

# Ōtepoti Dunedin Cruise Guide



**DUNEDIN**  
CITY COUNCIL

kaunihera  
a-rohe o  
Ōtepoti



**site**

Visitor  
Information

**dunedin**



# Vision

*To be the premier cruise destination in New Zealand, where passengers and crew want to disembark, and after a memorable experience, they want to return.*



dunedin



# Our Cruise Visitors

**Help Dunedin give our cruise visitors the best experience. Be a great ambassador for our city. This booklet will help you with information and tips to help your business and impress visitors.**

Cruise Action Group members, Dunedin City Council, isite Visitor Information Centre, Enterprise Dunedin, Port Otago, University of Otago, Dunedin Host and the Otago Chamber of Commerce, are committed to improving the visitor experience and supporting cruise industry operator professionalism.

The cruise market presents a large opportunity to grow tourism in Dunedin, both from the immediate ship passenger and crew spend and visitation, and those who return to Dunedin after the cruise, or indeed those who recommend Dunedin as a 'must see' visitor destination to others.

## Expected arrivals 2025/2026



**79 ships**



**Est 133,588 passengers**



**Est 62,186 crew**

- Dunedin currently receives approximately 88% of all cruise ship passengers who visit NZ.
- In Dunedin approximately 80% minimum will disembark, crew approximately 50% will disembark.



# Dunedin City Ambassadors

**The Dunedin Visitor Industry has worked together for many years to build a professional high quality visitor experience and image.**

In our role as Dunedin city ambassadors, we should aim to greet all visitors to Dunedin in a warm and friendly manner:

1. Say 'Kia ora'. Greet visitors to Dunedin in a warm and friendly manner. Dunedin is often the first port of call in New Zealand so a kiwi welcome is important!
2. Appreciate that isite staff and volunteers are Dunedin's official representatives; they will greet visitors first.
3. Conduct ourselves in an honest and respectful manner at all times to all stakeholders.
4. Avoid putting visitors under pressure to accept any marketing material or making incorrect, unsubstantiated claims about the product you are offering.
5. Be considerate of other operators when they are dealing with visitors; we shouldn't attempt to engage visitors when they are with another industry representative.
6. Keep footpaths clear for pedestrians and respect the instructions of officials.
7. Respect visitors to the Dunedin isite - keep away from the entrance and immediate surrounds. Do not enter the isite with customers; the isite is a neutral zone.
8. Abide by the planning, regulatory and permit requirements of Local and Central Government Authorities.
9. No direct selling involving money transfer is allowed in restricted areas and should be directed to the isite - please refer to the Dunedin City Council's Mobile/Temporary Stall Bylaw for more details on these areas.
10. Mobile trading or hawking permits will not be issued for tour operators for the Octagon and surrounding isite area. NZTA regulations also apply.
11. Keep our political views of Dunedin to ourselves and remain positive about our city.
12. Keep to the assigned areas at Port Otago and obey the instructions of the Port Otago Officials.



# Top Three Tips for your Warm Dunedin Welcome

- 1 First impressions count.**  
**You might be the first New Zealander our visitors meet.** Be a great ambassador. Greet visitors with a 'Kia ora', introduce yourself and your business, assist with any queries – show a warm Dunedin welcome.
- 2 Wear an easily identifiable uniform and name badge.**  
The image of your team represents your brand and your business. Keep your vehicle immaculate too.
- 3 Train your team.**  
KiwiHost and sales training are available from Dunedin providers. Be aware of the location of visitor amenities (toilets, cafes, banks, and internet). Encourage your team to know all local attractions.



# Top Tips for Hosting Cruise Visitors

1. Make sure you know about the ships in town ([www.portotago.co.nz/ marine-and-shipping/shipping-schedule/cruise-ships](http://www.portotago.co.nz/marine-and-shipping/shipping-schedule/cruise-ships))- where they have been and where they are going. Use this information to engage the visitors.
2. Have a Dunedin map. Know where the shuttles back to their ship leave from (if applicable) and the last shuttle departure time.
3. Make sure you have a cafe to recommend, with good coffee. Know where the nearest public toilet and other amenities (e.g., bank, money exchange, wi-fi, post box, supermarket). Help your customers enjoy their visit.
4. Impress the crew, they'll be back, and they talk to passengers.
5. Be very aware of the duration of the ship visit. Ensure your passengers are back in good time.
6. Don't forget to smile and say 'hello'/ 'Kia ora'.
7. Ensure your team is trained with customers in mind (e.g., jokes about other nationalities are inappropriate). Use common sense and also cultural sense. Ensure the right level of staffing is in place. International guests are used to proactive service.
8. Ask clients to post positive feedback online. Customer advocacy is the best free promotion.
9. Never take/send customers to an attraction without a booking. Disappointment may result.
10. Note: No direct selling, involving money transfer is allowed in restricted areas (Dunedin City Council bylaw). Mobile Trading or Hawking permits will not be issued for tour operators for Octagon & surrounding isite area. Please see here for Trading in Public Places **Trading-in-Public-Places-Bylaw-2025.pdf**

Check out [www.dunedinnz.com](http://www.dunedinnz.com), visit the Dunedin isite Visitor Centre and familiarise your team with all that Dunedin has to offer.

**Dunedin has a reputation as one of New Zealand's friendliest destinations – so let's live up to it.**

# Port Chalmers

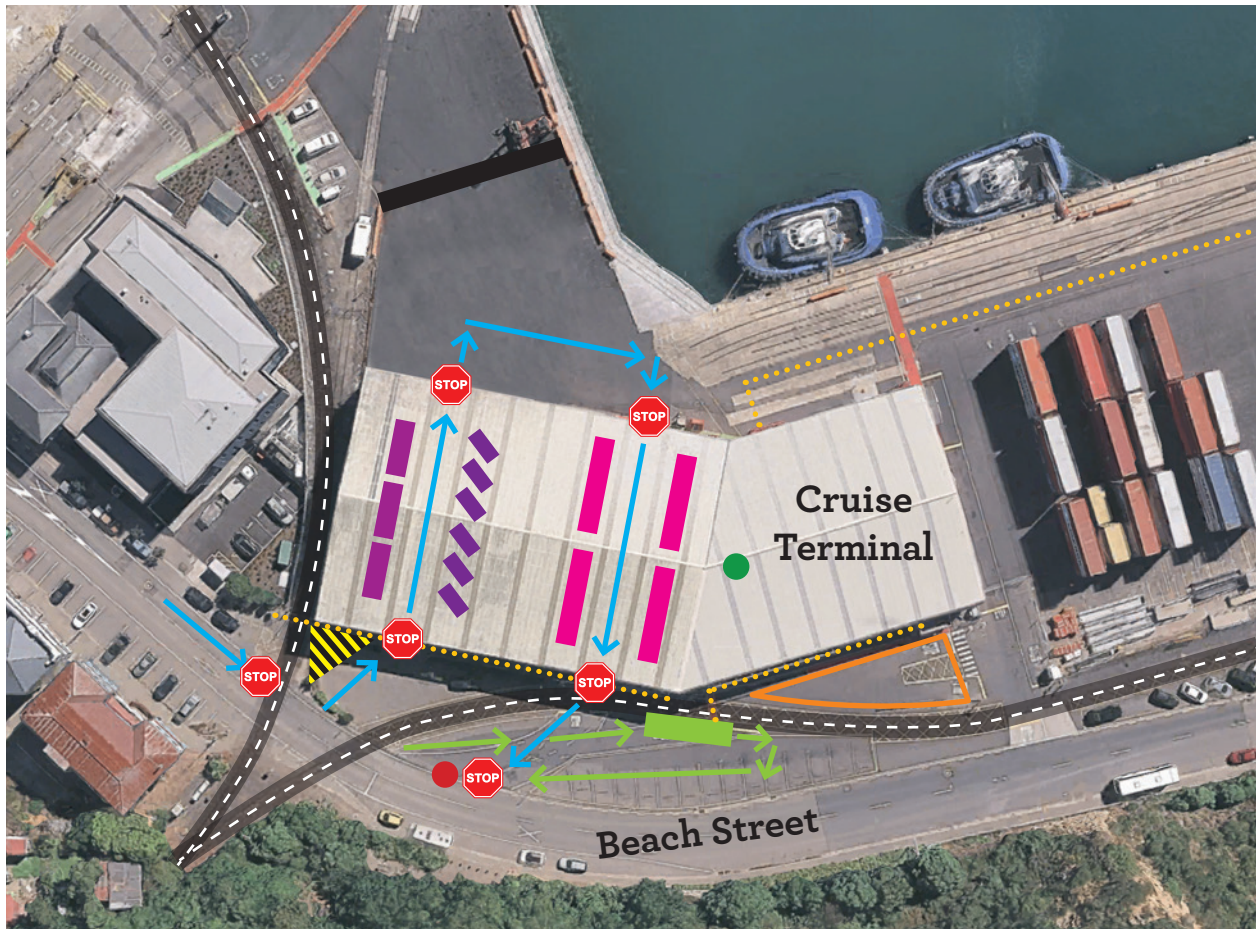
**Cruise ships have been calling at Port Chalmers since the 1960s. Cruise tourism is significant contributor to our economy.**

## **Port Chalmers Terminal Building Procedures**

1. Port Otago has placed local tour operators under the direct management of Dunedin's isite staff.
2. isite staff will book passengers on to local tours and receive the standard commission for bookings.
3. Local tour operators are required to register with the isite prior to the start of the cruise ship season, identifying their tour itineraries, staffing, minimum party size and vehicles used. They need to comply with any operating guidelines set down by the isite and this includes a familiarization meeting with isite staff.
4. Local tour operators also need to register with Port Otago via the website ([www.portotago.co.nz/cruise-ships/tour-operators-information](http://www.portotago.co.nz/cruise-ships/tour-operators-information)) and will not have access to Port unless approved.
5. Local tour operators wait *outside the Port gate* (on Beach Street or elsewhere) until their tour is sold. Access to A Shed will only be permitted to pick up paid passengers at the designated pick-up area. Local tour operators will be 'called' into the shed at the appropriate time via cellphone contact from the isite staff. There are no parking areas provided inside A Shed for local tour operators to operate directly from.
6. The isite is housed inside the cruise terminal and all passengers not already booked on ships' tours enter the terminal to take a shuttle to the city, walk into Port Chalmers or take a private tour..
7. Local tour operators are able to advertise in a designated area in the cruise terminal
8. The security access requirements, as applicable to the Port Otago facilities at Port Chalmers and Dunedin for all Cruise Ship Visits, must also be complied with.
9. When on site, all local tour operators must always follow the instructions from the Port Otago staff.
10. There is no wharf access for any tour operators.



# Layout plan for Port Chalmers Cruise Terminal Building



## Key

- Private Tours Travel Route
- Taxi Travel Route
- Large Parking Bay
- Medium Parking Bay
- Small Parking Bay
- Blocking Boxes
- Taxi STands (x3)
- Rail Line
- Government Official Parking (Police, MPI, Customs)
- ..... Pedestrian Walkway
- No Parking Zone
- Security Entry & Exit
- isite Counter



# FAQs

**1. What commission does the isite charge?**

The isite charges a standard 12.5% commission. Additional charges apply for poster display

**2. Do I have to register with the isite?**

Yes. You have to complete the isite agreement provide isite staff with information regarding your product. (Remember you must also register with Port Otago Security regarding terminal building access.)

**3. Do local tour operators need to set ‘minimum numbers’ for their tours?**

Yes. You need to advise the isite of the minimum number of passengers that you are prepared to run a tour for.

**4. Is there on-wharf signage directing passengers who want a private tour?**

Yes. Port Otago provides signage at the start of the walkway to the Cruise Terminal Building to direct passengers to the isite for information and bookings for private tours.

**5. Where can local tour operators park?**

Local tour operators park in A Shed when called in by the isite team.

**6. How does the isite communicate with private tour providers?**

isite staff contact drivers/operators via mobile phone to advise when a tour is ready to depart.

**7. Where are the cruise terminal building pick-up areas?**

All local tour groups must collect passengers from inside the Cruise Terminal Building. Vehicles are parked in A Shed and operators must walk through to the Cruise Terminal to collect their passengers.

**8. What happens if an operator gains access without having any bookings?**

In the unlikely event that this happens, Port Otago reserves the right to exclude that operator from site permanently.

**9. What about operators who have customers who have pre-booked via the internet?**

There is no change for operators who already utilize pre-bookings via the internet. They are allowed inside the terminal building 15 minutes before the tour start time. Operators with pre-booked tours must advise Port Otago Security of their booking, the passengers’ names and tour time, on the day before the tour.

**10. What about operators offering rental vehicles?**

These operators will also be managed by the isite in the same way as other tour operators.

**11. What access do taxi operators have?**

Taxis have to operate outside the terminal area. A dedicated taxi stand is outside A Shed (Beach St side) and on wharf signage directs passengers to the taxi stand. Passengers can hire a taxi from the stand. Drop-off passengers are allowed on-wharf, subject to the Ship’s Master permitting this and drivers being on the Port’s Access List

**12. What access do passenger shuttles have?**

Shuttles provided and organized by ground handlers will retain the right to access the area just outside the terminal building, as usual.

# Port Otago Security for Cruise Vessels Only

The introduction of the New Zealand Maritime Security Act 2004 and regulations has placed a number of responsibilities and requirements on all who wish to enter those ports that service international shipping.

The access requirements as applicable to the Port Otago facilities at Port Chalmers and Dunedin for all Cruise Ship Visits are outlined on Port Otago's website: [www.portotago.co.nz/cruise-ships/tour-operators-information](http://www.portotago.co.nz/cruise-ships/tour-operators-information)

## **APPLICATION FOR SECURITY ACCESS LIST MUST BE RENEWED EACH YEAR STARTING AT THE BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER.**

Local tour operators seeking access to the Cruise Terminal Building must advise the Port Security team ([cruise@portotago.co.nz](mailto:cruise@portotago.co.nz)) by:

- 0500 hours on the day of the vessel arrival
- Receipt of the above information outside these times may result in port entry being denied.
- Arrival/departure times for local tour operators – vehicles arriving to pick up passengers at a scheduled departure time should not be earlier than 15 minutes before scheduled time. All operators' vehicles arriving early should wait outside the port area; otherwise, they will be turned away.
- All operators are to depart the Cruise Terminal Building once they have picked up their assigned customers or at their time of agreed departure time.
- All pickups for local tour operators will be from Cruise Terminal Building including when two vessels are berthed at Port Chalmers (unless this changes for specific operational reasons or as directed by security staff).

- Taxis can still park along Beach St or outside on the A Shed apron and wait to be called in to collect passengers from the designated collection point.

As a condition of entry to Port Otago Limited Wharf Areas, your vehicle or any bags you are carrying in may be subjected to a random search by the security staff. Failure to comply with this request by security staff will result in entry being denied.

Active private retailing is not permitted on Port Otago Property

- Operators without authorization, found retailing within Port Otago property will have their entry rights revoked and trespass orders may be issued.
- All operators must conduct the business for which they have advised Port Security as reason for entry to the Port (such as taxi, tour operator, etc). No changing is permitted from one business operation to another.

### **Port Otago contact:**

Phone: 021 947 984

Email: [cruise@portotago.co.nz](mailto:cruise@portotago.co.nz)



# PORT OTAGO



# Dunedin isite Visitor Centre at Port Chalmers Cruise Terminal Building

The isite exists to provide excellent impartial advice to visitors to Dunedin and help them decide on suitable activities for their time in Dunedin and New Zealand. The isite is situated inside the Port Otago Cruise Terminal Building. This is a large area in which to tempt the cruise passengers with the amazing variety of tour options Dunedin has to offer, buy souvenirs and use the free Wi-Fi.

There is a large area to display posters for private tours available to cruise ship passengers. Tour operators have the opportunity to advertise and sell their products through the isite at Port Chalmers.

N.B. isite keep availability updates and are in a position to offer available alternatives.



# Poster Pay-to-Display at Port Otago Cruise Terminal with the isite

*See attached Terms and Conditions and contract for the poster Pay-to-Display*

**Deadline: midday 10th October 2025**

Signed agreement with poster (for approval).

For tour operators selling via the isite

- An A3 poster display space for \$100 (incl. GST) for the season, with 'book here' clearly written on the poster.
- All tours and attractions displayed on the posters must be available to be sold at the port isite.
- The isite can provide some helpful hints on how to create the best poster for your tour.

Port Otago and the Dunedin isite reserve the right to decline posters for display which are non-compliant for any of the reasons listed in the attached Terms and Conditions/Agreement. Cancellation of poster display during the season will incur a cancellation fee.

The poster display offer operates on a 'first come; first served' basis so once capacity is reached, the offer will be withdrawn.

Please note display space is only available for tours or attractions are bookable through the port isite, unless otherwise agreed by isite.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your poster layout, then please contact:

**Izumi Nakamura (Team Leader)**

Dunedin isite Visitor Centre

Dunedin City Council, 50 The Octagon, Dunedin.

P: 03 474 3300

E: [Izumi.Nakamura@dcc.govt.nz](mailto:Izumi.Nakamura@dcc.govt.nz)

Remember to ask Izumi to give you feedback on your poster before you print and/or laminate it!



# Customer Service Top Tips

You are in business to service customer needs, and you can only do that if you know what it is your customers want. When you truly listen to your customers, they let you know what they want and how you can provide good service. Never forget that the customer pays your bills and makes your job possible.

1. **Smile, be sincere, give a genuine welcome ‘Kia ora’.**
2. **Be knowledgeable.** Know your city attractions – you are a key ambassador.
3. **Show pride.** Be proud of your city, your product, yourself. Be armed with positivity.
4. **Think of customers as individuals.** Once we think that way, we realize our business is our customer, not our product or services.
5. **Greet your potential customers** when they walk within eye contact of you.
6. **If a customer makes a request for something special, do everything you can to say yes.** The fact that a customer cared enough to ask is all you need to know in trying to accommodate them. It may be an exception from your customer service policy, but (if it isn't illegal) try to do it.
7. **Are you properly trained in how to handle a customer complaint or an irate person?**
  - Get training, have a plan for what to say and do in every conceivable case.
  - Make sure you know what to do and say to make that customer's experience a positive and pleasant one.
  - Listen to your customers complaint, ask questions and show empathy.
- Know how to apologize. When something goes wrong, apologize. It's easy and customers like it
- Deal with problems immediately and let customers know what you have done. Make it simple for customers to complain. Value their complaints. As much as we dislike it, it gives us an opportunity to improve.
- Even if customers are having a bad day, go out of your way to make them feel comfortable.
8. **Don't make promises unless you will keep them.**
  - Reliability is one of the keys to any good relationship and good customer service is no exception. If you say, 'I will pick you up at 9am', make sure you pick them up at 9am. Otherwise, don't say it. The same rule applies to client appointments, deadlines, etc.
  - Think before you give any promise - because nothing annoys customers more than a broken one.
  - Have a plan of action to advise if plans change.
9. **Be helpful. Even if there's no resulting immediate benefit from it.**

10. **Take the extra step**

- For instance, if someone walks up to you and asks you to help them find something, don't just say, 'It's in the main street'. Show them on a map.
- Whatever the extra step may be, if you want to provide good customer service, take it. They may not say so to you, but people notice when extra effort is made and will tell other people.

11. **Throw in something extra**

- Whether it's a coupon for a future discount, a free cuppa or a genuine smile, people love to get more than they thought they were getting. A gesture doesn't have to be large to be effective. Since the future of all companies lies in keeping customers happy, think of ways to elevate yourself above the competition.
- Consider the following: what can you give customers that they cannot get elsewhere? What can you do to follow-up and thank people even when they don't buy? What can you give customers that is totally unexpected?

12. **Identify and anticipate needs**

- Customers don't buy products or services. They buy good feelings and solutions to problems. Most customer needs are emotional rather than logical.
- The more you know your customers, the better you become at anticipating their needs.
- Communicate regularly so that you are aware of problems or upcoming needs.
- Make customers feel important and appreciated. Treat them as individuals. Always use their name and find ways to compliment them but be sincere. People value sincerity. It creates good feeling and trust.

- Think about ways to generate good feelings about doing business with you. Customers are very sensitive and know whether or not you really care about them.
- Thank them every time you get a chance.

13. **Feedback. Want to know what your customers think of your company?**

- Ask them! Compose a feedback card and put it where they can see it or distribute at the end of your time together. Keep it short and simple. Ask what it is they liked and didn't like; what could be improved, etc.
- Make sure you acknowledge all feedback and take time to consider it carefully.

14. **Treat team members well**

- Team members are your internal customers and need a regular dose of appreciation.
- Thank them and find ways to let them know how important they are. Treat your team members with respect and chances are they will have a higher regard for customers. Appreciation stems from the top.
- Treating customers and team members well is equally important.



# Baldwin Street Care Code

**Help us treasure and protect Dunedin's spaces and places for everyone to enjoy.**

Please respect our cultural heritage.

Dunedin City Council land is for the benefit of all residents and visitors.

Please:

- Keep safe. Pedestrians keep on the footpath; drivers are not expecting you to be on the road. Look before you cross.
- Be tidy. Use public rubbish bins.
- Respect private property. Baldwin Street is a residential street and people live here.
- Park safely and legally. Keep clear of road ends with private gateways/thoroughfares as private landowners need access to their properties at all times.
- Be considerate. Look after other users.
- Nearest public toilets are at the bottom of Baldwin Street and are open 24/7. Find other Dunedin public toilets at **Public toilets - Dunedin City Council**

Please report any issues the DCC can fix, e.g., graffiti, damage etc.

P: 03 477 4000, E: [dcc@dcc.govt.nz](mailto:dcc@dcc.govt.nz)

We want to ensure Dunedin looks fantastic and welcoming for our visitors.



# New Zealand Transport Agency

The New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi maintain and operate the state highway network in Dunedin, and the Dunedin City Council are responsible for the local roading network.

Information about roadworks, incidents, and road closures are loaded onto NZTA's **Journey Planner** in real time for the state highway network. You can use this tool to plan your journey and know what delays you can expect. You can also report issues that impact travel, such as crashes or obstructions, on state highways to 0800 4 HIGHWAYS.

NZTA and the DCC work together and with Port Otago to coordinate roadworks and minimise disruption to cruise ships. This includes work by NZTA and DCC as well as other parties who require access to the road such as utilities.

There is an incident management plan that would be activated if an unplanned incident closed State Highway 88 anywhere from the Parry St roundabout to Port Chalmers on a cruise ship day so that passengers would be able to return to the ship. This involves the coordination of emergency services, NZTA, DCC, and Port Otago.

**NZTA can help with advice if you want to set up as a tour operator.**

**New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) monitors the compliance and safety levels of passenger service operators who provide transport for cruise ship customers.**

Historically the Agency has carried out several operations at Port Chalmers to ensure that cruise ship customers are provided with a safe experience. Our monitoring includes all types of commercial operators from pre-arranged, pre booked tours to large buses ferrying people into and out of the city. As new providers emerge, NZTA see the monitoring of transport of cruise ship passengers to be an increasingly important part of the work we carry out with the transport industry.

NZTA staff often work in conjunction with the Police Commercial Vehicle Safety Team (CVST) at Port Chalmers to ensure that the highest standards in passenger transport are maintained. During the upcoming cruise ship season, NZTA and CVST will carry out operations that involve vehicle inspections to ensure all passenger service vehicles are mechanically sound and in a good state of repair. Checks will also be carried out to ensure that all drivers are appropriately licensed and operating within the relevant legislative requirements contained within the Operator Licensing Rule and all requirements of the Work time & Logbooks Rule.

NZTA staff often work in conjunction with the Police Commercial Vehicle Safety Team (CVST) at Port Chalmers to ensure that the highest standards in passenger transport are maintained. During the upcoming cruise ship season, NZTA and CVST will carry out operations that involve vehicle inspections to ensure all passenger service vehicles are mechanically sound and in a good state of repair. Checks will also be carried out to ensure that all drivers are appropriately licensed and operating within the relevant legislative requirements contained within the Operator Licensing Rule and all requirements of the Work time & Logbooks Rule.

**Inspections of Passenger Service Vehicles would include the following:**

- The driver has a current passenger endorsement.
- The driver has the correct driving licence for the vehicle that is being driven (Class 2 for a Bus).
- The vehicle is operated under a relevant Transport Service Licence.
- The vehicle has a current Certificate of Fitness (COF) and Registration (Vehicle Licensing).
- The vehicle has up to date Road User Charges if required.
- The driver has a logbook, and it has been filled out correctly and met all requirements outlined in the Worktime and Logbook Rule 2007.
- The driver has had sufficient rest prior to starting their shift.
- Current Driver Identification Card displayed centrally and visible to all passengers.
- That the vehicle is at COF standard, (that is, have a minimum of 1.5m of tyre tread).

Worn tyres are an example of a vehicle fault which we sometimes identify during our inspections. This is a fault that could easily be eliminated by implementing a daily walk-around inspection prior to arriving at Port Chalmers.

**Some additional requirements for Small Passenger Service Vehicles being used for 'taxi' type trips will also be checked, and they include:**

- The in-vehicle security cameras are operating and there is signage to advise passengers that a security camera is operating.
- A fare schedule is displayed, or the fare must be negotiated before the start of the trip
- Child safety lock warning sticker is displayed, if applicable.

If any of the above faults are located, consideration will be given to ordering the vehicle off the road to correct the faults before the commencement of duty. Also, the drivers concerned could also be subject to the relevant infringement for the offence.

NZTA and CVST are determined to ensure that the passenger service industry operating from Port Chalmers maintain high standards and deliver excellent service to international visitors to Dunedin.

**If you have any additional questions or require clarification on any matters, please don't hesitate to contact the Dunedin office of NZTA situated on the 2nd Floor of the AA Building, 450 Moray Place or phone on 03 951 3009.**

**DUNEDIN CONTACT**

Greg Sims - Principal Compliance Officer

DDI: 64 3 951 3008 M: 021 833 344

E: [greg.sims@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:greg.sims@nzta.govt.nz)

**NZ Transport Agency**

Level 2, AA Centre 450 Moray Place

PO Box 5245, Moray Place Dunedin 9058

T: 64 3 951 3009 F: 64 3 951 3013

[www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz)







# Helpful Websites and Contacts

Cruise Calendar with Events

**[cruise-ship-calendar-2025-26.pdf](#)**

Dunedin isite Visitor Information

**[Dunedin isite Visitor Centre - Dunedin City Council](#)**

Parking Regulations

**[Parking regulations - Dunedin City Council](#)**

Dunedin's Official Visitor Site

**[Visit - Ōtepoti | Dunedin New Zealand official website](#)**

Cruise Ship Arrivals

**[Cruise ships | Port Otago](#)**

New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

**[Highway conditions | NZTA Journey Planner](#)**

# Incidents

## **Up-to-date cruise ship schedule**

### **Cruise ships | Port Otago**

isite will email as soon as possible after receiving official confirmation of any changes.

## **Information about roadworks, incidents, and road closures**

### **Check Highway conditions | NZTA Journey Planner**

If SH88 closes and you are first on the scene, after contacting police, ring 03 474 3300 immediately and notify isite so they can inform others of the detour (via Upper Junction Road or SH1).

## **Illness/Norovirus**

Ensure you have a Health and Safety Plan in place in case of an incident.

## **Accident or incident involving a passenger**

Ensure you have a Health and Safety Plan, and make sure Port Otago is notified.

If something does happen, gather as much information as possible before calling – e.g., the person’s full name, cabin number, ship name (if two are in port), a brief summary of the injury/first aid required, etc. If the person is not accompanied on the tour, the contact person’s name on board may also help. This information assists the agents and ship in determining the best possible actions and solutions.

### **Port Otago contact:**

*P:* 021 947 984

*E:* [cruise@portotago.co.nz](mailto:cruise@portotago.co.nz)

## **Spotted anything the DCC can fix?**

If you notice something that needs attention, let the DCC know via the **Fix it form - Dunedin City Council**, email [dcc@dcc.govt.nz](mailto:dcc@dcc.govt.nz), or call 03 477 4000.

Please keep an eye out, as we want Dunedin to look fantastic for all our visitors!