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Nepal alert level raised



THE Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has increased the warning level for Australians wanting to visit Nepal, in the wake of a devastating earthquake over the weekend.

The Smartraveller advice is now at the "Reconsider your need to travel" level, with Aussies seeking to depart the country told to contact airlines for the latest information on flight schedules.

The magnitude 7.8 quake's epicentre was 80km west of Kathmandu, with a large number of deaths and injuries reported.

Last night, reports claimed several hundred Australians were missing, but most major tour operators to the region have confirmed their passengers are

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news and photos, a front cover page for JITO plus full pages from: (click):

- AA Appointments jobs
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- Renault Eurodrive
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 Hawaii Tourism

safe and have been accounted for. Intrepid says its Kathmandu team has been working to ensure the ongoing safety of its pax, and making onward arrangements however a series of aftershocks has postponed plans to transport clients back to the capital.

Wendy Wu Tours has one group in the region who are safe and awaiting flights, while World Expeditions ceo Sue Badyari says the company's ground staff on all trips have been contacted and advised that all passengers are safe and well.

The international airport is operating at limited capacity and it is possible travellers in Nepal may have to wait some days before they can fly out.

Qantas SCL turn-back

FLIGHTS across South America have been disrupted by the eruption of a volcano in Chile (*TD* 24 Apr), including the return of a Qantas service from Sydney to Santiago on Fri night.

QF says its SCL services have now resumed normal schedules.

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Magellan tops 120

INDEPENDENT Melbournebased travel agency East Burwood Travel & Cruise has signed to join the Magellan Travel Group, with effect from 01 May.

Owned by Brian and Sharon Leeson, the agency has grown from two consultants in 1983 to a team of 12, possessing more than 250 years of travel experience, spanning airline, wholesale, cruise, corporate & sales representation.

Their addition increases the Magellan Travel Group network to 121 Member Agents, with the retailer flagging two more new agents will join the group by Jul.

Albatross ANZAC 2016

TWO unique ANZAC Day on the Western Front and Gallipoli tours feature in Albatross Tours newly released ANZAC Commemorative Tours program for 2016.

The five-day Somme Battlefields Tour is priced from \$1,829ppts. More new brochures on page 6.

SUGGESTIONS that Air China may coordinate its conduct with a proposed pact between Qantas & China Eastern to limit capacity growth between Sydney and Shanghai has been slammed by the Star Alliance carrier.

Responding to the ACCC's Draft Determination to knock back the planned Australia-China venture between QF and MU, Air China blasted assumptions made by the competition watchdog that it may collude on the route.

"CA rejects the inference that it would have the incentive to engage in any form of collusion (even tacitly) with Qantas and China Eastern. More importantly, it would be unable to do so.

"Such inference fails to have regard to the dynamics of competition in China," CA said. Air China currently operates three routes between China and Australia; Beijing to Melbourne via Shanghai, Beijing to Sydney

and Shanghai to Sydney (which launched in Jul 2014).

CA defended a drop in capacity on the Shanghai/Sydney route, saying capacity has remained stable over the past four years.

"Instead of capacity decrease, CA was in fact trying to expand its overall capacity on Australia/ China routes and offering a more competitive product by flying from Beijing or Shanghai to Sydney instead of flying from Beijing to Shanghai," the airline told the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

In its submission, parts of which were redacted for commercial confidence, Air China said it has the ability to jack up frequencies between Shanghai and Sydney.

Air China also said the proposed alliance will be an incentive for it to boost capacity in response to a rise in fares - which it doubted would occur - or if QF/MU were to decrease capacity.

New BNE SmartGates PASSENGERS departing and

arriving at Brisbane Airport will be among the first to be screened using new SmartGate technology being rolled out at the nation's eight international airports.

Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton announced the move on Thu, saying the new gates use facial biometric technology to confirm the identity of a traveller, by scanning a passport image and matching it to the traveller.

"They will allow border protection officers to focus on people who pose a risk at the border, while legitimate, law abiding travellers will be processed with less manual intervention," Dutton said.

The contract for delivery of the SmartGates was awarded to Vision Box following a ninemonth trial of the tech at BNE.

A total of 92 new SmartGates will be introduced nationally between now and mid-next year.









P&O unveils Aria & Eden

THE new ships set to join the P&O Cruises fleet will "take modern Australian cruising to the next level," according to the company's senior vice president Sture Myrmell.

The 1500 guest *Pacific Aria* and *Pacific Eden* - currently sailing with sister line Holland America as the *Statendam* and *Ryndam* - will join the Australian line-up later this year after a major refurbishment which will see them take on their new identities.

New Jetstar kids pack

JETSTAR is offering a new prepurchase option for a children's comfort pack on international flights which contains a kid-size neck pillow, toothbrush, socks, eyeshade, postcard and pencil plus use of a blanket.

The packs can be ordered online for \$10 prior to four hours ahead of departure. Penthouse suites on the vessels will "redefine Australian cruise luxury" with large spa baths and walk-in-wardrobes, Myrmell said, while venues will include The Blue Room which will offer live music; the new Ocean Bar; and a Chef's Table private dining room.

Salt Grill by Luke Mangan will also feature and a new look Lido Pool will have a retractable roof.

The new details unveiled today for *Aria* and *Eden* will complement the previously announced Pantry food market and new on-board restaurants including Angelo's & Dragon Lady.

The new ships will emerge from dry dock in Singapore, with a gala five-ship spectacular welcome into the fleet taking place on Sydney Harbour on 25 Nov.

More details on the upgrades in tomorrow's issue of *Cruise Weekly* - subscribe free online at www.cruiseweekly.com.au.

TIA push for Tasman Passport-free plan

NEW Zealand's Tourism Industry Association has backed a call by NZ Internal Affairs Minister, Peter Dunne, for passport-free travel between Australia and NZ.

TIA ceo Chris Roberts said "stepping off a trans-Tasman flight should feel like stepping off a domestic one...we are out of step with other nations which consider themselves close friends."

Four Points fly-thru

FOUR Points by Sheraton Darling Harbour has unveiled a "fly through" showcasing its expanded meeting facilities which are currently under construction.

Scheduled to debut in May 2015, the development will help address a shortage of space during the construction of Sydney's new International Convention Centre.



THE founder of the world's newest country claims to have been overwhelmed with citizenship applications since it was announced two weeks ago.

Dubbed "Liberland," the new nation occupies three square miles of "disputed forest" between Serbia and Croatia.

Czech man Vit Jedlicka is Liberland's founder and selfproclaimed president, who said the area on the Danube was "terra nullius" and therefore able to be claimed.

Liberland's official languages are English and Czech, and there's a website (liberland.org), a flag, a capital city (Liberopolis) and even a Wikipedia entry - so it must be legit!

Apparently more than 160,000 people have applied already.



Quest Nowra – opening 30th April

Quest Nowra is set to become the Shoalhaven's premier accommodation provider. Featuring 81 studio, one, two and three bedroom serviced apartments, the property is conveniently located on Kinghorne Street in Nowra's thriving town centre. Whether travelling to the Shoalhaven region for business or pleasure, Quest Nowra is the ideal accommodation choice.

Visit **questnowra.com.au** or **Search "QG" on the GDS**





Monday 27th April 2015

Aquis Resort boss steadfast

HONG Kong business tycoon Tony Fung has reiterated his commitment to the Aquis Great Barrier Reef Resort at Yorkey's Knob amid doubts the multibillion dollar project will ever take off.

In an open letter to the Cairns Community on Fri, Fung sought to reassure supporters of the eight hotel & casino development that he remains steadfast in seeking the project come to light.

"There has been much speculation in recent months about the future of the project.

"I want to assure you we remain totally committed to bringing Aquis Great Barrier Reef Resort to fruition", he said.

Fung said recent steps have been taken to elevate the Aquis project's exposure to the Queensland tourism & property industries, in addition to a move to have Casino Canberra (which it acquired last year) listed on the Australian Stock Exchange.

<u>discover</u>

"All of these investments. and any future investments. should be seen as reinforcing our commitment to Australia, Queensland and the Aquis Great Barrier Reef Resort. In no way do our recent investments diminish our commitment to the Yorkeys Knob project," Fung remarked.

He added the company was currently negotiating with the Queensland Government "on the best way to progress the project".

"Our team continues to hold positive, productive negotiations with the government and we will hopefully be able to announce some further developments shortly".

EK revamp headsets

EMIRATES will introduce newly redesigned headsets for its Economy class pax, compatible with ice, including new child-sized headsets, available on Boeing 777 aircraft from the end of Jun.



MAKE AND DEPOSIT TWO NEW BOOKINGS ON SELECT DISCOVER THE WORLD CRUISE PARTNERS THIS APRIL TO GO IN THE DRAW TO WIN A \$1,000 GIFT CARD.



BA ramps up SIN A380

BRITISH Airways will boost its thrice weekly Airbus A380 service between London Heathrow and Singapore to a daily operation, effective 14 Dec.

"Scheduling the A380 on the Singaporean route on a daily basis signals our commitment to the route and the region," BA head of UK/Ireland sales Stephen Humphreys commented.

BA operates double-daily flights between Heathrow & Singapore.

MEANWHILE, British Airways and Iberia - both owned by IAG - have joined the European Low Fares Airline Association.

The move follows a decision earlier this month to drop out of the Association of European Airlines due to a dispute on how the AEA viewed Gulf carriers.

IAG ceo Willie Walsh said the group was keen to work with the ELFAA and its partner airlines on a suite of policy and regulatory issues "including the pursuit of further aviation liberalisation".

airberlin last week revealed it to was terminating its membership with the AEA (TD 22 Apr).

Fortuna to China

COSTA Cruises has announced the deployment of a new cruise ship to its China fleet, increasing its presence to four vessels.

The 2,720 passenger Destinyclass Costa Fortuna will begin operation from Shanghai in Apr 2016, expanding Costa Cruises' capacity in China by 38%. Costa Fortuna was built in 2003.

HINN Xpress Adelaide

INTERCONTINENTAL Hotels Group has announced it will open a newbuild Holiday Inn Express property in Adelaide in 2018.

To be built on Hindley Street in Adelaide's CBD, the 245-room property is the third local venture between IHG and Pro Invest.

Please join us for our 2015 Northern Hemisphere Ski Agent Expo Evening

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*Conditions apply. Freestyle Holidays is operated by Pinpoint Travel Group

Mantra shakes things up in Bali



MANTRA Group has added its second property in Bali, with the 261-room resort to be known as Mantra Sakala Resort & Beach Club, Bali.

The hotel opened in 2013 on a 2.4 hectare site on the Nusa Dua peninsula, "a region popular with Australian and European travellers seeking a luxurious experience in a beachside location," the company said.

CEO Bob East, who's **pictured** above sealing the deal, said expansion in Indonesia is among

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Mantra's strategies, "but we have focused on quality rather than quantity".

The Mantra Sakala offers 247 suites and 14 private one and two bedroom pool villas, while resort facilities include three pools, a wellness spa, restaurants, beach club, kids club and extensive conference facilities with capacity for up to 650 delegates.

Top Aussie concierge

COLIN Toomey, longstanding chief concierge at Sydney's Shangri-La Hotel, has been named as International President of Les Clefs D'Or.

He's only the second Australian to hold the esteemed position heading up the elite group which comprises some 4,000 top level concierges from across the globe. This year Toomey is celebrating his 20th year at the Shangri-La.

NZ neo engine order

AIR New Zealand has selected Pratt & Whitney's PW1100G engine to power its 10 Airbus A320neo and three A321neo aircraft ordered last year.



ACCC fines Spreets \$600K

INTERNET-BASED group buying aggregator Spreets has copped a \$600,000 fine from the Australian Competition & Consumer Comm for misleading customers.

Spreets directs traffic to group buying portals that offer a suite of products and activities including hotel and holiday packages, at heavily discounted prices when sold in bulk.

Those companies include Groupon, Scoopon, Living Social, Our Deal and Luxury Escapes.

On Fri, the ACCC ordered Spreets to cough up penalties to the tune of \$600,000 "for making false or misleading representations" of the Australian Competition Law.

The Federal Court said that between Jun 2011 and Apr 2012 when it operated as Australia's largest online group buying website, Spreets contravened the ACL by engaging in misleading and deceptive conduct about the cost of certain deals, consumers' ability to redeem vouchers and consumers' refund rights.

ACCC Commissioner Sarah Court stressed the Court's decision should serve as a further reminder to online traders that the ACL applies to them, including consumer guarantees. "All online businesses, including those offering daily deals, must ensure that representations made on their websites are clear and accurate, particularly in relation to price and any restrictions on a deal being offered, including availability and redemption conditions," Court said.

Spreets agreed to joint submissions on penalties and a statement of agreed facts and consented to the other orders made by the Court.

In 2013, Scoopon was ordered to pay \$1 million for making false or misleading representations to businesses and consumers, while LivingSocial accepted a courtenforceable undertaking in Dec last year due to concerns over consumer contracts and other representations made on the site.

QR LHR A380 earlier

DOHA-BASED Qatar Airways has brought forward the intended launch date of its second daily services to London Heathrow.

According to travel agent GDS displays, the **one**world carrier will operate flights QR001/002 using the superjumbo from 01 Jul, rather than 16 Jul.





Fiji Airways new ceo?

FORMER SriLankan Airlines chief executive officer Peter Hill is rumoured to be the front runner to take over the leadership role at Fiji Airways, the Sri Lanka's *Daily Mirror* has speculated.

Fiji Airways denied the report, saying the airline's Board are set to meet three short-listed candidates in the near future.

The move follows the departure of former ceo Stefan Pichler who has joined airberlin as its chief.

SilkAir/GTA sign MoU

TRAVEL distributor GTA has inked a SGD\$2 million 12-month Memorandum of Understanding with SilkAir to collaborate on new marketing initiatives, aimed at generating more traffic to the airline's Singapore hub.



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CONGRATULATIONS David Fraser from MTA Travel

David is the top point scorer for Round 11 of *Travel Daily*'s Super 15 Rugby industry footy tipping competition. David has won a gift pack from Emirates.

Major Prize:

Two return Economy Class airfares to Dubai with **Emirates**



FOUR Seasons Hotels & Resorts

has unveiled its Private Jet (**TD** 23 Apr 14) which will be used on itineraries around the world that visit Four Seasons properties.

The retrofitted Boeing 757 offer 52 seats hand-crafted leather flatbed seats (**pictured**) and will be serviced by a team of 10 inflight crew, including an Executive Chef, Sous Chef and Concierge.



SPG App Watch app

GUESTS of Starwood Hotels & Resort Worldwide's lovalty program Starwood Preferred Guest (SPG) will be able to use the new Apple Watch app to unlock hotel room doors "with the flick of the wrist", the company says. Once registered for 'SPG Keyless', the Apple Watch will automatically send guests their room number and will function as a hotel room key at any SPG Keyless enabled Starwood hotel allowing guests to bypass the front desk (where available). Starwood introduced the SPG Keyless technology late last year for smartphone users, enabling the device to act as a room key.

Vanuatu improves

CONDITIONS across Vanuatu continue to improve following the path of devastation left by tropical Cyclone Pam last month.

Late Fri afternoon, the Australian Govt lowered its travel advisory for the South Pacific destination from 'Exercise a high degree of caution' to 'Exercise normal safety precautions'.

"Essential services have been restored to most parts of Port Vila and tourism infrastructure is being repaired," the Smartraveller website notes.

Brochures

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily*'s Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



Evergreen Tours - 2016 Europe River Cruising & Tours Three river & ocean cruise combo itineraries headline next year's program. Paired in conjunction with its Emerald 'Star Ship' river product, the options link with Princess Mediterranean and Baltic Sea voyages and a Poseidon Expedition of the Arctic onboard *Sea Spirit*. With five 'Star Ships' sailing in 2016, the number of Budapest to Bucharest cruises have also been

bolstered. On the touring front, the 17-day Best of Switzerland & Rhine River Cruise has been introduced, visiting Geneva, Montreux, Interlaken, Lucerne and the Golden Pass train journey.



APT Kimberley Coast Cruising 2016

This new program includes voyages aboard the *MS Caledonian Sky* and *Oceanic Discoverer* which APT has exclusively chartered. Fly Free SuperDeals are on offer for all cruise and land tour combinations, and the land content includes visits to APT's exclusive network of wilderness lodges plus a portfolio of stations, hotels and lodges.



Creative Holidays - USA 2015/16

Creative Holidays has expanded its sightseeing and options in this new program, with additions such as the TMZ Hollywood Tour in Los Angeles, Flavours of New York and Bike the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. There's also a range of recommended itineraries including the Grand Canyon Sampler, Big Apple Adventures and The Best National Park Tour.

Windstar 2015 Voyage Collection



This new program covers Windstar's portfolio of itineraries which call at 150 ports across Europe, the South Pacific, the Caribbean and Central America. It includes the recently launched *Star Pride* as well as *Star Breeze* and *Star Legend* which will debut next month, with new itineraries including voyages to Arabia, Iceland and beyond.

Infinity Holidays - Romantic Escapes

The new Romantic Escapes brochure from Inifinity includes ten new properties from across the country including Orpheus Island, the QT Port Douglas, Eco Beach in Broome and Tasmania's Wheelhouse Apartments. The format is slightly different to Infinity's regular domestic brochures, but there are still double page spreads including travel tips and essential

information, with a re-arranged fold out cover.



Bench's latest Africa experts



WE KNOW Travel's Clive Sisley & Susanna Dowling-Fenarau have been recognised as qualified Africa gurus having completed



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CONGRATULATIONS

from Amity Travel

Sue is the top point scorer for Round 4 of Travel Daily's AFL industry footy tipping competition and has won a gift pack and Lonely Planet guide, courtesy of Tourism Ireland.



Major Prize: Two return Economy Class airfares to Dubai with **Emirates**

sign up at www.traveldaily.com.au.

Bench International's 'Safari School' education course. Since its launch in Oct, Bench International has seen participant numbers swell to over 600 for its Safari School, which sees members receive a certificate, an Africa 'bible' and logo which can be attached to emails.

Clive and Susanna are pictured proudly displaying their certificate with Bench International NSW sales rep Chris Le Roux.

Hibernian bookings

LUXURY travel firm Belmond is now taking reservations for its new rail product in Ireland which will debut in Aug next year.

Belmond Grand Hibernian offers a range of two-, four- & six-night itineraries across the Republic and Northern Ireland.

Destinations include Cork to Killarney, Galway and Westport & Dublin to Belfast and Portrush.

The Grand Hibernian features 40 ensuite cabins, two dining cars and an observation car.

Prices start at \$4,470pp for the two night trip and \$6,890pp for the four night option - for more details, phone 1800 000 395.

SAA chief guits

THE suspended chief exec of South African Airways Monwabisi Kalawe has been resigned with immediate effect after a hearing into alleged misconduct. Kalawe was stood down from the role in Oct last year.



Monday 27th Apr 2015

Mobile bookings rise

MORE than 1 in 4 travellers are likely to book travel arrangements while on the go, a new report in the US has found.

According to the Hotels.com Hotel Price Index of global customers, 50% of travellers booked same or next-day hotel stays using a mobile device, such as a smartphone or tablet.

The company found the top destination booked last year via a handheld device was Las Vegas, followed by Orlando & New York.

Mobile booking demand in the US jumped 81% year-on-year.

UA switch 787s to 777s

UNITED Airlines has announced it will exchange 10 Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft on order with the bigger 777-300ER for deliveries beginning in 2016.

"The new 777-300ER aircraft will provide attractive upgauge and range opportunities to the company at competitive economics", United said.

The Star Alliance carrier also confirmed it would remove 130 50-seat aircraft from its schedule by the end of this year and make further cuts in 2016 and beyond.

UA is also in final negotiations to lease 10-20 narrowbody aircraft for delivery in coming years.

The adjustments are aimed at accelerating the airline's network initiatives as it transitions from flying into the mainline operation from the regional operation.



Sail around the world on an APT small ship cruise with this month's exciting Travel Daily competition, brought to you in partnership with Australia's leading award-winning cruise operator APT.

Every day we'll be taking you on an adventure, showcasing the many highlights and destinations available on an APT Luxury Small Ship cruise. The person with the most correct answers, and who wows us with the most creative answer to the final question, will win the following unforgettable prize: an all-inclusive '17-day Southeast Asia Adventure' Expedition Small Ship cruise for two, departing 14 June 2016. Send your answers to: APTcomp@traveldaily.com.au

Q17. On APT's 12-day Britain and Ireland Explorer Expedition Collection cruise, which famous tipple can you choose to sample when you stop off in Dublin?

Hint: CLICK HERE see p21

Pharmacy



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Produced each weekday since 1994, the newsletter is first with the latest industry

news and is available by paid subscription to people within the travel industry

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Travel Managers

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- Perth: http://applynow.net.au/jobs/F166228
- Brisbane: http://applynow.net.au/jobs/F166660
- Melbourne & Surrounds: http://applynow.net.au/jobs/F164013
- Hobart: http://applynow.net.au/jobs/F166940

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- Perth: http://applynow.net.au/jobs/F188274
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- Enter the draw for some awesome prizes
- ... and so much more!

The Hawaiian Islands are a place of diverse natural beauty, unique culture, world class cuisine and a legendary aloha spirit. It's no wonder Hawai'i has seen a huge surge in Australian visitor arrivals over the last five years, increasing 158% from 121,482 in 2009 to a record-breaking 313,054 in 2014!

Hawai'i continues to be a popular choice for Aussie holidaymakers and the Aloha Down Under Workshops are YOUR chance to gain in-depth destination and product training on the Hawaiian Islands. Guests will enjoy informative workshop sessions and will be taken on a visual journey through Hawai'i, tracing the steps of our recent Agents of Aloha exclusive famil.

MELBOURNE	SYDNEY	BRISBANE	GOLD COAST
Tuesday 12th May	Wednesday 13th May	Thursday 14th May	Friday 15th May
Park Hyatt Melbourne	The Westin Sydney	Pullman Brisbane King George Square	Outrigger Surfers Paradise
1 Parliament Square, Melbourne VIC 3002	1 Martin Place, Sydney NSW 2000	Cnr Ann & Roma Streets, Brisbane QLD 4000	22 View Avenue, Surfers Paradise QLD 4217
Time: 5:00PM-9:00PM*	Time: 5:00PM-9:00PM*	Time: 5:00PM-9:00PM*	Time: 5:00PM-9:00PM*

*Due to the format of the Aloha Down Under Workshops guests must arrive on time at 5:00PM.

REGISTER TO ATTEND AT <u>WWW.ALOHADOWNUNDER.COM.AU</u> REGISTRATIONS CLOSE ON 30 APRIL 2015

T: (02) 9286 8951 E: info@hawaiitourism.com.au f facebook.com/alohadownunder

