

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news including our PUZZLE page.

New MEA CEO

MEETINGS & Events Australia (MEA) has announced the appointment of Peter McDonald as its Chief Executive Officer.

McDonald comes to the organisation "with extensive experience in member industry peak bodies, events and professional and tertiary education," according to MEA Chair Nigel Collin.

"The MEA Board are excited to have Peter join us and believe he will be a great asset to both MEA and our sector," he said.

McDonald, who has already started at MEA, was executive officer NSW and ACT at the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia until Oct 2019.

NT tourism grants

TOURISM businesses in the Northern Territory can now apply for grants worth up to \$50,000 in the fifth round of the Visitor Experience Enhancement Program which opens today - more info at grantsnt.gov.au.

\$30m bonus for FCTG staff

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) employees from across the globe will share in a bonanza of free shares worth \$30 million at the current market price if they remain with the business in its COVID recovery until the end of next year (*TD* breaking news).

The Global Recovery Rights (GRR) program is a "material investment in the people who are integral to both our recovery and our future success," according to MD Graham Turner.

"The GRR program underlines our people's importance and recognises their efforts and their loyalty since the pandemic began and heavy travel restrictions were imposed, adversely impacting their earning potential, while they continued to work incredibly hard to help customers secure refunds or rearrange their travel plans."

Under the scheme, most participants will receive a one-off GRR grant of 250 share rights, which can be exchanged for an equivalent number of ordinary Flight Centre Shares in Feb 2023 when the company releases its Dec 2022 half-yearly results.

In some locations, where the company is not able to offer

its Employee Share Plans, the company will instead pay a cash benefit to staff members who meet the continuous employment condition.

About 7,500 people in Flight Centre businesses across the globe - apart from board members and senior executives - are expected to receive 1.9 million shares under the program.

Turner said the GRR scheme was "first and foremost a retention program that encourages our people to continue their careers with us during what we believe will be an important 18-month period as vaccination programs progress, trading conditions start to normalise and the recovery starts to gain momentum".

He said it would also give employees a "stronger degree of ownership of our company, and thereby strengthens the ties between their interests and those of our other shareholders in the mid- to long-term".

AAT Kings extends flexibility

AAT Kings has extended its "Rebook. Refund. Relax." conditions for guided holidays through until 30 Sep this year, with the aim of continuing to provide clients with the confidence to book trips.

Up to 30 Sep, new AAT Kings Guide Holiday and Inspiring Journeys bookings will be eligible for a refund 30 days before departure for the land portion, should a trip need to be changed due to government restrictions.

EK enhances IFE

EMIRATES in-flight entertainment will feature live coverage of the rescheduled 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, as well as games of the UEFA Euro 2020 football tournament.

EK has also added about 100 new movies each month this year along with "trending HBO shows".

Get on your bike!

AUSTRALIAN Cycle Tours, part of the World Expeditions portfolio, has added a range of new itineraries to its offering to meet increasing demand from active travellers looking for new ways to explore.

The four-day Capertee Valley in Comfort self-guided cycle is an introductory level trip including two nights in a deluxe B&B and the third in a boutique hotel, priced from \$1,520 per person.

There's also the more challenging seven-day Central West Trail Self-Guided Cycle Tour, a 380km circuit trail ex Mudgee.

In Vic the Great Victorian Rail Trail Self-guided cycle takes riders from Mansfield to Tallarook over four days, priced at \$1,290pp incl accom and e-bike hire - more info at australiacycletours.com.au.

TRAVEL DAILY TRAINING ACADEMY WILL ENSURE YOU DON'T GET LEFT BEHIND

Make sure you are ready to take advantage of a travel bounceback - get up to scratch on a variety of destinations with the Travel Daily Training Academy.

[Click here to start learning](#)



RED CENTRE 'MATES RATES' SALE

* AGENT COMMISSIONABLE *

Mates Rates

up to \$1000 per person

BONUS DISCOUNT

NT Now



Window Seat

DON'T trust anybody if you are travelling on Gympie's Mary Valley Rattler on 13 Aug, because they just might be the person who committed the murder most foul.

The special Murder on the Rattler Express event will see passengers encouraged to dress in their finest Victorian garments and become the high flyers of 1920s Hollywood high society, where they must investigate a staged murder.

Each traveller will become a character in the drama and be assigned a costume and intricate back story to create as much intrigue as possible.

Attendees will be given a fake name, as well as money to bribe or blackmail fellow characters, and an 'accusation form' to smoke out who the murderer is.

Tickets are priced at \$195pp. - see [HERE](#) for more information.



NZ/NSW pause ext

QUARANTINE-FREE travel from NSW to New Zealand had its paused extended until at least 11:59pm NZST on 6 Jul 2021, as case numbers associated with the Bondi cluster continue to rise.

The NZ Government has confirmed travellers are prohibited from entering the country if they were in NSW after 11:59pm NZT on 22 Jun 2021.

Restrictions will also apply if you drive through NSW to another state to fly to NZ, or leave NSW by air to get to another airport.

Address trust to recover

MOST Australian travellers believe the travel industry is doing a "poor" job when it comes to providing fully flexible refunds and deposits, a new study compiled by Edelman Data & Intelligence for Travelport shows.

A study of 11,000 travellers across 10 countries, including 1,000 in Australia, showed 67% of Aussies believe the sector is not doing enough to offer "fully flexible or refundable products", while 70% of respondents also said the industry was failing in its duty to offer products without any hidden costs.

Disappointment among Australians was also shown to be higher than the global average, with a significant 39 and 22 percentage point gap between performance on refunds and hidden fees respectively.

The findings are part of a wider conclusion that discovered four key "trust gaps" exist in the travel sector, identified as major factors that could accelerate the industry's recovery.

These include a need for more transparency around COVID safety, data privacy and

information credibility.

More than half of Australians stated they would like to see more reassurance on how health measures are being enforced, in particular, improved air filtration, social distancing and managed boarding and queuing.

On the issue of privacy, only one third of travellers in Australia (compared to 40% globally) said they currently trust travel companies to use their personal information in the right way.

When it comes to trusting travel advice, the least credibility was found to be those with a clear vested interest in selling, such as social media influencers (18%) and celebrities (14%).

Interestingly, Gen Z was revealed to be the least trusting in almost every category.

TNZ hears Aussies

A NEW trade survey launched by Tourism New Zealand is asking agents to help them shape its trade plans and activities.

The survey closes 30 Jun at 5pm AEST - participate [HERE](#).

Air NZ boosts Qld

AIR New Zealand will now fly year-round to popular Qld destinations the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast and Cairns.

The direct flights will fly from Auckland and Christchurch under a newly formed agreement with the Qld Govt, currently endorsed through to at least May 2022.

With an additional 26,000 seats available across the three Queensland destinations, Chief Customer & Sales Officer Leanne Geraghty said the new flights mark the first time New Zealanders will be able to travel with the airline to the Sunshine Coast year-round.

Air New Zealand flew around half of the 500,000 trips taken from New Zealand to Qld in 2019.



Tas in good shape

TASMANIA'S visitor spend grew by close to 30% for the Mar quarter this year when compared to the same period pre-pandemic, despite the ongoing challenges posed by COVID-19.

Driving the positive numbers are additional airline capacity on most capital city routes, as well as the injection of Kiwi tourists via the trans-Tasman bubble.

Air NZ has reported the Hobart service as having the best forward booking load factor of any of its trans-Tasman markets, with the average 20,000 visitors every year from New Zealand tipped to grow over the next 12 months.

Is ScoMo stalling?

SINGAPORE Airlines Regional VP for Australia, Louis Arul, believes the Australian Govt is not prepared for serious discussions around a green lane yet because of the slowness of its vaccination rollout, *SMH* reports.

Discussions have been ongoing since the middle of 2020, but Arul fears the implementation will be "rushed" if details aren't worked out sooner rather than later.

On this episode:
It's just money AFTA all!

CLICK HERE
to listen.

NEW EPISODE

Travel Daily
NEWS ON THE FLY

CORPORATE UPDATE

SMEs are key to recovery

EXCLUSIVE

AUSTRALIA'S small- and medium-sized businesses are vital to restoring the corporate travel sector in Australia to pre-pandemic levels, Corporate Traveller Australia General Manager Tom Walley believes.

Speaking with *Travel Daily* this morning, Walley stated the main reason for this was because SMEs make up the bulk of companies in Australia, and they can also react swiftly and adapt to changing conditions in volatile climates.

"SMEs have the ability to pivot their travel policies quickly, they're not usually subject to large company restrictions or risk management and they are often owner/operators who are very focused on growth and very quick to adapt," Walley said.

"If there is an opportunity, small businesses are more likely to say 'let's go, let's grow', and we tend to find they book quickly and much faster than say a bank would for example," he added.

Encouragingly, Walley also revealed that the Flight Centre-

owned Corporate Traveller was already back to having 85% of its pre-COVID customers booking with the business, albeit with significantly less spend.

"On average they are spending about half but we do have some companies who are spending around 150% of pre-COVID levels and they tend to be attached to the mining sector...which is the one sector that hasn't really stopped," Walley said.

"Our travel in states like WA is still going gangbusters because of mining...that's the state with the highest level of corporate travel compared to pre-COVID levels, followed by Queensland."

Walley also noted that although business travel was starting to show some green shoots, there were some employment segments still showing signs of stalled recovery.

"What we have noticed is that the middle management segment has slowed up, what SMEs seem to be doing is putting the people that keep the wheels turning on the road right now," he said.



Tourism cooking up some interest



NETWORK 10's MasterChef Australia is set to serve up some of the country's native ingredients in the NT outback.

In partnership with Tourism Australia and Tourism Northern Territory, two upcoming episodes on Mon and Tue will see the final eight contestants take inspiration from the outback using a range

of native ingredients, in a service challenge beneath the stars at Bruce Munro's Field of Light Uluru, and in an elimination challenge at Simpsons Gap.

"We are proud to support *MasterChef* to showcase Indigenous tourism experiences and unique native ingredients," said Tourism Australia Managing Director Phillipa Harrison.

Pictured are MasterChef judges Melissa Leong, Jock Zonfrillo and Andy Allen.

CWT supports more

CWT has launched enhanced Travel Essentials tools to guide a safe return to business travel.

Five new features will buttress the global rollout of Travel Essentials - a publicly accessible search platform providing information on applicable travel restrictions, procedures and requirements based on trip origin, destination, travel dates and traveller nationality.

New functionality includes multilingual support, with over 15 languages now available, easy access to travel documents, which can be completed online and downloaded, a vaccination status filter, splitting entry restrictions for vaccinated and unvaccinated travellers, and a feature making it easy to share documents to send to clients, co-workers, friends, and family.

New tools also include multiple layouts, allowing for clearer and easier navigation.

For more details, **CLICK HERE**.

Five days in office is dead: Zoom CEO

ZOOM Chief Executive Officer Eric Yuan claims five days a week in the office will not return, as the hybrid work model brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic goes mainstream.

"I do not think the traditional way, to let every employee come back to the office five days a week, I do not think that model works," Yuan told the Macquarie Technology Summit on Wed.

"In particular, given the larger percentage of our workforce are Millennials or Generation Z, they need flexibility.

"That's why hybrid work will become mainstream, that's the future."

Yuan is confident Zoom is well positioned to maintain its growth, even as many workers do begin returning to the office.

Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly's fortnightly consumer magazine called *Keep Dreaming* is specially designed for agents to send their clients - giving you a reason to reach out to your database.

Click here to view *Keep Dreaming* magazine

Click here for a toolkit to help you share it with clients



Travel & Cruise Weekly

Icon under a microscope



THIS landmark is iconic and easily recognisable when you see the whole picture, but can you identify it from this small portion of the image?

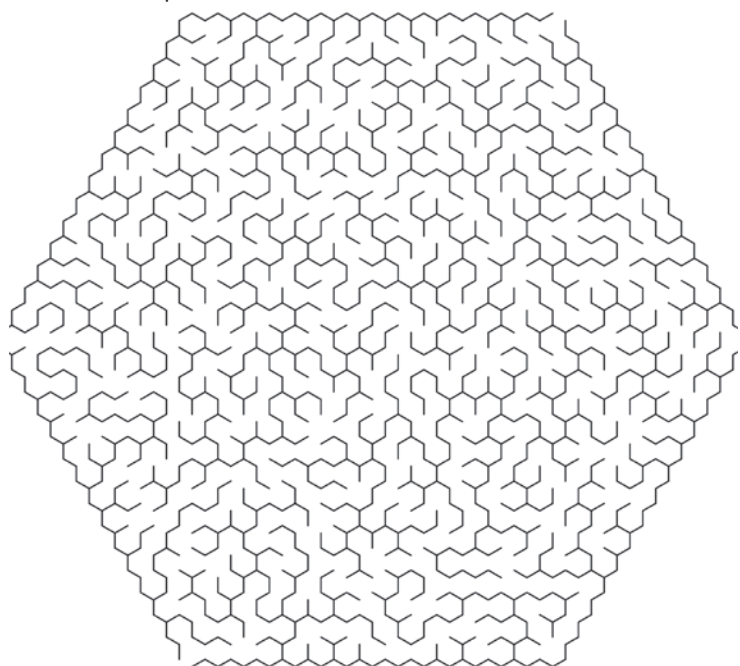
Although this is only a portion of the landmark, most photographs of it rarely capture

the whole structure, as it spans a total of 20,000km.

The landmark is considered one of the most impressive architectural feats in history, being built and maintained over many centuries and vital for the defence of the nation at the time.

A-maze-ing

CAN you find your way through this maze?
Start at the top and finish at the bottom.



The end of sorry saga of Bestjet has wrapped up with no good news for creditors - read more the June issue of *travelBulletin*.

travelBulletin [CLICK to read](#)

Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the **TD** Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 28 Aug 2014:

SKEPTICS and conspiracy theorists stand up, Elvis Presley may yet live again...sort of.

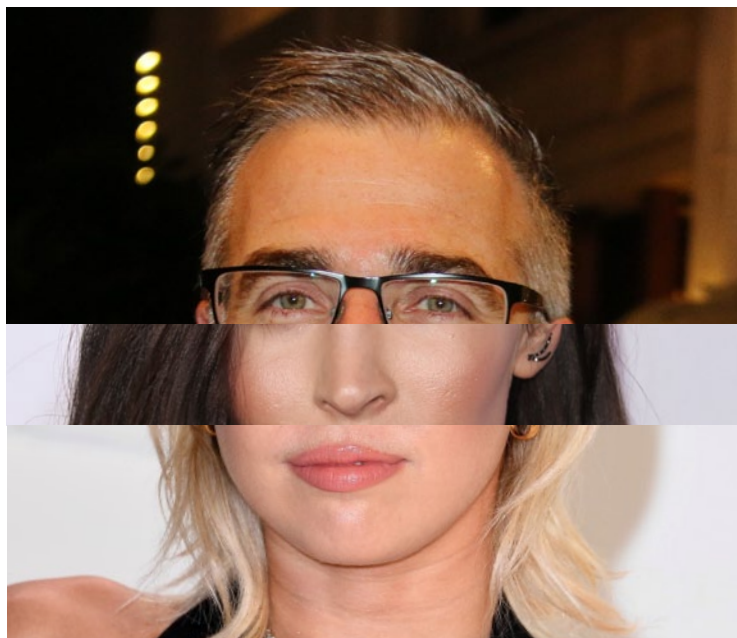
A partnership between Elvis Presley Enterprises and the Pulse Evolution Corporation will see the development of a "virtual King of Rock 'n' Roll".

Utilising state-of-the-art human animation technology, Elvis fans will soon be able to enjoy holographic performances by Elvis, which can appear on live shows, advertisements and other commercial mediums.

Jamie Salter, CEO of Authentic Brands Group, who own The Estate of Elvis Presley, said its goals were to maintain the integrity and authenticity of Elvis to allow a new generation of fans to see Elvis perform.

"This deal positions Elvis at the forefront of the digital domain."

Famous faces



THERE are three different faces that make up this picture.

They are a mixture of famous celebrities and travel names.

Can you figure out who the

eyes, nose and mouth in this picture belong to?

And don't worry if you can't guess them all, two out of three ain't bad!

Answers 25 JUN
Icon under a microscope: Great Wall of China, China
Celebrity faces: Ari Magouts, Express Travel Group, Nose - Megan Fox, Mouth - Miley Cyrus

Crowne reopens in Hawkesbury



CROWNE Plaza Hawkesbury Valley has completed its multi-million-dollar refurbishment.

The guestroom transformation was the fourth and final stage of the revamp, with 105 re-imagined rooms now completed with a modern interior and making the property the only premium-upscale hotel offering in the area.

Boasting eight distinctive room types in total, ranging from queen configurations to king bed Executive Suites with balcony views to the Blue Mountains, the most lavish option is the Bilpin Suite, a three-bedroom apartment featuring dual upper and lower mountain view balconies, two bathrooms, a kitchen, separate dining and lounge areas, and a 65-inch smart TV with built-in wall speakers.

The fully renovated bathrooms feature a frameless glass walk-in shower, a free-standing soaker bath, premium Kohler tapwear, and stone and timber floating

vanities with illuminating mirrors.

To mark the grand reopening of the hotel, local Hawkesbury Mayor Patrick Connolly joined General Manager Stephen Wills on 03 Jun for the ribbon-cutting ceremony (pictured).

"Not only does it mark the start of a brand new accommodation experience in the beautiful Hawkesbury Valley, but it also celebrates the tremendous hard work and dedication of our team throughout this 18-month-long refurbishment," Will said.

QR expands US

QATAR Airways' American network has expanded to more than 100 weekly flights across its 12 American gateways, with four destinations offering a double daily service.

New York City, LA, Chicago and Washington will all offer two flights per day, while DFW will be flown to 12 times per week.



Melco theme park

ENTERTAINMENT casino resort owner & operator Melco Resorts & Entertainment will develop a theme park and mixed-use project in Zhongshan, China.

Alongside investment holding company Agile, Melco will expand beyond casinos, having won a mega-site worth ¥4 billion (A\$815 million) in the Guangdong province city.

In addition to a theme park, the development will also include hotels, serviced apartments, shopping centres, and more, and is due for completion by 2025.

"We are determined to leverage the incredible expertise of the group in non-gaming activities," said Melco Chairman & Chief Executive Lawrence Ho Yau-lung.

Shop til you land

SINGAPORE Airlines and KrisShop are set to launch the world's first in-flight e-shopping experience.

The airline will become the first to offer live online shopping on board its aircraft from next week, when the KrisShop e-commerce platform becomes available via the KrisWorld in-flight entertainment system.

Customers will be able to choose from more than 4,000 products across a wide range of categories including airline merchandise, beauty, and more.

The service will initially be available on select Airbus A350 aircraft, before being progressively rolled out across Singapore Airlines' network.

TRAVEL SPECIALS

WELCOME to Travel Specials, *Travel Daily's* Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of, send the details to specials@traveldaily.com.au

Kids can fly free this school holidays with **Melbourne Star Observation Wheel**. Every day from 26 Jun to 11 Jul, the giant ferris wheel will offer a free flight for a child with every full price ticket. Book online [HERE](#).

Cruise Traveller has an exclusive offer for a 13 Jun 2022 Kimberley voyage with Yotspace between Broome and Darwin aboard the eight-guest *Pheonix One*, offering free private car airport transfer in Darwin for bookings made by the end of next month. The cruise is priced from \$12,020 per person, twin-share, including light plane boat transfers in Broome and Darwin. Call 1800 507 777 for more details.

Book a European holiday for next year with **Insight Vacations** and receive an exclusive 15% discount. Guests who book selected itineraries before 14 Jul can take advantage of the offer, with returning guests also eligible for a further 5% discount, delivering a combined saving of 20% off. Reserve your place today - call 1800 001 778.

Family groups can save almost \$10,000 on a tall ship adventure with **Tradewind Voyages** in Australia this Christmas. The offer is available through Cruise Traveller, with a second cabin booked for a family member including a saving of \$928 off the \$9,530pp fare - [HERE](#).

Got a confidential tip? Contact *Travel Daily* via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click [HERE](#)