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Laperouse sails in!

PONANT has welcomed *Le Laperouse* back to Sydney's waters for the first time in more than three years - discover where *Le Laperouse* is headed to in 2022-23 on the [cover page](#).

Syd enjoys premium

SYDNEY will be the first destination in the EK network to offer Premium Economy on all flights to and from the city.

The EK414/415 service joins the EK412/EK413 service, which has been offering Premium Economy since Aug.

QF increases flights

QANTAS will increase capacity on the east coast and east-west routes from late Mar 2023, with services between Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane to increase by 57 return flights a week, restoring capacity on the triangle to 93% of pre-COVID levels.

The carrier is also adding seats on transcontinental services to and from Perth using its Airbus A330 fleet, resulting in around 50% of flights to from Melbourne and Sydney to Perth being operated by widebody aircraft.

Bon voyage Mr Odell

ONE of Australia's most recognisable cruise executives has announced his retirement from the industry this morning (*TD* breaking news), with Senior VP & MD APAC for Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings' Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises brands, Steve Odell, to depart at the end of the year.

Odell boasts more than 35 years of global cruise experience, and joined NCLH in Oct 2015 to lead the launch of the company's Asia Pacific business, managing all three of the company's brands.

He has held his current position since 2019, where Odell has been responsible for the strategic expansion of RSSC's & Oceania's presence in the Asia Pacific.

The exit comes alongside a major restructure of the cruise company's local operations, with Caroline Smith appointed Managing Director, International for Regent Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC), where she will look after sales and marketing for APAC, EMEA, LATAM and Brazil.

Current VP of Sales, Australia and New Zealand for Regent, Lisa Pile, will see her responsibilities

expanded to include the entire Asia Pacific region as VP Sales and GM APAC for RSSC, reporting to Caroline Smith, while VP of Sales, Australia and New Zealand for Oceania Cruises, Jason Worth, currently Vice President of Sales, will step up to manage the entire Asia Pacific region as VP Sales and GM APAC for Oceania Cruises, reporting to Senior Vice President, Sales for Oceania Cruises Nikki Upshaw.

Norwegian Cruise Line Vice President and Managing Director APAC, Ben Angell, will continue in his role, reporting to NCL VP International Sales & Marketing, Jason Krimmel.

Commenting on the departure of Odell, CLIA Australasia Managing Director Joel Katz said: "Steve Odell has been a superb ambassador for our industry and a proud advocate for CLIA Australasia...it's hard to imagine the Australasian cruise sector without his...stewardship, but we're delighted to learn of his well-deserved retirement."

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of news and a cover wrap from Ponant.

Greek air explored

THE Greek Tourism Department has confirmed talks are taking place between the European country and airlines about establishing more direct links with Australia.

"Australia is a market that has a strong expatriate character and is a top priority for Greece," the country's General Secretary of Tourism Policy and Development, Olympia Anastasopoulou, told *The Greek Herald* this week.

"In the context of these meetings, the possibility of expanding direct air links between Greece and Australia throughout the year [have been on the agenda], as well as the creation of air links with new destinations in Greece, which will be explored," she added.

The talks follows confirmation of a local tourism office return in Melbourne (*TD* 21 Nov).

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Window Seat

A **BRITISH** couple have decided to pursue their dream of travelling around Australia by funding the adventure through ice cream and doughnut sales.

Izzie and Jack Partridge packed up their lives in the UK, booking flights as soon as Australia's border policies lifted, with the dream of exchanging the nine-to-five drudgery for a much sunnier life 'donut under'.

"We had fallen into a cycle of going to work, getting home, going out to meet friends for a drink and then doing it all over again the next day. It was nice but we both felt that we wanted something more," Jack said.

The pair now work out of a travelling van selling sweet treats, with no plans to return to the UK any time soon.

Cinzia Burnes gets on board

THE addition of Cinzia Burnes as a Director of the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) (*TD* breaking news) sees Helloworld Travel take up the seat vacated by its former Group GM of Air Tickets, Independent and Corporate Networks, David Padman, who recently resigned from the company (*TD* 26 Sep).

The announcement came following the final AFTA Board meeting for the year, at which the main item for discussion was the updating of the Federation's constitution and the voting framework going forward.

Chairman Tom Manwaring said the agenda "as always, prompted robust and frank discussion", with the Board's recommended position to be shared with AFTA members in the new year as part of the consultation process.

"It's been another full-on year and AFTA is proud of the role we have played in supporting our

members through the pandemic and recovery," Manwaring said.

"The Board's focus has been on ensuring we are in the best possible position to continue delivering for all members, especially in the rapidly changing environment we are now operating in," he added.

Burnes said it was an honour for her to join the AFTA Board.

"I look forward to working with my fellow Directors throughout this critical recovery period and beyond," she said.

MEANWHILE an update to AFTA members from CEO Dean Long today noted that nearly all of the businesses operating under the Australian Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS) are "back to positive cashflow with a pathway to profitability".

Long also confirmed the imminent launch of a "super exciting industry first platform" in the new year (*TD* 13 Dec).

Aussies join Hahn

HAHN Air has expanded its network with 14 new partner airlines this year, including Australian carriers FlyPelican and Nauru Airlines.

FlyPelican was named alongside five new interline partners for Hahn, including ITA Airways, Jordan Aviation, Safarilink, Transair, and World2Fly, while Nauru Airlines was one of nine airlines which opted to outsource GDS sales to Hahn this year, joining Nepal Airlines, Animawings, As Salaam Air, Cabo Verde Airlines, EZ Air, Fuji Dream Airlines, and Jambojet.

"Our indirect distribution solutions are the right fit for airlines with any business model and with any distribution set-up," Hahn Air's Executive Vice President Commercial Alexander Proschka said.

"We are the right partner for carriers that have no reservation system or GDS connections at all," she added.

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Peru protest headaches

HUNDREDS of foreign travellers have been left stranded in Peru's popular Machu Picchu tourist site following the cessation of train service to the area, as violent protests continue to cause disruptions following the arrest of ex-President Pedro Castillo.

Local officials claim that close to 1,000 visitors of varying nationalities are currently stuck in the town at the base of the mountain at Machu Picchu, with The Travel Corporation's Adventure World tour operator this morning moving to reassure agents that its teams on the

ground in Peru are reviewing each individual case of clients currently travelling to, from, or planning to arrive in Peru.

"Our on-ground agency cannot guarantee that passengers travelling to Peru or currently on the ground will be able to enjoy all experiences, including any visiting Machu Picchu, which officially closed on 14 Dec until further notice," a spokesperson for the company said.

"Adventure World is encouraging travel advisors and clients to reconsider their travel plans to the region and to reschedule their visit.

"In the case of travellers already at destination, Adventure World and their on-ground operations team is fully committed to providing the necessary modifications to their itinerary, with their safety as top priority."

In response to the protests and closures, local tourism body Promperu said trapped tourists can access the Tourist Police Peru app available on all platforms, or contact Tourism Police (POLTUR) via email [HERE](#).

EY doubles NYC

ETIHAD Airways has confirmed plans to double the number of services the carrier offers from its base to New York City.

Commencing 24 Apr 2023, Etihad will fly twice a day from Abu Dhabi to New York City, providing a total of 14 weekly nonstop services to John F. Kennedy International.

The flights will be operated by A350s and B787-9 Dreamliners.

Moreton Bay push

A NEW report from Airservices Australia has recommended examining additional options to maximise flights over Moreton Bay, in doing so reducing flight impacts on residents (**TD** 23 Aug).

The review outlined a Noise Action Plan for Brisbane, which will implement tracked measures against community involvement.

A 2023 priority program has also been flagged in the review, with Airservices Chief Executive Jason Harfield stating there should be a continuation of noise improvement trials.

Responding to the latest report being handed down, Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC) said: "it contains a large number of meaningful changes with the potential to reduce flight path impacts in Brisbane.

"BAC recognises the benefits of Brisbane Airport are shared across Queensland, but the impact of our operations are felt by some residents in Brisbane."

Veriu opens in Mel

VERIU Queen Victoria Market has officially launched in Melbourne's most iconic marketplace, originally flagged in 2019 (**TD** 03 May 2019).

The opening marks the first stage of Veriu's ambitious strategy to roll out its successful apartment hotel accommodation brand nationally, with Veriu Collingwood expected to open early next year.

Please hold Byron

THE NSW government has stopped a Byron Bay Council plan to place a 90-day cap on short-term accommodation at the last-minute, announcing late yesterday a move for the NSW Independent Planning Commission to hold a public hearing on the issue.

The Byron Shire Council this week voted in favour of the policy after working on the proposal for three years, however, the latest development will see the policy now have to jump NSW Government approval pending further independent advice.

Byron's proposal had met with plenty of push-back from online rental players (**TD** 09 Nov).

Nov MEL numbers

PASSENGER numbers at Melbourne Airport returned to 80% of pre-pandemic levels last month, with a total of 2,539,619 people passing through Melbourne Airport in Nov, including 647,368 international travellers, the highest-recorded since 2019.

The increase in international travellers reflected the increased capacity from airlines, including United Airlines and Qatar Airways, as well as the return of AirAsia X to Australia.

Almost two million domestic travellers also flew through Melbourne last month, which represented a 461% increase on the prior corresponding period.

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CORPORATE UPDATE

TripActions links with CT

CT PARTNERS has announced TripActions has joined its network this month, an all-in-one travel, corporate card, and expense management solution.

"One of TripActions' core tenets is being laser-focussed on our end users," TripActions General Manager Tim Gibson said, adding that joining forces with CT Partners will help enhance its Australia-based airfare pricing options, further improving its air shopping experience.

TripActions was most recently valued at around of US\$9 billion, while its recent \$300 million funding has accelerated global expansion plans to more than 3,000 employees across 60 global offices, including a team of more than 70 in Australia.

CT Partners CEO Matt Masson said TripActions was an "excellent fit" with the company's culture, and is now looking forward to further enabling the brand's

ATPI new GM WA

CORPORATE travel and events management company ATPI Australia has announced the appointment of Adrian Cooper as its new General Manager for Western Australia.

The appointment comes as ATPI Australia focuses on expanding its business in the mining and resources sector.

Cooper brings extensive travel and senior management experience, especially in the resources sector, including 16 years at FCM Travel Solutions Australia, first as Operations Leader, then as Regional General Manager WA & SA.

His previous roles also include Travel Executive at American Express, and a four-year stint at Qantas as the airline's Senior Operations Supervisor.

Cooper said it was an "exciting time" to join ATPI due to the growing business opportunities in the mining, oil and gas sectors.

growth prospects in Australia.

"We remain committed to continuing to nurture their business and turning their strategic goals into commercial results," he said.

TripActions acquired long-standing CT Partners member, Reed & Mackay, back in May 2021 (*TD* 07 May 2021).

Domestic \$\$\$ drop

NEXT year will see domestic travel costs decrease while international costs will remain high until Chinese carriers return, according to a series of trends predicted by Corporate Traveller, the SME travel management division of Flight Centre.

Corporate Traveller Global Managing Director, Tom Walley, said he expects that Chinese carriers will resume services in the first half of 2023, bringing competition back to the market and flight capacity back to 90% of pre-COVID levels.

It was predominately business directors and essential workers travelling during 2020 and 2021, however Walley predicts that middle management will make a strong travel comeback next year.

"I'm forecasting the business travel industry will continue capitalising on its post-COVID growth and success as businesses and their employees gain more confidence to return to the office and the skies," Walley said.

SQ extends miles

SINGAPORE Airlines' (SQ) frequent flyer customers will have more time to use their rewards, with the airline announcing it will extend all KrisFlyer miles that were due to expire between Jan and Jun 2023 by six months.

The rewards may be used on flights departing after 31 Dec 2023, so long as they are applied on or before the new expiry date, which will be reflected in the traveller's Feb account statement.



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Academy Travel gets cooking



SYDNEY-BASED small group tour operator, Academy Travel, spread the Christmas cheer on Tue, with the team choosing to spend its end-of-year party generously giving back to the

community.

The team headed over to Our Big Kitchen (OBK), a community kitchen in Bondi that prepares and distributes over 250,000 meals a year to thousands of disadvantaged Australians across the state, as well as supporting more than 33 charities.

OBK also undertakes food rescue, working with organisations like SecondBite and Foodbank to minimise waste and turn fresh produce into home-cooked meals.

Volunteers can help with a wide range of kitchen activities, from food prep and cooking, to coordination of group activities, cleaning, packaging, setting up, and food distribution - to learn more about the charity and get involved, [CLICK HERE](#).

Pictured: The Academy Travel team ready to cook up a storm!

See Britain differently

VISITBRITAIN is preparing to launch a new global tourism campaign in early 2023 to help drive an increase in bookings from markets like Australia, with the push asking travellers to 'see things differently'.

Major events next year will take centre stage of Britain's marketing collateral, including the Coronation of King Charles III in May and the Eurovision Song Contest, which will take place in Liverpool on behalf of Ukraine, during the same month.

The news arrives as internal VisitBritain forecasts show international visitor spend in 2023 will be up 4% on the all-time spending high in 2019.

Australia also recently claimed back the mantle of being the UK's fifth most valuable international source market (*TD* 02 Dec), with VisitBritain's Country Manager, ANZ, Maria Sykes, stating that since travel restrictions were lifted in Jan, the destination has seen "an exponential rise in the pace of recovery", with both accelerated forward-flight bookings and arrival figures.

More boosts for LST

VIRGIN Australia resumed direct seasonal flights between Adelaide and Launceston yesterday, boosting air capacity to the city following renewed direct services between Launceston and Perth in Oct and added Qantas capacity to the Brisbane to Launceston route for Dec and Jan.

"The latest service will further drive visitation to our regional areas, spreading the benefits of tourism far and wide," Tasmanian Premier Jeremy Rockliff said.



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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

Klook has announced its Boxing Day Sale, which will offer 15% off Japan activities, including theme parks and rail passes. There are also prizes up for grabs such as Tokyo Disney Resort Park tickets for the first 500 customers to "spin the wheel" on Klook's [Boxing Day deals page](#). RSVP to the [Facebook event page](#) to be notified when the deal drops.

To celebrate its "Go Further, Get Closer Wave Season" campaign, **Celestyal Cruises** is giving travellers the chance to save up to 60% off its most popular 2023 and 2024 itineraries booked from now until 28 Feb 2023. Prices start from \$469 on the three-night Iconic Aegean sailing, which is normally priced at \$1,150 - go to celestyal.com for details.

Murray River Paddlesteamers has extended 15% savings on its program of overnight cruises in 2023-24, plus the removal of the solo surcharge and free bonuses for bookings made before 15 Jan - call 03 5482 5244.

Guests staying at **Novotel Sydney Darling Square** these summer holidays can take advantage of the 'Stay & Putt' offer, which includes overnight accommodation for two, breakfast for two at Pier St. Grill (kids under 16 eat free), overnight parking at First Parking Darling Square, and 10% discount off Pixar Putt tickets - contact 02 8217 4000.

Rotty is now ready

ROTTNEST Island's main entry point is now ready for summer, after its main jetty underwent a \$12.9 million upgrade as part of several new initiatives to improve the island's tourism experiences.

The redevelopment of the six-berth jetty saw the concrete deck area extended to provide safer clearances for ferries and help ease congestion, plus a wave screen installed on Berth 5 to improve the ability to use Berth 4 during strong northerly winds.

Additionally, visitors can now take advantage of a 9pm ferry service, which launched this week and will operate from Thu to Sun until 31 Mar 2023, as well as utilise the new booking website, [Stay Rottnest HERE](#).

The King honoured

OUTGOING Chief Executive of Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) Peter King has been honoured with a permanent tribute in the venue's Plenary - a unique red chair in recognition of his earlier career as a first-class cricketer.

King has also been inducted as an honorary Club Melbourne Ambassador and was gifted a lifetime membership to the Exhibition and Events Association of Australasia (EEAA).

During King's 11-year tenure as CEO at MCEC, Club Melbourne has supported bids to win 107 international events to the tune of \$860 million in economic impact, drawing over 150,000 delegates to Melbourne.

HA looks forward to bright future



HAWAIIAN Airlines celebrated a successful 12 months of service in Australia today, exactly one year after it returned to Sydney on 15 Dec 2021 to reconnect the two destinations after a nearly two-year hiatus ([TD 17 Dec 2021](#)).

The Sydney-Honolulu service operates five times weekly using the widebody Airbus A330 aircraft, with Australian travellers also able to access one-stop services via Honolulu to the carrier's US domestic network.

"We are deeply grateful to our passengers, travel industry partners and our terrific staff who have helped Hawaiian successfully rebuild our Sydney-Honolulu service," said Andrew Stanbury, Regional Director for Australia and New Zealand at Hawaiian Airlines.

"Hawai'i is traditionally a hugely popular holiday destination for Australians, and even more so today - replenished, welcoming and offering new experiences

and of course the magnificent diversity of the Hawaiian Islands."

Pictured in Sydney with their NZ HA colleagues, a small but mighty team who donned their sunglasses because, clearly, there is a "bright future ahead".

Coddington departs

TOURISM and Events Queensland (TEQ) is farewelling outgoing CEO Leanne Coddington, who will make her departure on 22 Dec after working with the organisation for 26 years.

In a video uploaded to TEQ's YouTube channel [HERE](#), Coddington expresses her thanks to the industry for its support of her over the years.

"I am happy to be leaving at a time where we are seeing the industry rebound," she beamed.

Patricia O'Callaghan, who currently heads up Destination Gold Coast, will take over from Coddington at the end of Jan.

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