

Vic tourism tax slammed

A PROPOSED new tourism levy on short-stays in Victoria would adversely impact the state's attractiveness as a tourism destination and be an "unfair way" to deal with housing issues, Accommodation Australia (AA) CEO Michael Johnson believes.

Reacting to reports that Victoria's Premier Daniel Andrews is considering introducing a charge on short-term rental and hotel stays of a mooted \$5 a booking, AA's chief argued such a move would incentivise Aussie travellers to ditch Victoria as a tourist destination, and discourage international arrivals from choosing Australia as a long-haul market altogether.

Johnson said it would jeopardise the delicately recovering Chinese tourist market in particular, which Tourism Australia is currently asking to "Come say G'day".

He added that the timing of tax being implemented during a recovery stage would also be

detrimental for Victoria's battered visitor economy.

"The return of overnight international tourists is critical to Victoria meeting projected visitor number and spending targets - spending by international visitors is still less than half what it was in 2019 - down \$4.6 billion," he said.

"Now is not the time for Victoria to pull up the welcome mat to visitors," Johnson added.

The AA argues the unregulated accommodation sector should be targeted instead, not hotel guests who spend money on visitation.

Cox on talent

DESTINATION NSW CEO Steve Cox is the latest industry leader to appear in the ongoing Tourism Talent interview series.

Cox speaks about his mission to deliver economic and social benefits to the people of NSW by growing the visitor economy, with a \$65 billion annual spend by 2030.

Increased efficiencies and productivity enhancements from a DNSW reorganisation have been key, while Cox also discusses work in 2022 which is delivering results this month - view Cox's commentary at traveldaily.com.au/videos.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of news including our Sustainability page plus a full page from Silversea.

Silversea Academy

AGENTS can become a Silversea expert by joining the new-and-improved Silversea Academy, designed to provide quick learning in short modules.

To celebrate the relaunch, Silversea is offering a \$450 bonus commission - see the [back page](#).

Travel Daily
ON LOCATION

VENICE, ITALY

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Crystal Cruises, which will today debut its newly refurbished *Crystal Serenity* on a voyage from Venice to Marseille.

ANTICIPATION is at fever pitch today among the Aussie contingent who will shortly board *Crystal Serenity*.

Public spaces have undergone a complete redesign by Swedish firm Tillberg, which said it had worked closely with the reborn cruise line's management "to ensure that their iconic fleet stays top-rated by the guests".

Two new guest room categories include the Junior Crystal Penthouse Suite as well as the Single Guest Room, a perfect option for solo cruisers.

More on Crystal tomorrow.

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QF points out date

QANTAS is pulling out more stops to ensure its customers use up their remaining COVID-era credits before they expire, launching a special reminder marketing campaign this week.

The carrier's latest advertising push is running across radio and full-page newspaper ads to bolster its existing trade campaign (**TD** 26 Jun), encouraging travellers to use credits by the 31 Dec deadline.

As a further incentive, the carrier is also offering double Frequent Flyer points for credit bookings made by 31 Jul.

Last month, Qantas revealed there was still around \$150 million worth of COVID credits to be used by passengers who booked through travel agents and third parties.

Time to choose tourism

SEVEN-AND-A-HALF million dollars is being offered by the Federal Government to various tourism bodies across the states and territories to encourage workers to 'Choose Tourism'.

A new program will work in partnership with the tourism industry, aimed at helping to address workforce shortages across the sector.

Grants under the Choose Tourism program will enable the states and territories to develop new campaigns, extend existing activities to attract new workers, and ensure they have the skills to deliver quality experiences for their visitors.

Federal Minister for Tourism, Don Farrell, said his state-based colleagues around Australia are united in their commitment to return the country's visitor economy to pre-COVID expenditure levels of \$166 billion by next year, and grow it to \$230

billion by 2030.

"The Federal Government is committed to growing our tourism industry, and to achieving what we need to ensure the sector has the workforce they need," he said.

"Choose Tourism grants will fund a range of activities including jobs expos, mentoring, targeted media campaigns, and specific industry training."

"Attracting workers to the visitor economy, including young people, older workers, those with disabilities, and First Nations people, will give more people the chance to get a job and pursue a career in what is a diverse and dynamic sector," Farrell added.

The Choose Tourism grants complement a national Austrade campaign to encourage eligible pensioners to take advantage of the temporary change to the Work Bonus by joining the tourism workforce.

Devries joins MSC

BRIGITA Devries, former Swan Hellenic GM Australia and New Zealand, has joined MSC Cruises in the newly created position of Senior Sales Manager for Australia and New Zealand.

Based in the cruise line's Sydney office, Devries will draw on her extensive experience in the sector, which includes leadership, sales and marketing roles for brands like Star Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line.

MSC Cruises Managing Director Australia & New Zealand, Lisa Teiotu, said she is "very pleased" to announce the major appointment, adding it will "further strengthen our local sales team to support our trade partners and demonstrates the growth for Australia and New Zealand".

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Expert tips: The TTL is 1hr from booking date/time and Rail Europe offers a grace period of up to 2hrs during which refunds for a booking can be made without paying a refund fee. Also, the new DB API is live and offers a smoother booking experience. Check the Systems connectivity status page before booking.

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ACCC sounds loyalty alarm

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is warning travellers about a new text message scam currently targeting Qantas Frequent Flyer members.

The consumer watchdog, working in partnership with the National Anti-Scam Centre, issued the warning today about a concerning text scam which attempts to steal Qantas Loyalty members' points, as well as login details and personal info to use fraudulently on other platforms.

Over the last four months, 209 reports have been made to Scamwatch, with a significant percentage targeting frequent flyers with Qantas.

The alert has asked travellers to be extra vigilant when receiving digital correspondence purporting to be the carrier, especially if it relates to the impending expiry of points.

The text or email includes a link



to a fake website, which prompts customers to log in, where they are then prompted to provide credit card details to use the supposedly expiring points.

"We are very concerned that Australians experiencing cost-of-living pressures may be more susceptible to these scams," ACCC Deputy Chair Catriona Lowe said.

"Scammers are deliberately panicking consumers by claiming their points are expiring soon, so we urge people to immediately delete or ignore any message regarding a loyalty program that contains a link," she added.

To avoid being a victim, never click links in text messages and ensure apps/websites are accessed independently.

Qantas hops on Kangaroo Island

QANTAS has announced it will be increasing its frequency to Kangaroo Island, offering 12 return flights a week from 29 Oct.

"We have a proud history of supporting Kangaroo Island, particularly during the island's recovery from the devastating 2020 bushfires, and we're excited to help more Australians and international visitors discover one of Australia's most unique destinations," the carrier said.

NZ gradual recovery

INTERNATIONAL arrival numbers to New Zealand continue to recover, with 160,359 travellers jetting in during May, representing 73% of volume recorded in the same '19 period.

Leisure travellers made up 56,000 of arrivals, which is 60% of pre-COVID, with hopes future months will be kicked along by the FIFA Women's World Cup.

See Indo in luxury

A NEW Australia-based tour operator has launched operations this week, offering travellers premium experiences and packages in Indonesia.

To mark the launch of Indo Insider Tours, the company has introduced an all-access luxury trip to the Mandalika MotoGP in Lombok, with the high-speed event to take place in Oct.

The VIP tour offers access to the team's pit box, pit lane and full paddock passes, a VIP dinner with MotoGP royalty, as well as a range of two-wheel experiences.

Founded by former Indonesia Tourism Officer, Miriam Tulevski and her husband, motorcycle racer Ian Godwin, Indo Insider Tours promotes itself as offering curated premium experiences, designed for "the curious, intrepid adventurer in all of us".

The company is also developing a day of track riding at Mandalika Circuit following in the racing lines of the MotoGP riders.

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Mandarin tracks eco progress

MANDARIN Oriental has published its annual sustainability report, outlining the luxury hospitality group's latest sustainability achievements and strategic initiatives.

The report highlights a 30% carbon intensity reduction, a 31% drop in energy intensity, and 16% water intensity reduction across Mandarin's portfolio compared to 2012 baselines, putting it on track to meet its Environmental Group Targets for 2030.

Other milestones detailed in the report include a reduction in Scope 1 greenhouse gas emissions from 16% in 2012 to 12% in 2022, the elimination of 99% of single-use plastics across all operations in 2022 (excl. supplier packaging), and achieving 100% responsible sourced status in key priority categories, such as coffee & tea.

For more sustainability news, see [page six](#).

Agents get their Philo the city



MW TOURS and Philippine Airlines recently hosted a group of lucky agents from Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia on a famil trip to the Philippines, where they explored the best of Manila, Cebu and Bohol.

Pictured: Tour Guide; Joe Peralta, Kreative Travel; Andrea Davey, MTA; Kylie Brady, KB4 Travel; Jennifer Gibbons, Helloworld Bunbury; (front) Hannah Truong, The Dream

Holiday Travel Agency; (back) Lydia Scuglia, Helloworld Top Ryde; Anusah Patel, Helloworld Carousel; Ashley Cooper, Philippine Airlines BDM WA; Natasha Melhuish, Holiday World; Craig Hunt, MW Tours BDM Vic/Tas; Brody Paino, Capricorn Travel; Darryl Laing, The Travel Agent; and the hotel manager.

Cycle Japan bought

CYCLING company Ride & Seek has acquired the Aussie founded Cycle Japan, in addition to launching a new extended Samurai Tour, covering Mt. Fuji.

Ride & Seek has worked closely with Cycle Japan since it was founded by Australian John Morrell, and offered its first tour five years ago.

The first two legs of the new Samurai Tour are already sold out, but the 15-day Mt. Fuji stage still has availability, starting at \$9,700 per person - for more info on the adventure, [CLICK HERE](#).



Window Seat

AN AUSSIE dad has passed down a passion for aviation to his son, with aspiring pilot Patrick Schwarz joining Jetstar's ranks alongside father Captain Phil Schwarz, who has flown with the carrier for nearly two decades.

The 21-year-old is one of 140 pilots set to join Jetstar's workforce this year as part of a huge pilot intake - the younger Schwarz is also one of the first cadets to come to the airline directly from the Qantas Group Pilot Academy, which launched in 2020.

"I've always dreamt of following in my dad's footsteps and finally achieving that milestone is going to be really emotional, not just for me but for Dad too," Patrick enthused, ahead of operating his first commercial flight with Jetstar yesterday.





"He's worked really hard to get to this point and I can't wait to fly with him one day when we're on the same fleet," Phil Schwarz emoted.



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Millennials bag most losses

CLOSE to 40% of Aussie Millennial travellers have lost their baggage while travelling, new research compiled by Compare the Market has shown.

While the study of over 1,000 Aussies showed that one in three travellers have at some stage lost baggage on trips, Millennials are the most likely to lose their bags at the airport, faring worse than Baby Boomers (30.2%) and Generation X (30.6%), while only a quarter of Gen Z travellers have faced the scourge of lost luggage.

Those who have experienced lost bags were most likely to get items back within days (55.4%), not hours (14.5%), while close to 20% of Aussies were without their bags for weeks, and 8.8% had to endure months of waiting.

Thankfully, only 3.1% of Aussies said they never saw their suitcases again, with Compare the Market's General Manager of General Insurance, Adrian Taylor, stating people should be aware that in these cases, reimbursement is possible.

"If you're one of the 3.1% of

unlucky people that never sees your luggage again or it's been considered 'lost' by the airline, you may be entitled to monetary compensation from the airline, and your travel insurance may also pay out the difference between the reimbursement from the airline and the value of your personal belongings, based on the travel cover that you have," he observed.

The survey also asked respondents what lost items they missed the most, with chargers topping the list (42.6%), followed by clothing (40.9%), electronic devices (17.8%), jewellery or watches (17.2%), wallet/purse (12.6%), and ID documents such as passports (6.3%).

Gammo appointed

GLOBAL travel communications agency, Slojourn Studio, has appointed former luxury travel advisor Chaldee Gammo to the newly created position of 'Conscious Curator'.

The luxurious position will see Gammo combine her travel industry knowledge with recent experience as a meditation coach and energy healer.

She will work closely with Aussie travel agents via digital and face-to-face sales meetings and training sessions on Slojourn's portfolio of conscious travel clients, which will incorporate mindfulness sessions, yoga classes, and more.

Floating TikTok

ROYAL Caribbean has launched a new regional TikTok account @RoyalCaribbeanAUNZ, building on the success of its global account @RoyalCaribbean, which boasts half a million followers.

Cruise fans will be regaled with cruise tips, destination guides, and behind-the-scenes glimpses.

AFTA UPDATE

from Richard Taylor, Director of Membership Experience



LAST week I visited an agency on the outskirts of Brisbane. The owner moved her independent business into a storefront location

last year, despite a few people questioning her wisdom and even her sanity at the time.

The place itself doesn't get a lot of walkers passing by, but is highly visible to the area's car traffic, which has to stop at a nearby junction.

Then last night I was talking to another in Newcastle.

She did exactly the opposite, relocating from the street to an office location above the same shops, in that murky first-floor world usually occupied by strange people I prefer to stay away from, such as accountants, solicitors and other similarly suspicious characters...and dentists.

Both are thriving.

And I mean really, really kicking goals.

The longer established business on the first floor benefits from avoiding troublesome foot traffic,

allowing more time to dedicate to established clients, and on the flipside, the clients contacting the first agency have already Googled it and looked at the website, meaning they're not surprised by having to make an appointment or that there will be a schedule of fees in this brave new world.

Which begs the question - what is the right location to choose when opening a travel business in 2023?

I would love to hear more examples, but suspect that there is no definitive answer on that one.

Especially when you mix in the armies of mobile agents who are loving their flexible setup.

Your answers on a postcard, please.

One thing is true across the board, though, and it's that prospective clients are researching the people they do business with.

One agency told us recently that 87% of their new clients in 2023 had first checked on whether they're an ATAS accredited business.

That's an eyebrow-raising figure that is probably not universal, but it's certainly something to consider.

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Jetstar



MSC green report

MSC Cruises is highlighting its progress towards net zero operations by 2050 in its newly published 2022 Sustainability Report.

The report identifies the cruise line's advancement in six key areas within its Sustainability Action Plan, which is based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The carbon intensity of MSC's fleet is down 33.5% since 2008, according to the report, which also highlights the launch of *MSC World Europa*, the world's largest LNG-powered cruise ship.

The update also details MSC's comprehensive review of its procurement processes and practices to identify what further opportunities exist to improve its sustainability performance.

AVIATION COULD DWINDLE

AUSTRALIA is at risk of being "priced out" of the international aviation network as airlines strive to meet environmental targets over the next decade, the Australian Airports Association (AAA) has argued.

The country's remote position on the map means it could lose connectivity if voluntary carbon emission schemes become formalised and mandatory, which AAA chief James Goodwin (pictured) has warned could happen "very soon".

International carriers may cut emissions by simply not flying as much, "and with Australia at the end of the world it would be very easy to just no longer fly to Australia", he explained, leaving Aussies with fewer and more expensive travel options.

To ensure this doesn't happen, the government needs to be "a strong voice at the international



tables where these emissions reductions are being discussed and calculated", Goodwin argued.

While it's "no silver bullet", sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) will play an important role in making long-haul flights to Australia more eco-friendly, however the country will need to "play catch up" when it comes to ramping up its SAF production capabilities.

Qantas has voiced its agreement, with a spokesperson telling *Travel Daily* that "domestic production of SAF needs to increase to help reduce the cost and that's going to take a whole-of-industry and govt approach".

Jet towards zero

THE Australian Government has met with UK ministers this week to discuss shared ambitions and initial progress in decarbonising aviation, including the work of their respective Jet Zero Councils.

The Australian Jet Zero Council, inaugurated last month (TD 21 Jun), is due to hold its first meeting in Aug, which will see industry stakeholders convene to identify a greater range of opportunities to decarbonise the aviation sector.

"The Council will support Australia's aviation industry and government to collaborate in achieving emissions reductions on the path to net zero, including through increased use of sustainable aviation fuels," Federal Transport Minister Catherine King said.



THE TRAVEL CORPORTATION
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This report gives insight into the work we've done, and continue to do, as we target our goals.

MONEY

WELCOME to Money, *TD's* Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

AU\$1 = US\$0.674

THE Australian share market is off to a poor start this week, with the Australian dollar dropping over one cent against the greenback, down a cent against the Chinese yuan and three cents against the South African rand.

The Aussie has however gained slightly against the Japanese yen, up one cent, while remaining relatively flat against other currencies.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.674
UK	£0.526
NZ	\$1.086
Euro	€0.609
Japan	¥95.34
Thailand	฿23.25
China	¥4.844
South Africa	11.96
Canada	\$0.888
Crude oil	US\$81.07

PR cancels flights

PHILIPPINE Airlines (PR) has announced the cancellation of several flights from 25 to 27 Jul due to the risk posed by Typhoon Egay (Doksuri).

The weather may affect major parts of Luzon, seeing PR cancel some services between Manila and Basco, as well as flights operating between Manila & Laoag today.

Subject to the evolving situation, further cancellations may occur - check updates [HERE](#).

Team Tassie takes to Singapore



TOURISM Tasmania CEO Sarah Clark flew to Singapore last week alongside 10 Tasmanian tourism operators for the Marketplace South East Asia trade event, hosted by Tourism Australia.

The gathering was an opportunity for Tasmania to showcase its tourism offerings and connect with travel buyers, as part of ongoing efforts to bolster the state's international visitor reputation.

The Tassie team held a lunch for key industry partners, with Clark's itinerary also including meetings with stakeholders,

such as Tasmania's in-market PR representative, and participating in media interviews.

Singapore is the Apple Isle's only overseas market that has recovered to pre-pandemic visitation levels.

MEANWHILE, Tourism Tasmania has published its *Corporate Plan for 2023-26*, which details its strategy to connect with customers to drive demand, as well as outlining the DMO's role in leading and shaping policy development for the state's visitor economy - a copy of the plan can be downloaded [HERE](#).

Pictured: Team Tasmania, including Clark (middle), with Allaster Cox, Australian High Commissioner to Singapore.

Galactic pioneers

VIRGIN Galactic has revealed the three pioneering passengers set to join its second commercial space flight next month.

Eighty-year-old Jon Goodwin, a former Olympian with Parkinson's Disease, will be among those boarding the flight, along with wellness coach Keisha Schahaff and her daughter Anastatia Mayers, 18, from Antigua.

The duo will be the first Caribbeans to travel to space, after securing their seats in a draw that raised \$1.7m for the non-profit, Space for Humanity.

EY most punctual

ETIHAD has been ranked the most on-time airline by Global Aviation Analytics Group in the first half of 2023.

The carrier delivered 83.4% of flights on time during the year to date, joining a select few carriers who have managed to score above 80%.

The airline's Chief Operating Officer, Mohammad Al Bulloki, said with over four million pax flying with the brand in the summer season via its home base, it "is an important milestone for EY...to consistently deliver reliable operations".

Airlink gets Nosy

JOHANNESBURG-BASED Airlink has announced the reinstatement of weekly services to Madagascan island Nosy Be from 23 Jun.

The resumption follows the rebooting of services to Madagascar's capital Antananarlov in Jan (*TD* 23 Jan).

Nosy Be is an island famous for its pristine beaches and unique fauna and flora, and has become an increasingly popular tourism spot in recent years.

Travel Daily

The Chat

with Jenny

A Conversation with Kathy Pavlidis

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