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ATAC adds seven members

THE Australian Travel Agents Co-Operative (ATAC) has expanded its ranks by seven new members in recent months, with a number of further prospects "well into the pipeline" as agencies consider their post-pandemic options.

ATAC GM Michelle Emerton and Chairman Ken Morgan told *Travel Daily* the key attraction for many of the additions is that unlike many other agency groups "we are not locking anyone in".

"There is no fee to join, no ongoing fees, no marketing levies and no franchise fees," Emerton said, meaning ATAC members are able to use their funds to "invest in their own future, rather than a brand's future".

She noted that the current COVID-19 situation had forced many business owners to reassess their position and had given them an opportunity to look at their bottom line.

Transparency is also a key

attractor for many ATAC members, who are given complete autonomy about how they support preferred partners.

"We don't tell our members who they have to use - but by the same token our preferred deals give them plenty of opportunities to make some serious money," Morgan noted, with prospective new members often comparing ATAC's offering with the deals offered by their current network.

"99 times out of 100 we are in the money," he said.

As a cooperative, all ATAC members hold shares in the group which pre-COVID were delivering a 12% dividend, while also giving members up to seven override payments a year complete with itemised accounts so they can see the results of their support for preferreds.

"Every single sale made with a preferred partner makes our members money," Morgan said.

Emerton said while ATAC had long been seen as one of the industry's best kept secrets, "we're not the quiet achievers any more," with the support provided to members over the last 20 months putting agents in a "good position to restart again" as the pandemic subsides.

Wild for walking...

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has already hit its target of 600 registrations for next month's second annual Walk for Wellness campaign (**TD** 01 Sep), with the company now hoping to boost participation to 1,000.

The program aims to collectively walk 100,000km as it keeps the industry involved, engaged and energised with prizes, group sessions and more - to sign up see partnersfirstrewards.ncl.com.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news including our **PUZZLE** & a full page from **Singapore Travel Specialist**.

Adventure emerges

P&O Cruises Australia's *Pacific Adventure* has emerged from dry dock as the latest addition to the cruise line's three-ship fleet.

Showcasing its new identity and new livery, you can read more and view imagery in today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.



Bake along with us in September, with different recipes each week.

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This week's recipe:

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National plan on track: Tehan

THE Government's four-stage National Plan based on vaccination targets is our "ticket out of the pandemic," according to Federal Tourism Minister Dan Tehan, who last night confirmed restrictions on travel would ease at the 80% vaccination rate.

Speaking to a webinar convened by Sydney-based Member for Wenworth, Dave Sharma, Tehan said there had been a "real commitment from particular states and territories to adopting the national plan".

"The national plan is incredibly important, because once we get to that 80% vaccination rate, and it's 80% in a particular state and 80% across the nation - so if one state is lagging that does not hold up the national plan - that will allow international outbound travel to resume," he said.

"With our two most populous states, NSW and Vic, really ramping up their vaccination

rates, we're going to hit that 80% rate for individual states very quickly," he said.

While outbound travel will be permitted to any destination, it's likely that home quarantine will still be required for trips to countries not in a "travel bubble" with Australia - but discussions are also proceeding on that front.

Tehan said there was already a commitment to have a travel bubble with Singapore "ready to go by the end of the year," while there had also been some "very serious discussions with some of the Pacific Island nations".

South Korea, Japan, the UK and USA are also very keen to put travel bubbles in place with Australia, alongside the existing arrangements with New Zealand.

While there had been "noise" from some states about the plan, "they all did agree...we are very keen to make sure the national plan is adhered to," Tehan said.



RCG refunds work

ROYAL Caribbean Group (RCG) Chief Executive Officer Richard Fain said the company is looking to automate refunds so as to never fall as far behind in repaying passengers as it did during the pandemic.

Fain told *Global Cruise Report* that RCG had managed to work refund times down from 90 days to 30 days, which it was looking to cut down even further.

Avalon offsets

THE Globus family of brands' Lighthouse Project is branching out with a new Trees4Travel partnership, which will see Avalon Waterways offset the carbon footprint of every guest's cruise next year.

The company will manage this by donating tens of thousands of trees to Trees4Travel, while Globus, Cosmos and Monograms passengers will also be able to offset their holiday.



Window Seat

THERE are travellers out there who immerse themselves in the destination they are visiting more than most, and one great way to do this is to read a book set in their holiday location.

Well, now there's a really easy way to select the book, with a new site called Trip Fiction launching recently which allows travellers to easily search for books set in specific cities and countries around the world across different genres.

If you were travelling to Sweden you might pick up a copy of the crime novel *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, or if venturing to New Zealand in search of a thriller, a simple search reveals *Cemetery Lake* by Paul Cleave as an option.

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Wednesday 8th September 2021

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Thailand eyes Jan

THAILAND'S Minister of Tourism Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn wants the country fully reopened without quarantine by Jan 2022.

Ratchakitprakarn conceded the feat would depend on the country's vaccination efforts, pointing out Bangkok's reopening had been delayed a month, with most residents awaiting their second dose.

However he confirmed the reopening of Chiang Mai, Chonburi, and Prachuap Khiri Khan would go ahead on 01 Oct.

BYO coffee cluster

ANOTHER BYO Coffee Cluster Webinar Series is being planned for Oct and Nov, with suppliers invited to express their interest in taking part in the sessions.

Destination Webinars Founder Charlie Trevena said she was passionate in playing a part in helping suppliers get their messages out there - email **HERE**.

ATAS pullouts continue

MORE than 80 participants have withdrawn from the AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme over the last three months, most of them voluntarily withdrawing due to their businesses closing.

According to updates on the AFTA website, the pullouts include 10 Helloworld branded members including Helloworld Jannali, Helloworld Mount Lawley, Helloworld Ballarat, Helloworld Mt Barker, Helloworld Applecross, Helloworld Langwarrin, Helloworld South Perth, Helloworld Atherton and Helloworld Mt Ommaney.

Other agencies which have cited “business closure” for their withdrawal include Epping Travel, The Travel Haven, Our Travel & Cruise Experts, Maitland World Travel and TKT Travel and Cruise.

Platinum Travel Management
Albury, Alpha Travel, Directions
Travel WA, Tertiary Travel and
italktravel and cruise Midland are

among the closures, along with Jetaway Travel, All Things Travel Lara, Best of the Kimberley, Magic Travel and italktravel & cruise Castle Hill (**TD** 23 Aug).

As well as the closures, almost 40 other travel businesses are listed as voluntarily withdrawing from the scheme over the period, with no reason cited.

The list of withdrawals is currently up to 23 Aug, with more agencies expected to follow suit as financial stress on the industry mounts.

Sheraton appoints

NATHAN Gadd has been named as the new Director of Sales & Marketing at Sheraton Grand Mirage Resort on the Gold Coast.

Gadd returns to the region after six years at Sheraton Grand Mirage Port Douglas where he was involved in a significant makeover of the property.

Rail combo tours

APT has released two new rail combination tours centred on a three-day Great Southern rail journey from Brisbane to Adelaide.

Travellers can combine the Great Southern with a four-day private jet tour of South Australia, or a seven-day four-wheel drive luxury short break from Adelaide.

Both trips depart Brisbane 31 Jan 2022 and are priced from \$8,995 per person, twin share including a saving of \$1,000 per couple when booked by the end of this month.

Private jet tour passengers will enjoy a special winery experience at St Hugo Wines in the Barossa Valley, and will also visit Port Lincoln for a bay cruise.

Four-wheel drive short breakers will stay at luxury boutique accommodations including The Louise in the Barossa Valley and Mount Loftv House Adelaide Hills.

For more information on the
tours, call 1300 278 278.

The image is a promotional graphic for NCL's 2nd Annual Walk for Wellness. It features a light blue background decorated with numerous travel-themed icons such as a windmill, a bicycle, a palm tree, a train, a lighthouse, the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty, a cruise ship, a penguin, a reindeer, a cactus, a pretzel, a person sunbathing, another bicycle, a ballerina, a car, a guitar player, a whale, a cake, a house, a sailboat, a flower, and a person swimming. A large white rectangular area in the center contains the main text. At the top right of this area is a small globe icon. The text reads: "NCL'S 2ND ANNUAL WALK FOR WELLNESS 1-31 OCTOBER 2021". Below this, it says: "Join the NCL team in October for a walking challenge like no other, celebrating health and wellbeing within the travel industry." Then: "Get active and track your steps alongside your travel agent friends as we follow Norwegian Prima's inaugural season. As we journey around an interactive map, there'll be fun weekly challenges and exciting prizes up for grabs, including an NCL cruise, Apple Watch Series 6, gift cards and much more!" Next: "Register now and we'll provide information on how to get started, including downloading our free app." At the bottom of the white area is an orange button that says "REGISTER NOW". In the bottom left corner of the entire image, there is a small logo for "NCL Feel Free™".

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Register now and we'll provide information on how to get started,
including downloading our free app.

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BA plots a Better World



BRITISH Airways has announced the launch of its Better World sustainability program, revealing a new partnership with BP to source sustainable aviation fuel for all flights between London, Glasgow and Edinburgh during the UK's COP26 climate change summit.

To mark the moment, BA has partnered with Airbus to paint one of its fuel-efficient A320neos in the colours of the sustainability program (**pictured** behind BA CEO

Sean Doyle).

The British carrier also announced its customers will be able to purchase sustainable aviation fuel tickets in addition to carbon offset options.

"We're clear that we have a responsibility to reduce our impact on the planet and have a detailed plan to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, including investing in more fuel-efficient aircraft and improving efficiency," Doyle said.

The September issue of *travelBulletin* is out now. Read about CATO's reforms, vax the way forward for travel, Hurtigruten heading to Africa and more!

travelBulletin [CLICK to read](#)



VA Tassie promo

TO MARK its first services between Adelaide and Launceston (**TD** 10 Aug), Virgin Australia is offering flights at \$79 for travel up until 28 Feb.

The promotion will run until midnight this Fri and also includes the accumulation of loyalty points and status credits.

Sphere ships start

CONSTRUCTION on Princess Cruises upcoming LNG "Sphere" vessels has got underway in Italy this week, with the first steel cut on the first of the two ships.

Weighing 175,000 gross tonnes, the new dual-fuel powered LNG vessel will be the largest built so far in Italy, according to Fincantieri's Monfalcone yard, with each to accommodate approximately 4,300 guests and be based on a next-generation platform design.

The ship will be delivered in late 2023 and 2025.

Walk into luxury

WALK into Luxury has introduced a new premium four-day adventure in Tasmania which departs for the first time in Dec.

Leaving Hobart from 17 Dec, highlights of the day pack-only journey includes visits to Russell Falls, Lake Seal and Lake Dobson at Mount Field, as well as Shadow Lake, Platypus Bay & Echo Point.

Also included is a three-night stay at boutique property Pumphouse Point, located within the World Heritage-listed Tasmanian wilderness area overlooking Lake St Clair.

There guests will enjoy three-course dinners with local Tasmanian wines, as well as an in-room larder of local cheese, chocolate and other provisions.

The trip is priced from \$3,150ppts and departs weekly on Fri from 17 Dec to the end of Apr 2022, with added seasons to run from Oct 2022 to Apr 2023.

More details on offer **HERE**.



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F	P	T	T	X	N	G	F	M	N	E	U	H	W	M
Z	C	R	O	S	S	C	O	U	N	T	R	Y	Y	U

SEE if you can find these words. They are hidden horizontally, vertically and diagonally, forwards and backwards.

APRES
BEANIE
CHAIRLIFT
COAT
CROSSCOUNTRY
GLOVES
GONDOLA
ICE

SCARF
SKIING
SNOW
SNOWBALL
SNOWBOARDING
SNOWSHOEING
THERMALS
WINTER

Unscramble

HOW many words can you make out of these nine letters? Every word needs to include the centre letter, have four letters or more and not be a proper noun or a plural. You can only use each letter once.

I	C	S
T	H	A
M	I	N

Good – 15 words
Very good – 22 words
Excellent – 30 words

NOTE: We've used Chambers Dictionary to decide what words are acceptable.

Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly's fortnightly consumer magazine called *Keep Dreaming* is specially designed for agents to send their clients.



Know your brands

LOGOS are the main way that companies distinguish themselves, and some logos are so famous that you don't even need to see the company's name to know who it is.

See if you can identify these four logos.

1



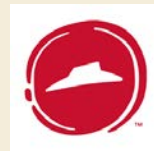
2



3



4



Whose animal is this?



SPRINGBOKS get their common name from their characteristic jumping display, leaping up to 2m off the ground in a stiff-legged posture.

Springboks are part of the antelope family and are mainly found in southern and southwestern Africa.

They have been the national animal of this country since the middle of the 20th century and a number of sporting teams of this nation are named after them, most notably the country's rugby union team.

Do you know whose national animal they are?

ANSWERS 08 SEP
Know your brands: 1 hipages, 2 VisitScotland, 3 Reading Cinemas, 4 Pizza Hut
Whose animal is this: Springbok - South Africa
Unscramble: cash, chain, chant, chasm, chat, chianti, chin, china, chit, chitin, hint, inch, isthmian, itch, MACHINIST, mash, match, math, maths, sham, shim, smith, snatch, snitch, staunch, than, thiamin, thin, this

Take the back roads of Ireland



BACK-ROADS Touring has seen bookings for its Emerald Isle tour of Ireland move from number three to top spot during the COVID-impacted period, the brand's Head of Sales Dylan Hearne has revealed.

Speaking to *Travel Daily* at Tourism Ireland's Virtual Expo yesterday, Hearne suggested one of the key drivers for this trend is a desire for travellers to visit friends and relatives after a prolonged period of absence.

"Australia has the highest population of Irish pro rata of any country in the world, the US has the highest population overall... but it has a very high legacy value and whenever I talk to friends they always seem to have some Irish lineage in their family to go back and visit," he said.

Hearne added that Ireland was also "on the radar" for the retired bucket list, baby boomer market, especially in combination with cruising out of Dublin to Iceland and Norway which have proved to be "hugely popular".

Another strong driver for Back-Roads in Ireland is its off-the-beaten track small group appeal, Hearne believes, with booking

trends suggesting more travellers are seeking smaller and safer tours as the world emerges from the pandemic.

"Small group touring is becoming more in favour now because of COVID than it was pre-COVID and in our domain there are not too many operators that do what we do in Ireland which puts us in great stead going forward," he said.

"We don't actually do capital cities on our tours either, we're not going to cliché destinations or sites that you would normally do on a mainstream tour...which from a safety perspective takes travellers away from that core conglomerate group...so there's comfort and safety for the customer," Hearne added.

Hearne added that Back-Roads is predicting near-normal booking volumes for Ireland in 2022 following an encouraging start to Sep, traditionally a strong month.

Back-Roads' popular two-week full Ireland experience from Dublin to Dublin is priced from \$5,519pp - for more details on the tour [CLICK HERE](#).

Pictured: The picturesque lakes of Killarney.

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Japan preps travel

JAPAN will issue digital COVID-19 vaccination certificates for overseas travel from Dec.

The Japanese Government plans to issue the guarantees via a QR scan code through a smartphone application.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and other cabinet members met on Mon regarding the promotion of a digital society, where they will decide on the specific details of a Government policy for digital vaccine passports.

EK carries more

EMIRATES carried 15.8 million passengers as the largest international airline in 2020.

Last year also saw Emirates' airport innovations facilitate the safe resumption of travel, and further enhancement of the customer experience.

This was led by the airline's new self-service check-in and bag drop kiosks, which enable customers to check-in, receive their boarding pass, choose seats on board, and drop off their bags.

ACCOMMODATION

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.



Jumeirah Group has announced its new international resort called **Jumeirah Maldives** will welcome its first guests from 01 Oct. The 67-villa luxury resort is located in the waters of the North Male Atoll, reachable by speedboat or seaplane from

Male Airport. The property is being promoted as suited to romantic getaways or an island retreat for friends and family to experience tropical luxury with many activity-based attractions.



The 345-room **W Changsha** has opened its doors in Hunan province China, located in the busy region of the city's central shopping precinct. Features of the new Marriott-owned hotel include a 24/7 fitness centre, expansive pool with a three-metre

"Space Cat" sculpture, a wellness spa, and large spaces for meetings and events across five separate rooms. The hotel also has plenty on offer for foodies, with three on-site restaurants available.



IHG Hotels and Resorts has opened the 73-room **Staybridge Suites Cardiff** in Wales, marking the debut for the brand in the European country. The pet-friendly property features rooms with fully equipped kitchens, free wi-fi, comfortable living areas and

flexible working spaces. Common area facilities also include a fitness centre, laundry facilities, parking area, a coffee bar and lounge, as well as several relaxation spaces in the lobby.

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