



MTAs Amanda Washington & Kim Newton



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Silversea upgrades

SILVERSEA Cruises is offering stateroom category upgrades, as well as US\$1,000 on board credit and reduced deposits of just 15%.

Valid on Silversea's exclusive door-to-door all-inclusive fares for bookings by 31 May, more details can be found on **page 7**.

\$9m for ATEC, CATO members

THE Federal Govt has released details of a new \$9 million grants program to help eligible tourism exporters and travel wholesalers take part in expos & conferences, as well as conduct marketing to attract visitation from international markets.

Intended to support travel and tourism businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, grants payments of up to \$15,000 for ATEC members and \$10,000 for CATO members and others are available, to support participation in a range of international tourism and travel trade shows in 2023, 2024 or 2025.

The 'Reconnect with International Markets' stream sees applications open from 23 May and close on 13 Jun, with eligible applicants required to be current ATAC or CATO members since at least Apr 2023, and be an Australian tourism exporter or a travel wholesaler (inbound or outbound tour operator).

Applicants must also have a total turnover of less than \$20 million in the last 12 months, and have attended at least one of a variety of events between 2017 and 2019 or 2022 such as Australian Tourism Exchange, ATEC's Meeting Place, ITB, WTM, ILTM, PURE or Indaba.

Non-ATEC and/or non-CATO members are also invited to apply, but must seek endorsement from either organisation as part of the process, with the grants to be administered by Austrade.

Government support - such as Export Market Development Grant funding - must also have not been accessed to support the activities funded by the grant.

A second 'Digital Uplift' stream offers one-off payments of \$2,000 to help applicants boost their online capabilities such as website design, refresh, audit or optimisation to deliver greater visibility to overseas consumers.

If any monies remain after the first round of funding in 2022/23, leftovers will be equally distributed to all successful applicants the following year.

CATO MD Brett Jardine said "it is critical that our members are supported in reconnecting with international markets to ensure a vigorous return of international leisure travel to and from Australia, through specific business development and marketing activities".

Full details of the program are online at austrade.gov.au.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news including **Business Events News**, plus full pages from:

- Silversea Cruises
- Abercrombie & Kent

Explore NZ appoints

AUCKLAND-BASED Explore Group has appointed Dominik Strobel to the newly created role of Groups Sales Manager for its range of experiences in Hamilton Island, Airlie Beach, Auckland and the Bay of Islands.

Strobel returns to the company from Europe where he has been working for the last five years, prior to which he was Explore's GM of Sales & Marketing.

More key industry appointments on **page six** of today's **TD**.

A&K Expeditions

ABERCROMBIE & Kent has released its 2024/25 luxury expedition cruise portfolio - for details see the **last page**.

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Albatross names new MD

ALBATROSS Tours has appointed Shelley Poten as its new Managing Director, with the move said to "take the business into a new era," according to founder Euan Landsborough.

The Flight Centre Travel Group veteran joins Albatross after an extensive search process (*TD* 24 Feb), saying she was "thrilled to be joining the Albatross team to lead this esteemed company into its next chapter".

Poten said together with Landsborough and the Albatross

team in Australia and Europe "we will continue to offer journeys that exceed our customers' expectations and create memories that last a lifetime".

Landsborough has run Albatross for over three decades, with Poten's appointment allowing him to "focus on what I love and do best" including discovering the hidden gems that Albatross Tours strives for, and further enhancing the operator's portfolio of meticulously designed tours.

"I am thrilled to be embarking on this new chapter with Shelley," he enthused - more appointments on [page six](#).

SIA ups Sydney

SINGAPORE Airlines has today boosted capacity on the Sydney-Singapore route, with the return of double daily A380 operations for the first time since Jan 2020.

The superjumbo will deliver an additional 1,176 weekly seats, lifting SIA-SYD capacity to almost 100% of its pre-COVID levels.

AC flydubai deal

AIR Canada has sealed a new codeshare pact with UAE-based flydubai, with the AC code to be placed on routes from Dubai to nine ports across the Middle East and the Indian Subcontinent.

Qld island lawsuit

A **QUEENSLAND** island that was once a thriving tourist hub and sanctuary for visiting Hollywood celebrities is now the subject of Qld Government-led legal action.

The lessee of Double Island off the coast of Far North Qld, Fortune Island Holding Company, has been brought before the Land Court by the State Government, which is accused of letting the island sink into disrepair.

"Our islands are natural assets that we want Queenslanders to be able to enjoy them as part of our great lifestyle," Qld Resources Minister Scott Stewart said.

"As a government we are committed to the responsible development of our island resorts for the jobs and business opportunities they create in regional Queensland," he added.

Actor Keanu Reeves rented the island in 2001 for an entire week to party and host guests when he was in Australia to film the blockbuster, *The Matrix*.

Hotel price bounce

NEW research from Savills Australia and New Zealand has shown that Aussie hotels are able to charge more for guests this year on the back of returning demand following the pandemic.

The report indicated the 12 months to Mar 2023 has seen the highest Average Daily Rate growth across Darwin (+50%), Cairns (+47%), Brisbane and the Gold Coast (+42% respectively) compared to 2019.

QF extra seat trial

QANTAS is offering passengers the chance to purchase the seat next to them for a reduced fee as a way of adding comfort on select routes as part of a new trial.

Prices start from \$30 for routes such as Sydney-Gold Coast and Adelaide-Melbourne, while longer services like Adelaide-Darwin will cost \$65, however, the confirmation won't be made until travellers arrive at the gate.

SCENIC ECLIPSE
MARITIME MASTERS
EXPEDITION
ANTARCTICA

AGENT INCENTIVE: MEET THE MASTERS - QUESTION 2
Which technical animation features in this week's episode that aids guests' health?

[LEARN MORE](#)

To find out, tune in to Maritime Masters on Sunday at 7.30pm on Foxtel's Discovery Channel or catch up on BINGE from Monday at 4pm.



Window Seat

THERE is roughly a one in 100 chance of dying on a climb of Mount Everest, which is why it makes the recent feat of Nepali sherpa Kami Rita especially impressive.

Yesterday, the experienced conqueror of monoliths scaled the world's tallest peak for the 27th time, in doing so reclaiming his own world record of reaching the lofty summit the most number of times of anybody in history.

Clearly the adulation has not gone to Rita's head like the thinning oxygen levels at the top of the mountain might have, stating at base camp after the record climb "these records were made not with an intention to make them but during my work as a guide".

The height of humility!

New airline fills critical void

A **NEW** regional airline in Western Australia will launch operations from Jul, promising to deliver more routes, upgraded services and cheaper airfares for regional Western Australians.

Nexus Airlines, owned by Aviair, will operate 76-seater planes on routes linking Geraldton, Karratha, Port Hedland, Broome, and other regional WA ports, as well as an important link to the state capital Perth.

The debut of the new carrier was made possible as part of a \$4 million cash injection from the WA Government, with the new airline able to accommodate eight times the capacity of Aviair's current nine-seater planes used on the existing Inter-Regional Flight Network, helping to push down prices for tickets.

WA Transport Minister Rita Saffioti hailed the launch as a "game-changer" for the state's residents, who for the first time



ever will be able to fly between Karratha and Geraldton.

The Minister also confirmed that customers using the Nexus Airlines Geraldton-Perth route will have access to the Regional Airfare Zone Cap Scheme, making air tickets more affordable.

"This scheme has been incredibly popular and an additional \$20.7 million in the 2023-24 State Budget will see it continue to make flights to and from Perth more affordable for regional residents," she said.

The routes will seek to service the booming demand in the Pilbara for fly-in, fly-out mining workers in the region, as well as better connect regional families.

Fiji dates locked in

THE Fijian Govt has confirmed the Fiji Tourism Convention will take place on 02 Nov.

The event will include reps from tourism businesses, govt agencies and industry associations, covering off on topics such as sustainable tourism and industry trends - email **HERE** for details.

Minor visits Aussies

MINOR Hotels will host a five-day roadshow in Australia visiting Melbourne, Brisbane, and Sydney from 29 May to 02 Jun to showcase its luxury properties, marking the first time European reps will arrive Down Under.

Brands in the spotlight include Anantara, Avani Hotels and Resorts and NH Hotels, which span popular destinations such as Bali, Vietnam and Thailand.

More than 300 guests are expected to attend evening cocktail networking events - for details on the brand, see **HERE**.

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Hotel has some Moxy

OPENING in Aug, the Moxy Sydney Airport hotel has appointed History Will Be Kind to handle its marketing strategy.

The agency will be charged with positioning the hotel as a great choice for millennial travellers, with influencer marketing flagged as at least one method of reaching younger guests.

The property, located at 56 Baxter Road in Mascot, boasts 301 rooms and amenities such as The Moxy bar, all-day dining, a cafe, plus five event rooms.

Tix price drives NZ

THE high costs of domestic flights in Australia is leading an increasing number of travellers to plan trips to New Zealand instead.

The booking insight was published by Tourism NZ as part of new research conducted with Aussies and travellers in other markets, with comparable flight prices to NZ viewed as a driver of Aussies crossing the Tasman.

“[Aussies] don’t need to plan the details as they don’t have as much to lose, they think of us as ‘just over the ditch’ which makes us an easy and risk-free choice compared to other destinations,” the report stated.

While Aussie travellers said they were strongly driven to visit NZ on the basis of safety, distance, and landscapes, the survey found that the major hurdle is culture, with places like Thailand and Bali viewed as preferable because they are “so different to ours”.

“We lack the cultural difference some are desiring from an international holiday,” the report noted, adding that greater immersion in local lifestyle, and showcasing Maori and unique Kiwi culture will be key to overcoming the perception.

Other key marketing “hooks” identified to drive greater Aussie visitation include nature activities that can be enjoyed as a group, combating perception of cold weather, and promoting NZ as a place for honeymoons and bdays.

Novotel flags Box Hill site



ACCOR has expanded its presence in Victoria with the recent signing of Novotel Melbourne Box Hill, which is slated to open in Jan 2025.

Located around 14km east of Melbourne CBD, the newbuild hotel will feature 132 guestrooms, plus conference and event facilities including a 200-capacity ballroom.

There will be a number of dining options, including an all-day restaurant, lobby bar/cafe, and a rooftop bar, as well as a day spa, sauna, wellness centre, and gym.

The property is owned by APH Holding, whose CEO Johnson Zhang said, “the hotel will have access to public transport and retail amenities and will be an appropriate asset for Melbourne’s much-needed second CBD.”

Apple covers you

TRAVELLERS seeking trips to remote areas of Australia and New Zealand now have the option of using Apple’s Emergency SOS satellite capability, which has been launched locally this week.

The new beacon service is available on all iPhone 14s, and is free for two years from activation, plus it can not only manually activate SOS but also can auto-detect a fall, mountain bike crash or vehicle accident.

Accor Pacific Chief Executive Officer Sarah Derry described the signing as a “significant milestone” for the hotel operator.

“Box Hill is a vibrant and growing suburb, and we are excited to offer both business and leisure travellers a stylish and contemporary accommodation option in this dynamic community,” she added.

Pictured: Artist’s impression of the upcoming hotel.

Minor locks in Saudi

MINOR Hotels’ latest agreement with Saudi Arabia’s Tourism Development Fund will kick-start a flurry of developments across various regions of the Middle East nation.

The hotel group will look to implement its Anantara, Avani, Tivoli and Oaks brands over the next couple of years, with the projects to include mountain resorts, wellness resorts, and various urban hotels.

The first project of the partnership will be announced by the second half of the year.

The agreement follows Minor Hotels’ expansion with its Avani brand to enter Europe and Latin America next year (**TD** 20 Apr), as well as the recent opening of the new Oaks Chengdu at Cultural Heritage Park in mainland China (**TD** 27 Mar).

GROUPS

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TTC Tour Brands Spotlight on Groups



So why would you get involved with booking Groups business you might ask?

With Groups

business you not only have extraordinary commission/ margin opportunities but many other great benefits. For one, complimentary places are available on Groups departures that you can use for your clients or even yourself to escort your group. A Group discount is available and you can also align with market offer deals on certain departures that are applicable to the multiple people you have booked.

If you custom design your own group, you will have full flexibility over budget, itinerary and inclusions. You can then set your own price allowing you to control profit and discounts. Therefore, the more guests you secure on the trip, the more you earn! Not to mention how a unique itinerary or package can attract new high-value clients to you!

Groups are certainly a good business avenue and TTC Groups, with our dedicated Groups specialists, can help you get your Groups across the line.

Andrew Young, General Manager Sales, TTC Tour Brands Oceania



Tune in next week for more Groups insights and visit groups.ttc.com



Big WA wins

PERTH will host an int'l education conference next year, the Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE) Conference & Exhibition.

Held from 04 to 08 Mar 2024, the event will attract more than 2,000 guests to the city who work in or provide services to the int'l education sector.

MEANWHILE, Coldplay will play two exclusive concerts in Perth on 18-19 Nov.

Tourism Western Australia partnered with Live Nation Entertainment to bring the British rock band to Perth for the only Australian stop on their popular 'Music of the Spheres' World Tour.

Adelaide bid team

BUSINESS Events Adelaide has a new bid team, after the SA Government delivered an increase in funding.

The new team is led by Jakki Govan, who joined Business Events Adelaide late last year, along with new recruits Casey Smith, Helen Xu, Mark Phelps, Peumi Peiris, Chantel Kistenkas, Chantel Kistenkas, Sara King, & Marcia Mudge.

CEO Damien Kitto said the investment represented a sensible investment in South Australia's economic future.

Langham GC offer

THE Langham Gold Coast has unveiled an exclusive MICE offer, providing complimentary add-ons for events.

Corporate and business clientele booking before the end of Aug can benefit from up to three add-ons, including two complimentary upgrades to a Junior Ocean suite, arrival tea & coffee, an infused water station, and more.

The offer is available on events held up until the end of Jul 2024.

EVERYBODY GETS A PROMOTION!

ICC Sydney promoted 30 team members from Jan to Apr, acknowledging the contributions and potential of its crew.

Promotions included those in Food & Beverage Supervisor, Security Supervisor, and Audio Visual Floor Manager roles.

ICC has also supported the recruitment of casual hires, which are up 150% since Apr 2022.

The promotions support ICC's commitment to invest in its workforce as the venue delivered a strong calendar of events in the first five months of the year.

ICC said the hands-on experience, industry-leading training program, and pathways to progression contributed to the recent wave of promotions.

"With the strong return and growth of events in 2023, the focus on our team has never been more important," Chief Executive Officer & Group Director of



Convention Centres Geoff Donaghy said.

"We're incredibly proud to offer a world-class service, which is down to our people's hard work, commitment and passion.

"These promotions recognise how important it is to acknowledge, reward, and invest in the development of great talent," he added.

ICC's team also swept the Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) New South Wales Awards earlier this week, with five wins from as many nominations.

The accomplishment highlights the team's commitment to delivering extraordinary experiences, and cements its world-class standing within the business events industry, ICC said.

IHG campaign

IHG Hotels & Resorts has launched a new campaign offering unparalleled choice and rewards for meetings & events across APAC.

The 'Meet How You Meet' push is designed to delight delegates and reward bookers with a suite of exclusive benefits, upgrades, and experiences to choose from across participating IHG Hotels & Resorts locations across APAC.

The campaign ensures an "unparalleled level of personalisation", IHG stated, with 121 custom-built offers available across popular IHG MICE locations, from beach and onsen destinations including Hayman Island, Fiji, and Beppu, as well as a range of urban locations across big cities such as Sydney, Melbourne, Tokyo, Singapore and Bangkok.

New Hyatt Centric Melbourne spaces



NEW event spaces are now available to entertain groups at Hyatt Centric Melbourne.

The hotel has seven versatile spaces suited to business meetings, conferences, social events, and weddings, with the latest audiovisual technology, theming, high-speed wi-fi, and unique activities on offer to support event planners.

Gourmet catering is also available, with chefs creating

a curated menu to suit the event's unique tastes and style, combining the finest local produce with premium beverages.

There are seven total event packages available, providing 31m² through to 201m², with the largest space able to host up to 200 guests.

For an overview of the packages and more information, [CLICK HERE](#).



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.

New appointments at **Travello** has seen **Andrew McEvoy** become its new Chairman alongside **Phil Gunter** as the new Board Director. McEvoy was the former boss of Tourism Australia and brings in-depth knowledge of the consumer market from his vast experience in tourism, media, digital marketing and e-commerce to the company. As a former executive at Virgin Australia and British Airways, Gunter accrued extensive experience in the travel and tech space, and has been an advisor and investor at Travello since 2019.

Marriott International has announced **Brain Povienlli** has become its Senior Vice President, Global Head of Marketing after a three-year stint as SVP Brand, Loyalty & Portfolio Marketing. Povienlli will lead the marketing strategy and guest experience through Marriott's brands.

The **Australasian Railway Association** has welcomed **Paul Scurrah** to the ARA Board as a General Director. Scurrah, who was the former CEO and Managing Director of Virgin Australia, will help represent major rail and freight operators to the ARA Board.

Amanda Hyndman has been promoted to the position of Chief People Officer at **Mandarin Oriental**. After joining the company in 2007 and being appointed as Group Director of Quality & Rooms in 2020, Hyndman will oversee the development of human resources strategies, as well as spearhead the growth of the brand.

Renaissance lands in Portugal

RENAISSANCE Hotels, part of Marriott Bonvoy's portfolio, has announced the opening of Renaissance Porto Lapa Hotel.

The 163-key property features one restaurant and two bars, as well as a 16-metre outdoor heated infinity pool and a fitness centre, and 540m² of event space to accommodate 600 guests.

"Porto is an alluring destination with a thriving wine and culinary scene, intriguing sightseeing... Renaissance Porto Lapa Hotel will entice guests and locals alike with unexpected discoveries that will delight," Global Brand Leader Jennifer Connell said.

Delta opens more

TO ACCOMMODATE Delta Air Lines' increased service frequency at the Salt Lake City International Airport, five additional gates will open at the hub's Concourse A, where all will be leased and operated by the carrier.

Twenty-two gates will be available for Delta's passengers by Oct, the carrier confirmed.

AA inks DFW deal

AMERICAN Airlines and Dallas Fort Worth International Airport have signed a new 10-year construction deal to build Terminal F, renovate Terminal C, as well as install gate expansions at Terminal A and C.

Congratulations Captains!



A SPECIAL graduation ceremony was held last week in Sydney to recognise the 16 Rex Airlines cadet pilots who have graduated from the Australian Airline Pilot Academy (AAPA).

The Federal Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Carol Brown and the NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Jenny Aitchison were present to address and applaud

the cohort of graduates, with the son of Max Hazelton, who passed away on 09 Apr, Toby Hazelton, awarding Luke Kelly and Luke Morris the Max Hazelton Award for the most outstanding cadet pilots among the classes.

"The skills you now possess are in high demand and I am delighted to officially welcome you into the Rex family," AAPA's Executive Chair Chris Hine said.

The pilot cadet program is a wholly owned subsidiary of Rex and has been running since 2007.

Pictured: Federal Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Carol Brown, NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Jenny Aitchison, and Executive Chairman of the Australian Airline Pilot Academy Chris Hine celebrate with the 16 Rex cadets.

Latest NT funding

TWENTY-FIVE Top End businesses will share in a nearly \$2 million fund to enhance the region's tourism offering.

The latest round of Visitor Experience Enhancement Program (VEEP) grants will allow \$1.77 million for the funding of up to 50% of the total cost of upgrades to businesses, seeking better visitor experiences.

Eleven businesses in round six of the VEEP grants will receive the maximum \$100,000 in funding.

The allowance can be used on a range of projects, such as accommodation upgrades, improved leisure facilities, and expansion of hospitality offerings.

Since its inception in 2018, VEEP has allocated funding to more than 300 projects.

Nick in the Limelight

NICK Gordon has been appointed as a new Director of Limelight Arts Travel, bringing with him 10 years of experience designing new tours in Europe, Asia and Australia.

More recently he held BDM roles in the travel and adult education industries, including for the Australia Council for the Arts.

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