

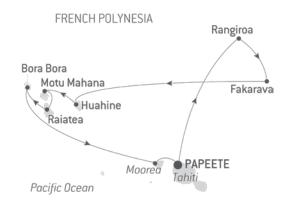


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SARINA BRATTON AM, CHAIRMAN ASIA PACIFIC

With extensive accolades and being widely regarded as a visionary businesswoman and Australia's 'First Lady' of cruising, Sarina Bratton has drawn on her passion for discovery to redefine the concept of small ship luxury expedition cruising.

DISCOVER THE VOYAGE

Travel Daily First with the news



the massive impact of months of

lockdowns, Qantas Group is still

anticipating a significant loss for

the six months to 31 Dec, with a

forecast of up to \$1.1b in losses.

Joyce noted a significant hit to

news of the Omicron variant and

additional guarantine restrictions.

international schedules has been

airline's CEO confirming adjusted

slowed by about 10%, with the

restart timing for some routes

including Japan, New Zealand,

Hong Kong and Shanghai in

response to new restrictions.

The return of San Francisco

flights from Sydney and Brisbane

has also been paused, he added.

More from Qantas on page four.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven

pages of news including

cover page from Ponant.

Business Events News and a

booking momentum with the

Planned growth in QF's

Thursday 16th December 2021

Sail with Sarina!

PAUL Gauguin Cruises is today showcasing next year's inaugural Chairman's Cruise, which will see Sarina Bratton AM, Asia Pacific Chairman of Paul Gauguin parent Ponant, join guests on a voyage in the Society Islands and the Tuamotos - see the **cover page**.



QF confident of 70% share

QANTAS says it is expecting domestic competition to intensify over the next six months, but believes it is "well placed to respond through its frequency of flights, network reach advantages and reduced cost base".

During an update from the carrier this morning, CEO Alan Joyce said the Group now expects its overall market share to normalise at around 70% once all state borders open - meaning he believes rivals Virgin Australia, Regional Express and new entrant Bonza will be forced to battle it out over the other 30%.

Joyce noted a significant improvement in the QF balance sheet, in part facilitated by the \$802 million sale of land near Sydney Airport (**TD** 15 Oct), as well as "strong sales that flowed once firm opening dates for international and domestic borders were announced". However while the recent boost in travel activity had partly offset



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Sabre exec shuffle

SABRE Corporation has appointed former CWT chief Kurt Ekert as the company's President.

Ekert will report to Sabre CEO Sean Menke, with the separation of the president and CEO roles part of efforts to "build a leadership team for the future".



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How has the pandemic impacted the way the travel sector operates, and what will remain in the emerging postcovid world? We investigate taking travel back to the future in the latest *travelBulletin*.

Thursday 16th December 2021



AN INDIAN baggage handler has enjoyed an unexpected trip to the UAE, after deciding to have a bit of a snooze on the job.

The cargo loader worked in Mumbai for low cost carrier IndiGo, and took a power nap in the belly of the plane while it was being loaded for a flight to Abu Dhabi last Sun.

India's aviation regulator DGCA confirmed the incident, saying "post loading of baggage in aircraft, one of the loaders relaxed in baggage compartment 1 and fell asleep."

He woke as the aircraft took off from Mumbai airport, but wasn't discovered until arrival where he underwent a medical examination before being sent back on the return sector - but this time in the passenger cabin.

AFTA tweaks ATAS rules

EXCLUSIVE

THE Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) has confirmed it will transition out of the "Monitor and Support Mode" currently in place for its national accreditation program, which had its criteria significantly modified with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Mar 2020.

Members have been advised of new rules for the AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS), which will now see 2021 Financial Statements assessed according to the criteria set out in the ATAS Charter; however the AFTA Compliance Manager will have authority to apply discretion to each of the tests apart from the critical Client Fund test.

The Client Funds test is part of the solvency evaluation for ATAS participants, and must be passed for members to remain part of the scheme by demonstrating that client funds are covered by available cash within the business.

Any indication that client funds are not appropriately accounted for will remain a Show Cause event, meaning AFTA will request the ATAS member to explain why their participation in the scheme should not be terminated.

AFTA has also confirmed that ATAS members are expected to comply with their own internal complaint management policies, and assist AFTA where a complaint has been escalated to the ATAS Compliance Manager.

However the ATAS Complaint Appeal Committee (ACAC) remains suspended until 31 Mar next year, the Federation noted.

AFTA also confirmed that as previously advised the ATAS Charter would shortly undergo its periodic review, with all members given the opportunity to discuss and consult on any recommendations for the scheme.

Smartvisit plots American growth

SMARTVISIT Group, the Australian-founded parent company of iVenture Card, has announced the appointment of Richard Peterson to the newly created role of Vice President, Smartvisit America.

Peterson, who is also CEO of the US Cultural & Heritage Marketing Council, will work to connect the diversity of America's cultural attractions and experiences to travellers via the iVenture platform, which has thus far only had a West Coast presence powering attractions passes in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

"With the resurgence of tourism in the coming years, Smartvisit sees exponential collaborative opportunities to offer its suite of products and services across the wider North American marketplace," said Smartvisit founder Ryan Rieveley.

More appointments on **page 7**.

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TAANZ - Air NZ ruined Xmas

AIR New Zealand's shock decision to slash base commission for travel agents across the Tasman (TD 10 Dec) means Christmas "has been stolen" for the country's travel sector, according to an open letter from the Travel Agents Association of New Zealand (TAANZ).

TAANZ Chairman, Brent Thomas from House of Travel, said the move had been undertaken "without even the respect of any consultation, by our single largest supplier and partner...a partner who the travel agency and broker community have wholeheartedy supported in good faith not only over the past 21 months, but always in their times of need over many years - Air New Zealand".

TAANZ said the announcement of commission cuts just before Christmas had been clearly perceived as a sign that trade distribution is not important to the NZ national carrier.

While recognising the need for all businesses to review costs and make hard decisions, "it is the manner by which it was done, the timing and the lack of recognition for what has already been done that cuts to the core of the travel agency community," TAANZ said.

"As borders re-open and carriers return there will be more choice and complexity for the New Zealand consumer... the importance of the travel agency channel will again prove its value to, and support, those airlines who fairly recognise the channel's sales and support," the organisation added.

The cuts do not apply to tickets sold in Australia, with Air NZ Chief Customer & Sales Officer, Leanne Geraghty, telling Travel Daily "we look forward to continuing our strong travel agency partnerships as the new travel environment emerges and we adjust to the changes together".



QR likes a G6

QATAR Airway's private jet division Oatar Executive has taken delivery of an additional three Gulfstream G650ER aircraft. boosting its overall fleet to 11.

The so-called G6 has a 7,500 nautical mile range, giving it global reach allowing it to operate non-stop from Doha to New York in about 13 hours.

Hotelbeds+Event

HOTELBEDS has announced a new preferred partnership with Australia's Event Hospitality & Entertainment Group, with the pact covering 71 properties and Event's brands including Rydges Hotels, QT Hotels & Resorts, Atura, Jucy Snooze and Independent Collection.

Regional Director Colm Flanagan said the agreement came at an ideal time, with Hotelbeds seeing its Pacific regional bookings between Jul and 2022 now 40% up on the same period in 2019.

Viking Egypt 2024

CLICK HERE

VIKING Cruises this morning released details of its full 2024 Egypt river cruise season, including the popular 12-day Pharaohs & Pyramids itinerary.

Operating roundtrip from Cairo, Viking ANZ MD Michelle Black said the destination was a favourite among the company's Australian and NZ guests, "so it's fantastic that we can offer the full 2024 season so far in advance".

The program includes 160 departures across four vessels, all of which have been specifically built to navigate the Nile. More details on 138 747.

Te Pae tomorrow

CHRISTCHURCH'S new Te Pae Convention Centre will have a ceremonial opening tomorrow, with the venue featuring 24 meeting rooms, a 1,400 seat tiered auditorium, 2,800 square metres of exhibition space and room for a 1000-seat dinner.



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Mat's the way (aha, aha) I like it!



MAT McLachlan Battlefield Tours founder and namesake Mat McLachlan caught up with Josephine Hanney (pictured) from Travelcall to congratulate her on winning a seat on the four-day Western Front Explorer itinerary.

Hanney won the prize by successfully completing the *Travel Daily* Training Academy modules created by the John Monash Centre and Hauts-d-France (*TD* 20 Jan) which she undertook earlier this year.

The four-day small group tour departs weekly between Apr and Nov, taking in the main battlefield sites on the Western Front.

The tour is guided by an expert historian and includes accommodation in the heart of the battlefields.

View full tour details HERE.

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your clients' holiday!

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QF Airbus fleet renewal

QANTAS today announced the outcome of its Project Winton fleet update plan, with a detailed tender process seeing it select Airbus A320neo and A220 planes to renew its domestic narrowbody fleet (*TD* breaking news).

The process included detailed evaluation of the A320neo and B737 MAX families as well as A220s and Embraer E190/195-E2s.

CEO Alan Joyce said that subject to final Board approval, a firm order for 40 new Airbus planes mainly A321XLRs and A220-330s - along with 94 purchase right options, would be confirmed by Jun 2022, with "flexibilty on timing and mix of aircraft from within these two families".

The move will complement an existing Jetstar order for more than 100 A320neos already in place, with the combined deal meaning the Group can draw down on a total of 299 deliveries over the next decade and beyond for Qantas, QantasLink & Jetstar. "Once finalised, this will represent the largest aircraft order in Australian aviation history," Joyce said.

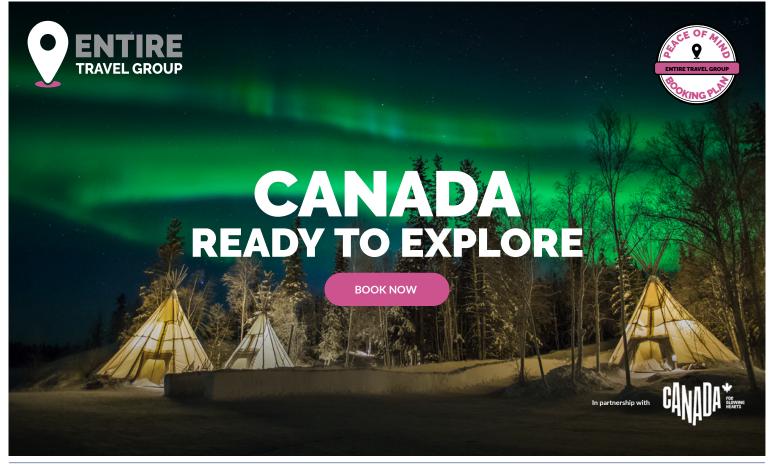
el & Cruise

Weekly

The XLR can carry about 15% more passengers on each flight than QF's existing Boeing 737-800s, while the small and medium sized A220s give the group flexibility to deploy the planes throughout most of its domestic and regional operations.

Both aircraft types will be powered by Pratt & Whitney GTF engines, with up to 20% fuel savings which will in turn contribute to QF's broader emission reduction efforts.

"Qantas is in a position to make these commitments because of the way we've navigated through the pandemic...this is a clear sign of our confidence in the future," Joyce added, thanking all of the aircraft makers for the efforts they put into the tender process.



CATO's Christmas cheer



Thursday 16th December 2021

Seabourn explores

SEABOURN Cruise Line has announced two "extraordinary expedition voyages" to the Northwest and Northeast Passages in mid-2023.

Seabourn Venture will depart 29 Jul 2023 for a 26-day journey from Tromso, Norway to Nome, Alaska followed by a charter flight to Anchorage, while *Pursuit* will traverse the Northwest Passage from Kangerlussuaq, Greenland to Nome on a 23-day voyage departing 26 Aug 2023.

EY cloud push

ETIHAD Airways has announced a multi-year agreement with New York-listed IT services provider Kyndryl to "help accelerate the next stage of its digital transformation journey".

Over the next three years, Kyndryl will help the carrier modernise its IT infrastructure, "working with leading cloud providers to select platforms based on the specific requirements of EY's missioncritical workloads".

Marriott Bahasa

MARRIOTT International will launch a new website in Bahasa Indonesia, targeting an increased number of domestic travellers as part of a "hyper-local" strategy and commitment to personalised experiences.

The new site will allow guests from Indonesia to book and pay for stays across Marriott's global portfolio of 7,900 properties.

US Government to make travel easier

US PRESIDENT Joe Biden has signed an Executive Order to streamline Government red tape, including changes to facilitate faster issuance of passports and also speed up airport wait times.

The Washington Post confirmed that Americans will be able to renew passports online, with the State Department now authorised to develop a new process replacing the existing cumbersome paper-based system which also involves payments by cheque or money order.

The US Department of Homeland Security has also been asked to "test innovative technologies" at airport security checkpoints, while new systems will allow easier engagement with the Transportation Security Administration, including online chat and improved communication during screenings.

Home2 Suites debut

HILTON has announced the launch of the Home2 Suites by Hilton brand in the Asia-Pacific region, with the debut of a new property in Shenzhen, China located in the city's Bao'an district.

Home2 Suites caters to the extended stay market, with Hilton saying its Free to be You concept "empowers sophisticated trailblazers to maintain their everyday lifestyles in a home away from home for any length of stay".



THE Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) has brought its members together at Christmas functions this month in both Sydney and Melbourne.

CATO's annual Xmas parties were held at the Harbour View Hotel in Sydney on 08 Dec, and at Juliet Melbourne on 14 Dec. More than 60 members in Sydney and 35 in Melbourne attended

the events, which were sponsored by AlUla. Members were given an insight

into the intriguing destination, and were addressed by CATO Managing Director Brett Jardine, who took the opportunity to acknowledge the board, which he said had remained "incredibly





supportive and involved," despite members dealing with their own COVID-related challenges.

The board was also thanked by Chair Dennis Bunnik, who talked of cautious optimism about next year as restrictions lift.

The Brisbane CATO event will be held next Wed 22 Dec sponsored by tech platform Tour Atlas.

Pictured above at the Melbourne gathering are, from left: Lisa Pagotto, Crooked Compass; CATO MD Brett Jardine; Liz Anderson, Sundowners Overland; and Brett Mitchell from Intrepid Travel.

Inset above are Sonia Holt and Anthony Khattar from AlUla, while at **left** is CATO Board Member Julie King from Julie King & Associates with Insook Lee from Korea Tourism Organization.



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NZ FRAMES EVENTS

NEW Zealand's Business Events Industry Aotearoa (BEIA) has worked closely with the country's government to create a guide to holding safe meetings under the new New Zealand COVID-19 Protection Framework (CPF).

The Guidelines for Safe Meetings COVID-19 Protection Framework (CLICK HERE) has been designed to help all in New Zealand's business events sector understand how the CPF works, and the role of My Vaccine Pass.

The guidelines model business events operating at all three of New Zealand's alert levels: Red, Orange, and Green.

Additional guidelines have been developed for accommodation and tourism activities.

BEIA Chief Executive Lisa Hopkins said in the immediate future, with NZ operating under the CPF framework, there is greater flexibility for domestic business events, provided

Country boost

THE NSW Government has announced a helping hand for country shows, to ensure they return bigger and better in the new year.

The almost 200 agricultural shows scheduled for next year can now apply for funding under the NSW Govt's \$5 million Country Shows Support Package. attendees are vaccinated.

Speaking at the BEIA-convened Future of Business Events Virtual Summit earlier this month, Hopkins said rapid antigen tests would be a tool event organisers would use to help maintain the ability to operate business events.

She predicted a slow and staggered recovery for the sector, with opportunities crushed by strict border measures, including seven-day quarantine.

However overall, Hopkins said opening the international border was paramount to the future success of the sector, which would in turn signal optimism for New Zealand at large.

"Business travel is a good barometer and it saw levels slump by 54%," she said.

"The business events sector in New Zealand has declined by 73% in spend since 2019, down to \$400 million in 2021 from a value of \$1.5 billion two years ago."

PCMA convenes

THE Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) has launched a digital experience for Convening Leaders next year.

The digital program will take place in Las Vegas from 09-12 Jan, with on-demand access available. **CLICK HERE** to view.

Apply some Jam

THE world's first *Space Jam: A New Legacy* exhibition will open its doors at Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre this Sat.

SPACE JAM: A NEW LEGACY – The Tunes vs Goons Experience is set to transform the hit live-action film into an immersive, funfilled basketball and videogaming event.

The exhibition will feature Looney Tunes photo opportunities, basketball hoops, video arcade games, a mega-slide, a "power-up" tower climbing structure, and a range of interactive basketball tests and challenges.

ICMI survey & win

BUSINESS events personnel are invited to have their say about the future of the industry in a survey from ICMI Speakers & Entertainers.

Those who complete the 10-question survey, which will help ICMI better understand the immediate demands, hopes and fears facing its clients, will go into the running to win a prize of a \$250 Myer voucher.

To win, lodge the best suggestion of how ICMI can improve its events.

CLICK HERE to complete.

ICC Sydney is 5!

SYDNEY'S International Convention Centre has celebrated its fifth birthday, with the organisation thanking the industry for its ongoing support and collaboration.

Over the last five years the venue has delivered a whopping 2,700 events including conventions, exhibitions, banquets, seminars and concerts, welcoming 4.5 million visitors through its doors.

CEO Geoff Donaghy thanked the NSW Government for its vision, leadership and ongoing support of ICC Sydney "as a beacon of innovation, learning, entertainment and community contribution".

He added that 250 events had already been secured for the first half of 2022, along with a pipeline extending through to 2031, with expectations that ICC Sydney will return to delivering \$1 billion annually to the NSW community over the next five years.

Get Local sells out

GET Local is officially a sellout, with 150 exhibitors confirmed.

The Australian business events community is coming together in a big way on 15 and 16 Feb at ICC Sydney.

Register to attend HERE.

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Abercrombie & Kent



It's that time of year again!



INDUSTRY Christmas celebrations are understandably somewhat subdued this festive season but the itravel team (pictured) came together to celebrate the year that was at the new Philter Brewing venue in the Sydney suburb of Marrickville.

The group said that after being apart for so long it was great to reconnect over a "drink or few".

"Whilst it has been challenging for all, we have also had some positives to celebrate with some new faces joining the family," said CEO Steve Labroski.

"Our best years together are still ahead, and we're excited to see what's to come for the itravel family," he added.

New Spanish Nobu

NOBU Hospitality has announced its fourth property in Spain, with the planned addition of the Nobu Hotel and Restaurant San Sebastian in 2023, featuring 20 guest rooms and a 98-seat Nobu restaurant.

Google AI to help secure aviation

THREE UK airports are set to trial new artificial intelligence (AI)-led technology using machine learning systems developed as part of the Google Cloud platform.

Dubbed Project Dartmouth, the initiative, led by British security and safety group Pangiam, aims to make air travel safer by integrating AI into airport baggage screening operations. Initially rolling out at Aberdeen,

Glasgow and Southampton Airports, the system will focus on rapidly identifying potential threats in baggage, using technology to detect prohibited items in real time as luggage passes through X-ray machines.

It will also be used to "spot anomalies and unusual patterns which could indicate a new or coordinated attempt to breach security," with a Google Cloud spokesman saying "we look forward to improving the aviation industry at large".

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.

Georgina Williams has been promoted to Head of Commercial - Hotels, Tourism and Leisure at Elanor Investors Group which runs the Elanor Hotel Accommodation Fund. She was previously the division's Director of Marketing, prior to which she held roles with Best Western Hotels, Silverneedle Hospitality and Stamford Hotels & Resorts.

Holland America Line has named Kacy Cole as its new VP of Marketing & E-commerce. She was previously Senior Vice President of Marketing at digital platform LTK, and will report to HAL Chief Commercial Officer, Beth Bodensteiner. Bill Zucker has also been appointed as Holland America Line's new Vice President of Public Relations and Communications, bringing over two decades of communications industry consulting experience to the senior executive position.

Jim Parashos has been appointed as the new General Manager International Recovery at Melbourne Airport. Parashos was previously Executive GM - Aviation at Brisbane Airport Corporation. His role at BNE is being taken by Ryan Both who was most recently Asia Pacific regional lead for Embraer offshoot Eve Air Mobility.

The new **W Sydney** has named **Roxanne Markovina** as its new Director of Sales and Marketing. Her previous roles include leading sales & marketing for the Andaz Liverpool Street in London, and she has also worked with IHG properties in Australia, London and Singapore.

London's iconic **The Dorchester** has appointed **Luca Virgilio** as its new General Manager. Virgilio will take on his new role next month, and will oversee a comprehensive renovation of the property. He was most recently GM of Dorchester Collection's Hotel Eden, Rome.

Scenic Group has named US cruise industry veteran Sharla Smith as its new Regional Sales Director - Southwest Territory in America. Smith was most recently with Paul Gauguin Cruises, and has also held sales roles with Royal Caribbean and Celebrity Cruises.

Ocean-going retailer **Starboard Cruise Services** has named **Paula Fernandez** as its new Chief Financial Officer, and **Mike Hunssinger Turek** as Chief Commercial Officer. Fernandez has been with the company for more than two decades, while Turek joined in 2019, with the pair reporting to CEO Lisa Bauer.

NZ adds new ATR

AIR New Zealand's newest aircraft joined the fleet yesterday, with a brand new ATR72-600 turboprop arriving in Auckland after a 10-day journey from Toulouse in France.

The 68-seat plane will service regional routes to destinations such as New Plymouth, Tauranga and Nelson, with the first commercial flight planned for 23 Dec, expected to be the busiest day this year for the airline with over 30,000 pax booked to travel.

NCL Panama move

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) is claiming a major first after announcing a homeport season out of Panama from Mar 2022.

Norwegian Jewel will be the first large cruise ship to be based in the city, offering the opportunity for passengers to experience a transit of the Panama Canal on 12 departures also including calls in Costa Rica, Aruba and Colombia.

The ship will operate from the new Panama City Cruise Terminal in Colon.

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