

LOT drops the lot

LOT Polish Airlines has confirmed that effective immediately it is reducing BSP travel agency base commission to 0% on all tickets issued in Australia and NZ, a further cut from last year's LOT commission reduction to 3% (TD 27 Jul 2021).



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News Corp Australia

Stop relying on the Govt

AN ALARMINGLY high number of Australian travellers hold mistaken beliefs about how much assistance the Federal Government can extend if they get into trouble overseas, a new survey has revealed.

The *Consular State of Play* report compiled by the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade found that two-thirds of Aussies believe if a traveller has a medical emergency overseas, a government representative will ensure they get the medical treatment they require.

Half of all surveyed are also of the opinion that in the event of a medical emergency overseas, the Federal Government will arrange a fully funded repatriation.

ICA CEO Andrew Hall believes the gap between the reality and the perception heightens the need for more Australians to consider taking out travel insurance prior to overseas travel.

"You couldn't travel overseas without your passport, and you shouldn't travel overseas without travel insurance, no matter the destination," he argued.

The under-30s demographic are the least likely to take out an insurance policy, the survey found, with 12% categorised as 'active rejectors' of travel insurance - meaning they consciously plan to travel internationally without insurance.

In contrast, only 3% of Aussie travellers over 30 feel the same.

Further findings showed that 95% of respondents feel cancellation cover for claims relating to COVID-19 will be an important consideration when purchasing cover, while 68% stated the pandemic had made them feel less confident to travel overseas, and 86% said they plan on being more cautious about travelling to places where it could prove harder to get back home.

Down in Canberra for the launch of the key travel survey was AFTA CEO Dean Long, who observed the report clearly demonstrated that "if you can't afford travel insurance, you simply shouldn't be travelling".

Long also noted the insights regarding travel insurance only serve to highlight how important the role is that AFTA's member travel agents are playing in keeping Aussie safe overseas.

"Our ATAS-accredited businesses are the number one distributor of travel insurance, showing travel professionals can and should be very proud of our role in keeping Australians travelling safely and with the appropriate and essential level of insurance protection," he said.

"Plus, by booking through an ATAS business, you have the additional confidence of knowing you are dealing with the...best."

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of news.

Erkec luxury switch

ASKIN Erkec has started a new role as Head of Operations Australia for Travel Associates.

Erkec moves to the Flight Centre Travel Group-owned agency network after almost 11 years at Corporate Traveller, having been with FCTG since 2002.

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Air NZ electric plane plan

AIR New Zealand has today taken the next step in its ambitious plan to make zero emissions aircraft technology a reality in Aotearoa NZ.

A new accelerator program has launched today called Mission Next Generation Aircraft, which aims to fly its first commercial demonstrator flight from 2026 and then begin replacing NZ's Q300 domestic fleet with more sustainable planes from 2030.

The move follows the Products Requirement Document released late last year (**TD** 21 Dec 2021) which called on manufacturers and suppliers to join the quest.

More than 30 aircraft developers responded to the request with ideas and insights to guide the technology development, with Air NZ CEO Greg Foran saying the carrier is now in close negotiations and expects to sign letters of intent with its selected partners by the

end of the year.

"We have bold sustainability goals...conventional business processes are not going to address the technology or infrastructure required to meet them," he said.

"We want to lead the rollout of zero emission aircraft, and will work alongside aircraft developers, innovators and infrastructure providers to give them the confidence they're developing a product that's a viable option for us," Foran added.

EK extends pass

EMIRATES has added Tel Aviv and Jeddah to its Arabian Air Pass, which allows passengers based in Dubai to visit 13 cities across the Middle East.

The Air Pass is valid for travel on EK-operated flights only, and must be issued as a separate PNR & ticket - emiratesagents.com.

T'way Aussie debut

BUDGET South Korean carrier T'way Air has confirmed plans to fly four weekly return flights between Incheon and Sydney from 23 Dec.

The service will operate using 347-seat Airbus A330-300s, configured with 12 Business and 335 in Economy.

South Korea is Sydney's seventh largest inbound visitor market and the flights are still subject to final government approval.

Finding wellness

HYATT Hotels has introduced more than 200 new wellness experiences to its global network for loyalty members through a new program called FIND.

New offerings include an Open Air Jungle Safari at Alila Ubud in Indonesia, cocktail tasting at Andaz Dubai the Palm in UAE and chartered fishing trips at the Hyatt Centric Key West Resort & Spa in the United States.



Window Seat

AUTHORITIES in Wales in the UK have asked tourists to stop leaving socks on a remote beach in Pembrokeshire.

However they've agreed not to touch a shrine to Dobby the house elf, a character from the Harry Potter series, after previously flagging its removal.

The site at Freshwater West beach is part of a protected conservation area, where some of the scenes in the Harry Potter *Deathly Hallows* movies were filmed - including the tragic death of Dobby who ends up being buried on a dune overlooking the coast.

Since the films were released in 2011, fans have been making the trek to the remote site to lay tributes to Dobby - including socks symbolising his freedom from evil servitude.



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NSW wildlife push

AUSTRALIANS are being invited to “find their path” among the national parks of NSW, in the first-ever joint tourism campaign between National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Destination NSW.

The new marketing material highlights the state’s diverse range of natural landscapes, including beaches of Tomaree National Park, unique rock formations in the Warrumbungles, and the ancient cultural landscapes of Mungo and Mutawintji.

The marketing push will roll out across TV, digital media, billboards and outdoor media in Victoria, the ACT, Sydney and regional NSW from 04 Nov.

Parks across NSW are set to receive 755km of new and upgraded walking and mountain-biking tracks, 61 new or improved picnic and visitor areas, and 36 campground upgrades by 2024, as part of a \$450 million investment.

Qantas flags IR concerns

QANTAS Chairman Richard Goyder today told shareholders the company is concerned that the Government’s proposed industrial relations changes “effectively dismantle the enterprise bargaining system that has served Australia well for decades” - while at the same time revealing that QF’s average non-executive salary is over \$100,000.

“We’re concerned that lowering the bar for compulsory arbitration and enforcing multi-employer bargaining would effectively lead to centralised wage setting.

“This kind of system will have little regard for the fact different companies have different needs... and that will have a massive impact on productivity, growth and (in the longer term) the ability to pay more,” he said.

MEANWHILE also speaking at the Qantas AGM, CEO Alan Joyce addressed operational performance, noting that reliable

service is one of the biggest factors driving passenger choice.

“For several months this year we weren’t living up to the service standards people rightly expect...there were too many flight delays, long call centre waits and mishandled bags.”

However Joyce highlighted figures released today showing QF is “firmly back to pre-COVID levels of service” despite supply chain issues and a potential COVID-19 related sick leave spike.

Joyce said currently the airline is keeping planes in reserve, but when things normalise Qantas plans to boost capacity to its “natural domestic market share position of around 70%”.

He also highlighted the ongoing performance of Qantas Loyalty, promising it will keep growing through expansion into financial services, hotel bookings, and integration of the TripADeal online holiday package business.

Qld’s golden decade

THE Queensland Government has unveiled its 10-year tourism industry strategy in the lead up to the state’s 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Announced by the state’s Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk at the DestinationQ Forum on the Gold Coast yesterday, the *Towards Tourism 2032* plan aims to more than double the state’s overnight expenditure to \$44 billion a year by 2032.

As part of the wide-ranging strategy, Palaszczuk declared 2023 to be the “Year of Accessible Tourism”, announcing a \$12 million investment to go towards building infrastructure and installing technology to assist travellers with an impairment.

Queensland Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe added the 10-year strategy was a “golden, once-in-a-generation” opportunity for Queensland to reshape its visitor economy. See more details [HERE](#).

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CANADA



Visitor visas on the rise

THE number of visitor visa holders in Australia moved beyond the 200,000 mark in Jun this year for the first time since 2019, a new report from The Department of Home Affairs has revealed.

The *Visitor Visa Program Report* showed that close to 220,000 visa holders were in the country by Jun, a massive leap on the meagre 40,810 holders that were in Australia in Jun last year.

Gradual improvement in numbers had been noted since Dec 2021, with the steepest jump in visas issued seen between Feb & Apr, fuelled by fully vaccinated Visitor visa holders being able to travel to Australia from 21 Feb without a travel exemption.

The figures also show Australia is on track to meet pre-pandemic levels, with Jun sitting approximately 100,000 visa holders short of the same month during the 2018/19 period.

The vast majority of visa visitor arrivals during the 12 months to 30 Jun 2022 were sourced from four countries: India (118,070), the United Kingdom (101,609), Singapore (83,077), and the United States (67,496).

Tourist visitor visas were far and away the most popular application type lodged, with the government receiving 637,264 in the 12 months to 30 Jun, followed by ETA Tourist visas (278,015), eVisitor Tourist visas (272,828) and Business Visitor visas (80,364).

Qatar delays CBR

QATAR Airways has again delayed its return to Canberra, pushing back its scheduled return of flights to the nation's capital in Dec to 01 Apr next year.

MEANWHILE Singapore Airlines is reportedly also in talks to return to Canberra.

SAA keeps Oz rights

THE International Air Services Council has ruled that South African Airways (SAA) should retain all of its historical route traffic rights between South Africa and Australia, paving the way for the troubled carrier to reboot its Aussie connections when the time is right.

A spokesperson for SAA indicated to **TD** that the carrier's intention is to return long-haul international services to Australia, however no time lines have been given at this stage, so there are no immediate plans.

Meanwhile in the coming weeks the airline confirmed it would introduce flights to Blantyre and Lilongwe in Malawi, Windhoek in Namibia, and Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe as part of the second phase of its COVID revival plan.

SAA has also indicated that plans are currently underway to launch its first post re-start intercontinental route during the first quarter of 2023.

Jetstar lands mark

JETSTAR'S inaugural flight from Seoul to Sydney was completed yesterday, becoming the first budget carrier to offer direct flights between the two nations.

The airline is now operating three return services a week, using Boeing 787 Dreamliners, carrying up to 100,000 travellers each year between Australia and South Korea.

"We know that the absence of a low-cost, direct link has been a barrier for many, but our service makes visiting South Korea more convenient," Jetstar said.

China Palau flights

TAIWAN'S China Airlines is planning more flights to Palau this month, with the airline's new Airbus A350 and A331neo to fly the added services on the Palau route from 16 Nov.

The two aircraft will fly the route every Tue and Fri, with Australian departures ex Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane.

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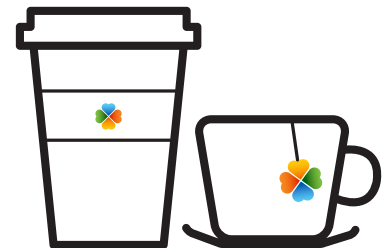
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Sofitel Darling Harbour appoints

JENIFER Dwyer Slee has been appointed as the new Commercial Director at Sofitel Sydney Darling Harbour.

Dwyer Slee is well known to the industry through various roles with Accor and InterContinental Hotels Group, moving to the new Sydney property from her most recent position as DOSM at Fairmont Resort & Spa Blue Mountains.

Paul's big Euro tour



YHA Australia CEO Paul McGrath recently embarked on a month-long, fact-finding mission trip around Europe, returning home with a few new ideas he believes will work well for his business back here in Australia.

McGrath visited Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Frankfurt and London, checking into six different hostels along the way to gain a first-hand experience of what life is like in low-cost, short-stay accommodation.

"Having travelled for many years as a corporate traveller, I had become accustomed to four- and five-star accommodation, so embarking on my first business trip to Europe for YHA while exclusively staying in hostels, I was a little apprehensive as to what I might encounter," the YHA Australia chief conceded.

"I expected basic, clean, quality accommodation, but with fewer creature comforts than I was used to, but what I found, which was completely unexpected, was a type of accommodation not really offered in Australia.

"These diverse European co-living experiences were of a quality and an affordability that rival any 5-star hotel, but with facilities and amenities that drew on the best parts of hostelling - shared spaces, social opportunities and a community atmosphere - to make travelling on business easier, more pleasant, more connected, and affordable," he added.

McGrath said that armed with the knowledge of his recent trip, he views the Australian market as being ripe for evolving its low-cost co-living accommodation products towards the innovative European design.

"I believe YHA is perfectly placed to capture and own this segment to better support our community of global travellers."

McGrath was appointed CEO of YHA Australia in Apr 2020, and has since worked with the board to modernise the business model with a view to evolving YHA into "a contemporary, relevant, connected, affordable accommodation provider".

CX lounge switch

CATHAY Pacific has changed its Sydney lounge affiliation to The House, the independent Aspire-managed facility also used by British Airways, Etihad Airways, Hawaiian Airlines, Philippine Airlines and SriLankan Airlines.

However Oneworld reciprocity will also see top tier Cathay passengers able to access the Qantas international lounges at Sydney Airport, including the First Lounge for Emerald level flyers.

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CORPORATE UPDATE

ATMC pushes sustainability

THE Association of Travel Management Companies (ATMC) is set to highlight sustainability as a core focus of its members, with ATMC Chair Tass Messinis to lead a sector roundtable at the upcoming Impact X Summit taking place in Sydney.

The gathering is timed to coincide with the COP27 United Nations Climate Change Conference which takes place over the next two weeks in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

Impact X will incorporate live sessions from COP27, with the 09-11 Nov event to be attended by leaders from business, government and innovation agencies with a focus on “accelerating action for a net zero, nature positive future”.

“Sustainability, of course, has been a growing priority for our ATMC members and their clients

for some time as the sense of urgency in transitioning to more practical measures to move towards a net zero future picks up pace,” said Messinis.

“I am delighted to be invited to attend Impact X Summit on behalf of our members and the companies they represent.

“This is an important opportunity to be part of this important dialogue alongside COP27’s focus on implementation.

“It is also a powerful platform to reinforce the important work Travel Management Companies have already undertaken in partnership with clients to better understand the impact of travel and identify practical measures to increase sustainability,” he said.

CWT appointment

CWT has announced the appointment of Victoria Berwick to the newly created Vice President role of Global Marketing Director.

UK-based Berwick will have a remit to spearhead all brand, customer, digital, event and product marketing initiatives for the TMC.

She joins CWT from her former role as Global Marketing Director with Reed & Mackay Travel.

Radius GCC growth

THE Corporate Travel Management-owned Radius Travel network has expanded its relationship with ITL World across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, with the move said to “significantly extend its customer servicing capabilities in the Middle East”.

ITL World has offices in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and Qatar, with CTM/ Radius VP of Global Agency Partners, Nicole Wilcock, saying the extension of the partnership was particularly welcomed by clients in the energy, renewables and marine sectors.

BCD, Sabre ink deal

SABRE Corporation has signed a new long-term strategic agreement with BCD Travel, with the pact envisioning increased booking levels via Sabre as well as technology collaboration.

The expanded pact will see the two companies “jointly invest and collaborate on new and advanced solutions that will help accelerate the technology-driven evolution underway across the corporate travel ecosystem,” according to a statement issued this week.

“BCD is a long-time, valued Sabre partner,” said Sabre President Kurt Ekert.

“This agreement demonstrates our continuing commitment to helping BCD achieve its objectives to differentiate its offerings, improve operational efficiency and grow,” he said.

BDC CEO John Snyder said the pact would help BCD enhance its speed to market “with functionalities to improve travellers’ planning and booking experience, including bringing NDC to life”.

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Travel Daily



Delta, Gate7 race day antics



DELTA Air Lines and Gate 7 kicked up their heels with some of their industry partners on Tue at a special Melbourne Cup event.

Held at the Hyatt Regency Sydney’s Zephyr rooftop bar, the glammed-up guests were treated to a Jim Beam Bourbon Tasting courtesy of Delta, Travel South and Gate 7 before watching the race broadcast from Flemington.



Pictured above are, from left: Nicole Laurie, Delta; Chris Watson of Chris Watson Travel; Ann-Catherine Jones, Frontier Travel; Darren Partridge from The Appointment Group; and Sam Hanania of American Express Travel and Lifestyle.

And **inset** are Jane Wilshaw of Delta; Gate 7’s Jo Palmer; & DL’s Nicole Bennett and Clint Jones.

PCMA expansion

THE Professional Conference Managers Association (PCMA) has appointed Visit Anaheim’s Junior Tauvaa as Chief Business Officer.

Tauvaa will commence in his new role in Jan 2023, with a remit to oversee PCMA’s events and education activities as the organisation plots “new and exciting initiatives to the global business events industry”.

Hahn Air blockchain

HAHN Air has joined the Camino “travel blockchain” consortium, which now has 70 members including European carriers Eurowings and Tui.

As a new “validator” of the network, Hahn Air will be validating transactions submitted within the trusted network.

The Camino blockchain is a decentralised private network which restricts access to members authenticated through a “Know Your Customer” process, allowing for reduced energy consumption and faster transaction speed.

Hahn Air spokesman Mathieu Montmessin said the organisation was looking forward to supporting Camino as the “worldwide operating system for travel products”.

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

Couples can save up to \$2,600 on **Travelmarvel's** 21-day Reflections of the Rockies and Alaska cruise. The itinerary encompasses Lake Louise, cosmopolitan Vancouver, national parks, and a cruise through Alaska's Inside Passage aboard Holland America Line's *Volendam*. Offer is valid until 30 Nov or sold out - call 1300 278 278 for more details.

European Waterways is waiving the solo supplement on *L'Impressionniste's* departure in Southern Burgundy on 16 Apr 2023 and *La Bella Vita's* departure in Italy on 16 Apr 2023, representing a saving of up to €1,800 (A\$2,790). The offer is valid when booked by 30 Nov.

Azamara guests can sail to the Mediterranean while earning a \$500 onboard credit on all stateroom categories, as well as the option to upgrade to a Veranda Plus for the price of an Oceanview Stateroom. Offer ends 04 Nov - visit azamara.com for details.

Aussie adventurers can save on a selection of **Outback Spirit's** 2023 tours when booked by 15 Dec, including the 13-day all-inclusive Arnhem Land Wilderness Adventure - call 1800 688 222.

QF slams Shonkies

QANTAS has fired back at consumer group Choice after it was labelled the "Spirit of Disappointment" (*TD* 03 Nov), calling the Shonky awards "a bit shonky itself".

"These [Shonky] awards are clearly out of date," Qantas sniped, adding it was disappointing that Choice failed to acknowledge the impact that COVID and border closures have had on the entire aviation industry, not just Qantas.

"We've been very transparent with our performance figures, both good and bad, but Choice is using figures that are just wrong... we've beaten Virgin Australia for on-time flights eight out of the past 12 months... and our call wait times are less than half what Choice is claiming," QF said.

Volocopter lifted

VOLOCOPTER has raised an additional US\$182 million in its latest funding round on top of the \$170 million it raised in Mar, positioning the German electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) company to certify its electric passenger aircraft, the VoloCity air taxi.

The second signing of its Series E funding round, which remains open, also saw two new investors jump on board - NEOM, the Red Sea's smart, cognitive city project, and Gly Capital Management of Hong Kong.

Volocopter offers a suite of fully electric multipurpose aircraft for urban missions, and expects to launch its first commercial air taxi routes in the next two years in major cities like Singapore, Rome, Paris, and the NEOM region.

Giddy-up for the Cup



GOLD Trip wasn't the only winner on Melbourne Cup Day this week, with the Ignite Travel team getting dressed up to the nines to celebrate the big race.

The staff donned their race day finery as the business came together to not only have fun on Cup Day, but to also mark all of the recent successes the company has achieved.

"We're so excited about what's coming up for us as we head into the final months of the year," Ignite Travel said.

The event was sponsored by

the Globus Family of Brands Australasia and Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings.

The Ignite Travel team **pictured** enjoying all of the colour and style of the Melbourne Cup.

CAOA new members

CULTURAL Attractions of Australia (CAOA), which is one of eight collectives that make up Tourism Australia's Signature Experiences Program, has recently welcomed two new Sydney-based members.

The Art Gallery of NSW and Bangarra Dance Theatre add new experiences and venues to the group, expanding its existing offerings for business event planners (*TD* 26 May).

Two after-hours experiences will be available at the Gallery, providing in-depth curated encounters with its extensive art collections, while Bangarra Dance Theatre will offer a behind-the-scenes experience complete with canapes and cocktails.

Movenpick package

MOVENPICK Hotel Melbourne on Spencer has announced a 'Celebration Package' to mark its first birthday, offering an overnight stay in a Classic Room, buffet breakfast, a welcome gift on arrival, Movenpick's ice cream parfait, and access to the hotel's free daily Chocolate Hour.

Priced from \$319 per night, the offer is valid for stays until 31 Jan.

For confidential tip offs, connect with *Travel Daily* via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click [HERE](#)

