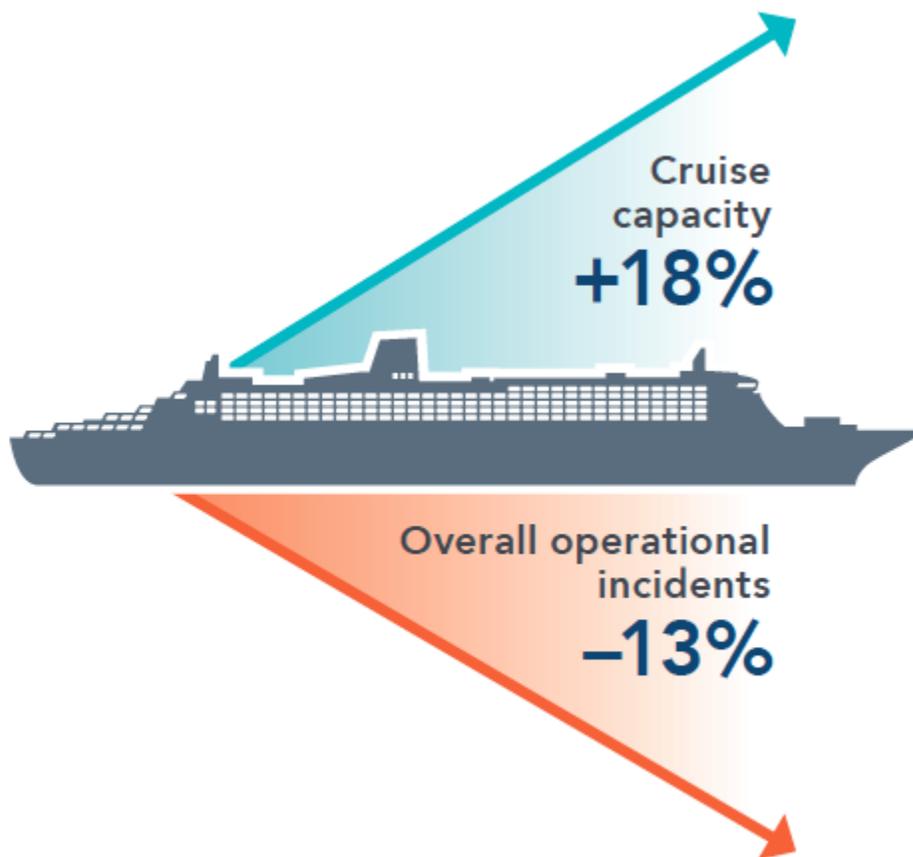


Safety at Sea: Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Are cruise ships safe?

A. Cruise ships are extremely safe. The cruise industry enjoys a safety record that makes us proud - with an extremely low number of safety-related incidents when compared to other modes of travel. In recent years innovative safety-related technology, processes and training have become even more sophisticated, making cruise ships safer than ever.



SOURCE: Report on Operational Incidents 2009 to 2013, G. P. Wild International, 2014.

Q. Do cruise ships conduct passenger safety drills?

A. Yes – in fact, every single passenger on a ship must take part in a mandatory, comprehensive safety drill or “muster” before a ship sails. The muster involves learning how to locate and wear a life jacket, and where escape routes and assigned lifeboats are located. This drill is required by international law established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a branch of the United Nations. The drill must take place before the ship leaves its first port and is also mandatory under CLIA’s policy. There are no exceptions.

Q. How are crewmembers trained to respond to emergency situations?

A. Cruise lines take crewmember training seriously. Crewmembers receive comprehensive training to equip them to prevent and respond to potential emergency situations. Every single crewmember on board must be trained in safety, security, and first aid procedures, including:

- Emergency signals and alarms
- Abandon ship procedures
- Man overboard procedures
- Fire prevention and fire safety
- Location and donning of life jackets

Crewmembers must prove their readiness in weekly emergency drills and monthly “abandon ship” and fire drills to refresh their training. But the training doesn’t stop there - they must also receive formal familiarization training every time they report for duty on board.

Q. Can I accidentally fall off a cruise ship while at sea if I am simply enjoying the cruise and acting responsibly?

A. No. Although overboard incidents are extremely rare, investigations have consistently shown they are the result of intentional or reckless acts. According to cruise industry legal expert Larry Kaye: “You don't get blown or swept off a cruise ship. It does not happen...these incidents, unfortunately, are some reckless or deliberate act.”

Q. Does each cruise ship have enough lifeboats for all passengers and crew?

A. Yes – and more. Every oceangoing cruise ship must have enough survival craft — which includes lifeboats, life rafts and marine evacuation systems — to accommodate 125% of the number of passengers and crew on board. All survival craft must be tested and meet rigorous international guidelines.

Q. Do cruise lines follow uniform safety regulations?

A. All oceangoing cruise lines follow the same strict safety regulations. As a condition of membership, CLIA members must implement CLIA’s safety policies, which in all cases meet – and often exceed – international law. Many of these policies have been adopted on a global level by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Q. How is the cruise industry working to improve safety?

A. CLIA never stops reviewing operational protocols and procedures with its oceangoing cruise line members to improve safety and safety-related, technology. As a result, processes and training have become more sophisticated than ever. Over the past two years, CLIA and its member cruise lines have developed a number of policies and programs to advance passenger and crew safety, including:

- An industry-wide [Operational Safety Review](#) to identify new safety policies; the resulting ten mandatory member policies have since been formally adopted by the IMO.
- The appointment of an Independent Panel of Experts that includes top maritime and transportation safety professionals charged with helping to develop measures to enhance safety across the cruise industry.
- A [Preparedness Risk Assessment Initiative](#) to identify best practices for responding to the comfort and care of passengers and crew in the rare event of a mechanical or other emergency.
- The “Black Swan Exercise,” a collaboration with the U.S. Coast Guard, the Bahamas National Emergency Management Agency and the Bahamian government to test cruise ship emergency and evacuation procedures in real-time conditions.

The cruise industry works with regulators and other stakeholders to constantly raise the bar on safety.

Q. Who oversees safety on board cruise ships in U.S. waters?

A. The U.S. Coast Guard is both a regulator and the enforcement agency that oversees cruise ships in U.S. waters. Coast Guard officials are involved in nearly every aspect of cruise ship oversight, from ship design and construction to ongoing operations. The Coast Guard conducts regular announced and unannounced inspections of cruise ships.

Q. How are ships and crews prepared to respond and prevent fires on board a cruise ship?

A. Fires on cruise ships are uncommon, but cruise lines must be prepared, by law, to prevent and respond to such an event. Cruise ships are equipped with smoke detectors, sprinkler systems, and other advanced fire safety equipment. The average oceangoing cruise ship has approximately 4,000 smoke detectors, 500 fire extinguishers, 16 miles of sprinkler piping, 5,000 sprinklers and 6 miles of fire hose.

Additionally, every CLIA member oceangoing cruise ship must have a crewmember firefighting team on board to respond immediately in the unlikely event a fire occurs. These teams receive formal firefighting training and conduct regular and extensive fire response drills on board.

Many ships have redundant systems in case of fire or electrical failure, including emergency generators that go above and beyond IMO requirements.