Standards & Statements
- Cruise Line Members
Membership Info
- Associate Membership
Info and Buyers' Guide
- Foundation
Foundation
- Members Only
Cruise Line Members
Associate Members
- Contact Us
Contact Us
- Home
Home

Site Search

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Bridget Ann Serchak 202-296-8463

Statement of the International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL) Regarding Allegations of Crime Onboard Cruise Ships

The cruise industry takes any and all cases of reported crimes onboard our ships very seriously. The safety and security of our passengers and crew is our highest priority. With more than five million passengers cruising each year, the industry takes every precaution to ensure that its passengers are safe and that they have a fun and enjoyable vacation experience. In fact, the cruise industry has the highest customer satisfaction rating of any vacation option.

Cruise Ships Have Procedures In Place to Ensure A Very Safe and Secure Vacation

A cruise vessel is comparable to a gated community. It has 24-hour security, controlled access, and an official manifest of all passengers and crew onboard. The precautions our member lines take to ensure passengers' security include:

- Background checks on prospective employees.
- Visas issued by the U.S. State Department for onboard crewmembers; U.S. embassies abroad will not issue work visas to crewmembers with criminal records.
- Highly trained security personnel onboard every vessel; in fact, every cruise ship is required by U.S. and international law to have a designated security officer onboard.
- Designated shoreside security representative for each cruise line, as required by both U.S. and international law, with internal shoreside security teams to manage and oversee onboard security policies and practices.
- Security screening for all passengers and crew before embarking or disembarking any vessel with access strictly limited to documented employees and fare-paying passengers. Once onboard, all passengers and crew are accounted for on the ship's official manifest.
- Established procedures to investigate, report and refer incidents of onboard crime to appropriate law enforcement authorities. ICCL member cruise lines cooperate fully with all U.S. law enforcement authorities, including the FBI and the U.S. Coast Guard Investigative Service, which, by statute, are tasked with investigating and prosecuting incidents involving Americans outside U.S. waters.

Crime Onboard Cruise Ships is Remarkably Low

Crime onboard cruise vessels is extremely rare as compared to similar

incidents reported ashore. A passenger is safer on a cruise ship than in urban or rural America. A review of FBI annual crime statistics reveals that the number of reported shoreside aggravated sexual assaults occurring in urban or rural communities is at least 20 to 50 times greater than the total number of all reported shipboard assaults of any type.

Cruise Lines Have Strict Policies Governing Crew Conduct

Cruise lines dismiss crewmembers who violate rules against fraternization with guests. In fact, U.S. immigration laws require all shipping lines to repatriate crewmembers accused of crimes, and will initiate extradition proceedings if necessary.

American Cruise Line Passengers are Protected by U.S. Laws

Cruise lines operate within a very strict legal framework that gives both federal and state agencies, as well as international administrations, the authority to investigate crimes committed onboard cruise ships. In the unlikely event that an incident does occur, the FBI has the authority to investigate and prosecute alleged crimes involving Americans anywhere in the world. In addition, all passengers embarking or disembarking a foreign flag vessel in the United States have recourse to civil actions in U.S. courts.

When a cruise ship is in international waters, reporting procedures are the same regardless of the ship's flag. Just as in any shoreside resort or hotel, the victim of the alleged crime must decide to report an incident to the authorities. Once a cruise line official has been notified that an incident has occurred, every measure is taken to investigate, report all findings, and share evidence with the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

In sum, cruise ship passengers are afforded greater protection by Congress and the courts than any other vacationers in the world, and cruise lines consequently have a greater interest in deterring any wrongdoing onboard their ships.

Cruise Lines are Subject to Civil Liability in U.S. Courts

In any isolated instance of alleged sexual assault, U.S. courts have held cruise lines accountable to the most stringent legal standards, including civil damages in trials before U.S. juries. Federal law expressly prohibits cruise lines from disclaiming liability for any injury to passengers. Shoreside employers in U.S., on the other hand, are generally not held liable when, for example, an off-duty employee commits an unforeseen crime against a customer.


Passenger and Crew Safety Remains the Cruise Industry's Highest Priority

Cruising is one of the most popular vacation options, in large part because of its excellent safety record and the high level of quality service provided onboard cruise ships. The cruise industry is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for its passengers and crew.

#

ICCL is a Washington, D.C.-based, non-profit trade association that represents the interests of 17 passenger cruise lines in the North American cruise market and more than 50 national and international cruise industry suppliers. ICCL member lines operate 92 vessels that call upon major ports in the United States and abroad. These vessels carry more than five million passengers each year and account for approximately 90% of the North American passenger cruise line industry. The mission of the ICCL is to participate in the regulatory and policy development process and ensure that all measures adopted provide for a safe, secure and healthy cruise ship environment.

2111 Wilson Boulevard, 8th Floor, Arlington, VA 22201
P: 800.565.9338 - P: 703.522.8483 - F: 703.522.3811 - e-mail: info@iccl.org



International Council of Cruise Lines
Press Room

- Who we are
Learn more about ICCL
- Press Room
Follow the latest ICCL news
- Cruise Industry FAQ's
Answers to questions
- Resources
Operations & Lines
- Cruise Industry Policies
Standards & Statements
- Cruise Line Members
Membership Info
- Associate Membership
Info and Buyers' Guide
- Foundation
Foundation
- Members Only
Cruise Line Members
Associate Members
- Contact Us
Contact Us
- Home
Home

What is the ICCL?

U.S. Activities

International Representation

Partner in U.S. Economic Growth 02-296-8463

ICCL Staff & Committees

Open Letter From the Senior Executives of the International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL)

July 27, 1999

Cruise Industry Zero Tolerance Policy for Crimes Committed Onboard Ships

As leaders of the cruise industry, we are writing to reaffirm and strengthen our commitment to the safety and security of passengers and crew onboard our ships. These issues have always been of the utmost importance to us. Our action today establishes a unified industry standard, to be adopted by all member cruise lines, with regard to the procedures and reporting requirements that apply to crimes committed onboard ships.

This policy establishes a single industry standard that requires allegations of onboard crime be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities which, for vessels calling on U.S. ports or crime involving U.S. citizens, would include the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

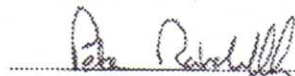
In summary, our companies, and our industry as a whole, have zero tolerance for crimes committed on our vessels. If crimes do occur, the appropriate law enforcement authorities will be called in to investigate and prosecute to the fullest extent of the law. We will continue to cooperate with the authorities to ensure that perpetrators of crime are brought to justice.



Micky Arison
 Chairman and CEO, Carnival Corporation
 Chairman, ICCL



Richard Fain
 Chairman and CEO, Royal Caribbean Cruises Limited



Peter Ratchliffe
 President, Princess Cruises



Joseph Watters
 President, Crystal Cruises

2111 Wilson Boulevard, 8th Floor, Arlington, VA 22201
 P: 800.595.9338 · P: 703.522.8463 · F: 703.522.3811 · e-mail: info@iccl.org