







AU/NZ 'one visa' one-sided

TOURISM Industry Aotearoa says it will continue to push for a common border between New Zealand and Australia, despite Australia's ongoing hesitation to move forward with the initiative.

TIA chief executive Chris Roberts told *Travel Daily* at TRENZ on Wed that Australia has "essentially said no" to the one visa strategy.

He said the 2015 Cricket World Cup gave both nations a chance to trial a one visa program, but it was heavily buoyed by NZ.

"That essentially was not a true one visa. It was New Zealand accepting the Australia visa."

Roberts said Indian tourists took advantage of the short-lived scheme, however most travellers to use it were from China.

"For the period of the World Cup... most of the one visa people were from China, they didn't actually come for the cricket."

Roberts told **TD** there had been "no issues and no problems".

"If you turned up in New Zealand and you had an Australian visa in your passport, we let you in.

"But it didn't work the other way and Australia is still saying it's

not prepared to do that."

He said the Australian Govt was making lot of other excuses, such as "systems not be compatible".

"There's 27 European countries with a common border. Kenya, Rwanda & Uganda have a common border. If three African countries can have a common border, why can't New Zealand and Australia?" he questioned.

The TIA boss admitted Australia's skittishness to move forward is a matter "we have to accept", but remained adamant that "we haven't completely thrown out the idea that ANZAC mates should have a common border".

Roberts has also suggested Auckland has the potential to "steal" cruise passengers away from Sydney if plans to add an 'inner dolphin' to Queens Wharf come to fruition - more details in today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

Today's issue of TD

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

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Jetstar-Finnair to link

QANTAS has lodged an application with the International Air Services Commission, seeking variations on existing capacity determinations from Australia to Thailand and Singapore.

The new requests would allow an expanded codeshare relationship between Jetstar and Finnair, with QF confirming that AY plans to "code share on flights operated by Jetstar on various routes from 15 Jun 2017".

Qantas has also confirmed it wishes to renew its existing determination on the Thailand route for a period of five years, with the ruling allocating 35.6 Boeing 747 aircraft equivalent units of capacity in each direction for passenger services and 26 third country code share frequencies, along with existing code share conditions.

The IASC is inviting other applications for capacity on the Thailand route with a closing date of 24 May - iasc.gov.au.

Luxon bullish on outlook

AIR New Zealand's chief exec Christopher Luxon is optimistic the Kiwi carrier can deliver a "pretty awesome result" this financial year.

Addressing concerns from NZ media at TRENZ in Auckland yesterday about an expected dip in profits by Air NZ this year, Luxon was quick to point out "the reality is that Air New Zealand has had a really good track record in its commercial performance over the past four or five years".

"Last year was a record year for us," Luxon highlighted.

While Air NZ's FY17 result won't be known until after 30 Jun, he emphasised that the past year had seen a massive increase in competition, with 10 new airlines "showing up".

"All of those airlines have then had to pitch themselves into the market place, and competition has obviously meant lower levels of revenue and therefore it's obviously impacted our profits".

"I'd say we are on track for a pretty awesome result", he said. In the face of competition, Air New Zealand is keen to boost its global network into markets with "more premium customers".

Luxon suggested the east coast and mid-west of North America, the east coast of South America, along with Southeast Asia and China as possible future locations.

"We are looking at quite a few new routes," Luxon told *TD*, but also said Air New Zealand was keen to boost capacity on existing routes as demand has grown".

He said trans-Tasman capacity would be up 3% in the coming year, with increased holiday traffic on the Queenstown route.

Luxon also said Air New Zealand would look for re-authorisation of its "very successful" trans-Tasman alliance with Virgin Australia with both the NZ and Australian competition authorities.

Travel Daily on location in Auckland, NZ

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Tourism New Zealand and Air New Zealand, from the TRENZ tradeshow.

THIS morning has seen another session of one-on-one meetings between suppliers and buyers at The Cloud and adjacent Shed 10 here on Auckland's Harbour.

New Zealand's Deputy PM and Tourism Minister Paula Bennett visited TRENZ and announced a new NZ\$102 million tourism infrastructure fund, to be divvied up over the next four years to support tourism projects.

This afternoon, delegates at TRENZ are braving wet weather to take in some of the scenery on an activity, including exploring Auckland's West Coast, The Sky Tower SkyWalk, Kelly Tarlton's SEA LIFE Aquarium and more.















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VA rejigs **Id** operations

VIRGIN Australia and Alliance Airlines today announced a new agreement which will see Alliance take over a number of regional Queensland routes from VA.

Effective 17 Jul, Virgin will cease operating ATR turboprop flights from Brisbane, with services to Bundaberg, Gladstone, Port Macquarie and Moranbah to be operated by Alliance Aviation.

The services will be sold as Virgin Australia codeshares with full network connectivity and Velocity frequent flyer benefits.

Alliance plans to use jet aircraft for the flights which will "substantially reduce travel times," the carriers said.

Flights on the routes will still

be available via GDS and anv pax with existing bookings will be reaccommodated onto the Alliance services

VA said the move reflected its previously announced plans to reduce its turboprop fleet.

Today's announcement continues the cooperation between Virgin Australia and Alliance, which since 2016 has been operating all flights on VA's Brisbane-Emerald route.

Alliance said it would also operate flights for Virgin Australia from Brisbane to Cloncurry, Mt Isa and Rockhampton on a wet lease basis for 12 months.

Alliance is acquiring three extra aircraft from Austrian Airlines.

New China option

FREEDOM Road Destinations has launched into the Australian market, with the aim of helping the industry capitalise on strong outbound demand to China.

The B2B destination management company works with tour operators, travel agents and business events organisers to provide "experiential and unique travel experiences in China".

The business was started by two long-term Australian expats in China, offering deep destination understanding as well as a strong familiarity with the local market freedomroaddestinations.com.

Dom airfares rise

LATEST figures from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics show an increase in domestic airfares in its monthly price index.

In May, best discount fares had an index of 64.6, which was higher than Apr with 59.7 and 10 points higher than May last year.

Business airfares rose on the index scale to 96.0 compared to

93.8 in Apr and 94.5 in May 2016.

QF partner offers

QANTAS' partnership with Dell and Intel is for Qantas Business Rewards members only, not Qantas Frequent Flyers, as reported in yesterday's TD.

Only QFFF members can earn five Qantas Points per \$1 spent on select Samsung QLED TVs until 02 Jul while the ongoing offer of three Qantas Points per \$1 spent on the complete range of Samsung products applies to Qantas Business Rewards members only.



Window

AN UNWANTED stowaway has cancelled a British Airways flight from Heathrow to New York.

The stowaway was a Blackbird and refused to leave the cockpit when 'asked' politely by the flight crew.

Efforts to remove the blackbird over several hours culminated in airport ground staff using a recording of birds in distress in an attempt to scare it away, but this succeeded only in forcing the animal into hiding.

The intruder even decided to deface the cockpit seats, as only birds can.

Pax were kept informed with events through regular updates by the captain, such as "our feathered friend is still at large."

Affected passengers on Mon's BA186 were transferred on to other flights to get them to their final destination.

ETG Connect line-up

EXPRESS Travel Group (ETG) has launched details and early bird pricing for its 2017 annual CONNECT Consultant Conference, this year taking place at the Novotel on Collins in Melbourne.

The conference will have training, professional development highlighting store profitability and sales talks.

There will also be education and mentoring sessions.

The conference will be the second running of the event after the inaugural event in 2016.

Taking place on 28-30 Jul, registrations start from \$499pp.

Viking hands over golden ticket



THE first three winners of Viking Cruises' golden ticket giveaway have been found, with Cruise Travel Centre Hobart, Escape Travel Mackay and italktravel Fountain Gate each winning one of seven Rhine Getaway river cruise prizes.

The four remaining golden

tickets can be found between Viking's new 2018 river brochures, and will see the winning agency win an eight-day Rhine Getaway river cruise for two.

Pictured from left are italktravel Fountain Gate winners Hayley Greene, Elenora Vulic and Natasha Pizzimento.

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QF backs private build

QANTAS ceo Alan Joyce has backed the potential for private involvement in the development of Western Sydney Airport, saying a non-government builder could offer "a better outcome".

His comments follow news that Toowoomba Airport's private developers were hoping to build and operate the new Badgerys Creek facility.

Wagner Group chairman John Wagner told media yesterday he intended to bid for the project and could deliver an airport for around \$3.5 billion, much less than the Federal Government's budget of \$5 billion.

Speaking on ABC radio this morning, Joyce said Toowoomba Airport was a "good example" of a privately developed airport.

"I'm a big fan of John Wagner, they've delivered an airport for a very low cost, on time and on

First JQ MEL to SGN

MELBOURNE Airport has welcomed the first of Jetstar's new services to Ho Chi Minh City (*TD* yesterday).

Airport chief of aviation Simon Gandy said JQ's service enabled more Victorian jet-setters to travel abroad.

"We welcome Jetstar Airways' decision to expand into South East Asia making the travel destination more accessible for Victorian holidaymakers," he said. budget," Joyce said.

"If there's a way to have private enterprise like the Wagners I would be supportive of that and if there's a way to have that dynamic in the construction of (Western Sydney Airport) we'll end up with a better outcome."

Joyce said although he supported a rail link to the new airport, he hadn't been disappointed by a lack of funding in the Federal Budget.

"We can't build the Taj Mahal from the outset," he said.

Tigerair to Hololulu

SINGAPORE Airlines' owned Tiger Airways Singapore/Scoot is set to introduce services to North America, with the no-frills carrier seeking permission this week to operate to Hawaii.

In its submission to the US Dept of Transportation, Tigerair/Scoot said its Honolulu service "will inject important new competition into the US-Singapore air transport market".

Flights would operate from Singapore to Honolulu via Osaka, Japan, using Boeing 787 *Dreamliner* aircraft.

The submission also reveals the sister airlines will be amalgamated and known as Scoot Tigerair Pte effective 25 Jul.

A start date for the Honolulu service was not listed, however it will not be before amalgamation.



Rachel Griffiths joins "No Robe"



ACTRESS Rachel Griffiths has shown her support for the Art Series Hotel Group's "No Robe" campaign (*TD* 20 Apr) and posed for a life drawing.

It seems Griffiths wasn't too eager to "gracefully recline in the nuddy" or "stand proud in all her glory like Michelangelo's David" as the campaign encourages, as she can be seen in her masterpiece opting to keep her robe on.

Under the push, Art Series Hotel Group is offering a "no robe package" where guests can take a photo in private and then it is sent to the Art Series' team of artists to "capture the image in art form, forever".

No Robe packages start from \$229 per night.

Griffiths is **pictured** with William Deague, ceo, Art Series Hotel Group & Mark Schaller, namesake artist of the Group's Bendigo Hotel, The Schaller Studio.

Element for Australia

MELBOURNE has today been named as the debut location for its funky Element brand in Australia, as Marriott International continues to invest locally, signing a management deal with TRC.

Element Marriott Richmond will be a newbuild 168-room hotel located at 558 Swan Street in the suburb of the same name.

Part of the Botanicca Corporate Park, the property will be 3kms from the Melbourne CBD and is slated to open in 2019.

VTIC bags Budget

THE Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC) has joined other industry groups in criticising the Federal Budget.

VTIC has labelled the Budget as "a missed opportunity to provide substantial support for Victoria's visitor economy", highlighting the \$1b transport infrastructure funding for Vic will not be implemented for several years.

VTIC chief exec Brad Ostermeyer said the hike in visa application fees "will make it harder for Australia to attract int'l visitors".

Norwegian approval

THE launch of Norwegian Air Argentina has been given the green light by the Norwegian Group Board of Directors and the group has begun hiring administrative staff in Argentina.

In Jan The Norwegian Group established an Argentinian subsidiary and is awaiting approval for an Argentinian Air Operator's Certificate.

Pending govt approval, the first new routes are set to be announced and on sale by the end of the year.







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.

David Peever will replace Bill Grant as Chairman of the Board of Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC). Peever currently serves as Chairman of Cricket Australia and Director of the Foreign Investment Review Board, the Australian Foundation Investment Company and the Stars Foundation

Amanda Elder is now a member of the management board of Kempinski Hotels. She's Senior Vice President of Business Development. Before working with Kempinski, she was Vice President, Sales and Marketing Europe for FRHI Hotels & Resorts.

Etihad Aviation Group has appointed Hareb Al Muhairy as Senior Vice President, UAE and GCC Sales. The airline has also promoted Amina Taher from her role as Head of Corporate Communications to Vice President for Corporate Affairs. Dr Nadia Bastaki will step up to the role of Vice President Medical Services and Ahmed Al Qubaisi is Senior Vice President responsible for international and environmental affairs.

MGM Resorts has announced Mark Strawn as Senior Vice President and Chief Administration Officer for MGM Resorts Design and Development in Las Vegas. Previously Strawn worked as Vice President Corporate Finance for Wynn Resorts in Las Vegas.

Four key executives have been appointed to drive future strategy for **Discovery Parks**. **Matthew Lang** will commence his role as Chief Financial Officer moving on from his role a SVP at Cobham. **Kate Berry** is Chief People Officer and comes from a human resources background. Lastly, **Dana Ronan** is Chief Marketing Officer and will use her 18 years' of experience in domestic tourism.

Amusement parks rise

THE International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions has named 170 new water parks, attractions and games opening this northern summer at 75 different amusement parks in Canada and the US.

CLICK HERE for a list.

RCI Cuba year-round

ROYAL Caribbean has released its first year-round program to Cuba, introducing 58 new cruises on *Empress of the Seas*.

The vessel will operate four- and five-night itineraries from Jan 2018-Mar 2019, more than half staying overnight in Havana.

Empress will sail from Tampa for the northern 2018 summer season and from Port Everglades for the northern Winter 2018/19.

Alaska tops 10 years

FOR the 10th year in a row, Alaska Airlines has topped airline customer ratings in the JD Power 2017 North America Airline Satisfaction Study.

The report was compiled from the responses of 11,015 business and leisure pax who flew a major North America carrier between Apr 2016 and Mar 2017.

Alabama 200 pass

VISITORS can save 25% on a range of attractions and 15% or more on restaurants with the Alabama Pass app, launched as part of the southern US state's bicentenary celebrations.

Passes are valid for seven days from the date of purchase and start at US\$10 per adult and US\$8 per child.



India to capitalise on growth



AUSTRALIAN travellers to India grew to 319,000 in 2016 representing an increase of 23% on the year prior.

The impressive result was announced at a joint Skal Sydney and Tourism India function yesterday in the run up to the Oct 2017 Skal International world congress in Hyderabad.

Speaking with *TD*, Kanchan Kukreja, India Tourism assistant director said, "Australia is the 7th largest source market for India with the key market segment, the 40 to 50-year-old leisure traveller, spending on average 20 to 22 nights and between \$4,000 and \$5,000 per person."

"Typically the first time traveller visits the golden triangle combining Delhi, Agra and Jaipur but for the second and third time traveller it's Kerala down south and Goa," Kukreja added.

To capitalise on this growth, Kukreja spoke of the initiatives that Tourism India is embarking upon to support the trade saying "this year we have changed our marketing by focusing more on luxury, working with the retail trade at expos as well as tour operators for fam trips."

"We can be contacted for training at any point", she said.

Kukreja is **pictured** (left) next to 2016 Skal president Sue Francis of the Travel Industry Club.



This week, Travel Daily and Sonoma County are giving travel agents the chance to win a \$50 Williams-Sonoma e-gift card.

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sonoma@traveldaily.com.au

Which Sonoma County winery houses movie memorabilia from one of Hollywood's most famous directors?

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Turkish laptop plan

TURKISH Airlines is the latest airline to introduce a laptop offering on board its aircraft for Business class pax travelling to the UK and US in response to their electronics ban.

The TK scheme will begin on 12 May, and allow pax to drop their laptop off to a dedicated staff member at the boarding gate.

Travellers will then request a laptop from cabin crew to continue working while in the air

Pax will need to bring a USB to transfer files to the device, which can be used as a tablet.

The device will also delete personal information when it is shut down.

US facial screening

US CUSTOMS and Border Protection says it will extend plans for facial recognition of travellers to also include US citizens.

The Biometric Exit program will register visitors leaving but will also scan US residents returning to the country, and will be added in several airports this summer.

China flights surge

CHINA'S airports saw a surge in international flights last year as more Chinese travelled overseas, government data shows.

Over 51.6m trips to international destinations were recorded in 2016, up 22.7%.



This month, Travel Daily is giving travel agents the chance to win a trip to New Caledonia, courtesy of Aircalin, New Caledonia Tourism and Sheraton New Caledonia Deva Spa and Golf Resort.

The trip for two includes return economy class tickets flying with Aircalin from SYD/MEL/BNE, 4 nights accommodation and buffet breakfast at Sheraton New Caledonia Deva Spa and Golf Resort and return airport transfers courtesy of New Caledonia Tourism.

To win, answer each question correctly and have the most creative final answer. Send your entries to newcaledonia@traveldaily.com.au

Caledonia?











Dallas-Fort Worth hotel boom



LEADERS from Dallas and Fort Worth are in the country this week promoting the region, which is undergoing a hotel boom.

Dallas has 6.000 hotel rooms in 35 new hotels under construction, while Fort Worth is adding 3,000 to its inventory.

Robert Jameson, president and ceo of Fort Worth Convention & Visitors Bureau said the city had over US\$300m worth of investments underway to improve the district.

"The work includes a refurbishment of the Fort Worth stockyards, which is popular for Australians after a true western experience, new shopping facilities and improved cultural spaces," he said.

President and ceo of Visit Dallas Phillip Jones said, "a lot of people are surprised about the transformation of Dallas as a destination; a lot of people think of the city as something out of the 1980's TV show Dallas".

He said nowadays both cities were very cosmopolitan with lots of cultural opportunities.

The final touches of a \$3b

revamp of the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport are being put in place, which has seen a strong influx of Aussies arriving. Jameson said about 70,000 Australians visit the region.

"Since the Qantas flight started the numbers have exploded." Jones said Australia is on the verge of being a top five market.

"It's a tussle between Germany and Australia to break into the top five," he said.

Pictured from left at the Tatler in Kings Cross: Mark Thompson, vp of tourism Visit Dallas; Phillip Jones, president & ceo Visit Dallas; Robert Jameson, president & ceo, Fort Worth Convention Bureau; and Mitch Whitten, vp of marketing, Fort Worth Convention Bureau.

Hapag-Lloyd cut steel

THE first steel has been cut to mark the start of the construction of Hapag-Lloyd Cruises' first of two new-build expedition ships.

Both Hanseatic nature and Hanseatic inspiration are expected to be ready by 2019.

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Postal address: PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710 Australia

P: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760) F: 1300 799 221 (+61 2 8007 6769)

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