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BUSINESS PRESENTATION

to offer luxury accommodation in regional NSW, with an agreement to purchase part of the Ellerston complex in the Hunter Valley.

The \$60 million deal will see Crown acquire a 50% interest in the property currently owned by Consolidated Press Holdings Group - the family company associated with Crown chairman James Packer.

The deal does not include Ellerston's agricultural operations, with the property featuring luxury accommodation, a go-kart track, cinema, several swimming pools and "one of Australia's best golf courses".

Crown said the acquisition would enable it to give effect to a commitment to the NSW government to give VIP gaming clients at Crown Sydney access to the regional operation.

Seven pages of news!

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news and photos, plus full pages from: (*click*)

• AA Appointments jobs

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The announcement came as part of the Crown annual results. which showed a 4.7% increase in non-gaming revenue from its Australian resorts to \$664.7m.

Crown's overall normalised profit after tax fell 17.9% to \$525.5 million, with the Australian operations strong but weak market conditions in Macau.

Crown Towers Melbourne recorded a 96% occupancy rate with a \$353 average room rate, while Crown Metropol and Crown Promenade Melbourne were also more than 90% full.

"These high occupancy rates reflect the very strong demand for luxury hotel accommodation in Melbourne," Crown said.

CLIA ceo departs

CRUISE Line International Association's recently elected ceo and president Thomas P. Ostebo has quit the role three months in, citing "personal reasons".

Executive vp of membership & operations Cindy D'Aoust has been named as acting ceo until a permanent head is appointed. More appointments on page 7.

SABRE RED APP OF THE WEEK: TRAVELFUSION

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ANTHONY Mancuso from Complete Conference in Crows Nest. Sydney has been named the winner of the Qantas and Disnevland Diamond Anniversary Incentive (TD 19 Jun).

He's won four return Premium Economy tickets to Los Angeles, four nights at the Disneyland Hotel and a five day park pass.

MH free night in KUL

MALAYSIA Airlines is enticing travellers to stay overnight in Kuala Lumpur for at least one night under a new incentive.

From today through until 12 Sep, passengers booking flights with MH ex Perth and Sydney will be provided with one free night's accom in the Malaysian capital.

The offer applies for travel from 01 Oct until 31 Dec.

"Not only does this give travellers the option of breaking up a long haul journey, it's such a fantastic way for Australians to sample the life and colour of KL as part of a bigger itinerary," said Tourism Malaysia deputy director general Dato' Azizan Noordin during the Tourism Malaysia Oceania Roadshow this week.





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STB sport event strategy



South Pac roadshow

THE South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) will host a two day Treasures of the South Pacific workshop in Newcastle and Sydney on 25-26 Aug.

Australian-based RTOs for Tahiti, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Niue, Solomon Islands, Samoa and the Cook Islands will be in attendance.

The showcase aims to educate agents on the array of South Pacific destinations, product requirements, travel distribution and services.

"We are taking a consolidated approach on this roadshow to jointly market the South Pacific as a region and to increase the strength of our brand in Australia," SPTO chief Illisoni Vuidreketi said.

"Australia continues to be the biggest source market for tourists into our region and we believe that this trend will continue.

Organisers are expecting to attract over 65 travel agents.

Events will be held at Crowne Plaza in Newcastle (24 Aug) and the Rocks in Sydney (25 Aug) email ttora@spto.org for info.

Cassia Phuket debut

BANYAN Tree has announced it will open its new Cassia brand to the world in Oct with the launch of the first property in Phuket.

Located at the group's integrated resort Laguna Phuket, Cassia Phuket features 221 one- and two-bedroom apartments for hotel guests and residence.

More info at www.cassia.com.

SINGAPORE Tourism Board head Lionel Yeo has admitted a "perception challenge" is proving an obstacle in having Australian travellers passing through the hub step outside Changi Airport.

Yeo said STB's estimates suggest only 20% of stopover traffic from Australia to the Lion City is going beyond the airport.

"There is a lot of opportunity for that number to grow," the STB chief executive told *Travel Daily* yesterday during a visit to Sydney. Yeo flagged growing the number

by Australian visitors to 30-35%. "A lot of Australians feel they

maybe already know Singapore, or maybe they feel there is nothing much to see or do, but through our surveys and focus group work, what we realised is a lot of Australians have a dated perception of Singapore."

"It might be something they remember from the 80s or 90s, so they haven't been in the last five years, or even the last 10 years -Singapore is quite a different city now," he explained.

Part of Singapore Tourism Board's work locally is to see how it can raise the level of awareness of what Singapore has to offer.

Growing major sports events space is a key strategy undertaken to entice more visitors.

Yeo said the success of the city's annual Formula One race has raised awareness of the city and hotel attendances, a platform that hopes to be replicated across other sporting events.

Singapore last year became the host of the finals of the Women's Tennis Association under a five year agreement and has signed to host matches of the Rugby Sevens Series for four years.

Yeo told **TD** cricket and football were also on the radar.

The STB boss confirmed Qantas' withdrawal of its Singapore hub in favour of Dubai two years ago has had "some effect" on Aussie visitor volumes, but was upbeat about future potential.

He said Qantas and Singapore Airlines have "increased their traffic intensity" on the Australia-Singapore route, but the STB was waiting to see how QF's strategy of making SIN a hub to access Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia would pan out.

"Even with current traffic from British Airways and Singapore Airlines between Australia and Europe there is still a lot of potential to get people out of the airport," he commented.

Australia remains a key source of visitor arrivals for Singapore.

While visitor arrivals are dominated by nearby Indonesia and China, Australia hovers in the top three to five source markets.

The average length of stay for Aussies in Singapore is currently 3.2 days, with the figure skewed by a large volume of VFR traffic that stays for five or six days.

Ormina + Silversea

ORMINA Tours has announced a strategic partnership with Silversea cruises, to offer joint land and sea itineraries and packages as part of their 2016 program - for more info see www.orminatours.com.

<section-header>

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EVERY property in the AccorHotels network in Australia is now part of the group's FASTcom automatic commission payment service, meaning travel agents can be guaranteed fast and reliable settlement.

FASTcom was introduced locally five years ago, with the aim of ensuring that agencies receive commissions "promptly and accurately" from all Accor branded hotels.

AccorHotels Australia vp of sales, distribution and revenue management Henrik Berglind said the service had been well received, with average payment times reducing from 53 days to 23 days.

The expanded coverage means "the days of agents having to chase individual hotels is a thing of the past with AccorHotels," Berglind said.

When agents book via GDS or on the accorhotels.com website

the booking is automatically added to FASTcom for review.

"Every week, every hotel reviews the previous week's departures and approves the commission payment," he said. Commissions must be

reconciled within that period or payments are automatically processed, and agents receive commission via cheque or direct bank transfer.

JQ Q300 unveiled

THE first of five Jetstar Q300 turboprops has emerged from a paint shop in Townsville, reports the *Aviation Tribune*.

The planes were formerly used by QantasLink, and will roll out across the expanding Jetstar New Zealand regional operation later in the year.

As well as new livery there's been an "interior refresh" to align with the Jetstar onboard product.

Digital Key check-in

HILTON Worldwide is allowing members of its HHonors loyalty program to now bypass hotel check-in and access rooms via a Digital Key smartphone app.

Initially rolled out in the US, the new tech is slated to be available at 170,000 rooms at 250 Hilton, Waldorf Astoria, Conrad & Canopy branded hotels by early 2016.

Since its soft launch last Jul, the Digital Key app has been used over 5 million times by HHonors members around the world to pre-select rooms, buy upgrades and request items to be delivered to their room (*TD* 30 Jul 14).

QF Awards to Melb

THE National Tourism Alliance has announced the 2016 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards will be hosted in Melbourne on 05 Feb.

Over 200 tourism business reps are expected to converge at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre for the event.



AMERICAN Airlines is becoming a dog's (or cat's) best friend, with the introduction of a dedicated "pet cabin" on transcontinental flights.

Sparking visions of designer poodles and pampered kittens, the special area - actually just a cupboard with vented doors (**pictured**) is available in first class on selected flights from New York JFK to Los Angeles and San Francisco.

There is room for two animals

in the first class cabin and they each have to be in their carrier inside the cupboard during take-off and landing.





Quest Rockingham – Now Open

Quest Rockingham is the new premier accommodation provider in Perth's southern suburbs. Comprising 96 studio, one and two bedroom apartments, the purpose-built property also offers a conference room facility, swimming pool and gymnasium. Located close to an array of dining options, it is the perfect accommodation choice for the business or leisure traveller.

Search **"QG" on the GDS** or visit **questrockingham.com.au**





Thursday 13th August 2015

Uluru sales upswing

AAT Kings global md Anthony Hayes says bookings for Uluru are "running red hot", fuelled by a big domestic spend from Tourism NT that is "hitting the right spot".

Hayes told **Travel Daily** this week bookings had bounced back for Uluru from the domestic market, traditional markets such as Germany & Italy, and Japan.

"They have had some pretty tough years and it is wonderful to see the occupancy at Voyages now looking so healthy," he said.

Hayes suggested the Royal Couple's visit last year, the Dalai Lama's brief tour of Uluru in Jun and new direct air capacity out of Melbourne has had a positive impact on tourism for the NT.

MEANWHILE, Hayes has flagged to *Travel Daily* the desire to expand AAT Kings' luxury small group Inspiring Journeys program into North Queensland within the next 12 to 18 months, likely through a partnership with Down Under Tours.

Air travellers weighed

UZBEKISTAN Airways (HY) has begun weighing passengers as part of a new preflight procedure.

The carrier says the move is within IATA's guidelines, allowing airlines to weigh customers and their hand luggage.

"After passing check-in on flight & prior to boarding into the aircraft, we will suggest you to pass the procedure of weighing with the special weighing machine placed in the departure gate zone," the Uzbekistan Airlines website says.

HY vows "full confidentiality of results is guaranteed".

PER evacuation

A FALSE alarm triggered a short evacuation of hundreds of people at Perth Airport's domestic Terminals 3 and 4 yesterday.

T3/T4 are used by QantasLink, Qantas, Virgin Australia & Jetstar.

The incident occurred when a fire alarm was activated for unknown reasons, it is reported.



Singapore celebrates 50 years

SINGAPORE Tourism Board chief executive Lionel Yeo joined local counterparts in Sydney to celebrate the Lion City's 50th anniversary of independence with travel industry partners this week.

The STB boss is on a brief visit to Australia, meeting with travel agents and other trade representatives.

A range of events are taking place across the city state as part of the 'SG50' celebration, including a free twice weekly Garden

Rhapsody music and light show at the Gardens by the Bay attraction.

Yeo is **pictured** (centre) cutting a celebratory cake at a media event with Sharon Lam, area director Oceania and John Conceicao, regional director Oceania.



Alila set to go Solo

LUXURY villa operator Alila Hotels & Resorts will open a new property in the Central Java city of Solo, the company announced. Alila Solo will offer 255 rooms and suites, opening in Oct 2015.

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LUXURY Aussie travel operator Scenic has revealed the return of its best dressed agency incentive for 2015, offering travel agencies

Mövenpick Boracay

THE upscale Sol Marina Resort in Boracay is sent to enter the portfolio of Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts from Dec after the firm secured a new management deal.

Mövenpick Resort Boracay is a "significant development" for the group in the established resort destination, said the hoteliers chief operating officer for Middle East & Asia, Andreas Mattmuller. the chance to win \$5,000.

The incentive will reward the agency which decks out its office with the best display, based on Scenic's 2016 European River Cruise program, focused on Rhine, Danube & Moselle rivers. Five runner up cash prizes will also be awarded to agents.

To give agents some inspiration, Scenic's Zena Dalton, Donna Reed, Paige Kirk & Cherie Bowman have donned the dirndls and piano accordions to get into the theme.

Entries can be submitted at facebook.com/ScenicTravelAgents and merchandise can be ordered through TIFS at www.tifs.com.au.



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Please send your resume to Katina@aboveandbeyondholidays.com.au (no agencies please)

Thredbo 15/16 passes

SALES for Thredbo's 2015/16 Season Pass have now opened.

Two options are available including a year round Thredbo 365 Pass which covers mountain biking in summer months and next year's ski season.

The 'Thredbo 365 Pass' enables pass-holders to a 50% discount on lift passes at sister properties in the Northern Hemisphere, such as Aspen Snowpass, Jackson Hole, Banff-Lake Louise-Sunshine Village, Whistler Blackcomb and more, as well as at Hakuba Valley in Japan & Valley Nevado in Chile.

It is priced at \$799 for adults and \$499 for children.

The 'Winter 2016 Pass' is valid for travel between 11 Jun and 03 Oct, priced at \$699 for adults and \$399 for children.

More at www.thredbo.com.au.

Blue Train value add

SOUTH Africa's The Blue Train is offering a complimentary night's accom and breakfast in Pretoria or Cape Town for 2016 bookings.

The offer applies to a pre or post nights, based at either Castello Di Monte or Sheraton Hotel in Pretoria or either Taj Hotel or The Westin in Cape Town.

Vic baseball homerun

THE Victorian Government is heralding the 2015 Australian Baseball League All Star match as a huge win for the state.

Team Australia, the country's best players, will take on the ABL's most decorated international imports, the World All Stars on 16 Dec at Melbourne Ballpark.

The match will be broadcast via ESPN, Fox Sports and the Major League Baseball channel in the United States, showcasing Victoria to a global audience.



Robbie Williams

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with thanks to world Journeys, we have double-passes to Robbie Williams concerts in Perth, Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney to give away.

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To win the Brisbane and Adelaide tickets*, send your entries to wj@traveldaily.com.au

Look out next week for the Sydney, Melbourne and Perth tickets

Solomon webinars

THE Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau is holding two webinars to provide the trade with further information on the 'Hapi Islands'.

The 20min destination sessions are scheduled for Tue 18 Aug at 8:30am and 10:30am (AEST).

Spaces are limited to participate, with agents urged to register asap - **CLICK HERE** for more details.



Business Manager NSW

A vacancy exists for a full time **Business Manager NSW – helloworld Branded Network Retail, based in North Sydney**.

This position will play a key role in maximising both individual member and helloworld profitability and provide direction to the helloworld network. To be successful in this role you will be a results driven individual who is passionate, energetic, and able to communicate effectively at all levels and be able to deliver value to the branded retail network by driving company initiatives.

If you are interested in applying for this role, please send your resume to Lynda.wallace@helloworld.com.au



Sheraton Russia boost

STARWOOD Hotels & Resorts Worldwide has announced it will open the Sheraton Ufa Hotel near the Ural Mountains, as part of plans to open 150 hotels by 2020.

Airservices Australia seeks fee rise

AIRSERVICES has proposed a 3.3% rise in fees to fund the cost of new services delivered in recent years, deliver efficiency programs and replace the air traffic management system to meet aviation traffic growth.

The proposal sets out funding for the provision of safe air navigation and rescue fire fighting services through to 2021 and would take effect from 1 Jul 2016.

Airservices acting chief financial officer Paul Logan said the proposal equated to an increase of less than 3.0 per cent over the five years of the agreement.

Under the proposal, an Airbus A380 travelling from Singapore to Sydney will be charged an additional \$589 by 2021, equivalent to \$1.74 per passenger increase over five years.

"This follows real price reductions of 20% since the



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commencement of the first long term pricing agreement in 2005," Logan said.

Industry members can provide written feedback on the proposal, after which a draft piece notification will be lodged to the ACCC for its review.

The ACCC said it would not object to Airservices Australia increasing prices on some of its monopoly services (*TD* 22 Jun). See: airservicesaustralia.com

APT Wine Program

NINE new Europe wine river cruises are available for bookings through APT from today.

The voyages range from eight to 16 days in length and depart between Jun and Nov 2016.

Each will have a 'Wine Ambassador' aboard, who will oversee tastings, host special dinners, lead excursions to wineries and educate guests on European wine heritage and traditions.

Cruises will travel on the Danube, Douro, Mosel, Rhine, Rhône and Seine rivers. Go to aptouring.com.au.

NZ dawn deals begin

AIR New Zealand's Dawn Deals campaign kicks off tomorrow and will run for four weeks.

The campaign will reveal deals on 14, 21, 28 Aug and 04 Sep, covering international and local destinations.

On the Thu evening before each Fri sale, a countdown will appear on wheretonext.nz site and when the sun rises in the destination, the deal will be revealed.

Space Shuttle Plaza

SPACE Centre Houston will open an eight-story complex, Independance Plaza on Jan 23.

The Plaza will feature a shuttle replica mounted on top of the first shuttle carrier aircraft and will host educational programs and be used for special events. **CLICK HERE** for more details.

Sun shines on Fiji roadshows



OVER 100 agents from Tropical North Queensland converged on a trio of Tourism Fiji roadshows held recently in the Qld far north.

The three roadshows took place in Cairns, Mackay and Townsville, with attendees learning a lot more about the destination of Fiji and its offerings for tourists.

As part of the event, agents enjoyed a traditional kava ceremony performed by the local Fijian community, including a band of warriors in traditional Fijian dress who are always happy to help to promote their country.

Pictured above from left at the event are Larry Burrows, Captain Cook Cruises Fiji; Keza, Fiji Association of Cairns; Mark Leonard, South Sea Cruises; Sandy Louie, Coconuts Travel Marketing; Jeff Bell, Fiji Hideaway Resort & Spa; Karen Everingham, Tourism Fiji and Deborah Nash from helloworld Edge Hill.

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Industry Appointments

WELCOME to Industry Appointments, Travel Daily's Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

Chris Bailey has been promoted to chief operating officer of Centara Hotels & Resorts. Bailey joined Centara in 2004 and was previously the Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing.

Holiday Inn Sydney Airport has appointed Louise Farguhar as executive chef. Farquhar brings with her over 20 years' experience and is coming from a role as executive chef at Q Station in Manly.

The Trump Organization has appointed Eric Danziger as ceo of Trump Hotel Collection. Danziger has over 45 years of hospitality experience and has been the president and ceo of Starwood Hotels, president and coo of Carlson Hotels Worldwide and president and CEO of Wyndham Hotel Group.

William Margaritis will take on the role of executive vice president of corporate affairs at Hilton Worldwide, where he will oversee internal and external communications, government relations and corporate responsibility globally.

Carnival Corporation has announced that Michael Ungerer, currently president of AIDA Cruises, has been appointed ceo shared services for Carnival Asia.

Brad Downton has been appointed as the new general manager of the Warwick Fiji, on the back of the hotel's recent rebranding. Downton has been promoted from his role as the resort manager of the Warwick Fiji.

Christoph G. Ganster is the new managing director for private island resort, Laucala Island. Ganster has most recently served 11 years with FRHI Hotels & Resorts.

Philip Cox will take the reigns at Discovery Bay Tourism in the role of general manager. Cox was most recently Marketing & Industry Liaison Officer at Australia's South West.

SureSave has announced the appointment of Peter James as its business development manager for NSW. James has 12 years experience in the travel industry and comes from a role at Scenic.

A new executive chef will take the helm at the Sheraton Melbourne Hotel. Achim Herterich will oversee Little Collins St Kitchen, Terrace Bar, Little Collins Larder and the hotel's dedicated meetings floor.

IHG to enter Krabi

HOLIDAY Inn Express will open in Krabi in two years time, following an agreement between InterContinental Hotels Group and U&N Hospitality Company.

The 222-room hotel will debut on Ao Nang Beach, marking the entry of the brand into Krabi.

Norfolk Jazz Festival

NORFOLK Island's annual Jazz Festival will be in full swing from 30 Nov to 03 Dec.

For full details on the event, see norfolkislandjazzesitup.nlk.nf

Wendy Wu earlybirds

AGENTS have until 18 Sep to book selected Wendy Wu tours and secure earlybird discounts.

Clients can save up to \$1,355pp on tours through China, Tibet, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Japan, India, Nepal and Central Asia for departures from Jan-Jul 2016.

EY backs film festival

ETIHAD Airways is sponsoring the 12th annual Arab Film Festival Australia, which opens its program in Sydney tonight.

Ch7 seeks adventures

CHANNEL 7 producers are on the hunt for two international destinations to feature in their new TV show Life Changing Adventures with Ricki-Lee.

The show challenges a team to take part in adventures to win money for a chosen charity.

Destinations must provide support, travel insurance and accom for 32 cast and crew and in their submission, describe the destination, typical Nov-Jan weather and region highlights and activities.

For more info & to apply, email lisa@LifeChangingAdventures.TV.

Avis Taiwan's Audis

AVIS Car Rental in Taiwan has rolled out a new Audi fleet and launched a 'Audi Fleet Prestige Rental Service'.

The service also offers a limo option in the luxurious Audi A8.



Starwood Dubai push

THREE new Aloft hotels and a Starwood hotel will open in Dubai following an agreement between Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide and Dubai Properties.

Scheduled to open in 2016, the four hotels will introduce 816 rooms, in line with the Government's focus on mid-scale hotel development ahead of the Dubai World Expo 2020.

The new hotels are: Aloft Dubai Dubiotech, which will be 20km from DXB international airport; Aloft Dubai Studio City, in Dubai's Media City; Aloft Dubai IMPZ, in the city's media production zone and Element Dubai IMPZ, which will cater to active travellers.



This month, *Travel Daily* together with Bhaya Cruises Group, Vietnam Airlines, Hai Au Aviation and Sofitel Plaza Hanoi are giving readers the chance to win an amazing Vietnamese holiday. The prize for two includes:

- Economy class flights to Hanoi Return airport transfers
- 3 nights' accommodation at Sofitel Plaza Hanoi
- Return Hai Au seaplane transfers to Halong Bay
- 2 night Halong Bay cruise aboard Auco in a Long Quan Suite

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To win, answer each daily question correctly and have the best answer to the final question. Send your answers to vietnam@traveldaily.com.au



are there in Sofitel Plaza Hanoi? Are Le Club membership and Accor Plus benefits applicable there? CLICK HERE for a hint.

Pharmacy

Bhaya Publisher/Managing Editor: Bruce Piper Editor: Guy Dundas Assistant Editor: Matt Lennon Contributors: Jasmine O'Donoghue, Jenny Piper, Sarah Piper Editorial email: info@traveldaily.com.au

Advertising and Marketing: Sean Harrigan and Lisa Martin - advertising@traveldaily.com.au

Business Manager: Jenny Piper - accounts@traveldaily.com.au

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