



# Travel Daily

First with the news

Thursday 22nd Oct 2015

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## AOT set for public listing

THE AOT Group has appointed financial advisory firm Ord Minnett to assist in a possible public listing of the company.

AOT owners Andrew and Cinzia Burnes already hold almost 10% of Helloworld, with HLO ceo Elizabeth Gaines recently confirming the company was in talks about a potential acquisition of AOT (TD 02 Sep).

However, two weeks later Helloworld announced the discussions were off because the "strategic and financial merits of the acquisition on the terms

proposed were insufficiently compelling to warrant proceeding with the transaction".

Burnes has now apparently decided on a different approach, after expressing anger at the Helloworld rebuff (TD 17 Sep).

Ord Minnett's most recent travel industry float was for Captain Cook Cruises owner SeaLink, with the broker also involved in share sales for Corporate Travel Management and Mantra Group.

### CDU rebranding

**CRUISE** Down Under has today rebranded as the Australian Cruise Association, with ceo Jill Abel saying the move "better reflects our role and positions us perfectly for the future."

More on the name change in today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

### O&O Cape Town deal

**ONE&ONLY** Cape Town has a Stay 4, Pay 3 promotion including complimentary daily brekkie, available for stays from now until 19 Dec - see **page 10** for more.

### Eight pages of news!

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

- AA Appointments jobs
- One&Only Cape Town
- Voyages to Antiquity

### Antiquity Greece trip

A **15-NIGHT** Greek Islands & Turkey cruise operating roundtrip from Athens on 16 Apr 2016 with Voyages to Antiquity is on sale priced from \$7,950 per person.

For full inclusions, see **page 11**.

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## ACCC reviews Tasman JVs

**THE** Australian competition regulator is to assess imposing capacity growth rates on certain trans-Tasman routes operated by alliance partners.

The mooted plan would apply to both Qantas & Emirates and Virgin Australia & Air New Zealand which gained joint venture (JV) approval from the ACCC two years ago.

In correspondence to the airlines last week, the ACCC said it is now seeking submissions as part of a formal review, from parties wishing to comment on a range of possible concerns of the tie-ups.

Topics of concern on the

relevant routes may relate to current market conditions, current & planned future capacity growth (including potential new entrants), the size & type of the aircraft operated by airlines, regulatory constraints on airlines' ability to operate and the impact of the variation on route profitability.

The Australian Competition & Consumer Comm said based on its assessment, it may require either alliance to lift capacity flown on any routes of concern.

Submissions must be received by the ACCC by COB 06 Nov.

## Egypt bomb concern

**THE** Dept of Foreign Affairs & Trade issued an updated advisory for Egypt yesterday, warning of the threat of "small explosions" on a frequent basis in Cairo and other parts of the country.

"Attacks are generally directed at security forces, but bystanders have been killed and injured," the Smarttraveller website says, adding "further attacks are likely".

The current advisory for Egypt remains at "Reconsider your need to travel".

## Lizard Is fully open

**THE** \$45 million refurbishment of Lizard Island Resort is complete with the property now fully open and operational.

It marks the end of a 16-month renovation process following damage by cyclones Ita & Nathan.

The final addition to the Great Barrier Reef-based resort was the Marlin Bar, which overlooks Anchor Bay on the property's eastern boundary.

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## Woolies mulls ditching QFFF

**WOOLWORTHS** is considering cutting ties with the Qantas Frequent Flyer Program, with reports about the possible split emerging just a day after Etihad announced its new partnership with rival retailer Coles.

Woolworths is reviewing its Everyday Rewards scheme, which allows shoppers to earn Qantas points when they buy groceries, with an unnamed source saying the cost of the program is a sticking point.

"I don't think anyone thinks Qantas is cheap, Qantas makes a fair bit of money out of its

rewards program," the source was quoted as saying by *Fairfax*.

A Qantas spokesperson confirmed the carrier had been in talks with Woolworths, in order to ensure the program "continues to meet the needs of our Frequent Flyers".

Woolworths first launched its partnership with Qantas in 2009, with the association having strongly driven uptake of both the Everyday Rewards and QFFF loyalty programs.

The retailer has confirmed changes are expected, with further details likely in the coming weeks.

## World Journeys currency surcharge

**NEW** Zealand-based touring firm World Journeys has confirmed it will be adjusting its brochure and online pricing of all small group hosted trips by 8% in response to fluctuating currencies.

The currency surcharge applies to 2016 itineraries that have not been deposited on by 30 Oct.

Agents can lock in current prices and take advantage of World Journeys' earlybird pricing by ensuring deposits of \$200 per person are applied this month.

"We have held off surcharging our small group journeys but even though the on-going weakening of the AU dollar makes this inevitable, we still want to give people the chance to avoid it," director Kate Gohar said.

## Creative land credit

**A BONUS** \$100pp land credit is being offered to clients booking Singapore Airlines Europe Earlybird fares with Creative Holidays for departures between 01 Mar-30 Sep, for sales made by 09 Nov.

At least four nights accom is required to avail the offer.



## Window Seat

**WE KNOW** Andrew Burnes is a powerful figure - but probably not as powerful as was implied in a story in *The Australian* today.

The report on the potential float of Burnes' AOT Group (see p1) claims he was "appointed federal treasurer in June" - which would have probably come as a shock to former treasurer Joe Hockey as well as Tony Abbott and Scott Morrison.

For the record, Burnes was actually appointed as the treasurer of the Liberal Party.

## AA 777 SYD preview

**QANTAS** has announced its oneworld and transPacific partner American Airlines will bring one of its flagship Boeing 777-300ER to Sydney on 13 Nov, a month ahead of the official launch of daily flights from Los Angeles.

AA, in partnership with Qantas, will host a day of activities and previews of the aircraft - including its lie-flat First & Business class cabin - which will be on static display at Sydney Airport.



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## Sep OTP results close

**VIRGIN** Australia achieved the highest on time departures among major domestic carriers during Sep, with 92% of flights getting away on time, closely followed by Qantas (91.8%).

The latest government On-Time Performance (OTP) figures out today show Qantas led on time arrivals (91.8%), with VA not far behind on 91.3%.

Tigerair Australia outperformed budget carrier rival Jetstar on both fronts, including a 6% better result on flight departures.

## Canada visits up 7%

**OVERNIGHT** stays in Canada by Australians jumped a healthy 6.9% year-on-year during Aug, new data released by Canadian Tourism Commission shows.

The uptick has helped prop up year-to-date numbers, which now stand at 196,133 (+3.7%) but 2.4 percentage points below the current targeted figure.

## Trav Choice recruits

**DETERMINED** to retain its position as a digital marketing leader in the retail travel sector, Travellers Choice has announced the appointment of its first digital services supervisor.

Tasked to steer the evolution of the group's digital marketing strategy is Swati Vaghjiani, who joined Travellers Choice in Feb as digital marketing coordinator.

Vaghjiani will be responsible with the ongoing development of the Travellers Choice website, enhancing the TC Direct database marketing system, web design & systems integration services.

For more of the latest Industry Appointments, see **page eight**.

## Maldives outbreaks

**THE** Health Protection Agency is warning of an outbreak of 'highly contagious' diseases in the Maldives including an as-yet undiagnosed viral fever, the common cold and diarrhoea.

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## AA jumps on *Back to the Future*



## El expands long-haul

**AER** Lingus is launching three new transatlantic routes in 2016, announcing overnight it will add Los Angeles, Newark & Harford.

All flights will operate ex Dublin and complement EI's existing nine routes to North America.

LAX services will commence on 04 May and operate five times weekly, with daily EWR and BDL flights debuting on 01 & 28 Sep.

**ABOVE:** Great Smokes!

American Airlines has joined the *Back to the Future* hype gripping the world, with the momentous day celebrated in the USA.

The airline - which adds Sydney to its global network in Dec - has produced a video clip featuring the DeLorean time-machine flying alongside AA jets on Oct 26 1985 and the "future" date of Oct 21 2015 - **CLICK HERE** to view.

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## Carnival China push

**CARNIVAL** Corporation has announced a major new joint venture targeting the domestic Chinese cruise market.

In partnership with the China State Shipbuilding Corporation and the government-owned China Investment Corporation, the initiative will see the creation of the "first multi-ship fleet sailing for a domestic Chinese clientele".

Carnival chief operating officer Alan Buckelew, who's now based in Shanghai, said while newbuilds are under consideration under a planned JV with Finantieri, the company may also consider "seeding" the new China cruise line with existing vessels.

## Aus Peru spend soars

**AUSSIES** have the highest average spend of any int'l visitors to Peru, the 2014 Foreign Tourist Profile study shows.

A total of 41,842 Australians visited Peru in 2014 - a 15% increase on the year prior - with an average spend of US\$2,637 and an average stay of 14 nights.

## VA Biz Suite to Nadi

**MORE** than 20 additional flights to Nadi will be operated by Virgin Australia over the Christmas/New Year period in response to increased demand.

The capacity boost comes via extra flights on Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne routes to Nadi and larger aircraft from Sydney, including Airbus A330 flights featuring VA's new Business Class suite, between 12 Dec to 23 Jan.

For full details, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Worldhotels growth

**WORLDHOTELS** has added four hotels in the Asia Pacific region to The Lalit's portfolio.

New additions include the 461-room Lalit New Delhi, the 368-room Lalit Mumbai, the 184-room Lalit Ashok Bangalore and The Lalit Great Eastern Kolkata.

## DXB goes contactless

**DUBAI** International Airport is planning to introduce contactless departures in Q1 of 2016 in order to speed up processing times.

The move may also see Emirates introduce immigration on flights prior to landing, Arab news outlet *Arabian Business* reported.

Future phases of the contactless processing system would see it include arrivals at DXB.

## Quest Macquarie Park underway



**CONSTRUCTION** has commenced on Quest Macquarie Park, NSW's third largest commercial office region.

**Due to open** in Dec 2016, Quest Macquarie Park will feature 111 apartments over six levels, on-site parking, a conference room, BBQ area and gym.

Quest ceo, Zed Sanjana was on-site with representatives from developers Goodman and Vikings, who will be the owner on completion.

Sanjana said it makes "perfect strategic sense for Quest to position itself in such a booming corporate centre of Sydney," with the City of Ryde anticipating an additional 40,000 jobs to be

created during the next 15 years in the business centre.

Pictured are: Chris Wright, AAP Corporation; Matt Doogan, Vikings Group; Zed Sanjana, Quest Apartment Hotels; David Wilson, Goodman and Anthony Hill, Vikings Group.

## New BA Euro routes

**BRITISH** Airways will next year launch three medium-haul routes connecting London to Biarritz, France, the Mediterranean island of Menorca and Palermo, Italy.

From 01 May-25 Sep, flights will run thrice weekly from LHR-BIQ.

LHR-MAH will run four weekly from 29 Apr-24 Sep & LHR-PMO twice weekly from 03 May-24 Sep.

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**MORE** than 200 AccorHotels have raised a whopping \$460,000 for Mission Australia and \$40,000 for Kokoda Youth Foundation.

The hotel company's employees have fundraised throughout the year, with the group's efforts capped off with more than 200 staff competing in a gruelling three-day Race to Survive adventure challenge.

Participants endured rain, 25km treks through rugged bushland, canoeing, obstacle courses, stretcher challenges and tug-of-war competitions.

The \$460,000 raised for Mission Australia will support their services including Missionbeat (NSW) – van patrols connecting people and combating homelessness, a pilot of a homelessness program in Queensland- and Charcoal Lane.

The \$40,000 will help the Kokoda Youth Foundation support young people by breaking cycles of welfare dependency,

addressing mental health issues and advocating suicide prevention.

"AccorHotels has now raised close to \$2 million for Mission Australia through our Race to Survive fundraising challenges and we are honoured to be seeing the funds go to such worthy projects in combating homelessness and improving the lives of Australians in need," said Simon McGrath, ceo of AccorHotels Pacific.

To view Race to Survive: Kokoda Trail highlights, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Scandi axes Tel Aviv

**SCANDINAVIAN** Airlines will drop its Copenhagen-Tel Aviv route to Israel in Mar 2016 due to declining demand.

Airline spokesman Henrik Edstrom said "it's an expensive route to fly. A long short-distance route. And there's a lot of competition on that route".

## Meriton review doubt

**MERITON** Apartments has attracted mainstream media attention this week, after a whistleblower told the ABC about attempts to manipulate guest reviews on TripAdvisor.

Meriton emails TripAdvisor feedback forms to guests after their stay, with allegations that in the case of people who complain at the front desk their email addresses were deliberately changed so they didn't get a reminder.

The former staffer also described efforts by Meriton to pressure clients to increase low ratings, in some cases by offering reduced rates or discounts off bills.

TripsAdvisor didn't comment on the specific Meriton Apartments cases, but issued a statement saying "any attempts by an owner of a property to boost the reputation of a business by selectively soliciting reviews only from guests who have had a positive experience is considered fraudulent, and is subject to penalties".

## S7 Transaero saviour

**THE** debt-laden Russian airline Transaero has been handed a lifeline, with the Siberia Airlines boss signing an agreement to buy at least 51% of the airline.

The *Siberian Times* reported S7 director-general Vladislav Filev intends to do everything possible to prevent Transaero going out of business and has purchased at least 51% of shares owned by air tycoon Alexander Pleshakov.

## Four SLH additions

**FOUR** independent hotels have joined the Small Luxury Hotels of the World portfolio this month.

Additions include The Hotel & Restaurant Chateau le Cagnard in the heart of the French Riviera (France); the historic Hotel Goldgasse, Salzburg (Austria); Hotel Sahrai, Fez (Morocco) and Hotel Vagabond, Kampong Glam (Singapore).

## Expedia lists air fees

**UPGRADE** options, a baggage calculator and paid seating options have this week gone live on Expedia.com.

The company said it is investing in tools to enable customers to compare and understand flight components in a transparent way.

Three more product features are expected to roll out this year.

The first, Price Trends, aggregates pricing data for a specific destination based on a users' recent searches & displays how the current flight price compares to the last 14 days.

Price Trends predicts the probability of price changes over the next week, while Structured Discovery presents results from searches similar to that which they have made before, such as using different dates.

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## Wego-Tourism Oz win

**TRAVEL** search site Wego.com and Tourism Australia have been awarded the 2015 WITovation Award for the cooperative marketing campaign, 'There's nothing like Australia'.

The three-month campaign won first place in the category of 'Content Magician' and featured on national Indonesian consumer media and on Wego Indonesia's travel blog, *TravelOn*.

### WIN WITH EUROSTAR



Everyday this week *Travel Daily* and Rail Europe GSAs are giving agents the chance to win a \$100 Coles Myer gift voucher.

Eurostar is currently celebrating their exclusive Earlybird offer with Rail Europe GSAs and they want you to join them by giving you the chance to win. In November 2015 Eurostar will launch their brand new Eurostar e320 trains. New features on board will include free wifi, ergonomically designed seats, extra storage space & much more.

To win, be the first agent to answer the below question correctly. Send your answer to [eurostar@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:eurostar@traveldaily.com.au)

Can you currently access free wifi on board Eurostar trains?



## ASF appoint architect

ASF Consortium has appointed architecture firm, Cox Rayner to lead the int'l design team for the Gold Coast Integrated Resort Masterplan (**TD** 04 Aug).

Cox Rayner is the architecture firm behind the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre, Ferry Road Markets, Griffith University Health Centre and Sanctuary Cove Building 56.

## CZ adds CSX, BKI

**CHINA** Southern Airlines will launch two non-stop flights to Malaysia by the end of the year.

A daily route from KL to Changsha will start next month and another from Kota Kinabalu to Guangzhou in Dec.

CZ general manager Li Yi Dong said the frequency for the Kinabalu-Guangzhou route is still in discussion.

## Le Méridien Thimphu

**LE** Méridien Hotels & Resorts has its second hotel in Bhutan, with the opening of Le Méridien Paro, Riverfront.

The hotel has 59 rooms and suites, a swimming pool, fitness center, Explore Spa, all-day dining restaurant and a casual café that transforms into a bar in the evening.

## Hawaii family guide

**HAWAII** Tourism Oceania (HTO) has launched its second annual Family Hawaii Guide.

The guide assists families in choosing the island and experiences that best suit their 'ohana (family) across the Islands of Oahu, Kauai, Maui and Hawaii (the Big Island).

HTO are giving away a 'ohana adventure valued at over \$10,000, **CLICK HERE** to enter.

# Tigerair outperforms Jetstar

**THE** boss of no frills carrier Tigerair Australia says the airline is now outperforming its "key competitor" in multiple fields, having delivered on reshaping the airline over the past two years.

Speaking to media in Melbourne yesterday, ceo Rob Sharp said the "new Tigerair" has delivered on promised "affordable safe travel with great customer service."

"We're doing what we said we'd do when we rebranded the airline in 2013".

Sharp (**pictured**) said for the year-to-date, Tigerair has "consistently outperformed" its primary rival in market, namely Jetstar, although he wouldn't specifically say the airline's name.

He said Tigerair has achieved major improvements across all areas of its operation.

"Year-to-date, Tigerair has consistently performed stronger than its key competitor on like-for-like routes," he said, with an 84% on time performance compared to 79% of Jetstar.

"We've had the lowest cancellation rate in the industry of all the major domestic carriers over the last 12 months," with just 1% of flights axed.

"That's 60% lower than our key competitor whose rates is 2.5%



on like-for-like routes."

Sharp also said results from the most recent independent survey of Tigerair customers indicates that 75% are overall "satisfied" with the Tigerair experience.

The figure is up substantially from a 64% score 12 months ago.

"Tigerair is transforming the budget market and the travel experience here in Australia," the ceo said.

"We've earned our stripes over the past two years."

**MEANWHILE**, Tigerair Australia will launch its first ever brand campaign in the months leading up to Christmas to promote the brand's overhaul (**TD** yesterday).

The nation-wide promo will feature on public transport, radio, billboards and digital spectrums, excluding TV due to the high associated costs, Sharp told **TD**.

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FREQUENT FLYER








## MEL rations fuel

**AIRLINES** at Melbourne Airport have for the second time this year been told to ration fuel.

International airlines were last night advised by the National Operating Committee on Jet Fuel Supply Assurance that it had changed the fuel supply status in MEL to a 'black traffic light', indicating the need to ration fuel.

Board of Airline Representatives of Australia (BARA) exec director Barry Abrams said it's becoming increasingly obvious that airlines don't have access to reliable fuel supply & continued unreliability "will act as a strong brake" to "the ongoing growth of air traffic in and out of Melbourne".

## QF Amadeus 'first'

**QANTAS** will be the first airline to implement the Amadeus Schedule Recovery, launched today.

The Travel Intelligence solution minimises disruptions to operations caused by external events by using data analytics to help quickly and efficiently identify the most critical issues, and act upon them.

It helps airlines make rapid choices such as whether to delay or cancel flights, swap aircraft, or reassign landing slots.

The solution is divided into three modules: Airport Resource Tracker, Schedule Manager and Schedule Optimiser.

Airport Resource Tracker, launched today, enables airlines to interact more efficiently with air traffic control so that the best possible use can be made of available airport arrival and departure slots.



## 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](mailto:appointments@traveldaily.com.au).

**Guy Thompson** has assumed the position of National Chairman of the **Australian Airports Association (AAA)**, replacing Stephen Goodwin who has stepped down after five years in the role. Thompson is currently the WA State Chair and Deputy Chairman of the AAA and the Executive General Manager Assets and Capital Works at Perth Airport.

Five industry members have been appointed to the **Queensland Tourism Industry Council** Board of Directors. **Peter Savoff** from Emporium Hotel Brisbane has been re-elected, along with **Wayne Clift** from Beetswalkin Consulting and **Mark Mugnaioni** from RACQ. First-timers to the board are **Denise Brown** from Brisbane Airport Corporation and **Mark Skinner** from Narrows Escape Rainforest Retreat.

A new Event Director, **Ian Wainwright** has joined the **Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME)**. AIME has also appointed **Elena Peridis** as Marketing Manager – AIME, Reed Travel Exhibitions.

**MANATHAI** Hotels & Resorts has named **Rudrojit Deb** as General Manager of **MANATHAI Surin Phuket**, which is due to open on 01 Nov.

**Destination Canada** has made three new appointments in its senior leadership team. **Emmanuelle Legault** has been tasked with the role of Vice President, International; **Suzanne Reeves** as Executive Director, US Leisure Market and **Maureen Riley** will assume the new role of Executive Director, Industry Partnerships, Canada.

Most recently the operations and bistro Manager of Amisfield Winery Bistro in Queenstown, **Tom Macaulay** has taken on a new challenge. Macaulay will take on the role of General Manager of food and beverage for **The Imperium Collection**.

A new addition has been revealed for **Staging Connections South East Queensland**. **Jim Grey**, previously of Moreton Hire, has been appointed as an additional Account Manager in the South East Queensland team.

**Dino Mezzatesta** will take on the top job as Chief Executive Officer of Accor Plus Asia Pacific, AccorHotels' travel, dining and lifestyle program. Dino has spent the last seven years leading AccorHotels franchise operations for Australia and NZ most recently held the position of Vice President Franchise Operations, overseeing a portfolio of over 70 hotels.

**United Airlines** General Counsel **Brett J Hart** has taken on responsibility of the carrier in an Acting CEO capacity, after current chief Oscar Munoz took medical leave for an indefinite period following a heart attack.

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## WIN WITH TRAVELMARVEL

Escorted Great Rail Journeys through Europe have arrived at Travelmarvel in 2016 and to celebrate, *Travel Daily* is offering readers the chance to discover the romance of rail. Every day we'll showcase the many highlights and destinations available on Travelmarvel's Great Rail Journeys.

The person with the most correct answers, and who wows us with the most creative answer to the final question, will win a 9 day Edinburgh, the Highland and Islands tour for two, departing June or September 2016. Send your answers to [rail@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:rail@traveldaily.com.au)



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Q15. On the 15 day Highlights of Tuscany, where does the tour start and finish?

Hint: see p32 of Travelmarvel's 2016 Great Rail Journeys brochure



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**\*\* JOB OF THE WEEK \*\***

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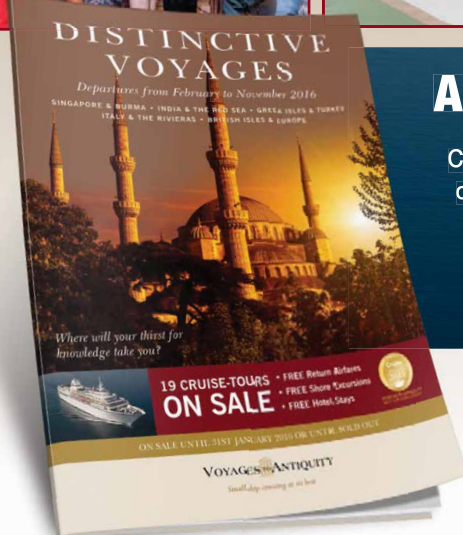
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