



2024 - 2025

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Royal unveils 24/25

ROYAL Caribbean has released its full program for the 2024/25 season, which goes on sale 04 May featuring a range of Brisbane and Sydney departures - see the [front cover page](#) and [page two](#) for the full story.

Final weeks for USA

THERE'S less than two weeks left for a chance to win a spot on Brand USA's 2023 MegaFam, which will see 50 lucky agents from Australia and New Zealand whisked away on exciting itineraries across the US.

For more details on how to enter the competition, which ends 30 Apr, [CLICK HERE](#).

1000 Mile appoints

1000 Mile Travel Group has welcomed Morgan Davies as its new Sales and Account Manager for the Australian market.

Davies has more than 20 years of corporate travel experience under her belt, including her most recent role at CT Connections where she was the Senior Team Leader.

"Morgan has a passion for pushing the boundaries and inspiring others to find creative solutions to complex problems," the company's founders, Ben Ross and Nicola Veltman, enthused.

The announcement comes after 1000 Mile Travel Group made several new appointments to its global leadership team in Feb ([TD 17 Feb](#)) - for more industry appointments, see [page eight](#).

QF knock-back on Alliance

QANTAS has responded swiftly to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) rejection of its proposed takeover of Alliance Aviation ([TD breaking news](#)), saying it will seek more information from the regulator and "remains confident the acquisition would not substantially lessen competition in any market".

The ACCC has been considering the issue for almost a year ([TD 25 May 2022](#)), after Qantas initially acquired a 19.9% holding in Alliance Aviation Services Limited as far back as Feb 2019, and then launched a full takeover for the charter operator three years later.

The Commission had previously outlined a statement of issues around the deal, with Virgin Australia also having a formal Charter Alliance Agreement with Alliance Aviation, which has been in place since 2017.

A renewal of that VA-Alliance pact is also currently the subject of an ACCC reauthorisation application by the carriers.

Alliance is also a key supplier of Embraer short-haul jet wet lease services to QantasLink, which is Alliance's biggest customer and currently has 18 E175s in operation and a further 12 options on the drawing board.

In today's decision, the ACCC noted that with both Qantas and Alliance being key suppliers of air transport services to the key fly-in fly-out resource project operators in WA and Qld, it believes the

deal is anticompetitive.

"Qantas and Alliance currently strongly compete with each other in markets where there are few effective alternatives... the proposed acquisition would combine two of the largest suppliers of charter services in WA and Qld," said ACCC Chair, Gina Cass-Gottlieb.

She said the Commission had also received considerable feedback that Alliance was strongly valued by customers as a "particularly vigorous and effective competitor".

"Alliance doesn't sell seats on major passenger routes, so many Australians may not have heard of them, but it is one of Australia's most significant airlines, with 70 aircraft currently and more on order...combining such an important player with Australia's largest airline, Qantas, would be likely to substantially lessen competition and is something we oppose," Cass-Gottlieb said.

Qantas issued a statement in the wake of the decision, saying it had requested a meeting with the ACCC to understand the decision which it believes "is at odds with the increasingly competitive nature of the segment".

QF noted that since announcing its May 2022 proposed acquisition of Alliance, competitor Rex had acquired National Jet Express from Cobham Aviation, in "a transaction that received ACCC clearance within 11 days".

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of news including **Business Events News**, plus a cover page from **Royal Caribbean International**.

Save \$500 on Cooks

ENTIRE Travel Group is offering savings of up to \$500 per couple on a range of independent holiday packages to the Cook Islands, ahead of Jetstar's launch of direct flights between Sydney and Raratonga, which starts flying from 29 Jun ([TD 16 Mar](#)).

The discounted packages include accommodation, transfers and a selection of bonus inclusions, such as the Club Raro Resort package, where guests can save \$500 per couple on a five-night stay at the recently renovated resort, located near Raratonga's main town, Avarua - for more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Win return flights to New Caledonia

THE Travel Community Hub has teamed up with Aircalin to give one lucky Aussie travel agent a chance to win return flights from Sydney or Brisbane to Noumea, New Caledonia for themselves and a companion, as well as return airport transfers with Friendly Transfers.

To be in the running, agents will need to share the top three selling points they use when suggesting New Caledonia to their clients, using the entry form [HERE](#), before 21 May.



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Royal's shore bet for 24-25

ROYAL Caribbean is gearing up for a bumper summer with the 2024-2025 Australia season going on sale from 04 May 2023.

The 4,905-passenger *Quantum of the Seas* will return to Brisbane, while sister ship *Ovation of the Seas* will be based in Sydney for a total of 45 departures between Oct 2024 and Apr 2025.

Quantum's third season includes five four- to six-night Queensland getaways to Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef via Airlie Beach, as well as South Pacific cruises to Mystery Island, Port Vila and Noumea, and one 14-night sailing to New Zealand, visiting Auckland, Milford Sound, Bay of Islands, Tauranga, Napier and Wellington.

Ovation has six 10- to 11-night cruises to NZ on offer, including a Christmas and New Year's departure, plus sailings exploring the South Pacific.

The program features more short getaways than any previous season, which can also be combined as back-to-back cruises for a longer trip.

For the full details, see the **front cover** of *TD* to learn more.

Bunnik's SL goes live

BUNNIK Tours has released 2024 dates for its Sri Lanka small group tours collection.

The program features one classic itinerary, the 17-day Sri Lankan Discovery, which showcases the country's unspoilt natural beauty, friendly people, and ancient history.

It also features the Sri Lanka In-Style itinerary, for those looking for a little bit more luxury, which features five-star accommodation throughout the journey.

Also included is a special departure for Sri Lanka's Kandy Festival in Aug next year.

See Europe in style

ABERCROMBIE & Kent has unveiled its ultra-luxurious collection of Wings Over the World journeys for 2024.

The collection features the brand-new Wings Over Europe's Iconic Capitals, a 12-day itinerary taking in the best of London, Paris, Rome and Athens.

Highlights of the journey, which start from \$76,915pp, includes a Champagne toast on the Shard, the tallest building in Western Europe; a tour of Paris via Citroen; an exclusive breakfast atop the Eiffel Tower; and a ride along the Athenian Riviera.

All A&K Wings Over the World journeys include immersive experiences, sightseeing options, breakfast in bed, luggage handling, laundry service, airport meet-and-greets with private transfers, all entrance fees, taxes and gratuities, and 24/7 on-call support.

For more details on the premium Euro trips, **SEE HERE**.

Scenic Euro river 24

TWO new river cruise itineraries are featured in Scenic's just-released 2024 Europe River Cruising program.

The new Danube In Depth, a 10-day cruise from Nuremberg to Budapest (and reverse), and Iconic Danube, an eight-day cruise from Passau to Budapest (and reverse), are among more than 270 departures in the all-inclusive collection.

Scenic has a Super Earlybird airfare offer for bookings made by 31 Oct 2023, with Economy flights included (up to \$2,200 per person) or fly Business from \$5,495pp on river cruises 11 days or longer - combinable with earlybird savings of up to an additional \$800 per person.



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Extra night in L Howe



LORD Howe Island's Capella Lodge has released a rare deal with a bonus night's accommodation in addition to the usual luxury inclusions.

Available for new bookings for stays between 06 to 22 Jun, the 'Stay 4 Pay 3 Cool Season Getaway' deal starts from \$5,700 for two people in a Capella Suite.

The package includes breakfast, sunset drinks and canapes, dinner, open bar with premium wines and spirits from 6pm daily, non-alcoholic beverages, and island airport transfers.

During their stay, guests can embark on Lord Howe's numerous mountain trails and rainforest tracks - to make a booking on Capella's Cool Season Getaway promotion, see [HERE](#).

Air travel feels the burn

DESPITE improvements at Australia's domestic airlines in Dec 2022 and Jan 2023, the operational performance of QF, VA and Rex all deteriorated badly in Feb, according to a new report from aviation consulting firm Butler Caroye.

The latest *Air Travel Pain Index* released this week indicates that network-wide, all three airlines are now "toe-to-toe" when it comes to issues, with 'Pain Indices' double acceptable levels.

The Pain Index for each carrier is compiled based on a range of factors, including on-time performance and cancellations, with Butler Caroye's Tony O'Connor noting that the best airlines in the world have Pain Indices in the low-to-mid-teens.

By contrast, in Feb this year Qantas, Virgin Australia and Rex all recorded figures of 40, 37 and 37 respectively - more than double the acceptable target.

The calculations take into account external factors, over which airlines have little control such as weather & airport issues, as well as day-to-day matters like staffing and infrastructure, and then longer-term strategic factors such as fleet & network planning.

On the busiest domestic routes, BNE-SYD and MEL-SYD both have worse airline performances than the Australian average, attributed to extra delays in Sydney.

O'Connor noted that after the service deterioration in Feb, Qantas and Virgin now sit not too far above their pre-COVID overall performance - which was still well above the acceptable target zone.

He also called out Jetstar's erratic performance, saying the QF LCC offshoot "needs to refine its operational feet...with profits flowing, Qantas should invest more in the day-to-day operational resources of its low cost carrier, soon".

AzAmazing Evenings

AZAMARA has expanded its signature AzAmazing Evenings as it reaches its 10-year anniversary, unveiling a new onboard daytime program for 2023.

AzAmazing Celebrations will include the return of AzAmazing Evenings, in addition to AzAmazing Days, a new shoreside event where guests can explore ports in the daytime through local musicians, food and wine, and entertainment.

The Nights in Arabia experience in Aqaba, Jordan is among the offerings, where guests will be regaled with a music and dance performance on the lawns of the luxurious Ayla Golf Resort, and the Day of Dancing in Mahon option, which includes a tour of historic fortress La Mola and an equestrian show.

Also added to the mix are Destination Celebrations, which are onboard events featuring live cultural performances and local cuisine inspired by a destination.



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AAT Kings reboots Tiwi

AAT Kings has restarted its short-break and day tours to the Tiwi Islands off the coast of the NT, along with a range of offers to mark the 2023-24 season.

Discounts of \$90 per couple are available on the three-day Kakadu & Tiwi Islands Explorer tour (\$1,569 per adult) and up to \$100 off per couple on the four-day Kakadu, Nitmiluk (Katherine) Gorge & Tiwi Islands Explorer tour (\$1,975 per adult).

The offer is valid for sale until 21 Jun for select departures from 01 Apr to 31 Mar 2024.

The Tiwis (Ratuwati Yinjara) are comprised of 11 islands, including two inhabited by the local Tiwi indigenous people, whose art, language, and culture remain distinct from the mainland.

The tours include a ferry ride from Darwin to Bathurst Island where a local guide will escort guests to an Aboriginal community for visits to the local



museum, church, and arts and crafts centres.

In Kakadu, activities include swimming in Edith Falls and a Yellow Water Billabong or Jumping Crocodile Cruise.

AAT Kings has also deepened its discounts on some departures across the Top End, with up to 20% off select experiences between 14 Apr and 21 Jun.

These include 20% off Outback Adventure (20 Jun 2023 departure, from \$6,756 ppts, saving \$1,689) and Outback Safari (01 Jul departure, from \$5,432ppts, saving \$1,358).

Bhutan inks Amadeus

BHUTAN Airlines has signed a new partnership with Amadeus, allowing travel sellers to book flights to the South Asian destination via the Amadeus Travel Platform.

The airline, which offers daily flights to Bangkok via Kolkata, India and three flights a week to Delhi, believes the move will help broaden its customer reach and increase its visibility among OTAs and travel agents.

Travello Cairns store

TRAVELLO Group is gearing up to open its first brick-and-mortar retail store in Cairns, Australia, as well as establish a customer support team in the region.

Customers to the store will be able to enjoy a unique Private Jet experience modelled after a jet flown by Kim Kardashian, where they can take selfies and access in-person travel advice and exclusive in-store offers.

Sudan deteriorates

THE security situation for travellers stranded in Sudan has now gone from bad to worse, with DFAT advising late yesterday that ongoing military clashes, gunfire and explosions have made foreigners the target of attacks.

“All airports in Sudan are closed to commercial flights and overland travel to border areas is extremely dangerous, it’s unlikely you’ll be able to cross land borders and you must consider the risks carefully before attempting to leave by any route,” DFAT has warned.

Sunny Jetstar sale

JETSTAR’S new five-day Sunshine Coast Sale is offering one-way Sydney-Sunshine Coast fares from \$61, as well as Adelaide-Sunshine Coast from \$99 and Melbourne-Sunshine Coast from \$79.

The promotion ends 11.59pm AEST Mon 24 Apr - details [HERE](#).

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*Flight credit offer is per person in Australian Dollars (AUD), and valid on new bookings only. Offer is subject to change without notice. Offer is valid on new bookings only made by 31 May 2023 on ER070124 and ER080224; Free Ocean Voyage compatible with ER070124 from Hobart to Lyttelton (Christchurch) in a similar cabin category; Free Ocean Voyage compatible with ER080224 is ER020224 from Auckland to Auckland in a similar cabin category. All advertised prices are based on the Ponant Bonus fare per person, in Australian Dollars (AUD), based on a double occupancy in the best available category, including port taxes and transfer, yield managed, correct at time of printing, are subject to availability and can be changed at any time; All Zodiac and shore excursions are included on luxury expedition itineraries unless specified; Open Bar includes wine, beer, French Champagne, spirits, and non-alcoholic beverages. Premium beverages and brands available at an additional cost; spa services on board are available at extra cost. More conditions apply, refer to au.ponant.com. ABN: 35 166 676 517. Photographs: © Studio PONANT - Nick Rains, Olivier Blaud. © Adobe Stock.



Grinch gives back!

CARNIVAL Cruise Line is extending its inaugural 'Grinchmas in July' cruises into Aug due to popular demand, with four new cruises announced.

The 10-day Great Barrier Reef voyage will depart on 31 Jul, followed by the eight-day South Pacific cruise on 10 Aug, a three-day Getaway on 18 Aug, and a 10-day South Pacific journey on 21 Aug.

As part of Carnival's partnership with Dr. Seuss (pictured getting fresh with a Carnival skipper), the Grinch-themed cruises include a *Green Eggs and Ham* Breakfast, and Seuss Storytime.



Sunshine Coast SHINES

VISIT Sunshine Coast (VSC) has launched its largest tourism training program ever called SHINE, which has been customised to help local operators enhance their offerings and deliver inspiring encounters to travellers.

Launched by Olympic champion Duncan Armstrong at an event attended by over 100 tourism businesses, the revamped model was developed by Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ), with VSC Head of Industry and Trade Development Andrew Fairbairn confident the program will successfully build on Sunshine Coast tourism's current assets.

"We know the world of travel has changed dramatically over the past three years, requiring a dynamic new approach to delivering experiences," he said.

"SHINE sets us on a pathway to deliver 'Sunshine Moments' to our visitors and prepare to shine

on a global stage at the 2032 Brisbane Olympics."

Tailored workshops and online training sessions will be delivered by VSC covering areas such as emerging travel trends, digital technology, online experiences, social media, and branding.

Businesses can participate by emailing members@visitsunshinecoast.com.

UK targets Oz love

THE UK is targeting Australia in its latest 'Great Love' campaign designed to encourage people to see the destination differently through study, work or tourism.

The new campaign shares stories from individuals across the LGBTQIA+ spectrum as they discuss their moments of self-acceptance and belonging in the UK, while providing all LGBTQIA+ communities with a platform to contribute their stories.

Whitsundays East Coast roadshow

TOURISM Whitsundays will hit the road for the first time since 2019, stopping in Melbourne on 05 Jun, Sydney on 06 Jun, Newcastle on 07 Jun, and Brisbane on 08 Jun.

Agents will be able to network with 20 of the destination's operators via the stand-up expo events - **CLICK HERE** to register.

Expo boosts Lithgow

THE upcoming Lithgow Business & Lifestyle Expo is set to provide a chance for developers, restaurateurs and attractions operators to consider the NSW Blue Mountains destination for future business prospects.

Taking place on 06-07 May, the event will feature around 100 stalls showcasing Lithgow's attractions, as well as an impressive art exhibition - for more business events news, see **page seven**.

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Avani expansion

MINOR Hotels has announced the expansion of Avani Hotels & Resorts in Europe and its entry into Latin America next year.

Aimed at “millennial-minded travellers”, Avani will add five European properties by mid-2024, with locations to include Avani Alonso Martínez Madrid Hotel, the first for the brand in Spain; Avani Frankfurt City Hotel, its first in Germany; Avani Museum Quarter Amsterdam Hotel, a first in the Netherlands; and Avani Palazzo Moscovia Milan Hotel and Avani Rio Novo Venice Hotel, which are rebranded properties in Italy.

In Central and South America, the 140-room Avani Cancun Airport Hotel in Mexico will be added, along with the 66-room Avani Royal Zona T Bogota Hotel, in Colombia.

Phillip Island tour

VISITORS to Phillip Island can now experience the destination in a new way, thanks to a fresh tour offering from Tour Local.

The Phillip Island Wine, Wildlife and Penguins Tour visits the tried-and-tested favourites of the island, while also giving guests a chance to experience the lesser-known parts of the island.

Highlights include a banquet lunch and wine tasting at Phillip Island Winery; sunset drinks and canapes at the Nobbies scenic lookout; a viewing of the Penguin Parade at Summerlands Beach, and much more - [CLICK HERE](#).

Hyatt Studios to debut in '24



HYATT Hotel Corporation has announced the launch of its new Hyatt Studios midscale brand, set to make its initial splash in the American market.

Construction is currently underway on the brand's first hotel, which in 2024 will offer guests suites with kitchen amenities, complimentary breakfast and a 24-hour market for those who are on the prolonged business trips away from home.

The Hyatt Studios brand will also be joining forces with the group's Hyatt Place, Hyatt House and Caption By Hyatt brands to receive support by leveraging the brands' wide and experienced portfolio of properties.

Chief Growth Officer, Jim Chu, said it was a proud moment for Hyatt, with the launch of the new brand expected to attract guests after a high standard of service expected of the hotelier.

“This new segment is expected to drive increased direct bookings

for all properties across the Hyatt portfolio,” he said.

Along with various agreements with multiple developers, Hyatt is currently looking to further expand the brand's footprint with the agreements numbering more than 100 sites, with new announcements expected soon.

Pictured: A room design of the new Hyatt Studios' suite featuring a kitchen, television and a generous living space.



SHOW US YOUR REGINA
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WHILE we're sure it sounded like a good idea in the drunken marketing meeting, it appears the Canadian city of Regina has been forced to walk back a highly suggestive tourism push this week (**pictured** above).

Issuing a statement in the face of a heavy backlash, Tourism Regina said it would be “opting back to the original Tourism Regina brand until a possible new brand identity is identified.”

To avoid any future controversies, the tourism body also said it had appointed a consultant to fully understand what went wrong the first time around.



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Queensland
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Instant bookings

PLANNERS will soon be able to take advantage of instant online event booking capabilities at more properties worldwide, thanks to an expanded agreement between MeetingPackage and Amadeus.

The travel tech company will offer MeetingPackage's Venue Sales Management (VSM) solution, which aims to increase the volume of instantly bookable meeting rooms in the market.

The technology, which integrates with most major property management systems and sales & catering solutions, comes at a time when increasingly busy planners expect more automation and prefer online booking options.

EVENT AWARD NOMINATIONS OPEN

THE Australian Event Awards 2023 is gearing up to be the biggest yet, and will recognise a total of 33 categories in a huge celebration of the industry's achievements.

After consulting with the industry, the Event Awards team has introduced 15 new categories, as well as reintroducing six pre-COVID categories.

For the first time, the event will acknowledge the contribution made by industry suppliers, such as those in the realm of catering, security, production, AV content, and equipment hire, via 11 new Industry Awards including the Event Supplier of the Year trophy.

The ceremony will also see 14 Best Event Awards doled out across event type specific categories, plus four Achievement Awards recognising

new innovations from industry leaders, and three new categories of Management Awards, such as Corporate Event Management Company of the Year.

The ceremony will wrap up with the Headline Awards, which could see some nominees go home with two trophies on the night, like the special judges' award, or the Event of the Year title.

"Taking on board the feedback from the industry, we revisited what was on offer and built a new set of categories to recognise areas of the industry not previously highlighted," Managing Director Ian Steigrad said.

In addition to the reworking of categories, the entry submission process has been made easier, thanks to a new entry form and simplified submission requirements.

The official date of the



ceremony and symposium is yet to be announced, however it is expected to take place in Sep.

Entries are open from now until 17 Jul, with an earlybird discount available until 02 Jun; nominees will be announced on 09 Aug.

You can make an entry to the Australian Event Awards [HERE](#), and check out the full list of categories [HERE](#).

Pictured: Caroline James Events, one of the 2022 winners.

Extraordinary events

OUT of the Ordinary Outback is offering a 10% saving on accommodation for corporate events for 10 or more people up to Mar 2024 at its regional NSW properties, including White Cliffs Underground Motel.

Tour group bookings featuring activities like 4WD adventures, space observatory experiences, indigenous art tours and opal mine visits are also available up to Apr 2025, with a bonus welcome pack worth \$50pp for groups of 10 or more - see [HERE](#) for more details.

Perth evokes more

WESTERN Australia has been selected to host AgriFutures Australia's evoke Conference in 2024.

The event is set to attract agrifood innovators from around the world, such as farmers, start-ups, and researchers, to the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre on 20-21 Feb 2024.

The last evoke conference was held in Adelaide and attracted 1,600 delegates from 20 countries.

Canada ramps up

DESTINATION Canada is set to receive CAD\$50 million in funding over the next three years to attract major international conventions, conferences and events, the country's recently released Budget 2023 has revealed.

The announcement comes after destinations across Canada celebrated the return of business events at the Global Meetings Industry Day on 30 Mar, under the theme #MeetingsMatter.

BEA event guide

BUSINESS Events Adelaide (BEA) has released its 2023 Planners' Guide, presented as a live compendium which will be updated online over the next 12 months.

The guide includes a swathe of up-to-date information on the city's accommodation, venues and business event suppliers, as well as general information to help organisers choose South Australia for a business event - see the guide [HERE](#).



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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.

Creative Cruising has appointed **Caitlyn Paris** as its new Marketing Executive. Paris will be responsible for enhancing the company's brand presence, trade marketing campaigns, and events, as well as better connecting key partners and Cruise Spirit members. She brings over seven years of experience in the cruise sector across multiple roles, and was previously the Trade Marketing Executive at Carnival.

Heath Delfos is the new Global Director of Revenue Optimisation at **StayWell Holdings**. With over 13 years of industry experience across the east Asia and Oceanic regions, Delfos will oversee and drive the management group's revenue management strategy. He was most recently the director of revenue and distribution at Accor.

Holland America Line has promoted **Rob Coleman** to Vice President, North America Sales from the role of vp of charter, incentives & series partnerships. Coleman will continue his 24-year stint with the cruise line as he oversees the accounts, incentives and sales.

Cassandra Kerr has joined **Silversea** to become its Director of Strategic Business Development APAC. Kerr brings decades of experience within the travel industry in leadership roles, and will collaborate with Silversea's directors to spearhead strategic opportunities across APAC.

Alerah Turner will continue his 20-year journey with **World Travel Protection (WTP)** as the new Chief Operating Officer to lead the Uxbridge Command Centre in London. Turner was most recently the director of global provider networks and will spearhead strategic operations for all of WTP's consumers.

Bali behaviour guide

THE Indonesian Govt is preparing to publish a "guide book" for tourists with rules on how to dress and behave while holidaying in the tourist hotspot, as well as an explanation of the road rules and an introduction to Balinese culture and customs.

Head of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Anggiat Napitupulu, told *The Bali Sun* that "it needs to be known that not all foreigners know what things are allowed and not allowed in Bali".

There is no release date yet for the tourist guide book.

My Home Virginia

THE Virginia Tourism Corporation has announced the launch of a three-episode video series named *My Home Virginia* on its website and YouTube.

The narrative-driven videos depict the prominent attractions in Virginia, and what drives travellers to the state from all over the world.

The first season was filmed and produced by Trevor Frost, who has worked with *The National Geographic*, helping to promote locations such as Great Dismal Swamp and the James River.

Watch the first episode **HERE**.

Tonga Tourism's new chief



THE Ministry of Tourism in Tonga has named Viliami Alamameita Takau as its new Chief Executive Officer for a four-year term.

Takau, who takes over from Sione Moala-Mafi, was formerly General Manager of the Tonga Tourism Authority, and has also worked for Tonga's Chamber of Commerce & Industry and as a Director of the Tonga Transport Board, as well as having an extensive background in business and management within Tonga's private sector.

"I am confident that Viliami's wealth of experience in the private sector, will help to revitalise Tonga's efforts to rebuild it's tourism industry post-pandemic and of course following the devastating Hunga Ha'apai eruption," The Pacific Tourism Organisation CEO Christopher Cocker said.

Pictured: Takau with Tongan Minister for Tourism Hon. Fekita 'Utoikamanu (right).

Samoa sessions

EARLIER this month, the Samoa Tourism Authority successfully wrapped up a series of interactive industry sessions focused on enhancing the island country's tourism products and services.

The initiative brought together local tourism industry members to discuss important tourism topics like marketing and promotion, research and statistics, as well as what policies are needed for enhanced visitor economy development.

Bunbury ramps up

CONSTRUCTION has begun in the WA city of Bunbury on the Maiden Reserve to build a new scenic outlook and trail.

The \$5 million project will feature two decks of lookout for views across the Kalgulup Regional Park, with the lower deck incorporating a 670-metre wheelchair accessibility ramp through the Tuart Forest.