



## During Cruise Wave Season, AIG Travel Stresses Planning for Passenger Protection

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### Provider of Travel Guard® travel insurance solutions shares ways to help ensure smooth sailing

HOUSTON, Jan. 27, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Cruise ships are expected to carry more than 22 million passengers worldwide in 2015,<sup>1</sup> and based on historical trends, many of the bookings will be made from January through March, which is known in the industry as "cruise wave season" for the high volume of reservations traditionally made during the cold winter months. With people setting their sights on sailing away, AIG Travel ([www.aig.com/travel](http://www.aig.com/travel)) shared tips today to help travelers "shore up" protection against contingencies that can be stressful and costly for cruisers.

"The recent high-profile Coast Guard medical evacuation of a passenger from a cruise ship near New Orleans is a reminder that unexpected events can happen while on a cruise vacation," said Phil Hsia, president, AIG Travel Americas. "Many people are unaware that an emergency medical evacuation at sea can cost tens of thousands of dollars, an expense that's typically not covered, or not fully covered, by private health insurance plans."

While "do-it-yourself" cruise planning is on the rise, an experienced cruise travel agent can help educate vacationers not only about specific ships, itineraries, shore excursions, pre- and post-cruise hotel options, related air travel logistics, etc., but also on ways to help guard financially against the burdens of unanticipated travel delays, lost luggage, and emergency medical care while away from home.

AIG Travel points out that while the coverage provided by travel insurance plans varies based on a number of factors, and not all circumstances are covered, a cancelled or delayed flight that causes a passenger to miss embarkation can present the challenge of trying to catch up with the ship at the next port, and that changing airline tickets at the last minute to do so can be costly.

Also, an illness or injury that requires treatment at a hospital in a foreign port may be ineligible for coverage by private health insurance plans, or cause the patient to incur high copayments that compound stress stemming from the medical condition and the disrupted cruise vacation. Passengers can help prevent medical issues by being up to date on routine vaccinations, as well as any that may be recommended by their physician or the Centers for Disease Control, as appropriate for their cruise destinations (see <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>), and packing alcohol-based hand sanitizer, seasickness treatment (if medically indicated), and copies of any current prescriptions.

AIG Travel's comprehensive Travel Guard insurance solutions can cover many unforeseen situations that could result in cancellation, interruption or delay of a cruise vacation, and many, additionally, feature 24/7 emergency assistance services. The experts who staff the service centers around the globe can assist with replacing lost travel documents or personal identification, conveying messages, finding an English-speaking doctor, and even coordinating alternate arrangements for a return home, if the unexpected becomes a reality.

Recently, in fact, AIG Travel arranged return travel to New Zealand for two clients who had been rescued and flown to Bali after their cruise boat sank in Indonesia during a four-day voyage. The clients were badly sunburned and suffered rashes, as minor leg and eye injuries. AIG Travel provided claims support and medical assistance to help with lost personal effects and luggage, unexpected travel and accommodation expenses, and overseas medical costs.

In 2014, for the seventh consecutive year, Travel Guard was named Cruise Holidays International "Non-Cruise Supplier of the Year," as voted by the members of North America's oldest and largest cruise-specialty retail franchise. Key considerations in the voting included overall product and support quality as well as other benchmarks. Travel Guard has also earned numerous other industry awards over the years.

For more information about the Travel Guard portfolio of travel insurance solutions and global assistance services, please visit [www.aig.com/travel](http://www.aig.com/travel) or [www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com).

<sup>1</sup>"Cruise Market Watch Announces 2015 Cruise Trends Forecast," Cruise Market Watch, Dec. 20, 2014, <http://www.cruisemarketwatch.com/articles/cruise-market-watch-announces-2015-cruise-trends-forecast>

**About AIG Travel and Travel Guard** AIG Travel, Inc., a member of American International Group, Inc., is a worldwide leader in travel insurance solutions and assistance. Travel Guard® is the marketing name for its portfolio of travel insurance solutions and travel-related services, including assistance and security services, marketed to both leisure and business travelers around the globe. Services are provided through a network of wholly owned service centers located in Asia, Europe and the Americas. For additional information, please visit our websites at [www.aig.com/travel](http://www.aig.com/travel) and [www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com).

**About AIG** AIG is a leading international insurance organization serving customers in more than 130 countries. AIG companies serve commercial, institutional, and individual customers through one of the most extensive worldwide property-casualty networks of any insurer. In addition, AIG companies are leading providers of life insurance and retirement services in the United States. AIG common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange and the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

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