

REIMAGINING CRUISE TOURISM IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: USING SUSTAINABLE MESSAGING TO REBUILD AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY SENTIMENT TOWARDS THE CRUISE INDUSTRY

LEMEAH HENDY

The cruise industry has experienced exponential growth over the past three decades, however the unprecedented outbreak of COVID-19 leaves the future of cruising uncertain. With the industry lying dormant for quite some time, it may be difficult to determine if the resumption of cruising will be welcomed by local communities. The cruise industry is known to contribute positively to a destination's economy, but is this incentive enough for residents?

This mixed method study aims to first understand how local communities in rural locations perceive the cruise industry as a social licence following the COVID-19 pandemic. Where a social licence reflects the acceptance and support of an industry by the public, which is central to the success of the sector and the delivery of positive host-guest interactions. From this, the study seeks to understand how the cruise industry can leverage communications and messaging to affect community sentiment and gain the social licence to operate in port destinations. The expected outcomes of research will contribute to the lack of social licence research in cruise tourism and extends the communication process model to further understanding local community sentiment. The research also intends to inform industry representatives about the effects of communication on the publics' acceptance of the restarting of this sector in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Supervisor: Associate Professor Sarah Gardiner.

Email: lemeah.hendy@griffithuni.edu.au