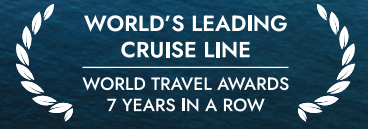


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New QantasLink boss

FOLLOWING the news of QantasLink CEO John Gissing's impending retirement in early Nov, Rachel Yangoyan has been revealed as his replacement.

She has been with the Qantas Group for 20 years in a range of executive roles across customer experience, operations, airports, and loyalty, and was most recently heading up the 'entry into service' program for Qantas' major fleet renewal, which focused on the A220.

Qatar chief calls it quits

QATAR aviation institution Akbar Al Baker will step down from his role as boss of Qatar Airlines after 27 years in the role.

A spokesperson for the Middle Eastern carrier confirmed to **TD** this morning that Al Baker's last day will be 05 Nov, after which time Hamad International Airport COO Badr Mohammed Al Meer will replace him in the role.

Al Baker is credited with taking the fledgling airline in 1997 to becoming a major powerhouse linking destinations all over the world, including strong connectivity in Australia for more than 20 years.

His tenure has been marked by commercial expansion, as well as an off-the-cuff leadership style which at times landed Al Baker in hot water, including in 2015 when it was reported he told female flight attendants that they could lose their jobs if they were pregnant, and again in May 2016 when he told Australian reporters that backpackers were not welcome in Qatar because they "are just there to lie on the beach and spend as little as possible".

At this stage, there is no



confirmation if the aviation executive will also be stepping down from other Qatari Government posts, including leading Qatar Tourism. **AB**

The Europe expert

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) is highlighting all that it has to offer for travellers who are seeking European vacations.

The cruise line's fleet sails to iconic destinations across the continent, from Croatia to Iceland - see the **cover page** for more.

Today's issue of TD

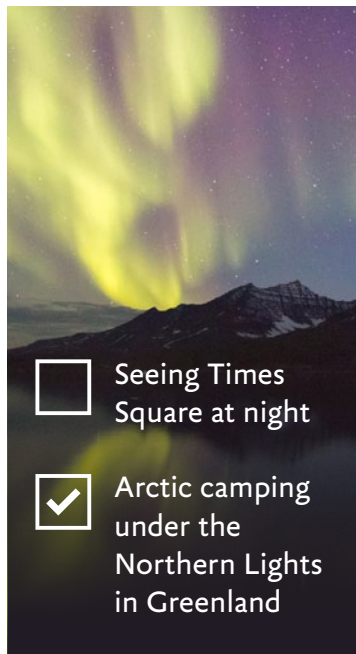
Travel Daily today features eight pages of news including a photo page from **Aircalin** and our **Sustainability** page, plus a front cover wrap from **Norwegian Cruise Line** and a full page from **Silversea**.

Silversea enhanced

SILVERSEA Cruises is offering agents a limited-time suite elevation offer for their clients, including a two-category upgrade on ocean voyages.

The luxury cruise line is also offering a one category suite upgrade on expedition sailings, \$1,000 of onboard credit and 15% reductions on deposits.

The promotion ends on 30 Nov - for the full details and conditions of the deal, see the **last page** of today's **Travel Daily**.



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Vanuatu impact

TROPICAL Cyclone Lola will impact Air Vanuatu flights operating today and tomorrow.

The carrier said it is in the process of contacting all affected passengers via email and phone, with anyone who has booked tickets on the affected days asked to check the status [HERE](#).

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Link provides electrifying notes



LINK Travel Group was recently chosen to take part in an electric vehicle (EV) trial with Avis Budget Group, exploring the future of the cars' use in the travel sector.

Several Link agency owners and

executives had the opportunity to take a Tesla Model Y EV for a spin, testing the car for its suitability for future corporate rental markets in Australia.

"We were able to supply Avis Budget Group with a comprehensive report on where we believe the corporate opportunities exist," Link General Manager Scott Darlow said.

"No doubt, sometime in the future corporate policies will mandate preferential use of EVs and we know our partners such as Avis will be ready to fulfil that demand," he added.

Outside of the corporate travel segment, Darlow also believes leisure travel will play a crucial role in future EV rentals, which he said "Avis Budget Group is positioned to capitalise on".

Pictured: Kurt Knackstedt, Head of Sales - Pacific, Avis Budget Group; Scott Darlow; Maria Pantazis, Account Manager - Australia, Avis Budget Group; and Ashley Halsall, National Sales Manager - Australia, Avis. *AB*

ETC flies new deal with Albatross Tours

EUROPEAN Touring specialist Albatross Tours has signed a deal with Evolution Travel Collective (ETC) to represent the brand to the trade, with the operator labelling the agreement "a key part" of its future sales strategy.

Selling points for Albatross include a strong emphasis on longer stays and character-style hotels, groups capped at 28 people, and first class coaches.

"We enjoy collaborating with partners that share a passion for authentic experiences, and we look forward to working with Albatross Tours to promote their touring product to travel agents and advisors across Australia," ETC MD Ingrid Berthelsen said.

Two more for Titan

TITAN Travel says its national roadshow has been a huge success, with hundreds of attendees in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Queensland.

The final two events in the current schedule will take place in Canberra on Tue 31 Oct ([CLICK HERE](#)) followed by Sydney's Cronulla ([CLICK HERE](#)) the following day.

"These are your last chances to see what Titan Travel has to offer for 2024 and beyond," said Ascend Travel Group's Lynda Wallace, who also confirmed plans are in progress for the Titan roadshow to continue in Tasmania in the coming months.

Attendees have the opportunity to win prizes including vouchers and a spot in the draw to win two places on a 14-day Canadian Rockies trip including AC flights.

Digital wayfinding for Sunshine Coast

SUNSHINE Coast Airport has become Australia's first airport to install BindiMaps, a new digital accessible wayfinding solution.

The technology has been created with input from hundreds of blind or vision-impaired users to ensure the highest possible levels of accessibility.

It uses a network of Bluetooth beacons and smartphone sensors to offer passengers a choice of either a text, map view or audio directions to guide them through the airport using real-time location updates.

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Batik to Istanbul

BATIK Air has opened reservations for new flights to Istanbul which are scheduled to debut on 09 Feb 2024.

Fares are on offer from PER, BNE, MEL, SYD and ADL leading in at \$1,649 Economy class return to Istanbul's Sabiha Gokcen Airport.

Kelsian tourism up 30%

THE Marine and Tourism operations of Kelsian Limited (formerly SeaLink) have grown revenue by 30%, after positioning themselves to "scale services and capture the rebounding travel demand post COVID".

Speaking at the company's annual general meeting today, CEO Clint Feuerherdt hailed new contracts in Gladstone and Sydney as well as "the effective and timely deployment of capacity along with more sophisticated yield management tools" over the last 12 months.

The company also made significant strides in expanding its coach operations, including acquisitions in the USA, WA and the Northern Territory, while the marine division "built a more dominant position on Sydney Harbour with the acquisition of the Starship Group, adding two impressive dining vessels to the

existing fleet".

Going forward, Feuerherdt also noted "it is great to see Australians continuing to holiday at our iconic island destinations, with domestic travel demand holding up despite cost-of-living pressures".

As well as domestic demand, the Marine & Tourism division also stands to benefit from increasing international traveller participation, particularly in its Sydney Harbour operations. *BP*

Railbookers South Africa expansion

RAILBOOKERS has announced the addition of 15 new itineraries in South Africa, featuring Rovos Rail and the luxury Blue Train.

Journeys range from nine to 20 days, with prices including rail transportation, sightseeing and hotel accommodation, allowing travellers to experience quintessential South African activities and destinations.

Railbookers Senior VP of Strategic Partnerships, Jim Marini, said the programs include wine tastings and experiences, safari trips to see the Big Five in Kruger National Park and more.

He said the addition of South Africa was in response for demand for luxury rail holiday solutions to South Africa, adding "one call to Railbookers can secure the ideal bucket-list holiday to South Africa, any day that the trains run".

A&K appointment

ALEXA Papoulias has joined the Abercrombie & Kent Australia team as Regional Sales Manager for NSW and ACT.

Papoulias moves to A&K after almost six years with Globus family of brands, which recently restructured its local teams.



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[CRUISE CALENDAR](#)

Capitol reopens

EVT Limited's Capitol Hotel Sydney has reopened after a major makeover to its rooms and public spaces.

The property is located in Haymarket, close to the Capitol Theatre as well as Chinatown, Paddy's Market & World Square, offering 95 rooms in a variety of styles catering to solo travellers through to accommodation for groups of up to seven guests.

Standard room rates start at \$200 per night - 02 9069 5540.




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Palau on the hop

NAURU Airlines will add the western Pacific Island nation of Palau to its 'Island Hopper' service from 30 Nov.

The expansion will see flights depart Brisbane and fly to Palau via Nauru, Tarawa, Majuro and Pohnpei, with a return flight to Brisbane operating once a week.

The soon-to-launch option can be booked from 27 Oct and adds to Nauru Airlines' weekly Air Niugini Brisbane to Palau service.

Airline founder bust

THE co-founder of a Malaysian budget carrier that ceased operations suddenly two weeks ago (**TD** 13 Oct) has been arrested on charges of money laundering.

MYAirline Director Goh Hwan Hu was detained alongside his wife and son, with the trio facing allegations of violating terrorism financing laws, but it is unknown if the charges are connected to the airline's collapse.

Air NZ boosts DOC pact

AIR New Zealand and NZ's Department of Conservation (DOC) have renewed their ongoing partnership, this morning announcing an additional five-year commitment and a doubling of annual direct investment.

The update will see the airline invest over NZ\$5 million in DOC biodiversity programs through until 2028, continuing Air NZ's support for sustained pest control and species monitoring across five of New Zealand's Great Walks.

The increased contribution will also incorporate the Department's nationwide Conservation Dogs program into the partnership.

"The environment is fundamental to tourism," noted DOC Director-General Penny Nelson, adding "when people experience nature that is wild, healthy and unique it has a positive impact on them".

"Our environment is a major

drawcard for international visitors and New Zealanders alike."

Nelson said the partnership with the airline "means we can do more for native species than we could alone".

As well as cash funding, Air NZ will also provide over NZ\$5 million of "in-kind support" including continuing to fly conservation dogs and threatened species and initiatives to raise awareness of the country's biodiversity crisis.

Air NZ Chief Sustainability Officer, Kiri Hannifin, said since the DOC partnership kicked off in 2012 it had seen over 42,000ha of sustained pest control alongside some of the most iconic Great Walks, as well as flown more than 4,300 threatened species and conservation dogs and "enabled over 30 million engagements with people through joint storytelling".

More sustainability news on **page seven** of today's **TD**. **BP**



Window Seat

ANOTHER international incident looks to be brewing this month, with Sweden throwing down the gauntlet to Switzerland in an effort to finally end the longstanding confusion (?) between the nations.

According to Visit Sweden, each year about 120,000 people ask Google "Are Sweden and Switzerland the same?" with shocking statistics also finding 28% of people "wrongly highlighted IKEA or ABBA as things they loved about Switzerland rather than Sweden".

Sweden's tourist board is now proposing a settlement, laying out what each country can promote, for example "yodelling" (Switzerland) and "not yodelling" (Sweden).

More in an explanatory video at traveldaily.com.au/videos.



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Industry out in force for Princess



THE launch of Princess Cruises' 2023/24 summer season in Sydney yesterday saw a strong turnout from the line's industry partners, who enjoyed a special welcome from Princess President John Padgett before a celebratory lunch on board *Royal Princess*.

Padgett confirmed that this year will be Princess' biggest ever in Australian waters, with four ships operating here including two Royal-class vessels homeporting in Sydney - a 44% overall increase.

He also announced that the line's current flagship, *Discovery Princess*, will be deployed in Australia in 2025/26 as part of a yet-to-be-finalised new program - more details in today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

Pictured above at the event are, from left: CLIA Australasia MD Joel Katz; Karen Deveson, HelloWorld GM Cruise; Phil Hoffmann, Phil Hoffmann Travel; and Steve Brady, last week named as Deveson's successor at HLO as Group GM Cruise. *BP*



Dan Russell and Jean Summers-Reeves from Clean Cruising are **pictured** above with Princess chief John Padgett, while below Padgett and Princess Senior VP Stuart Allison are joined by Hunter Travel Group's Louise Dann and Lisa Tjandi.



ATIA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



AS MOST regular readers of this column will know, in recent months, ATIA has been firmly focused on strengthening our industry's relationships

in the nation's capital.

Last week started with being called to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, to provide evidence on the activities of our agency, TMCs and tour operator members in supporting international tourism.

This was a great opportunity to reconnect with so many of the Members of Parliament who advocated for the COVID support package, and who still support our industry.

It was also pleasing to see progress on our goal of ensuring that our elected officials recognise the difference between travel and tourism, continues to make positive gains.

We finished the week in Canberra, with our members at the ATAC conference.

It was fantastic to catch up with so many members, to hear first-

hand how everyone's recovery is going and to also receive some really positive feedback about our new approach.

This week, the team is working with our judges to finalise the winners of NTIA.

We also head over to ITB Asia, being held in Singapore, to drive awareness of our members' activities globally.

As part of ATIA's focus to be inclusive of all our members, I will be facilitating a discussion on 'Charting the Path of Travel Experiences'.

It will feature two of our leading ATAS-accredited businesses in The Travel Corporation and Discova, and we will be joined by TakeMeTour and TUI musement.

Being able to lead a discussion with these members will assist in elevating ATIA's brand globally, supporting what we do with the World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) in creating a more beneficial environment for each ATAS member to operate in.

It also allows the Association to take best practice from other markets, and bring it back to you, our members, with these updates to be featured on the ATIA Travel Exchange.

AS pilot sabotage

AN OFF-DUTY pilot sitting in the jump seat of a flight between Seattle and San Francisco has been arrested after attempting to take control of the plane in flight.

The service was being operated by Alaska Airlines offshoot Horizon Air, with the flight diverted safely to Portland.

The alleged attacker is now facing charges including 83 counts of attempted murder.

TAT China deal

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has sealed a strategic partnership with Asian streaming platform iQIYI which will aim to boost the number of Chinese-language TV productions and films produced in Thailand.

The collaboration also plans to actively promote the use of Thai artists in Chinese drama, films and variety shows to showcase Thailand to streaming audiences.



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Melbourne gets a taste of New Caledonia

NEW Caledonia Tourism and Aircalin hosted 80 travel agents and wholesalers in Melbourne last week, to launch Aircalin's direct flights from Melbourne to Noumea, commencing on 08 Dec.

Guests were treated to delectable drinks and canapes while immersing themselves in all things New Caledonia, the closest South Pacific neighbour to Melbourne.

Attendees also had a chance to win fabulous prizes with a fun destination trivia competition.

The night was a fantastic opportunity to remind Victorians of the close proximity of New Caledonia (only a three-and-a-half hour direct flight on Aircalin), while forging new connections with New Caledonia industry partners including Amarent Car Rentals, GLP Hotels and Promenade Group, Hotel Le Lagon, Marriott Hotels and Ramada Hotel.



CLAIRE and Stephane Dumoulin from Amarent.



CHRIS Thistlethwaite from Aircalin.



JULIE Cassin from GLP Hotels with Stephanie Mikkelsen from Luxury Escapes.



CLAUDIA Liebner from Doppelgaenger.



ROSALIND Dempsey and Annalisa Nevill from Flight Centre, and Matt Fabbiano at italktravel.



THE Helloworld team.



REBECCA Marchal from New Caledonia Tourism.



THE audience playing a fun New Caledonia trivia game.



WHO'S in the lead for the New Caledonia Trivia? Paul and Stephanie Mikkelsen from Luxury Escapes.



JULIE Lunn, Travel Managers and Lucy Mancilla, Marriott Hotels.



Sustain in action

AURORA Expeditions has unveiled new sustainable dining options ahead of its Antarctica 2023-24 season later this month, as part of its Sustainability in Action program (**TD** 20 Oct 2021).

The operator will offer locally sourced organic fruit, vegetables and dairy products, free-range chicken and eggs, grass-fed beef and other local products on *Greg Mortimer* and *Sylvia Earle*, as well as internationally certified seafood.

EK extends Neste

EMIRATES is set to receive three million gallons of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) from Neste in 2024 and 2025, after extending its partnership with the supplier.

The eco-friendly fuel will be used on flights departing from Amsterdam Schiphol and Singapore Changi airports, and represents the largest volume of SAF to be uplifted of any airline based in the Middle East and Africa.

"Our ongoing partnership with Neste...demonstrates our active engagement and support of the rapidly developing SAF industry," Emirates President Tim Clark commented.

WHAT YOU DON'T FANCY ABOUT NANCY

THE full environmental impact of Sydney's second major airport will be put to the public for feedback soon, with the Federal Government set to release its draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Western Sydney International Airport.

Among the impacts to be examined include how flight paths will affect First Nations and historic heritage in the region, as well as how noise and pollution will impact the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, biodiversity, greenhouse gases, and other aircraft hazards.

The EIS will also outline the changes to other aerodromes' flight paths, including the Kingsford Smith Airport and Bankstown Airport, which are required to safely integrate the



new upcoming Western Sydney International's control area and flight paths.

"Feedback has, and continues to be, a critical element to ensuring we deliver an airport which realises these lasting benefits, while balancing the needs of the community, environment, industry and users of the broader Greater Sydney airspace in the design of the new flight paths," Federal Transport Minister Catherine King said.

"That's why we have gone

above and beyond in community consultation, including the launch of an interactive Aircraft Overflight Noise Tool (**TD** 27 Jun) alongside the preliminary flight paths in Jun," she added.

Feedback on the EIS will also take into account proposed policies for noise treatments to existing properties most impacted by aircraft noise and considerations for any potential acquisition of properties.

The EIS is open for feedback from now until 31 Jan 2024. *AB*

MSC goes green

MSC Cruises has become the first major cruise line to achieve Green Marine Europe Certification, after earning the highest possible rating across eight performance indicators.

The voluntary program recognised MSC for its "environmental excellence" in the areas of aquatic invasive species, greenhouse gas emissions, oil discharge, underwater noise pollution, waste management, ship recycling, and more.

Wildlife heritage

TRAVELLERS can now enjoy a new and responsible way to engage with wildlife via a new global program, Wildlife Heritage Areas.

Developed in collaboration with responsible travel businesses and wildlife charities, the first-of-its-kind program offers responsible wildlife tourism experiences in destinations where local communities care for and protect the wildlife in their environment - find out more information **HERE**.

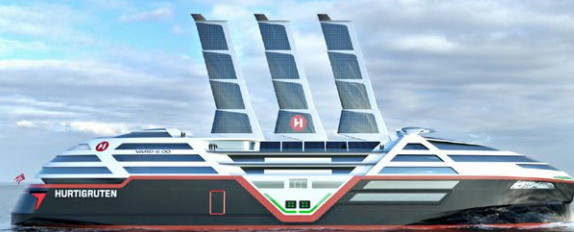
WTTC eyes hotels

THE World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) have teamed up to develop a structured framework for hotel sustainability, which is expected to launch in 2024.

The framework will provide a stepping stone between the three-year WTTC Hotel Sustainability Basics program and GSTC Certification, "ensuring a gradual yet comprehensive progression towards sustainability".



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MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.634

GLOBAL markets are being significantly impacted by the rising tension in the Middle East, resulting in the Australian dollar dipping to near one-year lows as of yesterday.

Meanwhile, Michele Bullock, the new Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia, has advised an interest rate hike could be coming, should inflation continue to float beyond the projected levels.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.634
UK	£0.517
NZ	\$1.084
Euro	€0.594
Japan	¥94.88
Thailand	฿23.02
China	¥4.612
South Africa	12.01
Canada	\$0.878
Crude oil	US\$92.16

US travel warning

THE US Department of State has taken the unusual step of issuing an advisory cautioning United States citizens against travel to more than 200 countries amid a backdrop of rising geopolitical tensions and conflict.

"Due to increased tensions in various locations around the world, the potential for terrorist attacks, demonstrations or violent actions against US citizens... requires increased caution," the State Department warned.

Anaheim shakes things up



SYDNEYSIDERS were treated to a taste of California thanks to Visit Anaheim, which held a cocktail masterclass last week as part of the Brand USA's activation at the SXSW festival.

Master mixologist from Strong Water Anaheim, Robert Adamson (pictured), hosted the boozy demo at Darling Harbour's Pumphouse for trade, media and the general public.

The 'Miehana', a coconut rum and citrus creation inspired by Anaheim, was the star cocktail of the show, with samples of the delicious creation handed out to the lucky audience.

After the masterclass, Adamson's creations were offered in a special happy hour along with 'Drunken Donuts' - a dish that harkens from Anaheim's original rooftop bar, the Fifth.

The talented mixologist is just one of many local characters to feature in Visit Anaheim's new brand campaign promotional video, which shows him shaking

cocktails at his usual outpost, Strong Water (see it [HERE](#)).

The 'Here We Go' campaign is designed to entice foodies, wine and beer connoisseurs, sports fans, and more to visit the one-of-a-kind destination. *JM*

Auctioning a cruise

CHIMU Adventures is giving Aussies the chance to embark on the trip of a lifetime, all while supporting a worthy cause.

The Polar and Latin American specialist is auctioning off two spots on a 14-day cruise to the Antarctic Circle departing Feb 2024, with every dollar raised to be donated to the Cancer Council.

The journey sets sail on *Ocean Endeavour*, taking guests to ice-capped mountain ranges and immense icebergs and glaciers.

The opening bid started at \$15,000 and now sits at over \$19,000, with seven bids already made - [CLICK HERE](#) to check out the auction, which ends 18 Nov.

QF loyalty offers

QANTAS has added 6,000 reward seats across flights for the European summer season, with new Business and Economy Class Flight Reward seats up for grabs one every QF service to London and Rome from Jun-Aug 2024.

The carrier has also launched a five-day Points Plus Pay sale from now until 27 Oct, which halves the number of points required for any First, Business or Premium Economy seat on any international QF marketed flight.

MEANWHILE, a strike planned for today by the Australian Federation of Air Pilots (AFAP) has been canned "to give Qantas subsidiary Network Aviation every opportunity to come to it senses".

The AFAP, which represents 90% of commercial pilots employed by QF, said a strike will go ahead if an agreement isn't reached by Fri.

D'Aoust tossed overboard at AQV

CINDY D'Aoust has departed American Queen Voyages after holding the role of President since Sep last year.

Parent group Hornblower said the departure was a result of a business restructure aimed at further integrating American Queen Voyages with Hornblower Group into one unified entity.

D'Aoust was previously the President and CEO of Cruise Lines International Association until Dec 2018.





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