

## Bali arrivals fall

THE number of Australians visiting Bali slipped by 10% in Oct as the island's volcano Mount Agung rumbled to life.

While the peak of disruption occurred in Nov when volcanic ash caused extensive flight cancellations, Oct figures released yesterday by the Bali Government Tourism Office show Australian arrivals were falling from the time of the mountain's first activity.

The total number of Australian arrivals during Oct was 93,991, down 10% on the previous month and on the same month of 2016.

Overall foreign visitor arrivals were up 7.6% over Oct 2016 to 465,085, but were down 15% from the 550,520 int'l visitors recorded the previous month.

## Magellan consultation

EXCLUSIVE

MAGELLAN Travel Group chairman Andrew Jones has acknowledged concerns by a "minority of members" about the network's shock acquisition by Helloworld (TD 19 Dec), pledging to provide full details of the deal at a series of national roadshows.

He is aiming to stem a rising tide of dissent, which has seen a number of Magellan agencies raise issues over the Christmas break about a lack of consultation - with some first finding out details of the deal via the *Travel Daily* breaking news bulletin released when it was announced by Helloworld Travel Limited.

Jones told TD this morning "we will address those concerns."

"We are committed to providing all members with full details of the transaction, which we have been unable to do to date, in our forthcoming Around Australia Roadshows commencing the week of the 15th of January".

Jones said the update would include full details of the rationale behind the decision, and a "clear outline of the monetary benefit that directors are offering to members" which he said was

a "significant percentage of the transaction".

He said the HLO deal would also provide a range of opportunities and services for members.

Helloworld has agreed to pay \$32.5 million for Magellan, with the transaction documentation finalised late on the Friday before Christmas (TD yesterday).

An ASX announcement after 7pm that evening confirmed that the deal is "expected to complete in early January 2018," which could potentially mean it is done and dusted prior to the promised member consultations.

MEANWHILE a group of members representing about a third of Magellan's 130 offices has signed a letter to the firm's board, requesting clarification of the deal in the "context of the Magellan Travel Group structure".

A member has also circulated a questionnaire canvassing other potential options for the group.

In the interests of presenting a balanced view we have summarised some of their concerns on **page two**.

## Kakadu appoints

KAKADU Tourism has appointed James Robinson as its new sales and marketing executive, to be based in the organisation's Darwin office.

Robinson joins from NT tourism group Redco Investments, the operator of Darwin attraction Crocosaurus Cove and two Darwin hotels.

In his new role, he will be responsible for sales and marketing activities for Kakadu Tourism assets including Mercure Kakadu Crocodile Hotel, Cooina Lodge, Yellow Water Camping, Yellow Water Cruises and Kakadu Adventure Tours.

## Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has four pages of news and photos.

## 2017 safest ever year in the skies

AIRLINES worldwide posted a near unblemished record last year, with 2017 named the safest ever year for air travel.

Data released by aviation consultants 'to70' shows only two fatal accidents involving commercial airlines last year, with just 13 lives lost and not a single death aboard a jet aircraft.

Both of last year's fatal incidents involved propeller aircraft, one in Russia and the other in Angola.

With an estimated 3% growth in air traffic during 2017, the accident rate for large aircraft in commercial aviation has fallen to one fatal accident for every 16 million flights, to70 says.

Not included in the figures was a cargo air crash in Kyrgyzstan which killed 35 people on the ground last Jan.

## Trafalgar \$999 air

TRAFALGAR has released a new "simple to book" \$999 return air deal for its 2018 Europe and Britain itineraries as part of its "2018, It's Time" campaign.

The fare includes taxes and is on sale to 28 Feb or until sold out.

Travellers can alternatively choose a 7.5% early payment discount.

Trafalgar Australia md Matt Cameron-Smith said the offers would help agents "maintain momentum" into the new year.

The offers are valid for travel between 01 Mar and 30 Nov.

## Royal Brunei Lounge

ROYAL Brunei Airlines has launched an upgraded Sky Lounge at Brunei International Airport.

The new Sky Lounge offers a buffet dining area, a mini cinema, a games arcade, kids' zone, shower facilities, free internet access and meeting room.

Lounge passes can be purchased at the door for BND50 (AU\$48) for adults or BND45 (AU\$43) for prepaid adult bookings.

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## Viking Explorer Sale

**VIKING** Cruises is offering savings of up to \$6,300 per couple in its Explorer Sale, available for bookings to 31 Mar.

Deals include free flights on select Asia ocean cruises, plus 2019 river cruises offered at 2018 prices with free flights to Europe and Russia on itineraries of 13 days or more.

The \$6,300 per couple saving is available on the 15-day Into the Midnight Sun cruise which travels to Scotland's Orkney and Shetland islands, now priced from \$9,699 per person.

## Wendy Wu BDM

**WENDY** Wu Tours has appointed Paola Bamonte as business development manager for NSW, taking responsibility for the regions of Southern NSW, Southern Sydney, the South Coast and Riverina.

Wendy Wu gm Australia Steve Richards said Bamonte brought extensive experience in retail, sales and operations.

## NZ coach launch

**NEW** Zealand coach specialist Grand Pacific Tours has launched its Sep 2018 to May 2019 season brochure, with savings of \$300 per person on a selection of departures in spring and autumn.

The operator has also introduced tour guides to all of its Affordable, Signature, Cruise & Coach and Special Interest departures, in addition to drivers.

## MTG agents demand answers

### EXCLUSIVE

**THE** directors of Magellan Travel Group (MTG) have been asked to respond by 5pm today to a letter signed by 27 agents, comprising about 40 of the organisation's 130-strong office network.

A copy of the missive has been obtained by **Travel Daily**, with the content questioning how the board can have sold Magellan to Helloworld (**TD** 19 Dec) without first convening a meeting of the group's unitholders.

Magellan is a unit trust, where each member holds part of the organisation alongside the three "Founder Units" which together comprise 15% of the trust.

The agents cite clause 61 of the Magellan Trust Deed, asking for clarification as to why it did not in this case oblige Magellan's Trustees to call a meeting of

members to "determine whether the terms and conditions of the proposed transaction are acceptable to them".

Signatories include agents such as Travelrite, Trendsetter Travel, Landmark Travel, Where2Travel, Alpha Travel & more, with the letter asking the board to "demonstrate how you have acted in unitholders' best interests".

In recent days another agent has also sent fellow MTG members a furious email, along with a survey seeking feedback on alternative options.

Several agents have contacted **TD** to express surprise at assertions by MTG chairman Andrew Jones that feedback on the deal had been "on the whole very positive" (**TD** 22 Dec).

Some have also questioned a claim by HLO md Andrew Burnes that the deal will boost the company's agent TTV by \$900m, with members told at recent meetings that currently only about half that value is subject to preferred agreements.

However it's understood that on top of the \$450m, bringing Magellan into the Helloworld fold is likely to capture more TTV in existing HLO supplier deals.

Magellan chairman & co-founder Andrew Jones has committed to providing full details of the rationale behind the transaction, as well as monetary benefits and additional services for members at a series of upcoming meetings later this month (**see p1**).

## Scout confirms TXL

**SINGAPORE** Airlines' low-cost long-haul offshoot Scout has confirmed details of its new non-stop services to Berlin (**TD** 04 Dec), with GDS displays indicating the four times weekly 787-8 flights will debut on 20 Jun 2018.

SQ will codeshare on the route, with SIA passengers offered FlyBagEat fares including a hot meal, 'Snooze Kit' and a 20kg baggage allowance.

Flights booked on a single SIA itinerary will transit in Singapore seamlessly, with baggage checked through to the final Scout port.

## Tianjin AKL launch

**TIANJIN** Airlines has launched its first services from Auckland to Tianjin via Xian.

This is the carrier's second international route between China and New Zealand, coming in addition to its Auckland to Tianjin via Chongqing services which began in Dec 2016.

The new flights will operate once a week, departing Auckland at 2205 each Sat, arriving in Xian at 0635 and Tianjin at 1125.

## Ormina upgrades

**ORMINA** Tours has upgraded several hotels offered in its Italian itineraries, with no price change.

The new five-star properties include the Villa D'Este in Lake Como (part of the Italian Lakes & Swiss Mountains Tour), Ortea Palace in Syracuse (Sicily Bella Tour) and the De La Minerve in Rome (Ultimo and Highlights of Italy North Tours).

## Skiers stranded

**THOUSANDS** of skiers have been left stranded in the French alps after heavy snow falls over New Year's Eve closed roads and major gateways including the local airport at Chambéry.

British media say up to 4,000 people have been affected, including hundreds of drivers forced to use emergency shelters.

The dumping follows an incident on Christmas Eve in which 150 skiers had to be rescued when a French chair lift broke down.

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## TravManagers' helpful elves



**TRAVELMANAGERS** teamed up with Hoot Holidays to donate over 200 cans of food to Sydney's Exodus Foundation's Christmas can drive.

The food parcels were delivered to disadvantaged Sydney families bringing some much-needed Christmas cheer.

TravelManagers product exec Sandra Reucker, who organised the donation, said it was great to know the contribution helped those in need.

"We collectively donated over 200 cans with a value of approximately \$700," she said.

**Pictured:** TravelManagers' Maria San Pascual (left) and Sandra Reucker (right) deliver cans of food to Pauline Tighe, The Exodus Foundation's coo.

## G Adventures sale

**SMALL-GROUP** tour operator G Adventures is offering a number of specials on sale until 31 Jan, to celebrate the new year.

Valid for travel departing before 31 Jul 2018, options include an eight-day Cuba Libre roundtrip from Havana.

Priced from \$1,499pp, the tour allows guests to experience the hills and wander amongst orchids and mountain coffee plantations.

Also on offer is a 15-day Highlights of Morocco itinerary from Casablanca to Marrakech from \$1,679 per person.

Travellers will witness the Atlas Mountains on the tour.

**CLICK HERE** for more info, or call G Adventures on 1300 796 618.

## Mawson's hut visit

A **CHIMU** Adventures expedition cruise has made history by visiting Cape Denison - home to historic huts from Sir Douglas Mawson's scientific expedition to Commonwealth Bay, Antarctica.

This was the first time in seven years that tourists have made it close enough to see some of the buildings from Mawson's 1911-1913 expeditions due to limiting ice conditions previously.

Just 46 guests from Australia, Switzerland, Taiwan and Singapore were aboard the expedition ship which departed from Hobart on 15 Dec 2017.

The guests sailed on the Russian expedition ship *Akademik Shokalskiy* to complete the trip.

## LHR enviro push

**ENVIRONMENTAL** charges at Heathrow are set to increase by 7% as the airport seeks to minimise its impact on communities around the facility.

From 01 Jan, airlines will be offered incentives to deploy their newest aircraft at Heathrow.

LHR ceo John Holland-Kaye said the move would make the airport cleaner and quieter for locals.

The increase in fees is part of LHR's sustainability strategy Heathrow 2.0, which sets targets to deliver a more sustainable future for aviation.

## Hilton spring retreat

**HILTON** Hotels has added a new hot spring retreat to its resort portfolio with the debut of Hilton Huizhou Longmen Resort.

The Chinese resort boasts modern interiors, many fine dining options and 366 rooms & suites with floor-to-ceiling views.

Hilton Huizhou Longmen Resort is the first Hilton property in China to feature natural hot springs that guests can enjoy.

The resort features an abundance of versatile function space, separated into 11 rooms, including the Grand Ballroom.

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## Window Seat

**WE'VE** heard of aircraft bird strikes, but how about a bird inside the cabin.

A Delta Air Lines flight captain decided to turn his plane around and return to Detroit after a bird was discovered inside the flight deck.

In a statement, the airline said the unwanted passenger entered during the boarding of the aircraft.

Once bound for Atlanta, the bird made itself known, leaving the captain with no choice but to return to the airport and be removed from the aircraft.

The suspect was set free upon capture, but offered no explanation on why it hid.

Passengers arrived in Atlanta only three hours late.

## Patagonia debut

**AUSTRALIS** has celebrated the christening of *Ventus Australis*, its new expedition ship.

The vessel will sail to Cape Horn and the glaciers of Tierra del Fuego in South America.

Tailor-made for cruising along the mountain and glacier-lined fjords of Patagonia, *Ventus Australis* has capacity for 210 pax.

To celebrate the second ship for the Chilean cruise line, Australis has frozen fares for the 2018/19 summer season.

Australis is also offering a 10% discount to pax who combine two four-night cruises.

## Macedonia warning

**DFAT** is reporting high political tensions in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Recent protests have turned violent in the capital Skopje and other major cities.

The Australian Government is advising travellers to avoid rallies, demonstrations and large crowds as they may turn violent.



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## An Insider's look at Vietnam



**FIVE** agents from across Australia were recently taken on an exciting famil to Thailand and Vietnam organised by Asian tour specialist Insider Journeys.

The seven-day journey included taking in the bustle of Bangkok through a City and Temples Tour before jaunting to Vietnam and exploring the streets of Hanoi.

The agents were able to sample some delicious Vietnamese street food before checking out must-see sights such as the Presidential Palace and One Pillar Pagoda.

### Vietjet adds neos

**LOW-COST** Vietnamese carrier Vietjet has taken delivery of its new A321neo aircraft.

The new arrival will begin operating domestic and international routes in and out of Vietnam this month and will boast improvements to cabin design and engine performance.

Vietjet has also ordered 11 more of the A321neo aircraft, bringing its total to 73.

The final leg saw the group cruise with Au Co Cruises in the picturesque Halong Bay.

**Pictured** on the cruise are Raymond Lewis, Departure Point Travel Gladstone; Kate Dancaster, Insider Journeys; Kayla Quadrio, Travel Hotspot; Daniela Ferry, Quenbeyan City Travel & Cruise; Debbie Tapper, Qantas Holidays Reservations WA & Mejrem Morina, Helloworld Travel Corio.

### Anguilla milestone

**FOUNTAIN** Beach Residence has announced that its 65-room Zemi Beach House Hotel & Spa resort in Anguilla will reopen from 15 Feb following damages inflicted by Hurricane Irma late last year.

Restorations have included work to its guest rooms, digital entertainment offerings and 300 year old Thai House Spa, with the owners claiming the Zemi Beach House Hotel & Spa is the first five-star hotel to reopen on the island.



## Accommodation Updates

**WELCOME** to Accommodation Updates, *Travel Daily's* Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to [accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au).



**Hilton Sanya Yalong Bay Resort & Spa** in China has opened a games room called Kidz Paradise that features a large outdoor water playground. The new space is designed to delight the appetites of the 3-12 year old demographic. The hotel has also launched a three-day winter camp for kids which will see them toured through three themed activities each day.



A major \$10.5m renovation has recently been completed at Elegant Hotels Group's **Treasure Beach** resort in Barbados. The adults only hotel boasts 35 updated rooms which now display designs of coral stone walls and added private balconies, vaulted ceilings, private plunge pools and contemporary artworks.



A revamped Italian restaurant called La Scala is the latest attraction at **The Sukhothai Bangkok** in Thailand after recently being unveiled to the public following a six-month renovation. Along with a refreshed look, the restaurant now offers up new dishes created by chef David Tambourini. La Scala already had an established brand presence, first opening its doors in 2002.

### Eurowings A340s

**EUROWINGS** will deploy A340-300 aircraft on its Dusseldorf to Vienna and Majorca routes from 28 Feb and 01 Mar respectively.

Initially servicing six weekly flights for both routes, the carrier will subsequently look to roll out the A340s on long-haul services.

From 28 Apr the airline will use the aircraft to service Dusseldorf to Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic and New York's JFK Airport and from 30 Apr it will use A340s to service the Dusseldorf to Cancun route.

### Mt Field revamp

**VISITOR** services at Mount Field National Park north of Hobart are set to be boosted with a proposal in place to improve cleaning service for the day-use facilities at the campground and the introduction of a central online booking system for all accommodation enquiries.

### Hyatt enters Spain

**HYATT** Hotels has recently opened the 159-room Hyatt Centric Gran Via Madrid located centrally in the Spanish capital.

The opening constitutes the first Hyatt Centric branded property to operate in mainland Spain.

Attractions of the hotel include being located just minutes from the famous El Retiro Park, Prado museum and Royal Palace.

### Ryanair Brexit plan

**RYANAIR** has taken steps to insulate itself from the commercial risks of Brexit by applying for a UK licence.

The Irish carrier has previously expressed concerns about not being able to operate domestic UK routes after the Mar 2019 Brexit deadline, citing the need for a new aviation framework to be developed between the United Kingdom and the European Union.