

\$5,000 up for grabs with Star Alliance

STAR Alliance is celebrating its 25th birthday this month, and travel agents get all the presents.

Having been founded in 1997, the network of leading global carriers has "led the way in enabling seamless travel experiences, finding new ways to recognise and reward loyalty, and creating cutting-edge digital solutions that make international travel easier", according to a spokesperson for the Alliance.

A special competition for travel advisors is launching today with five easy-to-answer questions and participants will be in the running to win one of 25 gift cards worth \$200 each - to enter simply go to traveldaily.com.au/star-alliance.

Hawai'i incentive

THE Travel Junction (TTJ) has launched a new campaign in partnership with Hawai'i Tourism Oceania, offering 15% commission on all Hawai'i accom bookings between now and 21 Oct for stays until 31 Mar 2023.

The deal is available exclusively for bookings via TTJ's HELiO platform, and the travel advisor with the highest sales during the campaign will also win a trip to Hawaii - **CLICK HERE** for details.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news plus full pages:

- United Airlines
- CLIA Cruise360

AFTA finances stabilise

THE Australian Federation of Travel Agents has reported a \$178,000 loss for the year to 31 Mar - a significant improvement on the \$2.1m loss in 2020/21 as the pandemic reared its ugly head.

The AFTA annual report was released on Fri, detailing a range of achievements including successfully reducing expenses by more than 50%, while maintaining "the critical areas of advocacy and member support".

Membership fees were reintroduced at a significantly discounted rate following the free membership year in 2020, while staff numbers were slashed to six.

The outcome means AFTA still has a "sizeable retained earnings position which continues to be under management, generating income for the Association beyond membership fees and corporate partnerships in future years," the report notes.

Going forward, AFTA will continue to be primarily funded by membership subscriptions, under the new transparent fee structure (**TD** 05 May) which is based on turnover rather than the number of retail locations.

The financial statements show AFTA's overall revenue for 2021/22 was \$1.33 million, while expenses totalled \$1.51 million.

Total salaries amounted to \$589,942 - just over a third of the \$1.6 million in 2020/21 - while the report also notes the lease on AFTA's Sydney CBD premises was extended during the year and will now expire on 22 Jul 2023.

More from AFTA on **page five**.

What's the big industry secret?

A MYSTERY organisation has launched a new campaign today promising that "the travel industry's best kept secret is about to be revealed".

To express your interest in being among the first to find out what the big news is, **CLICK HERE**.

C360 tix available

CRUISE Lines International Association Australasia is inviting the industry to be part of cruising's revival by taking part in this month's Cruise360 conference in Sydney.

Scheduled for Thu 25 Aug at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, tickets also include entry to an industry-wide cocktail party - see the **last page**.

Farrar to Collette

DAVID Farrar has been appointed as Collette's new Head of Sales in the Australian market (**TD** breaking news), with the move part of expansion to meet surging demand.

Farrar is well known to the industry after more than 20 years with The Travel Corporation's Insight Vacations and Luxury Gold (**TD** 14 Apr), leaving the company in a restructuring earlier this year.

He said after seeing Collette's "exceptional" handling of traveller bookings and refunds throughout the pandemic "I'm looking forward to joining the team and continuing the Collette success story in Australia".

Collette's Exec VP Global Business, Christian Liebl-Cote, said having seen the market potential when he visited this year (**TD** 19 May) "now is the right time to build our Australian team".

"David brings huge experience and we look forward to rapid growth out of Australia," he said.

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LE adds more activities

LUXURY Escapes customers will now be able to choose from more than 2,000 experiences across 150 destinations worldwide, after the Melbourne-based travel provider announced the launch of Standalone Experiences today.

Highlights include an 11-course Land & Sea degustation experience at the award-winning nel in Sydney; a scenic flight to Rottneest Island with Swan River Seaplanes, an encounter with green sea turtles in Waikiki during a three-hour boat adventure; and luxury gondola cruises on the Gold Coast.

Members will also be able to access live events, including VIP tickets to see tenor Andrea Bocelli in concert at Qudos Bank Arena in Sydney, or score corporate box seats at the Australian Open tennis tournament.

Co-founder and CEO of Luxury Escapes Adam Schwab, revealed the company grew its experience

offering by 81% in 2021 during the pandemic, and is working with partners in global key markets, including Thailand, Bali, Maldives, the UK and the United States to further expand its growing product portfolio.

“We’re committed to delivering the best travel experiences for our customers, so we’re excited to be offering even more options in a way that suits both travellers and local best,” he said.

For more details, [CLICK HERE](#).

Bangkok opening

THE Standard, Bangkok Mahanakon has opened as Global Group Asia’s flagship on the continent.

Taking up residence inside the King Power MahaNakhon, the urban retreat offers 155 rooms and suites, as well as cultural programming anchored by food, drink, and after-dark offerings.

Professor Gschwind

FORMER Queensland Tourism Industry Council CEO Daniel Gschwind has joined Griffith Institute for Tourism (GIFT) as a Professor of Practice, where he will ensure research methodologies are at best standard and improve relationships with the key private and government stakeholders.

He will also help GIFT create legacies tied to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

SIA massive profits

SINGAPORE Airlines Group (SIA) has posted a first quarter operating profit of S\$556 million (A\$576 million) on the back of surging pax demand.

SIA posted its second-highest quarterly operating profit in its history, and also recorded an operating cash surplus of S\$1.48 billion (A\$1.53 billion) for the three months, a significant improvement on the prior period of almost A\$1.04 billion.

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Samoa Tourism Authority invites proposals from experienced sales and business development specialists and agencies to provide strategic sales planning and management services.

The mobile Sales Executives will be based in Brisbane (and will cover Queensland) and Melbourne (and will cover Victoria).

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MORE THAN HOT AIR...

Adam Bishop investigates the government's ambitious new plans for a local Sustainable Aviation Fuel industry.



Window Seat

FEASTING on insects while flying is simply not cricket!

Except perhaps in the case of low-cost Japanese carrier Zipair, which recently revealed its passengers now have the choice of ordering burgers loaded with powder made up of spotted crickets, a supposedly nutritious boost for one's immune system.

The creepy crawly burger will also boast tomato, fresh buns, patty, and a spicy flavoured tomato sauce - we can only assume to disguise the questionable taste and texture.



Bonza jet touches down!

THE wait is finally over for soon-to-launch Aussie carrier Bonza, with its first Boeing 737 MAX aircraft touching down on the tarmac at Sunshine Coast Airport this morning (**pictured**).

It was a milestone moment for the new airline which has faced delays in obtaining its first planes (**TD** 18 May), with the touchdown marking the first 737 MAX to be based in Australia and another key step towards Bonza making a possible late Sep launch.

The fleet of planes will be based initially on the Sunshine Coast and in Melbourne, where Bonza plans to fly Aussies travellers to 17 destinations on 27 routes.

"We are beyond excited to welcome our first aircraft to Sunshine Coast Airport and with so much buzz around the country for Bonza, we hope today is also exciting for the communities we'll be flying to," CEO Tim Jordan said. "We are now one important



step closer to connecting more Australians with convenient low-cost travel options to more destinations for holidays and to visit loved ones," he added.

The aircraft's finishing touches, including its unique Bonza interiors, will be completed in Australia, with the airline now calling on Aussie travellers to help name the inaugural jet.

"Who better to name our first aircraft than the people we are here to serve," Jordan enthused.

Earlier this month, Bonza announced its IATA code as 'AB' (**TD** 12 Jul), a nod to Andrew Brodie and his team who welcomed Bonza to the Sunshine Coast as its home base.

DRW gets tastier

DARWIN Airport's food and beverage facilities are set to be significantly upgraded over the next several months as part of a new 10-year agreement signed with SSP Group plc.

Reflecting on the new deal, Darwin Airport Executive General Manager Property and Terminal Ross Baynes said the hub was in need of an upgrade as it looks to bring the airport up to the evolving needs of travellers.

"Food and beverage offerings at airports are inextricably linked to customer experience, so it is really important we offer variety, quality and value," he said.

The Northern Common, Asian Kitchen, Top End Burgers, Crate and Maccinetta will all open progressively, with existing retailer Hectors set to reopen with a revamped look and menu.

In the international terminal, Pronto by Maccinetta, the Gliding Goose, Roll'd, and Red Rooster will all open later this year.



Enhancing connectivity from Australia

We are pleased to announce the resumption of daily services to Canberra via Melbourne, starting 1 October 2022.

With this resumption we will operate two daily flights from Melbourne, enhancing our network from Australia to 45 weekly flights.

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GOING PLACES TOGETHER



Rising costs impact SA

CONCERNS over rising costs, inflation, and labour shortages are impacting business confidence among tourism operators in South Australia, according to The Tourism Industry Council South Australia (TiCSA) latest *Sentiments Survey*.

Just one in four businesses managed to increase their workforce over the Jun quarter, while 45% of tourism operators also reported an increase in wage expenses, with most doing so to attract and retain staff "in a tight, competitive market".

Rising prices has led many tourism businesses to raise their costs with consumers, with the report showing that close to half of the state's operators had hiked their rates since last year.

TiCSA CEO, Shaun de Bruyn, said that while the survey certainly pointed to some promising recovery signs, the results were

also a reminder that recovery from COVID-19 will not be a swift and smooth journey.

"Labour shortages, rising inflation, and an uncertain economy take the shine off what looks to be a pathway to the strong recovery of the tourism industry," de Bruyn said.

"We must emphasise that recovery isn't immediate, and despite things looking bright, we must continue to work with industry to build their resilience."

On the plus side, just over 70% of businesses reported they were not experiencing a downturn due to COVID-19, while 49% of respondents said they had experienced an increase in the holiday/leisure market segment.

Close to two-thirds of businesses also noted they were either "extremely confident" or "confident" about how business will fare over the next 12 months.

Refer & be rewarded

FLIGHT Centre launched its Alumni Referral Program last week, with any former worker at the company who successfully refers a candidate to pocket a \$250 Flight Centre travel voucher.

"The referral program allows us the chance to grow our Flight Centre family tree and welcome new candidates into the business that have never worked with us before," the company said.

To refer a candidate, former Flighties need to select the job they wish to refer and fill in their details using the 'Refer a Friend' box on the job ad.

ATAC Vietnam tours

AUSTRALIA Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC) is offering a series of group tours to Vietnam as part of a new tie-up with Asia Spa Retreat.

Adventures focus on stays in Ho Chi Minh City, Nha Trang, Hanoi and Da Nang.

Mudgee campaign

MUDGEE Region Tourism's new campaign has now launched to the market, targeting a "new generation" of traveller.

The campaign focuses on encouraging visitors to "feel the love" by reconnecting, rediscovering, and reimagining the region.

Mudgee and its surrounding towns and villages will focus on sharing amplified activities aligned with food + wine, wellness + nature, arts + music, and vibrant heritage.

Agri-tourism series

GURU Productions has launched a new national program filmed in Victoria and supported by Visit Victoria and Agriculture Victoria, recognising the value of the agri-tourism industry.

Good Chef Hunting, featuring well-known chef Alejandro Saravia, will launch nationally on Sat across Nine's channels.



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Don't forget to follow us on Facebook for awesome spot prizes too and details of exclusive rates at selected USA hotels.

To be in with a chance of winning one of these amazing prizes, make a Stuba USA accommodation booking of \$250 and over between now and 21 August to automatically be entered into the prize draw to win.

For full details of hotel prizes and t's and c's, scan the QR code or visit usa.stuba.com



FOCUS ON AFTA ANNUAL REPORT

AFTA: industry still in crisis

AUSTRALIAN Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) Chairman, Tom Manwaring from Express Travel Group, has noted that despite improving conditions as the COVID-19 pandemic abates, “it is clear we are still in a crisis and one that will take some time to work through”.

Writing in the AFTA Annual Report (see **page 1**), Manwaring noted that the impact of the virus was swift and destructive, while the recovery is bringing its own challenges to the industry.

“In my 53 years in this industry I have never experienced an operating environment such as the one we are facing today, and I do not see this changing any time soon,” he noted.

“Our team members at all levels are now being asked to work harder than ever before, to continue supporting our suppliers

and travellers.”

Manwaring highlighted negative consequences of the situation, including the huge pressure being placed on industry workers to manage schedule changes and client demands, at the same time generating new business.

“For business owners, the changing commercial environment is presenting significant challenges with financial implications which are yet to normalise...with this changed operating environment we must be mindful of this and urgently identify how we can reform our cultures to retain and attract great people,” he said.

A key focus for AFTA going forward is “working with all stakeholders to encourage and promote the benefits of working in our sector,” Manwaring added.

“AFTA must, and is, assisting in creating a generation of new travel professionals and this work will continue into next year and beyond,” he concluded.

AFTA and ATAS by the numbers

THE Australian Federation of Travel Agents had 1,186 members in total as at 31 Mar 2022, with the organisation’s Annual Report noting that represented total employment of 54,744 people across the country - in turn supporting 2.29 million Aussies.

ATAS accredited membership included 166 tour operators and wholesalers comprising 14% of the total, along with 842 retail travel agents (71% of the total), 83 corporate travel agencies/ TMCs (7%), 59 mobile agents (5%) and 35 online travel agencies (3%).

The 1,186 total ATAS accredited entities was down 165 on the 1,351 number from Mar 2021, representing 2,618 locations.

The corresponding figure in Mar 2020 was a total of 2,738 ATAS accredited locations.

The 2022 report doesn’t break the ATAS membership numbers down in to actual locations, reflecting the new TTV-based membership fee model.

Strong advocacy track record

AFTA’S bipartisan approach to promoting the interests of the travel sector continued to deliver during 2022, according to a summary in the AFTA Annual Report released on Fri.

The Federation focused on building relationships with major political parties and critical crossbench MPs, investing “considerable resources... in growing understanding and awareness of the value of travel and travel professionals”.

As well as direct advocacy, AFTA members were empowered to speak directly to MPs, while the year included 271 meetings with MPs and public servants, 1,476 media engagements, 653 AFTA media releases and briefings plus a whopping 38 Parliamentary speeches referencing ATAS travel businesses.

Dean Long: equity is key

AFTA CEO Dean Long says the Federation has been able to deliver over the last twelve months because of a “focus on no frills and a return to fundamentals: a commitment to equity, transparency and governance, and a determination to evolve to ensure future success”.

Writing in the AFTA Annual Report for the year to 31 Mar (**pictured**), he noted that “the values of transparency, governance and equity are core to my approach as CEO,” with the AFTA Board and team sharing similar commitments which drive their approach and actions daily.

“The strength and advantage of the AFTA Board lies in the broad representation from independents through to branded, retail to corporate, across the full range of travel businesses,” Long wrote.

“The value of this diverse set of views continues, and AFTA continues to supplement Board discussions with member consultation,” he added.

“This is a time when the value of a travel professional, leisure and corporate, is more compelling than ever...we have and must continue to challenge our approach to ensure we are in exactly the right spot to harness future opportunities.

To view the full AFTA annual report **CLICK HERE**.



Tribute to Tom

THE selfless commitment of AFTA Chairman Tom Manwaring has been called out by CEO Dean Long in the Federation’s Annual Report which was released on Fri.

Long highlighted Manwaring’s willingness to become Executive Chairman after the abrupt departure of Darren Rudd.

“Tom’s generosity in voluntarily taking on these responsibilities, essentially acting as a de-facto CEO without payment, should not be underestimated,” he said.

“He provided direction, leadership and support for the AFTA team so they could keep supporting members at the level needed during the darkest times of COVID...he has always done so with wisdom, kindness and humour and that should and must be acknowledged.”



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BROCHURES

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



Swan Hellenic - Worldwide Cultural Expeditions

Swan Hellenic has published a new brochure detailing its 2022/23 sailings, which promises travellers an in-depth look at wildlife, history, anthropology and landscapes across the globe, on journeys aboard its fleet of five-star boutique ships. Guests can witness the whitest sand and turquoise lagoons in the French Polynesia, visit Inuit communities and Viking ruins in the Canadian Arctic, or explore the savannah wilderness in Africa.

Each itinerary offers unforgettable excursions, from kayaking and Zodiac rides, to snorkelling, hiking and snowshoeing.

NZ cruise sessions

THE NEW Zealand Cruise Association is inviting travel agents to attend its Regional Workshops this week.

The first workshop is set to take place tomorrow in Dunedin, followed by Christchurch on Thu, and Tauranga on Fri.

The association is also counting down to its 2022 conference, which will be held at the Aotea Centre, Auckland, on Thu 18 Aug.

Dreamliner update

THE Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has granted Boeing approval to commence its inspection and modification plan for the Boeing 787 Dreamliner, after a 15-month pause on deliveries and several airworthiness directives.

Boeing currently holds 120 undelivered 787s in its inventory, with American Airlines expected to receive the first 787 once deliveries resume.

Vic secures cycling

THE Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race will remain in Geelong and on the Surf Coast until at least 2025, after the Victorian Government secured the four-day cycling festival for the next three years - the next event is scheduled for Jan 2023.

AirAsia up in the air

AIRASIA has announced a one-year partnership between its dedicated Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) unit and AAM developer, Skyports Infrastructure, to explore the development of an urban air taxi service in Malaysia, particularly in Kuala Lumpur.

The partnership will focus on joint feasibility studies for the integration of air taxi vertiport infrastructure, the identification of potential vertiport sites, and the development of operational requirements and frameworks to establish a vertiport network to link with conventional air flights.

WA eases tourism burden

THE Western Australian Government has announced a new streamlined audit process for businesses providing nature-based tourism in the state's national parks, marine parks and other reserves in the conservation estate.

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) has collaborated with the Tourism Council of Western Australia and Ecotourism Australia to "align key performance indicators with higher levels of environmental accreditation".

This means that operators who achieve those standards will be deemed to have met DBCA's performance requirements in most cases, and will no longer have to undergo costly sustainability audits, except in "certain circumstances".

As a result, the new process will cut costs and time burdens for tourism operators, in addition to driving the high standards that are expected of tourism businesses, the govt claims.

Businesses set to benefit from the new process include many of the well-known wildlife and tourism experiences in WA, such as whale shark and humpback tours on the Ningaloo coast, and scenic flights and 4WD experiences in the Kimberley.

"This new audit process reaffirms the commitment to develop new experiences with the right environment safeguards in place," WA Tourism Minister Roger Cook said.

BA B777X delays

BRITISH Airways won't get its first Boeing 777X until 2026, the carrier has revealed, despite hopes it would arrive this year.

The initial order was placed in early 2019 (*TD* 01 Mar 2019), but following delays to the B777X program, a quarterly update from British's parent International Airlines Group confirmed it is now expecting the aircraft between 2026 and 2028.

Crossing the Tasman

A NUMBER of delegates from Tasmania's business community headed to New Zealand yesterday on a tourism and trade mission, as part of the Tasmanian Government's actions to grow and diversify the state's global economic opportunities.

Tasmanian Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Jo Palmer, who attended the mission, emphasised the importance of the New Zealand market to Tasmania's tourism industry.

Palmer highlighted Air New Zealand's direct flight into Hobart as a "fantastic opportunity" to bring travellers directly from New Zealand, as well as from North America via one-stop in Auckland to Hobart.

LGA refurbishment

NEW York City's completely new LaGuardia Airport is nearly done, after six years of construction.

Terminals B and C have been revamped to include new departure and arrival halls, gates, and security gates.

Delta Air Lines is the sole operator at Terminal C, which has invested a whopping US\$4 billion into the project.

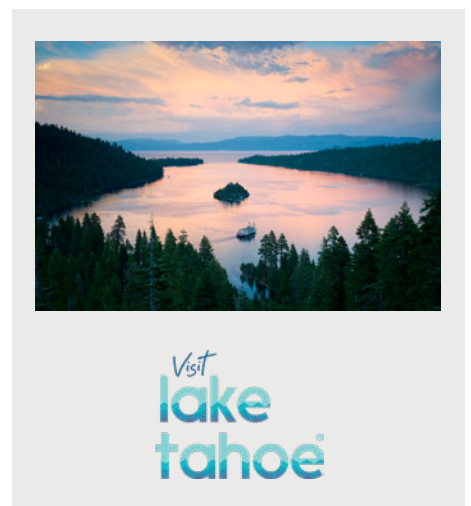
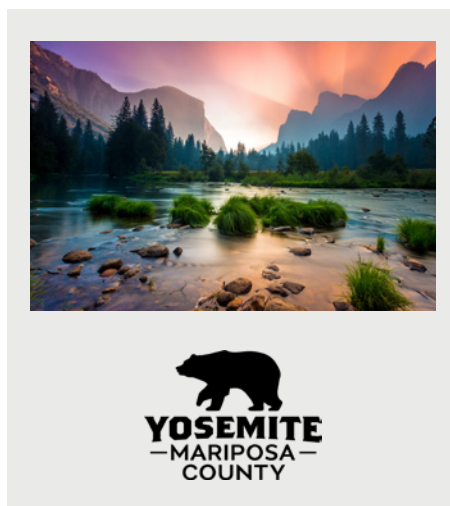
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- Join the Gate 7 **Facebook** agent page or **resource centre**.
- Agents who complete the training modules and qualify in all of the above will go into a draw (with one place for the agent who books the most).

Agents will be required to make their own ways to departure Cities SYD & MEL.



Game of Skill

1. Information on how to enter and prizes form part of these terms & conditions. Any entry not complying with these terms and conditions is invalid. The Promoter's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 2. Entry is open to any Australian registered travel agent, travel broker or mobile agent who sells and book United Airlines into SFO as a tourist destination from Australia. 3. The Promotion commences on 18th July - 29th August 4. To enter, Eligible Entrants must during the Promotion Period: Agents must complete the United Airlines Training Modules and book 4 United Airlines tickets from Australia to the USA on UA ticket stock 016. Join the Gate 7 Facebook agent page or resource centre. Agents also responsible to note booking number to provide to UA. • Six Agents will win a trip to San Francisco, Lake Tahoe and Yosemite National Park • Agents must register their details via the registration form, with UA ticket numbers & nights booked in San Francisco/Lake Tahoe/Yosemite Mariposa County. 5. The Promoter reserves the right to verify the validity of entries and reserves the right to disqualify any entrant for tampering with the entry process or for submitting an entry that is not in accordance with these Terms & Conditions. 6. Agents who complete the training modules and qualify in all of the above will go into a draw (with one place for the agent who books the most) will win a place on the fam 8. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Chance plays no part in determining the winning. 9. The Prizes: • Six (6) Places on the 'Breathe with United' retail agent fam trip. • 3 Nights in San Francisco • 2 Nights in Yosemite Mariposa County • 2 Nights in Lake Tahoe • All accommodation, touring and activities • 50% of meals 10. Not included: • Transfers to departure city (Melbourne x 2 and Sydney x 4) • Airline taxes • Incidentals

Terms and Conditions

Entrants must be free and available to travel to the USA Saturday 15th Oct, returning to Australia Monday 24th October. The prize winners will be responsible for all expenses not outlined in the prize description including but not limited to food and beverage, gratuities, activities, souvenirs, and the securing of and payment for any Visa expenses required for entry into the US. The prize cannot be changed or deferred to another date. No cash alternative. By participating, the entrant agrees to be bound to these terms & conditions and the decisions of United, and agrees to waive any right to claim ambiguity in regard to the contest mechanics and/or the interpretation of these terms & conditions.

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- Ben Angell, VP and MD of Norwegian Cruise Line APAC and Chairman, CLIA Australasia

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