Travel Daily First with the news

Friday 26th August 2022







Today's issue of *TD*

Travel Daily today features eight pages of news, including photo pages from CLIA's Cruise360 and Virtuoso.

Travel Daily

on location in **Iceland**

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line, which will this weekend hold a massive naming ceremony for its new Norwegian Prima in Reykjavik, Iceland officiated by pop princess Katy Perry.

A SIZEABLE Australian contingent has arrived in Iceland today in the lead-up to the highly anticipated naming ceremony for the new Norwegian Prima.

Participants will board the ship tomorrow, but in the meantime are making the most of key visitor highlights in Reykjavik, including the iconic "Golden Circle" tour which takes in three spectacular natural attractions, as well as the famed Blue Lagoon.

Tonight NCL CEO Harry Sommer will host a welcome reception, followed by a hosted dinner at Reykjavik's Harpa Cultural Centre, while tomorrow is the main event, billed as "A Very Perry Special Christening Ceremony" in which the global star will name the ship.

Govt seeks WoAG input

EXCLUSIVE

THE Federal Department of Finance has launched an industry consultation, seeking input from interested parties on a proposed upcoming tender process for the Whole of Australian Government (WoAG) travel contract.

A formal document describing the process notes that it is "not a notice or otherwise a part of any tender process for travel and accommodation management services, which is yet to be determined or commence".

The current arrangements are due to expire on 30 Jun 2023, and are currently provided under separate contracts with QBT Pty Ltd (for Travel Management Services) and AOT (for Accommodation Program Management Services) - both organisations now owned by Corporate Travel Management.

The consultation paper canvasses a range of new options, noting that the current arrangements have delivered a range of benefits for the government such as improved booking behaviour, discounted pricing, technology enhancements and greater reporting and oversight.

"However there is scope for further improvements under the new arrangements," the document notes, with the consultation aiming to engage a wide range of stakeholders

including government travel teams, travel bookers and travellers, the travel industry, and associated industry bodies.

Technology providers, TMCs. accommodation brokers and industry suppliers will also be engaged in the process.

It's expected that the consultation will conclude at the end of next month prior to the launch of a tender process which will be evaluated in the first few months of 2023 prior to the formal awarding of the tender.

A discussion paper highlights a range of topics, with responses requested by Fri 09 Sep.

Responses can be submitted HERE by 5pm (AEST) on Fri 09 Sep, & the discussion paper can be viewed **HERE** - more on **p6**.

How R U travelling?

MANAGE Health's Peter Annis-Brown has created an exclusive "Travelling with U" program for the travel industry, after a strong response to the recent session he hosted alongside Chris Watson Travel's Chris Watson and Richard Taylor from the Travel Community Hub (TD 04 Aug).

The interactive, self-paced online Accredited Mental Health First Aid course is "designed to help you offload your baggage".

A total of 50 places are available across two intakes, with registrations closing on 31 Aug for more details CLICK HERE.

NTIA voting live

VOTING is now open for the 2022 National Travel Industry Awards (TD yesterday), with categories up for grabs in both the "Most Popular" and several of the "Most Outstanding" categories - **CLICK HERE** to vote.







The travel industry's best kept secret revealed

The Australian travel industry's most comprehensive and transparent financial protection - find out why here





Air traffic still down 85%

INTERNATIONAL air traffic to/from Australia saw 1.61 million passengers pass through the country's airports in Jun, still well short of the 3.32 million travellers recorded during the same month before the pandemic.

The latest results published by the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics show that Australia's total air passenger numbers for the year to the end Jun was 6.51 million, down close to 85% on the same period in 2019.

Air capacity in and out of the country in Jun was also shown to be 53.1% short of 2019, while overall seat utilisation was back on better ground at 82.8%.

Qantas led the way with 17.8% of the market, followed by Singapore Airlines (15.6%), Jetstar (11.6%), Emirates (9.4%), Air New Zealand (7.4%) and Qatar (5.9%).

In terms of budget carriers, Indonesia AirAsia, Jetstar, Jetstar Asia and Scoot Tigerair comprised 17% of the total air traffic in and out of Australia, representing a slight increase on pre-pandemic volumes, which saw LLCs make up 14.2% of traffic in Jun 2019.

Sydney to Singapore remained in top spot as the most subscribed city pairing (112,053 pax), followed by Melbourne/ Singapore (109,804), Perth/ Singapore (77,351), Sydney/ Auckland (59,072) and Sydney/ Dubai (54,860).

QF increases Samoa

QANTAS has announced more direct weekly flights between Australia's eastern seaboard and Samoa's Faleolo International Airport as part of its Northern Winter schedule from Nov to Mar.

The additional services are scheduled for both weekdays and weekends, and are available to book now online.



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Bend it like Qatar

QATAR Tourism has kicked off a new stopover campaign featuring Posh Spice's husband David Beckham, showing travellers how they can slot tourism goals all over the country during a short stopover stay.

Beckham visits the spice markets of Souq Waqif, soaks up local street art, cooks up some tacos, cams in the desert, and takes a leisurely motorbike ride around Doha in the campaign.

The push will also serve to highlight Qatar's amazing stopover packages, starting from \$20pp per night for a 4-star hotel, and \$29pp for a 5-star hotel.

Watch the campaign HERE.



Fred's local GSA

EXCLUSIVE

CRUISE Traveller has been named as the exclusive Australian distributor for British cruise operator Fred.Olsen Cruise Lines.

The move has seen Cruise Traveller launch the first ever dedicated Australian website for the line at fredolsen.com.au, and will shortly launch the brand's first Australian brochure covering voyages in 2023/24.

Fred.Olsen operates four classic cruise liners accommodating between 900 and 1,360 guests, celebrating "traditional seafaring heritage".

Cruise Traveller MD Craig Bowen said the product was an "ideal alignment for Cruise Traveller's focus on boutique cruising experiences", with the company promoting an exclusive new 95-night 'Grand Africa and Indian Ocean' package starting in London on 17 Nov 2023 priced from \$24,645 - 1800 507 777.



Discover the beauty of Greece

Uncover the Mediterranean marvel on our two daily flights to Athens, four weekly flights to Mykonos, or three weekly flights to Santorini, via Hamad International Airport, Doha.

*Mykonos and Santorini are seasonal destinations, with flights available until 18 September 2022.





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Ohana shines Down Under



HAWAII Tourism Oceania has kicked off its 10th anniversary of Aloha Down Under this week after a two-year hiatus, with a large contingent of 'Ohana' (family) arriving on Aussie shores.

This year's roadshow attendees included 17 accommodation providers, airline and activity suppliers, such as Hawaiian Airlines, Marriott International, Norwegian Cruise Line, Waikiki Collection, and more.

Over 150 attended the agent roadshow event in Sydney, which was followed by gatherings this week in Brisbane and Melbourne, with Auckland the next location to hit on 29 Aug.

The five-day roadshow has included a dedicated B2B function, the opportunity to network with Hawaii suppliers, enjoy live Hawaiian entertainment, hear the latest destination updates, and the chance to win trips to Hawaii.

Pictured: Hawaii Tourism Oceania suppliers serenading media lunch attendees.



EK direct to AKL

EMIRATES will restore its non-stop A380 services to Auckland from 01 Dec, replacing the existing Boeing 777-300ER service, which makes a stop in Kuala Lumpur before continuing on to NZ's largest city.

When it reboots, the service between Dubai and Auckland will reclaim the mantle of being the longest route on the EK network, clocking in at 14,200 kilometres.

Flight EK448 from Dubai to AKL will depart at 10.05 and arrives at 11.05 local time the next day, while the return flight will depart AKL at 21.15 and arrive in Dubai at 05.25 the next day.

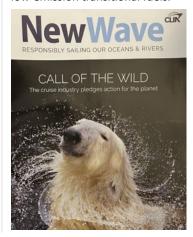
MEANWHILE Emirates will also be restoring its direct flights between Dubai and the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur on the same day as Auckland.

EK noted that deploying more A380 jets are in line with growing global demand, with 32 destinations being served & more coming in the next few weeks.

CLIA surfs New Wave

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia's latest edition of New Wave magazine will be distributed to its member travel agents and industry stakeholders as part of the Cruise Month initiative in Sep.

The publication will showcase the cruise industry's sustainability initiatives, including tech advances being pioneered by cruise lines worldwide and new low-emission transitional fuels.





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ONLINE EVENTS

webinars, product launches and updates, executive interviews and more.
For more information contact us at

events@traveldaily.com.au



Window Seat

"FALCONERS" from all over the world are set to attend the largest international falcon auction in the world, the upcoming fourth annual International Saudi Falcons & Hunting Exhibition in Riyadh.

The event is expected to record a 30% increase in the number of participants on past events, and will feature falcon breeders from around the world, including the United States, France, Spain, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Belgium and the Czech Republic.

The 10-day event may also see the record of "world's most expensive falcon" broken, which is held by 'Gyr Qarmousha', who was sold for SR1.75 million (A\$670,000) by American falcon breeding centre, Pacific Northwest Falcons.



EY bites bigger apple

ETIHAD Airways has confirmed it will boost flights to New York City later this year, with 11 weekly services to connect Abu Dhabi to the Big Apple from 15 Nov.

The four new flights per week will be operated by a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, while existing daily services will continue on Etihad's new Airbus A350 aircraft, which has been deployed on the John F. Kennedy International route since Jun.

"Our New York service continues to perform strongly, and having already experienced record passenger demand this summer, Etihad is excited to be investing further in this market by building on frequency levels ahead of the peak winter travel period," the airline said.

Yarra Bay terminal must be built



WITH the COVID-19 pandemic close to over, the challenge of capacity constraints on the Australian cruise industry, particularly in Sydney, must be "back on the table", Senior Vice President & Managing Director Oceania Cruises & Regent Seven Seas Cruises Steve Odell insisted at today's Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Cruise360 conference.

Speaking at the 'State of the Industry' panel at today's sold-out event, the former local CLIA Chair said the challenge was one of the largest facing the industry prior to the pandemic, and the Yarra Bay proposal (*TD* 17 Sep 2019) should be revisited.

"That was a challenge at the time, the capacity constraint, it's still there today," Odell remarked.

"If you look at the Port
Authority (of NSW's) books, there
are bookings there until the
middle of 2025, there are 100
new cruise ships on order, some
of them to be deployed here,
ships that provide the volume to
the market, so that issue has to
be back on the table soon."

Odell added that although the cruise industry recognised the difficulty of the Yarra Bay plan, there is no question Sydney needs another cruise terminal.

"The endgame, though, is that we're going to need more capacity in Sydney," he commanded.

"You see companies like Virgin coming into Melbourne, you see what's happening in Brisbane, so there's no question given what the projections are, we have to get back on this conversation quickly here," he added.

Pictured are Odell and Uniworld Boutqiue River Cruise Collection President & CEO Ellen Bettridge at the Cruise360 event in Sydney.

Russell is champion

THE local cruise industry has awarded Clean Cruising General Manager & Director Dan Russell with the Cruise Champion Award.

The honour was announced by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) at its Cruise360 Australasia conference in Sydney yesterday, with the accolade serving as recognition of Russell's efforts in supporting a careful resumption of cruise operations in Australia and NZ.

CLIA's Cruise Industry Awards will return in Mar 2023 in Sydney.

VA adds capacity

VIRGIN Australia has applied to renew 1,260 weekly seats on the Fiji route with the International Air Services Commission, as well as 900 seats for Vanuatu via a codeshare with Etihad and Singapore Airlines.

The carrier has also requested additional allocation of 172 seats on the Indonesia route.

Apollo improves position

APOLLO Tourism & Leisure has posted a net loss after tax of \$3.3 million for the 12 months to 30 Jun, a marked \$17.2 million improvement on the previous corresponding period.

The result was helped along by a \$44.7 million reduction in operating costs to \$238.8 million, as well as a \$10.3 million gain in vehicle rental income - mainly driven by resurgent tourism in Canada and Europe.

Apollo conceded the latest 12-month resulte were hampered by COVID travel restrictions in Australia and New Zealand, forcing a cost-reduction strategy to maintain liquidity.

"While the outbreak of COVID variants significantly disrupted the momentum of our domestic markets in Australia and NZ, the recovery in forward booking rental revenue has been profound following the reopening of international borders in

Australia," Apollo's CEO Luke Trouchet said.

"Our global forward booking rental revenue has almost recovered to pre-COVID levels, on a fleet size approximately 45% smaller than we were running in 2019," he added.

Only last month, Apollo and potential merger partner Tourism Holdings extended the final date of their proposed agreement to 15 Oct 2022, with the two companies striking trouble with the competition regulators in Australia and NZ (*TD* 28 Apr).

The companies pledged to divest assets to reduce competition concerns, with a decision from the regulators expected early next month.

Looking forward, Apollo flagged an increase of its global fleet to keep pace with demand for RV holidays, forecasting a \$136m increase on fleet capital expenditure over the next year.



CORPORATE UPDATE

WoAG spend plummeted

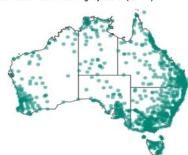
THE COVID-19 pandemic has had wide-ranging impacts on the Federal Government's travel requirements, with figures provided as part of the Finance Department's consultation paper (see p1) confirming 2021 spend of \$329 million, compared to \$554 million for the 2019 calendar year.

"Generally government travel reduced during the pandemic, however due to the wide-ranging services and programs delivered by the government, travel levels for some entities remained steady or even increased," the paper notes, detailing travel booking data for the last five years.

In 2019 the government spent \$256 million on domestic air travel comprising 618,000 bookings (an average of \$414 per booking), compared to \$123 million in 2021 on 250,000 bookings (averaging \$492).

Recovery appears to be under way, with the first six months of this year recording \$119m in domestic air on 253,000

comestic accommodation bookings by location (2021-22):



bookings, indicating the overall figure for 2022 is likely to be back to pre-pandemic figures.

International air spend by the government amounted to \$163 million on 48,000 bookings in 2019 (average \$3,395) while for the six months to 30 Jun the figure was \$88 million on 17,000 bookings (average \$5,176).

Domestic accommodation cost the government \$135 million in 2019, totalling 822,000 room nights, while so far this year the accommodation bill has been \$81 million on 461,000 room nights.

Accommodation bookings are widely distributed across the country, as indicated by a map provided in the paper (pictured).





Dynamic pricing

THE Federal Finance
Department is seeking to provide government entities with "faster and easier access to highlevel airfare pricing", with the aim of helping streamline trip planning, budgeting and approval processes, particularly int'l trips.

The WoAG discussion paper (see **p1**) invites views on how such a pricing guide could be delivered, allowing bookers to quickly gauge approximate prices and options for upcoming trips and fast-track approval processes.

Inventory challenge

AS TRAVEL restrictions have eased and demand has grown, government entities have found it increasingly challenging to secure airfares and accommodation, with the Finance Department's WoAG discussion paper (see p1) seeking to explore options to maximise access to available inventory.

The intended outcome is to eliminate instances where rooms or seats are available publicly, but are not bookable under the WoAG arrangements, with stakeholders asked for their input on how further content could be unlocked going forward.

ATMC on board

THE Association of Travel Management Companies (ATMC) says its members are already getting involved in the organisation's new campaign (*TD* 19 Aug) which aims to "harness the power of \$6.5 billion spent on corporate travel each year by 26,000 Australian companies".

ATMC Chair Tess Messinis reiterated that while TMCs had stepped in and stepped up to support clients during the pandemic with new technology, platforms and systems, "the breadth and depth of services and support offered is still not as widely understood or valued as deserved".

He said it was vital to ensure there was a better awareness of what it is that TMCs do in terms of helping organisations safely and seamlessly manage business travel within productivity and budget frameworks, "especially now so many of our members are re-aligning their fees frameworks to more accurately reflect the reality of the market, the increased cost of business and the additional reliance on our teams".

"We are determined to better shape the landscape in which we operate and in which decisions are made about corporate travel".

Govt looks to consolidate

THE Federal Government's new consultation about its existing Travel Management and Accommodation Program Management arrangements (see p1) will investigate whether the two separate contacts could be streamlined through a single arrangement.

According to the discussion paper, "under the current separated arrangements, travellers are often required to contact multiple suppliers to change components of the same trip...also under the current model government entities may need to use multiple systems and incur separate fees when

making a booking that includes accommodation".

Stakeholders are asked to provide their views on how travel management and accommodation services could be provided through a single arrangement, described as an "enhanced one-stop-shop for government entities to book and manage travel".

Key considerations include risks and benefits of such an approach, the impact on pricing and fees, third party providers and how a TMC could manage a large accommodation program, including sourcing allotments and handling charge-backs.

Travel Daily

Friday 26th August 2022



HOST James O'Loghlin kept the audience in stitches between the panel sessions.

Cruise360 docks after three years

THE first CLIA Cruise360 conference to cast off since 2019 went swimmingly yesterday, with suppliers, agents and key stakeholders gathering at the Hyatt Regency Sydney to discuss the powerful recovery that lays ahead for cruising.

A huge amount of prizes in the form of free cruises were handed out to travel advisors on the day, while panel sessions discussing the state of the industry, the changing habits of cruise passengers, and the rebuilding of the future were also headed up by some of the biggest names in the industry.

The day also saw a keynote speech delivered by the irrepressible Uniworld Boutique River Cruises global CEO, Ellen Bettridge, who extolled the value that travel agents will continue to provide in the revival of the cruise sector.



CLIA Australasia's Managing Director Joel Katz finally had some great reasons to smile during his opening address to the audience yesterday.



PHIL Hoffmann leads a chat with Melinda Gregor, Jeff Leckey and Roslyn Ranse about how to rebuild cruising.



SVP & Managing Director Asia Pacific, Regent Seven Seas Cruises & Oceania Cruises Steve Odell and Australian Cruise Association CEO Jill Abel enjoying a well earned drink.



CARNIVAL Australia chief Marguerite Fitzgerald contributes strongly to discussions about agents and suppliers working together to rebuild the industry.

t 1300 799 220



ROYAL Caribbean Cruises VP & MD Gavin Smith opens up proceedings during the all-important State of the Industry panel session.



stirring keynote speech, reminding agents they are crucial to the future of the cruise sector.



CRUISING'S great disrupters: Virgin Voyages stepping up its awareness in the local market at C360 after years of delays.





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

Guests who book a stay at Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel Sydney between o1 Sep and 30 Nov can enjoy 20% savings with the Spring Sweet Savings promotion. The offer includes access to the health club, including the heated indoor lap pool, steam room, spa and gym - radissonhotels.com.

AAT Kings and Inspiring Journeys have partnered with the South Australia Tourism Commission to allow travellers to save up to \$600 per couple on selected South Australia tour departures from 01 Apr 2023 to 31 Mar 2024, including the four-day Outback Explorer, which features a visit to Coober Pedy. Book by 30 Sep at aatkings.com/sa/.

Holidaymakers can take advantage of a Rejuvenation Season package with \$1,100 worth of additional inclusions at The Reef House Boutique Hotel & Spa in Palm Cove, Cairns. The package includes an Indigenous cultural experience, cocktail making, wine tasting, beach yoga and more. Packages start at \$1,772 for bookings from Oct to Mar - call 07 4080 2600.

The Red Centre has teamed up with Flight Centre to offer travellers \$250 off every \$1,000 spent with Flight Centre towards a holiday to the Northern Territory, such as the four-day Uluru & Kings Canyon Adventure, priced from \$1,395pp. Visit flightcentre.com.au for more.

Let's seize the days!

TOURISM & Events Queensland (TEQ) has announced the launch of a new \$4.5 million campaign encouraging travellers to 'Seize the Days' and book a Queensland holiday before the end of the year.

The campaign will target Queensland's largest interstate markets, New South Wales and Victoria, as well as Queenslanders, and is a follow-on from TEQ's 'Days Like This' campaign.

Expected to help draw 6.7 million visitors and \$4.4 billion in overnight visitor expenditure, the campaign will air in several stages starting from 09 Oct, highlighting the state's "wonderful breadth of destinations and experiences".

For a full fact sheet on the marketing push, CLICK HERE.

Passages at Sea

CORAL Expeditions is inviting guests to "unplug from life" and enjoy an "authentic seafaring experience" with its new Passages at Sea voyages.

Guests can mingle with and observe the crew at work, as well as enjoy daily presentations where they will learn about navigation and ship-handling.

The feature voyage in the series is a 19-night Across the Indian Ocean navigation aboard Coral Geographer, which departs Zanzibar on the west coast of Africa before charting eastwards to arrive in Fremantle, WA.

A 10% early bird discount will also apply to bookings made by 30 Sep - for further information CLICK HERE.

Embracing Indian opportunities



THE Australia India Travel & Tourism Council (AITTC) partnered with the Australia India Business Council (AIBC) this week to host the inaugural Australia India International Business Summit (AIIBS) in Sydney.

The three-day event was hailed the biggest Australian Indian B2B event in the southern hemisphere, attracting more than 700 attendees from key industries and sectors including education, tourism and hospitality, defence, manufacturing and infrastructure.

The Summit commemorated India's 75th Independence anniversary and was themed 'People to People Connect for

Jayride losses rise

JAYRIDE recorded a \$2.51m loss for the 12 months to 30 Jun, with the Australia-based company leaking slightly more than the \$2.3m loss in the prior period.

Results also reflected a 237% increase in net revenue, a net cash pool of \$3.7 million with no debt, and a 216% rise in trip bookings, with growth concentrated in the European market.

Jayride's slice of the European market share expanded by 490% in the second-half of 2022, with the company also expecting to see significant growth in Asia as the region continues to reopen to international travellers.

Looking ahead, Jayride plans to introduce a raft of new traveller offers, including to and from nonairport destinations.

Business to Business Outcomes'.

Over 100 travel and tourism business leaders, along with government representatives, attended a business session on Wed discussing the opportunities for bilateral tourism.

The recently signed Australia India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement will see partnerships between the two countries strengthened and generate trade in many sectors, including tourism.

Tourism Australia MD Phillipa Harrison said India is a key market for Australia and one of the fastest to come back, with 32,000 visitors recorded in May.

"Both countries have reopened their doors for tourism, and airlines are operating at high load factors, so we need to get tour operators and people engaged to grow opportunities further," AITTC Chairman Sandip Hor said.

Pictured at the Four Seasons Hotel are: AITTC co-Chairman Phillip Boniface; AITTC Chairman Sandip Hor; Taj Hotels' Thushara Liyanarachchi; and AFTA CEO Dean Long.

Insurance campaign

SOUTHERN Cross Travel Insurance has launched a new campaign, reassuring travellers to "relax, we're with you".

"We know that, now more than ever, travellers are looking for a brand that they can trust will be there for them, if the unexpected happens," the company said.

Got a confidential tip? Contact Travel Daily via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click HERE



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