

December 18, 2006

MCA Infoline
Tutt Head
Mumbles
Swansea
West Glamorgan
SA3 4HW

Dear Sirs :

Facts & Information in relation to The MV Athena Cruise from Falmouth – 10 September 2006

We are a National Consumer Organisation providing advices to UK citizens travelling principally outside the UK. This request is made pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

HolidayTravelWatch has received a complaint from a holidaymaker who was left bereaved following a recent voyage on the MV Athena. HolidayTravelWatch has also received a number of complaints from other passengers either suffering injury or contractual complaints following this cruise. The cruise ship left Falmouth on 10 September 2006, and steamed toward the Eastern Seaboard of the Canadian and US coast, for what was expected to be a 24 day cruise, visiting many ports of call, concluding with a visit to the Azores before returning to Falmouth.

Unfortunately, the ship encountered severe weather conditions, and by Tuesday 12 September was experiencing sea conditions which apparently included swells and waves up to 9 metres in height. HolidayTravelWatch has been advised that the conditions sent crockery crashing, that cutlery and crockery was held in place on dining tables by cling film, there were reports of falling mirrors and televisions, and it is understood that many holidaymakers were thrown out of their beds, some suffering injury. The cruise ship also missed calling into ports detailed on its schedule. HolidayTravelWatch understands that this was all due to the apparent effect of Hurricane Florence.

The holidaymaker, who suffered fatal injuries, fell whilst negotiating a small flight of stairs during the passage of the ship through these severe weather conditions.

Please provide details, notes, memoranda, observations, advices, comments, file notes, minutes in relation to the following:

1. All telephone, e mail and correspondence received detailing complaints as to the operation of this cruise;
2. All responses to the said complaints received by the Agency;



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'Know Before You Go' Campaign*

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3. All enquiries made by the Agency before the ship set sail, including all weather warnings given to the Master of the MV Athena;
4. All enquiries made by the Agency upon the ship's return to Falmouth, including all comments, warnings or other such devices given to the Master of the ship following this cruise;
5. All documents relating to any contact the Agency has had with the Coroner and Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Halifax, Canada;
6. All documents relating to any subsequent enquiry following the completion of this cruise;
7. All documents dealing with any consideration as to a Public Enquiry into this cruise;
8. All documents relating to any other Departmental, Government Body or other Organisation contact detailing any discussion, observations or otherwise relating to this cruise.

I look forward to hearing from you within the statutory time limit

Sincerely,

Frank Brehany
Managing Director - HTW

www.holidaytravelwatch.com