

Policies

Cruise Vessel Noise Restriction Policy

Otago Harbour is the natural harbour of Ōtepoti Dunedin and many protected species live along the harbour's coastlines.

Port Otago, itself, sits in the heart of the seaside village of Port Chalmers and the topography immediately around the port acts like an amphitheatre, when it comes to port-generated noise. As a member of the harbour community, we are committed to minimising the impact of noise on our neighbours and wildlife.

We are working proactively with our cruise partners to minimise noise, while also enhancing the reputation of cruise and building all-important social licence.

Excessive noise

"Excessive noise" is noise that is likely to generate community complaints.

In a cruise context, excessive noise generally relates to three sources:

- 1) Volume of music on board the ship. (From 2 nautical miles beyond Taiaroa Head and while inside the harbour, music should be no more than 70 decibels.)
- 2) The ship's horn. This should only be used for safety and maritime reasons while within the harbour.
- 3) Vessel announcements on outside decks. This should be limited, where possible, while within the harbour.

Communication

- 1) The requirement to adhere to the policy is outlined in the VAIS form.
- 2) The policy will be emailed to all shipping agents along with the Port Operations Cruise Information Guide at the start of each season.
- 3) Our pilot team will follow up and brief the master while onboard.

Monitoring

Real-time audio recording devices monitor noise levels⁷, providing an objective measure to identify when noise is genuinely excessive.

Steps to address excessive noise

- 1) Where noise is measured as "excessive", an email will be sent to the shipping agent to forward to the vessel master. The Port Otago Pilot would discuss the issue with bridge team as part of departure processes.
 - 2) If the same vessel consistently generates excessive noise, a formal notice of a breach of noise restrictions will be sent to the shipping agent/vessel master and a meeting with the cruise line/company would be initiated.
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