



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **ICCA Launches New River Cruise Training Course**

With river cruise numbers on the rise, the International Cruise Council Australasia has launched a new river cruise training module aimed at helping travel agents better understand the growing sector.

Latest ICCA figures show that river cruise passenger numbers from Australia rose 12 per cent in 2010, with the sector representing six per cent of the cruise passenger market.

ICCA General Manager Brett Jardine said the Europe River Cruising training module, which includes Russia and Egypt, presented a structured syllabus that looked at different elements of river cruising in order to give agents a thorough understanding of the concept.

“The module examines the history, development and growth of river cruising as well as the unique attributes of the vessels, potential river cruise passengers and the varied itineraries and exciting sightseeing on offer,” Mr Jardine said.

“It also includes an in-depth look at major river cruise destinations from Europe to Egypt, focusing on embarkation and disembarkation ports as well as unique and popular ports along the way.”

Viking River Cruises Australia Business Development Director (Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania) Liz Sawers attended the first training session in Melbourne earlier this month and said it was met with enthusiasm.

“It was specifically tailored to provide agents with a generic understanding of the concept of river cruising, an ability to identify and match their clientele to specific cruise types and give them greater understanding of the wide range of luxury options now available in the market place,” Ms Sawers said.

The river cruising training course is an elective module worth 15 points as part of the ICCA’s cruise industry accreditation program.

Mr Jardine encouraged all ICCA retail agents to consider taking part in the training whether they were already accredited or not.

“It is important for agents to keep looking for educational opportunities to stay motivated and abreast of changing trends in the industry,” he said.

The ICCA’s river cruise members include APT, Avalon Waterways, Scenic Tours, Uniworld Boutique River Cruises and Viking River Cruises.

***The International Cruise Council Australasia is a not-for-profit organisation formed in 1996, committed to training travel consultants and raising consumer awareness of cruising.***

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