

## Travel Agent Central

### Port of Baltimore Ensures Bahamas Cruise In Spite of Blizzard

Dec 21, 2009 By: Staff TravelAgentCentral 0

Nearly two feet of snow fell on Baltimore during the weekend, but it didn't prevent about 2,500 passengers from boarding the Carnival Pride at 8 a.m. Sunday for a trip to the Bahamas. Beginning at midnight Friday evening, the Maryland Port Administration (MPA) began primary snow removal operations at its Cruise Maryland terminal that continued through 6 a.m. Sunday. Throughout the day Sunday, secondary snow removal operations continued while the Pride was able to replenish supplies and welcome guests aboard 2,500.

Utilizing 12-hour shifts and heavy-duty equipment that included plows, dump trucks and ATV-vehicles equipped with plows, operations and maintenance teams worked over a two day period to clear the walkways, pier and parking lots around the cruise terminal. The Cruise Maryland terminal includes 1,500 onsite parking spaces.

“This weekend, the men and women at the Port of Baltimore proved they can handle year round cruises, no matter what the weather,” said Transportation Secretary Beverley K. Swaim-Staley. “Working with a cruise schedule that does not allow for much flexibility, our team at the Port knew it had to be ready for the ship’s arrival and its departure later in the day. Their top priority was to make sure the pier, parking lots, and access into and out of the terminal were safe for our cruise customers. That mission was accomplished.”

The Carnival Pride was scheduled to depart Baltimore Sunday at 4:30 p.m. With the weather affecting air travel throughout the East Coast, Carnival made the decision to delay the departure by about four hours. As that decision was made, the MPA coordinated with BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport to alert arriving air passengers that the cruise was delayed and they would have additional time to reach the ship.

“Carnival Cruise Lines is extremely grateful to the Maryland Port Administration for the incredible effort put forth this weekend to conduct round-the-clock snow removal operations and ensure easy access to the cruise terminal for our guests,” said Vicky Rey, Carnival’s vice president of guest services. “It’s wonderful that we can count on our partners at the Port of Baltimore to keep things running smoothly even during extreme circumstances.”

The Port of Baltimore’s record-81 homeport cruises in 2009 is expected to have an economic impact of about \$152 million in its first year of all-seasonal cruising. In addition to Carnival, other cruise lines that have sailed from the Cruise Maryland terminal this year include Norwegian Cruise Lines, Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Deilmann. This year, the Port expects a record 165,000 passengers to cruise from Baltimore.

## **CRUISE INDUSTRY NEWS**

### **12/22/09 - SNOW DOESN'T SLOW DOWN CRUISE OPERATIONS IN BALTIMORE**

The Bahamas can't wait. Beginning at midnight Friday evening, the Maryland Port Administration (MPA) began primary snow removal operations at its Cruise Maryland terminal that continued through 6 a.m. Sunday. MPA cruise operations personnel had to make sure the cruise terminal was plowed, shoveled, salted and safe in time for the 8 a.m. arrival of the Carnival Pride ship and its approximately 2,300 passengers. Throughout the day Sunday, secondary snow removal operations continued while the Pride was able to replenish supplies and welcome aboard 2,500 excited passengers before it headed back out later that day for its scheduled cruise to the Bahamas.

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