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INDEPENDENT HOLIDAY PACKAGE EXPERTS

Education open day

WILLIAM Angliss Institute will host an open day for prospective travel and tourism students on 13 Aug from 10am-3pm AEST.

Attendees will be able to hear from *MasterChef* judge and mentor Shannon Bennett, one of several college alumni who will talk about their career journeys.

The Angliss Restaurant will host a food & wine matching experience, while an immersive demo will show how cabin crew get flight-ready with a full make-up tutorial as well as sessions on crucial customer service.

Information sessions will highlight options including travel & tourism certificates, diplomas and degrees - more info [HERE](#).

Domestic OTP plummets

THE on-time performance (OTP) of Australia's domestic carriers has plumbed new depths, with the latest figures from the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics showing Jun was the worst month ever.

The average on-time departure performance for participating carriers including Jetstar, Qantas, QantasLink, Rex, Virgin Australia and Virgin Australia Regional Airlines was just 61.9%.

Apr 2022 and May 2022 had respectively the second and third worst OTP results since recording started in 2003, with the Jun results further impacted by weather-related events and

congestion as sectors flown approached pre-pandemic levels.

Qantas was the worst of a bad lot, with just 59.4% of its flights arriving on time, with Jetstar fractionally ahead at 59.5%.

Virgin Australia wasn't much better, with a 61.8% OTP arrival rate, with the mainstream carriers outstripped by Regional Express which recorded a relatively healthy 80% OTP arrival figure.

The worst performing route was Darwin-Melbourne, where just 24.2% of flights landed on time.

Qantas also fared worst when it came to cancellations, with a whopping 8.1% of its flights cancelled, compared to 7% for QantasLink, 5.8% for Virgin Australia, 5.5% for Jetstar, Virgin Australia Regional Airlines with 5.3% and again Rex out in front with just 0.7% of flights cancelled.

Cancellations were highest on the Sydney-Melbourne route where 15.3% of scheduled flights did not operate.

Island Escapes refund pledge

EXCLUSIVE

ISLAND Escape Cruises has confirmed the cancellation of its third Kimberley departure in a row, overnight telling agents the 28 Jul voyage will not proceed.

The bad news follows the cancellation of 03 Jul and 16 Jul departures, with the company's former CEO Peter Bissett telling **CW** in an email he resigned on 04 Jul, with enquiries now best sent to Director Erik Helseth.

Another of the company's Directors, Christina Riisnes, who was Island Escape's NZ-based public officer, is also believed to have stepped aside in Jun.

Helseth, who is now designated as Island Escape Cruises CEO, told **TD** "we are working day and

night to resume operations...all guests on cancelled cruises have been informed that they will receive a refund of tickets, but due to lack of staff and a huge effort to resume operation this unfortunately takes longer than we hoped for".

"We are in the final stage of solving the issues and hope to be able to share the good news with the industry very soon and to come back stronger than before," Helseth added.

An update to clients apologised for the issues and promised refunds of tickets in accordance with Island Escapes' "applicable general terms and conditions".

More details from Island Escape in today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

Acid wash on arrival

SPECIAL citric acid-impregnated mats are being implemented at all Australian points of arrival for flights from Indonesia, with pax required to walk across them to sanitise their shoes to help stop foot-and-mouth disease from entering the country.

The mats will roll out initially in Darwin and Cairns as part of other measures including screening and risk assessments.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news including **Business Events News** plus full pages from:

- CATO
- TAFE NSW

Malaysia appoints

THE Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board has announced the appointment of Siti Hadijah Arifin as the new Deputy Director of Tourism Malaysia Sydney.

Arifin, fondly known to many as 'Caddy', has 19 years of experience, including in Tourism Malaysia's International Marketing, Communication and Advertising Divisions.

In her new role, Arifin takes responsibility for all marketing growth, administration and financial matters for Tourism Malaysia Sydney as it works to "pioneer Malaysia as a premier destination for Australians to visit".

More appointments on **P5**.

Games UK push

NEXT week's Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games is seeing VisitBritain ramp up its activity in the local market, seeking to boost visits from Australia for the sporting extravaganza & beyond.

The Games are taking place at 19 different venues across the West Midlands region, with VisitBritain hosting a trade fam and also working with Network Seven to showcase the destination during its coverage.



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Caravan sector slammed

A **NEW** survey published by the consumer watchdog has lashed the caravan industry for the high number of faults being experienced with new vehicles.

The ACCC conducted a survey of 2,270 caravan owners, with the results revealing 80% had reported a fault with their new caravan, with 50% of that group describing the issue as "major".

"It is the ACCC's view that it is reasonable to expect a new caravan won't develop a major fault within the first several years of use," ACCC Deputy Chair Delia Rickard said.

Complaints about the caravan industry have also been on the rise more broadly over the last five years, the report claimed, totalling 1,300 separate objections during that time, covering issues like guarantee failures, misrepresentations by caravan suppliers, and unexpected delays in the delivery

and repair of caravans.

Many consumers claimed that when they experienced a failure with their caravan, they were unable to obtain a solution that addressed the fault in full.

"We are very concerned by these reported failures to comply with obligations under the Australian Consumer Law, and the impact that these failures have on consumers," Rickard added.

In response, the Caravan Industry Association of Australia's CEO Stuart Lamont told **TD** that while the vast majority of industry businesses understand and adhere to their consumer obligations under Australian Consumer Law, there remain opportunities for improvement.

"The national body will work closely with industry...to further understand their obligations in dealing with consumers and industry businesses along the supply chain," he added.

Rex adds SAAB 340

REX has today taken delivery of another 34-seat SAAB 340 turboprop aircraft, becoming the 61st jet of its kind in the fleet.

The plane will help bolster capacity on routes such as Albury, Broken Hill and Coffs Harbour.

Sep in purple patch

NEW figures released by The Travel Corporation's Trafalgar brand suggests most Aussie travellers are choosing Sep as the departure period for their next overseas holiday.

The data showed that roughly a third of Trafalgar bookings are bound for Europe in Sep, with the bulk of travellers heading to Italy, Britain & Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

Trafalgar also noted clients were opting for a much shorter lead-in time compared to previous travellers, booking two months in advance rather than six.

Lindeman listed

THE island which was once home to the only Club Med village in Australia is up for sale.

Located in the Whitsundays, Lindeman Island has been divested by Chinese-based owner White Horse Group, joining a string of Qld islands changing ownership this year.

Lindeman has been closed to tourists for more than a decade following damage sustained during Cyclone Yasi, and is home to 637 hectares of national park area and seven private beaches.

White Horse had planned to redevelop the island to include three luxury resorts, upgraded airstrip facilities, a mooring area for up to 50 boats, and two tourist villa precincts, but will now instead seek to make a capital gain of around \$8m if it can find a suitor for \$20 million.

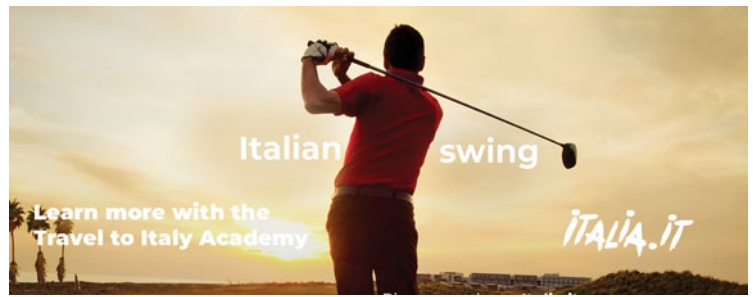
White Horse had also recently completed an Environmental Impact Statement required for tourism redevelopment.

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Window Seat

FAST food chain Subway has stepped in to help an Aussie teen who was recently garnished with a fine for not declaring the footlong sandwich she bought at Singapore's Changi Airport.

Jessica Lee purchased the sub in Singapore with the intent of eating half while waiting for her flight and polishing off the second course on her way home to Australia, however, our tough biosecurity laws soon put paid to that plan, slugging the girl with a \$2,664 penalty.

Ultimately it was the chicken and the lettuce which landed the young traveller in some hot mayo, but thanks to the marketing team at Subway Australia, Lee was given a gift voucher for the same amount by the Aussie retailer.

Upon receiving the voucher, Lee took to TikTok to praise Subway for the kind gesture.

"Subway, you have outdone yourself and this fine is worth every single cent," she posted.



Qatar adds five attractions

QATAR Tourism has announced five major tourism developments will open ahead of its FIFA World Cup later this year, including a winter-sun dreamland, a water sports paradise, and a wave of new resorts and attractions.

The five major openings are headlined by Winter Wonderland (pictured), a 200,000m² attraction set on a sandy island featuring seafront chalets, restaurants, festival games and rides.

Also opening is Fuwairit Kite Beach, likely to be popular with kitesurfers, as well as The Outpost Al Barari, featuring 21 luxury lodges surrounded by sand dunes and desert wilderness.

Also in development is Qetaifan Island North - billed as the first "Entertainment Island" in Qatar, boasting floating hotels, beach clubs, a water park and an 85-metre-high slide.

Another tourism drawcard will be The West Bay North Beach Project, an extensive tourism development covering 40,000m² of a premium beachfront in the heart of Doha.

"The countdown to the World



Cup is well underway and there's lots of world-class attractions to come before the matches begin," Qatar Tourism's Chief Operating Officer Berthold Trenkel declared.

"Amongst the buzz around the tournament itself we hope people are wowed by Qatar's state-of-the-art new tourism developments, significantly boosting the country's appeal as a leading holiday destination."

The new attractions add to a flurry of recent openings, including the 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic & Sports Museum in Mar.

Glimpse A&K's world

TRAVEL advisors are invited to rediscover the world of Abercrombie & Kent (A&K).

The business will be holding a series of trade events across key cities beginning 16 Aug, showcasing its extensive depth of experience, full range of luxury journeys, and extraordinary experiences to more than 100 countries on all seven continents.

With RSVPs strictly limited (**CLICK HERE**), agents are encouraged to book early to hear exciting announcements, enjoy exclusive previews, newly released brochures, and more.

Test your knowledge

IT'S time to round up your industry mates and attend CATO's Travel Trivia Master event.

Tickets to attend includes a two-course dinner, the trivia event, drinks, prizes and a DJ.

See **page six** for more info about the 04 Aug event in Sydney.

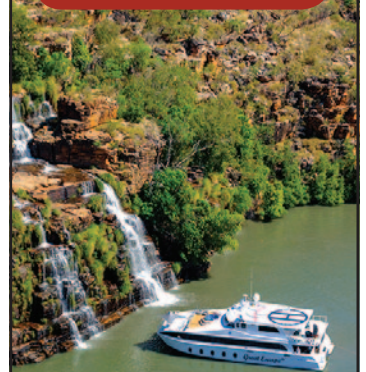
Pullman Auck refurb

PULLMAN Auckland Hotel & Apartments has reopened to the public after refreshing its forecourt and reception area.

Chef Paul Tasker will also take charge of the new open grill Tapestry Restaurant, open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

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Spotlight shines on Victoria

THE Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) hosted two major events over the weekend.

Around 300 scientists convened in the centre over 16-17 Jul for the 31st Annual Neuroscience Meeting (CNS), marking the first time the meeting had been held outside Europe and the US in 31 years, and generating an estimated \$3 million in economic benefit.

The MCEC also welcomed Australia's largest interiors event, the 18th edition of Decor and Design, allowing industry experts to network over 14-17 Jul.

MEANWHILE, the Victorian Government has extended the Call of Ideas deadline to 12 Aug, encouraging local businesses to provide ideas on how best to showcase additional regions of the state to visitors who arrive in Australia to watch the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

'EXTRAORDINAIRES' HONOURED

INTERNATIONAL Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney has recently recognised excellence among its team members at the Extraordinaires Awards, its annual internal program that honours outstanding performance across seven peer-nominated categories.

CEO Geoff Donaghy said he "could not be prouder" to congratulate the winners and nominees, highlighting the "overwhelming response rate" of the more than 270 nomination submissions received.

"At ICC Sydney, we strive to foster a culture that rewards team members as they live out our values of integrity and creativity," Donaghy said.



"We take pride in finding, nurturing and developing exemplary talent from early career to seasoned professionals and our annual awards program... celebrates their successes."

Awards were distributed across several categories, including

service excellence, innovation and creativity, team culture, leadership, workplace safety and risk management, and corporate social responsibility.

Pictured: ICC Sydney's team members at the 'Extraordinaires Awards 2022'.

GCCEC menu

GOLD Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) has launched a new collection of menus comprising of more than 500 items to suit a wide range of palates, with a focus on local and seasonal ingredients.

Opera upgrade

THE Sydney Opera House has unveiled a new look for its biggest performance space, the Concert Hall, after two years of renovations.

The hall, which reopened to the public yesterday, now boasts improved acoustics and enhanced access for people with mobility needs.

The venue's renewal was the final stage of the Opera House's \$300m 'Decade of Renewal' upgrade ahead of its 50th anniversary in 2023.

Airlie Beach acts

AIRLIE Beach Festival of Music has announced its line-up of live acts, which includes names like Jon Stevens, who will be performing hits from Noiseworks and INXS, and alt-rock band Eskimo Joe.

Set in the heart of the Whitsundays region, the event, which marks its 10th anniversary this year, takes place from 04-06 Nov, with a three-day pass costing \$300 per person, including access to the official after party.



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Comeback for face-to-face meetings

AUSTRALIAN property group Veriu Group has revealed a significant uptick in the number of companies favouring face-to-face meetings over virtual sessions at its properties in NSW, Qld and Victoria.

"There's an energy that comes with face-to-face meetings and our clients regularly comment that they didn't realise how much they missed it until they attended an in-person meeting," Director of Operations, Kyle Kaya, said, highlighting the ad hoc discussions, generation of ideas

and building of relationships that occur in-person.

Veriu Group's portfolio includes a range of city and suburban locations designed to cater for corporate conferences, with Veriu Queen Victoria Market set to open later this year, featuring three conference rooms, a conference lobby, and huge outdoor terrace/deck.

The company's conference packages can be customised to clients' requirements and on-site accommodation to make things simpler for event organisers.



APPOINTMENTS

WELCOME to Industry Appointments, *Travel Daily's* Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

The Star has appointed **Scott Wharton** as Chief Executive Officer of The Star Sydney and Group Head of Transformation. Wharton joins the company from the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA), where he was a member of the Executive Leadership Team since 2016.

Tracey Anderson has been named as **Abercrombie & Kent's** New Zealand DMC Operations Manager, bringing over 20 years' experience as a Virtuoso Agent in the US, where she was one of the top five selling agents to the South Pacific.

Tourism Fiji has welcomed **Leigh Howard** to its team as Chief Operations Officer. Howard has been in the industry for over a decade, having worked as General Manager for five years at ATS Pacific, and before that as a Conference & Incentives Manager at The AOT Group.

Marriott International has announced experienced hotelier **Achim Herterich** as the General Manager of Sheraton Melbourne. Achim joined Marriott in 2015 as an Executive Chef and then Food and Beverage Manager at Sheraton Melbourne.

Avianca + Sabre

AVIANCA has signed a new multi-year distribution agreement with Sabre to drive agency sales and revenue growth.

The three-year agreement will provide the travel agent community access to Avianca's content worldwide through the Sabre marketplace, including new distribution capability offers.

"Embracing NDC distribution and creating more differentiated content that reflects the needs and wants of today's traveller is more important than ever," explained Avianca VP Sales & Distribution Catalina Nannig.

"At Avianca we are convinced that implementing NDC at scale is key to deliver better content and solutions to travellers.

"(Sabre's) robust and scalable solutions can help us optimise our global distribution."

Kimpton in Mallorca

KIMPTON Hotels & Restaurants is set to open its first European resort on the Spanish island of Mallorca in the Mediterranean.

Opening in the next few months, Kimpton Aysla Mallorca will be operational year-round and offer guests rooms with large floor-to-ceiling windows with private balconies, and free access to a 900m² luxury Spa.

EK farms food in

EMIRATES Flight Catering has launched Bustanica, the world's largest hydroponic farm in Dubai, via an investment of around US\$40 million.

The large facility will produce over one million kilograms of produce annually, free from chemicals and using 95% less water than standard agriculture.

Virtuoso promotes Aus in NZ



VIRTUOSO members have gathered in NZ for the first time post-pandemic, linking up with Tourism Australia for a Down Under promotion in the country.

The company's accounts team, Michele Duncan and Jen Pagett, spent the week reconnecting with the New Zealand community in-person and continuing to forge key business relationships.

Their visit culminated in a luxury networking dinner in partnership with Tourism Australia, which saw Virtuoso travel advisors from around New Zealand gather to indulge in a delicious degustation of local produce.

"We are thrilled to work alongside Virtuoso to keep Australia on the map for Kiwi travellers," Tourism Australia Distribution & Partnerships Manager Daniel Wright said.

Pictured enjoying the well overdue catch up are: Travel Associates' Heidi Walker, Kelly De Graaf, Sian Cribbens, Sarah Jamieson, Michael Cory-Toussaint, and Natasha Warfield, with Wright and Pagett.

Thailand envisions 23

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) unveiled its marketing plan for 2023, which aims to "revitalise and transform Thai tourism" by promoting "experience-based and sustainable" travel.

TAT Governor Yuthasak Supasorn dubbed 2023 as a "new beginning" for the country's tourism sector, highlighting three strategic objectives - driving demand for meaningful travel, developing a new tourism ecosystem, and making the TAT a data-driven organisation.

TAT will continue to use the 'Visit Thailand Year 2022-2023: Amazing New Chapters' collateral for the international market, and will also launch in new markets, including Saudi Arabia.

Qantas fuels mayday

AN INVESTIGATION is underway after a mayday call from a Qantas plane on Mon with low fuel levels - the flight landed safely at Perth Airport.

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