Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **Monday 30 April, 2012**

NEW REPORT CONFIRMS CRUISE SHIP SECTOR AS STAR PERFORMER

Cruise shipping remains the fastest growing sector of the Australian tourism industry, a new report has confirmed today.

Tourism & Transport Forum (TTF) Chief Executive, John Lee said the International Cruise Council report found that in just one year the number of Australians taking a cruise jumped 34 per cent to 623,294.

"At a time when the tourism sector is facing a number of challenges, cruise shipping is one very bright star," Mr Lee said

"The report adds to growing evidence of the importance of cruise shipping to the Australian economy. Earlier this year a report by Deloitte Access Economics found the sector added almost $830 million to Australia's gross domestic product.

"It's an exciting time for cruise shipping and these figures confirm forecasts for the sector to continue to grow at a rapid rate.

"The only cloud on the horizon is the tourism industry's concern that governments will not keep up with the infrastructure needs of the sector.

"Many major ports are facing constraints and unless action is taken, the potential economic benefits for Australia will not be realised.

"It's why we need action from the federal government to allow cruise ships to share Garden Island on Sydney Harbour, why we need better landside port facilities in Brisbane and why TTF supports the Newman government's plans to improve cruise ship access in Cairns.

"The future is strong for cruise shipping in Australia but needs support from federal and state governments to lock in the gains that we are seeing for tourism and the broader economy," said Mr Lee.

<ENDS>

Media contact: Justin Wastnage - 0410 219 131