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Travel Masters

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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news including the latest **Business Events News**.

Hurtigruten boosts Virtuoso agreement

HURTIGRUTEN Cruises has expanded its existing USA deal with Virtuoso, signing a new agreement covering Australia and New Zealand as well.

The move is effective immediately, and comes in the lead-up to Virtuoso Travel Week.

Hurtigruten MD APAC, Damian Perry, said the deal reflected the critical importance of "professional industry partners," with local Virtuoso clients to now be offered exclusive benefits under the agreement, alongside attractive commercial terms and in-depth support for the full Virtuoso network.

More cruise news in today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

Border shut even tighter

EXCLUSIVE

HEALTH Minister Greg Hunt has clamped down on a loophole in Australia's current strict international border closures, yesterday amending a key legislative instrument to make it even harder for some people to leave the country.

The newly updated *Biosecurity (Human Coronavirus Potential) Amendment (No. 1) Determination 2021* removes a previous exemption from the overseas travel ban for Australians who normally live abroad.

The exemption, which was part of the original biosecurity determination on 18 Mar 2020, had been in place to enable those living overseas to return to their ordinary place of residence.

"Since the commencement of the Overseas Travel Ban Determination in Mar 2020, those persons who fall into this category

have had substantial time to take action under the exemption," the explanatory statement for the amendment notes.

"The exemption was not intended to enable frequent travel between countries... further as repatriation flights continue, it will be critical to manage the numbers of people leaving Australia with the intent of returning in the near future, to ensure flight and quarantine availability is prioritised for individuals who have been stranded overseas for some time.

"The amendment will reduce the pressure on Australia's quarantine capacity, reduce the risks posed to the Australian population from COVID-19, and assist in returning vulnerable Australians back home," the Minister explained.

The new determination formally becomes effective on 11 Aug.

Hola, Tour Amigo!

TOUR Amigo has appointed Paul Millan as the company's new Regional Director for Asia-Pacific.

Millan is well known to the industry through former roles with Traveltek, Travelscene American Express and Amadeus, with Tour Amigo saying his extensive knowledge, contacts and experience will ensure the company has the "right approach and focus required for new business growth".

More industry moves on **page 6**.

Scenic cruises again

SCENIC Luxury Cruises & Tours has recommenced its operations on Portugal's Douro River.

Guests from the US and UK are currently being welcomed, with Scenic also planning to resume on the Bordeaux on 29 Aug, the Rhine on 30 Aug and the Danube on 27 Sep this year.

A video of the Douro sailaway is live at traveldaily.com.au/videos.

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Quark Expeditions

Fletcher to Crown

FORMER American Airlines country manager Australia and Virgin Australia Regional Sales Manager EMEA, Michael Fletcher, has been appointed as Director of Sales for Sydney's new Crown Towers hotel.

After 22 years in airlines, he told **TD** he was "looking forward to immersing myself in the world of luxury hotel sales and leading the team for this stunning new resort property at Barangaroo".

His appointment has caused some industry confusion, with another unrelated (and slightly younger) Michael Fletcher currently the Director of Sales for the new W Hotel in Melbourne.

Luck of the expos

TOURISM Ireland's Virtual Expo will be held on 07 and 08 Sep.

Taking place from 3-5pm AEST each day, travel advisors will receive news, announcements and updates about activities and experiences in Ireland.

Advisors can expect to meet and chat with 30 Tourism Ireland partners and exhibitors over the two-day event, with regos to open in the coming week.

Silversea twitchers

SILVERSEA Cruises will next week host a webinar about its 2022/2023 expedition sailings, hosted by expert ornithologist Malcolm Turner.

Join the webinar on Wed 11 Aug by **CLICKING HERE**.

AFTA blasts QF changes

THE Australian Federation of Travel Agents says it's disappointed at a lack of consultation by Qantas, over the carrier's controversial new Terms & Conditions which became effective this week (**TD** 03 Aug).

AFTA Chairman Tom Manwaring said after reading over the new policies "we do have some initial concerns about the content".

He particularly highlighted the requirement that refunds remitted by Qantas be passed onto clients within four weeks, taking exception to "the implication that agents are the delay point in the refund process".

"In reality it mainly sits with airlines and suppliers," he told **Travel Daily**, adding that AFTA was seeking further feedback from its members and examining the ramifications of the changes.

"We will make a fuller statement once we are in a position to do so," he said.

Under the new policy an Agent Debit Memo will also be applied if refunds are not made to the client's original form of payment.

MEANWHILE as well as the refund policy and a requirement to highlight any fees being charged by agents in consumer advertising (**TD** 03 Aug), the new QF T&Cs also revises the Agent Debit/Credit Memo (ADM/ACM) policy, noting that agents must only raise an ACM where they can provide supporting evidence that an ADM was issued in error.

The formal Qantas ADM Dispute

Process must be followed, and in cases that do not comply with this requirement "the ADM will be reissued to the agent with service fees applied".

The revised policies also confirm that "Qantas will not accept cards issued in the name of an agent or their respective personnel as a payment method for the purchase of Qantas products".

Check grants spam!

TRAVEL agents and tour operators still awaiting payments under Round 2 of the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program are being urgently advised to check their spam folders, with a number of **Travel Daily** readers advising of critical updates from Deloitte which may have ended up in junk mail.

One applicant said he had received a "final follow up" from Austrade about not responding to Deloitte's requests, which related to the accounting firm's financial verification of turnover figures which are putting a roadblock in the way of any payments to firms with revenue over \$500,000.

It's now almost three months since the second round opened, with the most recent update three weeks ago (**TD** 13 Jul) confirming just \$25 million of the \$130 million available under the second round had been paid out so far, despite the travel and tourism industry being on its knees for 17 months now.

Tassie vouchers out

TASMANIANS can now register interest in new \$300 Government vouchers for accommodation, tourism experiences or car hire - traveltourismtasmania.com.au.

Win Adventures Through COVID by Parris Fotias

Every day this week **Travel**

Daily and Parris Fotias are giving readers the chance to win a signed copy of Parris' new book, *Adventures Through COVID*.



Parris Fotias has just flown home from a work trip through India. Eleven days later, COVID-19 is officially declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation. Soon after, the Australian Government closes its international border under Biosecurity Act 2015.

Adventures Through COVID is a personal odyssey that chronicles the frustrations of life during the pandemic.

It is a pilgrimage through past memories looking back on the funny, the ridiculous and the almost forgotten to help cope with an uncertain future.

To win today's copy be the first person to email the correct answer to the question below to competitions@traveldaily.com.au

Which Dorchester Collection hotel is featured on the front cover of the *Eagles Hotel California* album?



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Window Seat

AUTHORITIES on the famed Spanish party island of Ibiza have launched a new onslaught to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, recruiting private detectives to infiltrate a spate of illegal raves which have led to a surge in cases of the infection.

"Applicants must be detectives but need to look like tourists, so they can blend in with the people going to the parties," according to a *Reuters* report citing the island's deputy chief, Mariano Juan Colomar.

Currently most of Ibiza's normally pumping nightclubs are closed, while restaurants and bars must comply with a 1am coronavirus curfew - but the restrictions have led to scores of secret raves being organised in private homes.

Traveltek signs Impulse

SYDNEY'S Impulse Travel Group has invested in new Traveltek technology, which is now powering specialist wholesale brands including Momento Travel Services, Above and Beyond Holidays, Adriatica, the Small Ship Adventure Company and a new South Pacific operation called

Paradise Discovered.

The wholesaler has implemented Traveltek's iSell search and book platform along with mid-office system iBos, the Tourtek tour packaging product and Supplytek inventory management tool.

Stephanie Savage, MD of Impulse, said the decision to implement the platform had been "the only good thing about the COVID journey."

Impulse sought a technology provider from among the ranks of the Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO), with Traveltek a long-time CATO supporter.

CATO MD Brett Jardine welcomed the deal, saying "considering future business needs through investment in relevant technology is a proactive approach in ensuring you are ready for a strong rebound as we start to emerge from the effects of COVID-19".

ETIAS fee revealed

AUSTRALIAN travellers to Europe will pay an application fee of €7 for a pass required under the new European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) (*TD* 17 Nov 2016).

The online platform will go live in 2021 for any visa-free entrants to the EU, with applicants required to supply personal information, a health and criminal self-assessment and travel details.

The fee is only applicable to travellers aged over 18.

It's the worst Jerry!

THE International Air Transport Association's (IATA) World Air Transport Statistics have confirmed last year was the worst on record.

Just 1.8 billion passengers flew last year, a decrease of 60.2%, compared to the 4.5 billion who flew in 2019.

Industry-wide air travel demand, measured in revenue passenger-kilometres, dropped by 65.9% year-on-year, with international passenger demand decreasing by 75.6% compared to the year prior, and domestic air passenger demand lessening by 48.8% compared to 2019.

Air connectivity declined by more than half last year, with the number of routes connecting airports falling dramatically at the outset of the pandemic, down more than 60% year-on-year in Apr 2020.

Total industry pax revenues fell by 69% to USD\$189 billion.

WIN A SINGAPORE DESTINATION STAMP PACK



SYD makes more room



SYDNEY Airport is building a new hotel next to the existing Ibis budget Sydney Airport and Mantra on Sydney Airport to create an integrated hotel precinct (render **pictured**).

The new nine-storey building (render **inset**) will feature 321 rooms, along with new bars, restaurants, club lounges, valet parking and wellness centres.

Targeted to open in 2024, the

new precinct will be located on Ross Smith Avenue, with the Ibis budget and Mantra properties to be upgraded and refurbished, and incorporated into the newbuild, creating an area with a total complement of over 700 rooms.

Construction is proposed to commence next year.

travelBulletin



Reforms to the travel industry proposed by CHOICE have some up in arms, but discover why others think they may not be a bad idea.

Read more in the August issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read

All-round consulting

A **GROUP** of Australia's leading independent management consultants, several with strong tourism and travel specialisations, have come together as a collective under a new Odin360 banner to offer management support, planning & advisory services.

Led by former Tourism & Events Queensland CEO Steven Wright, the 28-strong group includes Tammy Marshall from the B Hive who has held senior roles at TFE Hotels, Carnival Corporation and The Travel Corporation.

Simonne Shepherd, former head of the NT Dept of Tourism, ACT Tourism and Canadian Tourism Commission is part of Odin360, alongside China tourism specialist and PR expert Andrea Plawutsky, former Tourism Australia economist Karl Flowers, Liz Ward from Tourism Tribe, and Leighton Wood, ex Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre COO - for more details see odin360.com.au.

Urgent Qld funding

QUEENSLAND Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) has issued an urgent plea to the Australian Government to extend the current eligibility of the COVID-19 Disaster Payment to employees of tourism and hospitality businesses in locations outside the state's locked-down areas.

QTIC has proposed a reintroduction to the flexibility provisions in the *Fair Work Act* put into place for employers during JobKeeper, and is also appealing to the Queensland Government to supplement the recently announced support with a review of all state fees and charges imposed on businesses.

"Our recent communications with operators paint a bleak picture of the current state of business and the immediate, to long term economic outlook for the sector," said QTIC Chief Executive Officer Daniel Gschwind.

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AGENT COMMISSIONABLE





Qld events support

THE Queensland Government has opened a second round of funding for its National Business Events Program, targeting national associations and corporate events bringing in more than 350 delegates who stay at least two days.

Funds must be spent in Qld to cover costs associated with the venue, delegate accommodation and/or ground transfers.

Funding of up to \$95,000 is available - for more details see teq.queensland.com.

Melb psych win

MELBOURNE has been chosen as the host city for the 2028 International Congress of Psychology.

Held every four years, the gathering is expected to deliver almost \$40 million in economic contribution, with over 5,000 delegates from across the globe taking part in a six-day program.

It's the first time the congress will have come to Australia in over 40 years.

VIC JOBKEEPER PUSH

A NEW report into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Victorian events and tourism sectors has recommended the state Government advocate for the resumption of the JobKeeper program for industries that continue to face significant restrictions on their activities, such as the events sector.

The comprehensive summary has formally confirmed a range of findings about the impact of the pandemic on business events, including that "many events businesses in Victoria do not feel represented by industry bodies".

The report found that the effect of lockdowns, border closures and other public health measures threaten the long-term viability of the state's events sector, while the inability to insure against COVID-19 was also cited as a "large barrier" to recovery, along with a loss of skilled workers.

Some participants in the inquiry noted perceptions that major events such as professional sport were treated more favourably than the business events sector in terms of restrictions and density limits, while others urged more rapid Government approval for COVIDSafe Event Plans.

Key recommendations included increasing Government mental health support for the events sector, as well as the publication of clear guidance on the types

of triggers for the imposition or lifting of density quotients and venue capacity restrictions "in order to maintain and support business confidence".

While some financial support had been provided by the Victorian Government, "more needs to be done to provide targeted support to ensure [the business events sector's] ongoing viability" as well as to identify and help those who did not receive any support, such as some sole traders.

As well as pushing for a return of JobKeeper, the report urged the release of public guidance by the Victorian Government on how its health mechanisms and policies will change in conjunction with the Prime Minister's new four-stage transition plan.

The Committee also suggested the establishment of a state-based "events industry taskforce" to review and revise the Government's consultation processes with the events sector, with the aim of independently recognising its value independent of tourism and other areas and also ensuring that small and medium sized businesses have a greater voice.

"A single peak industry body for Victoria's whole events sector would simplify consultation with the Victorian Government," the report also found.

BECA JAB CAMPAIGN

THE Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) has launched a new #GiveBEaShot campaign, urging the industry and the broader community to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible in support of the first stage of the Government's four-step national plan.

The move follows last Fri's announcement of the framework by Prime Minister Scott Morrison, with each phase of the plan triggered by vaccination thresholds which aim to ultimately remove restrictions, end lockdowns and domestic border closures and recommence international travel, "all of which are necessary for the business events industry to recover and prosper into the future".

BECA Deputy Chair, Geoff Donaghy from ICC Sydney, said prior to the recent lockdowns the industry had been clearly showing how business events could be held safely, effectively and in compliance with state-based health protocols.

"The nature of these highly organised and structured events, delegate behaviours, controlled settings and the contact tracing frameworks we have in place sets us apart from



mass gatherings," he said.

Donaghy noted that BECA and its member organisations continued to advocate for the sector to governments across the country, seeking industry and business support.

He also confirmed that "to further enhance our government engagement activities, we have formalised our relationship with the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry through membership, over and above our active role on the Tourism Restart Taskforce."

BECA has also proposed a Business Events Catalyst Fund which outlines options for a rebate, incentive grant payment, underwriting facility or nationwide event insurance scheme which would support Australian associations and corporations to move forward with in-person business events.

MCEC supports homelessness initiatives

THE Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) has formalised a longstanding relationship with Launch Housing, in a new three year partnership in support of the 25,000 Victorians who are sleeping rough or homeless each night in Melbourne.

The initiative lines up with National Homelessness Week, with MCEC participating in various fundraising events as well as supporting an employee

volunteer program, workplace giving, significant donations of MCEC resources and an At-Risk Youth Employment Program.

MCEC CEO Peter King said the pact would support Launch Housing's ambition of achieving zero homelessness in the city.

"As a significant part of Melbourne's culture and economy, it is important MCEC acknowledges the part we have to play in the wellbeing of the people in our community."

DRW tech boost

DARWIN International Airport has selected Elenium Automation to deploy its VYGR end-to-end solution to improve the passenger experience, enhance operational efficiency, and enable future growth.

A total of 30 portable kiosks will provide a fast check-in process, with all of them able to be easily moved for greater operational flexibility and utility.

There will also be 23 bag drops, six of which can also function as agent-assist and rework stations.

Intrepid SA outback

INTREPID Travel has launched a new South Australian Outback Adventure, giving Aussies the opportunity to explore rugged tracks on experiences designed to give back to local communities.

Designed to celebrate Indigenous histories and culture, the new tour is said to mark Intrepid's continuing commitment to developing trips that provide Australians with opportunities to discover their own vast backyard.

For more information on the Intrepid SA offering [CLICK HERE](#).

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.

Andrew Yell has been appointed as Group Travel Business Leader in Australia for Flight Centre Travel Group's **FCM Travel**. Yell joins the organisation with extensive experience in the hospitality, tourism and travel sectors, including more than a decade with The Travel Corporation's Creative Holidays and as an executive at Excite Holidays.

The new **Ace Hotel Sydney** has appointed experienced hospitality sales executive **Elliott Miller** to join its pre-opening team as Director of Sales and Marketing. He moves from his previous role at Pier One Sydney Harbour, with his career also including positions with Karma Group, Aman and as Adventure World Head of Sales.

Pae Papai, a well known Cook Islands senior chef, has been appointed as Group Relief and Support Chef at **Pacific Resort Hotel Group**.

Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings has announced the appointment of **Andrea DeMarco** as the new Chief Sales & Marketing Officer for **Regent Seven Seas Cruises**. DeMarco was previously the company's Senior VP of Investor Relations, and will be replaced in that role by **Jessica John**.

Jared Green has joined the team at Adelaide's **Mayfair Hotel** as Director of Sales and Marketing. Prior to the pandemic he was Director of Sales and Marketing at Six Senses Fiji.

Sofitel Sydney Darling Harbour has named **Lachlan Harris** as its new Commercial Director. He moves to the Accor property from his former position as Director of Sales at The Langham Sydney.

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Travel Daily



NRMA strikes Ballarat gold



NRMA Parks & Resorts is continuing its expansion, with **BIG4 Ballarat Goldfields Holiday Park (pictured)** joining the group.

The Vic Central Highlands campsite will be renamed **Big4 NRMA Ballarat Holiday Park**, with the move bringing the group's Australian presence to 36.

NRMA is also now the largest owner of campsites in Victoria, with its new Ballarat location following the acquisition of properties at Phillip Island and Mildura late last year, with a total of 11 Vic resorts in the portfolio.

Big4 NRMA Ballarat Holiday Park is centrally located in its namesake city, and is within easy walking distance of Sovereign Hill.

The campsite contains a range of two-storey villas, miners' cottages and campgrounds, and a wide array of in-park facilities, even including a sensory room for children on the autism spectrum.

NRMA Parks & Resorts Chief Executive Officer Paul Davies said the group was excited to add such a stellar property to its expanding collection of holiday parks across Victoria, especially after such a tough time for tourism.

We glove this news

SNOW depth in the NSW Snowy Mountains is at its highest level in more than 20 years.

According to measurements taken by Snowy Hydro at Spencer's Creek, as of last Thu, the natural snow depth is 186.3cm, the highest recorded since the bumper year of 2000.

Lockdowns also mean there is plenty of availability for visitors from regional NSW and the ACT.

AA hot Chile deal

AMERICAN Airlines has taken a stake in JetSmart, a low-cost airline based in Chile which is majority-owned by Indigo Partners, the owner of Volaris in Mexico, US-based Frontier Airlines and Wizz Air in Europe.

The AA purchase will see the carriers extend their cooperation in the form of a codeshare deal allowing the US carrier to expand its South American network.

JetSmart has a fleet of 20 A320s plus an order for 77 more, currently flying to 33 destinations across Chile, Brazil, Argentina and Colombia.

For confidential tip offs, connect with *Travel Daily* via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click [HERE](#)

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EDITORIAL

Editor in Chief and Publisher – Bruce Piper

Associate Editors – Adam Bishop,

Myles Stedman

Contributors – Nicholas O'Donoghue,

Jenny Piper

info@traveldaily.com.au

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

Sean Harrigan and Hoda Alzubaidi

advertising@traveldaily.com.au

BUSINESS MANAGER

Jenny Piper

accounts@traveldaily.com.au

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia
Tel: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760)

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