

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news, including our **Corporate Update** page, plus full pages from:

- APT
- Titan Travel

New Conlon role

KAREN Conlon has been named as the new Sales Director for Australia and New Zealand at luxury travel representation firm Plateau International.

Conlon joins Plateau after a decade with Belmond and its owner LVMH, including being Director of Sales, Trains & Cruises for Asia Pacific.

Titan coming to Oz

TITAN Travel is coming to Australia for a series of agent roadshow events throughout Sep and Oct, starting in South Australia - for all the details, head to the **back page**.

ACCC denies QF, MU

QANTAS has been knocked back on its request to coordinate operations with China Eastern Airlines, after the ACCC issued a draft determination this morning denying authorisation for the request (**TD** breaking news).

The two carriers were seeking permission on an Extended Joint Coordination Agreement, which would enable them and their related entities, including Jetstar, to coordinate passenger and cargo

transport operations between Australia and China until the end of Mar 2024 (**TD** 09 Dec 2022).

The consumer watchdog said the alliance would potentially breach competition laws, giving QF and MU the "opportunity and incentive to increase prices... by limiting or delaying the introduction of additional capacity on the Sydney-Shanghai route as pax demand continues to grow".

It pointed out that MU is currently the only airline flying direct between Sydney and Shanghai, with QF resuming flights in late Oct, and that demand for air travel between Australia and China is likely to keep growing between now and the end of Mar 2024.

The interim authorisation, which was granted in Mar, will remain in place while the ACCC seeks submissions in response to the draft determination before 06 Oct, prior to making a final decision. *JM*

TraveLeague tickets

BOOKINGS for this year's Christmas TraveLeague event in Melbourne go on sale today, with the annual gathering scheduled for Wed 13 Dec from 12.30pm.

Taking place at the Crown Palladium, tickets are priced at \$191 per person including GST, and can be purchased online via a booking link now live at christmastraveleague.com.

Last day to vote

VOTING for the 2023 National Travel Industry Awards closes at 11.59pm AEST tonight, with a record number of votes already lodged for the night of nights.

The NTIA Gala Dinner is scheduled for Sat 18 Nov in Melbourne, with a special industry-wide gathering also set to take place the evening prior followed by a finalists networking activity (**TD** 13 Sep).

So far more than 7,000 votes have been cast - add yours via the links at atia.travel.

Intrepid appoints

INTREPID Travel has appointed Emma Gray to the newly created position of Strategic Partnerships Manager, seeing the company's former Queensland BDM return to the business after a range of other roles at Destination Melbourne and Visit Victoria as well as in media and advertising with Nine and Nova.



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Autograph to Saudi

MARRIOTT International has signed an agreement to open an Autograph Collection property in Saudi Arabia for the first time.

Located in downtown AlUla, the 250-key hotel will be ready in 2025, featuring four dining venues, a spa, gym, and more.

QR info not for public

A **DAY** after requesting more time to respond to requests to provide more information to the Senate regarding the decision to block Qatar Airways from extra flights into Australia, Transport Minister Catherine King has refused to provide key documents citing public interest immunity.

King's decision came in the form of a letter on Thu that claimed the decision to grant Qatar additional landing rights as part of a bilateral agreement, and details regarding meetings with Qantas and other airlines, came under public interest immunity.

It means King will avoid answering questions in parliament about the controversial call that heavily favours Qantas as the next sitting does not occur until 16 Oct.

According to the *AFR*, King's letter said that bilateral air rights agreements were not commercial arrangements but treaty-level agreements between countries

and that making those documents public would expose the nature of sensitive bilateral agreements.

MEANWHILE the furore around the QF/QR decision hasn't escaped the CAPA APAC Aviation Summit, currently taking place in Brisbane.

Flight Centre MD Graham Turner said, "there is no doubt this decision will keep airfares higher and for the government to say that's in the national interest then what national interest are we talking about?"

He also acknowledged that there had been no clear explanation from the government and that airfares are unlikely to return to more acceptable levels until 2025.

Brisbane Airport CEO Gert-Jan de Graaff called for the scrapping of bilateral agreements, telling the conference that they were an "antiquated system" and that airlines would fly to markets where more volume is required so that more money can be made. *DF*

Airnorth spring sale

AIRNORTH is currently offering domestic airfares from \$271 to destinations such as Alice Springs, Darwin, Broome, Cairns, Katherine, and more, for travel dates between 30 Oct - 13 Dec.

For more information and to book, [CLICK HERE](#).

itravel



LOUISE MICHIELSEN
itravel Mobile, WA

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Celebrity departure

CELEBRITY Cruises has confirmed that long-time Director of Sales, Cameron Mannix, is leaving the company.

A spokesperson thanked Mannix for his contribution, saying his "larger-than-life personality and positivity helped establish Celebrity Cruises as a premium holiday experience" - more in Mon's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

Icon on sale early

ROYAL Caribbean has responded to "unprecedented interest" in its *Icon of the Seas* newbuild by putting 2025/26 holidays on sale three months ahead of schedule, with a series of week-long voyages ex Miami to the Caribbean, Puerto Rico & more.

The line's CEO Michael Bayley said the excitement around *Icon* is "making it clear that we've designed a revolutionary experience that reflects how consumers want to travel today and for years to come".

New VA policy

VIRGIN Australia has introduced a new policy to assist travel agents in handling documentation for fare refunds on tickets held by deceased guests.

All fare types can be refunded but the necessary documentation required is determined by the fare value, with tickets worth more than \$600 requiring either a formal Grant of Probate or Grant of Letters of Administration - see virginaustralia.com.

Alliance extension

ALLIANCE Aviation Services has announced the extension of its contract with BHP Iron Ore with a five-year term plus two-year extension option.

Under the renewal, Alliance will provide 14 services per week between Perth and BHP's Coondewanna and Barimunya work sites.

Alliance and BHP began their partnership in 2009.

Wendy Wu Tours turns 25



YESTERDAY Wendy Wu Tours (WWT) founder Wendy Wu hosted key industry partners for a fabulous celebration of the operator's 25th anniversary.

The enthusiastic Wu outlined the company's stellar trajectory after initially being established as an exclusively China specialist in a small suburban office in the Sydney suburb of Epping and now growing to a major multinational global tour operator.

While painful, the pandemic has also ultimately led to strong growth for WWT, which added new destinations such as Portugal, Georgia and Armenia that have proven exceptionally popular, while the reopening of Japan has seen the company already surge beyond 2019 booking levels (*TD 04 Sep*).

"We want to thank you for all the support you have given us, the airlines, the tourism boards and of course the wonderful travel agents who we cannot live without," she enthused.

Wu highlighted the company's new arrangement with the Chinese Tourism Board in Sydney (*TD 13 Sep*) which enables it to complete visa forms and submit

passports on behalf of clients "just like the good old days".

"That means our travel agent friends can just sell, sell, sell."

"Wendy Wu Tours is like a phoenix rising out of the ashes of COVID...we flew up like a phoenix, and I want to fly with all of you for another 25 years," she said.

Wendy Wu is **pictured** with Simon Bell, WWT MD Australia and Liu Dong, newly promoted to be Director of the China Cultural Centre in Sydney. *BP*

Citadines goes north

ASCOTT Limited Australia has completed the Citadines Walker North Sydney.

The new offering is part of a significant revitalisation of North Sydney, which has seen major businesses like Nine Entertainment Group move in.

Citadines Walker will feature North Sydney's highest room count at 252 across 19 levels.

It includes a unique two-storey mezzanine, a guest lounge, fitness centre with floor to ceiling windows, and a business centre with a boardroom and workstations.

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Window Seat

THE *Travel Daily* team was overwhelmed with gratitude at a Wendy Wu Tours event in Sydney yesterday (see **page 3**) after an extremely generous endorsement from the tour operator's energetic founder, Wendy Wu herself.

"No one in the industry has more readers...in the travel agency world and in the tour operating world, the frontline staff especially, everybody reads *Travel Daily* like the Bible," she said.

"Actually, it's more, because they do read the *Travel Daily* articles every day, even if they don't read the Bible every day!" Wu added.

Thank you Wendy for your heartfelt comments, and we look forward to continuing to inspire the industry.

Skroo sorry for Hudson

FLIGHT Centre Managing Director Graham 'Skroo' Turner has told delegates of the CAPA APAC Aviation Summit that he felt sorry for incoming Qantas CEO Vanessa Hudson.

On his feelings towards former Qantas boss Alan Joyce and Hudson, he said "Alan did a lot of great things in his 15 years as CEO and I'm sorry that's been overshadowed by current issues", before adding, "but I probably feel a bit sorrier for Vanessa Hudson who's got to take on the challenges now."

He added in jest that if he were Hudson he would take a sabbatical for a year, and that Qantas would return to strength in 12-18 months.

Turner has been somewhat of an ally for the recently departed Joyce and the national carrier, congratulating him on his tenure.

He told *travelBulletin* on 06 Sep "we are sad to see him stand

down ahead of his intended schedule but understand his reasoning as Qantas prepares for the dawn of a new era of success under Vanessa Hudson..."

The CAPA Summit continues in Brisbane today. *DF*

GX lineup confirmed

THE lineup for the World Community Tourism Summit, hosted on World Tourism Day, 27 Sep and part of the inaugural GX event in Peru has been set.

Travel personalities Jessica Nabongo, Australian travel expert and presenter, Tyson Mayr, and Mario Rigby are set to deliver keynote presentations among others in the program.

GX runs from 22 Sep to 27 Sep with more than 30 Australian agents, staff and representatives in attendance.

To find out more about the event, **CLICK HERE**.

NCL Walk on track to smash targets

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line has announced its Walk for Wellness is on track to hit 1,100 registrations by the end of today, already matching the number that took part last year with registrations remaining open for another two weeks.

Throughout this year's Walk for Wellness, NCL will donate \$1,000 to mental health charity, Mood Active each time specific milestones are unlocked.

To find out more and to register, **CLICK HERE**.

Thailand On the Go

THAILAND is the latest destination to be offered by On The Go Tours handpicked range.

The new tours range from four to 10 days with the possibility to add beach stays at the conclusion of itineraries.

More information **HERE**.



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CORPORATE UPDATE

Moten motoring to CG

EXCLUSIVE

CONNECTIONS Group, which describes itself as “Australia’s largest privately owned TMC”, has announced Andre Moten as its new Chief Commercial Officer.

The former Helloworld Travel executive most recently spent more than two-and-a-half years as the General Manager of the company’s business agencies and its Magellan network (*TD* 06 Sep).

Moten will now focus on new business and growth planned across CG’s three brands: CT Connections, Edge Connections, and Totem Connections.

From 09 Oct he will oversee CG’s commercial strategy and growth initiatives, working closely with clients and partners to drive innovation and business development.

Moten said it is a “real privilege” to be invited to join “such a progressive challenger brand” within the Australian travel

management sector.

“I look forward to supporting the Connections Group team in consolidating their future successes,” he added.

Founder & Director Gary Reichenberg said Moten’s knowledge and travel management expertise, coupled with his strong commercial background, make him the ideal individual to consolidate CG’s sales achievements.

“Equally, his leadership in driving growth, transformation and improving customer satisfaction in this complex and challenging industry is highly impressive,” Reichenberg added.

“His background in travel management services provides the right foundation to help steer the Connections Group of companies into the future.” *MS*

Conferma appoints

SONYA Geelon has been appointed as Chief Commercial Officer at Conferma Pay, completing the company’s new senior leadership team.

Geelon joins from her previous role as Mastercard Senior Vice President UK & Ireland & Country Manager Ireland.

She will drive Conferma’s customer-centric approach to further boost the uptake and evolution of its virtual payments platform, as well as its partnerships with banks, payment schemes and tech platforms.

GBTA call out

GLOBAL Business Travel Association’s (GBTA) call for proposals for next year’s convention is now open.

GBTA is seeking industry professionals to contribute “new ideas, solutions, and innovations for current issues and challenges that confront the travel industry”.

The Association is encouraging interested parties to build their proposal using the submission worksheet - more info [HERE](#).

TOURISM & EVENTS, A LOVE STORY FOR THE AGES?

[CLICK HERE TO READ](#)

travelBulletin



Wego expands into biz travel



ONLINE travel marketplace Wego, the largest in the Middle East and North Africa, has acquired Travelstop, a platform that simplifies business travel and expense management for companies globally.

By combining resources and expertise, Wego and Travelstop aim to shake up the way companies navigate the complexities of corporate travel as well as contribute to the growth and development of the travel industry in the Middle East

and Asia-Pacific regions.

“This strategic move is in line with our vision of offering comprehensive travel solutions to businesses in the region,” Ross Veitch, CEO and co-founder of Wego, said.

He added the acquisition will “empower businesses to streamline their travel and expense management processes” conveniently and efficiently. *DF*

Velocity telco boost

VIRGIN Australia has announced a partnership with Trikon, a boutique telco.

Clients who sign up to Trikon and buy three or more eligible phone systems with a billing commitment can receive up to 10,000 bonus Velocity points for their business.

To find out more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Goodwings grows

JTB USA, a subsidiary of JTB Corp, has announced participation in a US\$1.5 million late seed investment in Goodwings, the Copenhagen-based SaaS travel management platform.

Goodwings is a sustainable system that helps businesses reduce emissions by using their climate-focused SaaS platform for booking all their travel, with funds transferred into a Carbon Account which can then be offset.

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Hurtigruten Expeditions is introducing a Price Promise feature on select tours along with an Early Bird discount offer with up to 30% savings available on over 70 expedition cruises. The deal applies to new 2024/25 season bookings made between 01 Sep-30 Nov. Travel to South America, the Galapagos Islands, Antarctica, Iceland and more at competitive rates - **CLICK HERE** to learn more.

Save up to 15% on your next stay, along with daily complimentary breakfast and late check-outs at **Hotel Kurrajong Canberra** with its latest offering. Guests can also dine at Chifley's Bar & Grill and enjoy some of the itineraries to explore the capital. Prices for a Heritage or Terrace Room start from \$268 per night - book a room **HERE**.

With the spring holiday coming around the corner, **essence Peregrin Beach** has curated the ultimate offering for those who are looking for a beachside "staycation". Use booking code "SEPT23" while completing a transaction on the hotel's website **HERE** to enjoy 10% off and a welcome gift of two premium essence beach towels.

Available until 30 Nov, **Cruise Traveller** is offering savings of up to \$3,080 per couple and two free nights in Osaka pre-cruise on its 16-night Japanese Journey. Departing on 21 Mar 2025, travellers are invited to cruise aboard the 702-guest boutique ship, *Azamara Pursuit*, travelling to 11 destinations, including the South Korean city of Busan. Package prices start from \$7,970ppts. Call 1800 507 777 to book.

Globus is offering couples savings of up to \$1,000 on its 2024 Europe tours. Travellers can explore the best of the continent, from the sun-kissed shores of Southern Italy to Croatia's hidden alleyways, with itineraries like the 11-day The Croatian Journey from \$4,249 per person, the 24-day Britain & Ireland In Depth adventure from \$9,999 per person, and so much more. Book a tour **HERE**.

Lock in the lowest price for the 2024 Epic Australia Pass for unlimited access to **Perisher, Falls Creek** and **Hotham** in the next winter season. Book by 18 Oct to enjoy the offer for only \$959 and just \$49 upfront. Also available is the 2024 Epic Australia Pass Skitube for an extra \$179 in the same transaction. Learn more **HERE**.

Viking's Deals of the Week offer up to \$2,500 of flight credits on two of its ocean cruise itineraries. The 15-day Iceland & Norway's Arctic Explorer is an adult-only voyage that sails across the Arctic Circle and the coasts of Norway and Iceland from \$11,995pp. Meanwhile, from \$9,295pp, travellers can spend time in Rome and Athens, as well as Naples, Pompeii and Crete on the 15-day Cities of Antiquity & The Holy Land voyage. Call Viking on 138 747 to learn more.

Travel Associates cruise roadshow



TRAVEL Associates kicked off its national tour of luxury cruise luncheons this past week.

The company hosted its latest event yesterday in Adelaide, which followed on from successful events in Melbourne and Sydney.

An additional two sold out events are coming up in the Gold Coast and Brisbane over the next month, with Travel Associates to reach more than 650 new-to-brand clients across the dates.

"Similar to the trend of bringing forward 'bucket list travel', this form of 'getting away from it all' cruise experience is a direct result of our newfound understanding of the importance of time, and how we use it to nurture our own personal wellbeing and for family development," General Manager Rachel Kingswell explained.

Pictured: the Travel Associates team celebrates its successful event yesterday at SkyCity Adelaide. *MS*

The Chat

with Jenny

A Conversation with Jean Summers-Reeves

of Clean Cruising

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Glenelg Life Saving Club, Glenelg, (SA)	27 Sep	07:30-09:00
Empire Grill, Geelong, (VIC)	3 Oct	18:00-20:00
Half Moon, Brighton, (VIC)	4 Oct	18:00-20:00
Sebel, Ringwood, (VIC)	5 Oct	07:30-09:00
Frasers, Kings Park, (WA)	11 Oct	18:00-20:00
Crown and Ancor, Newcastle, (NSW)	17 Oct	18:00-20:00
The Lagoon Restaurant, Woollongong, (NSW)	18 Oct	18:00-20:00
RSL Castle Hill, Castle Hill, (NSW)	19 Oct	18:30-20:30
Rydges Gold Coast Airport Hotel, Gold Coast, (QLD)	24 Oct	07:15-08:45
The City Winery, Brisbane, (QLD)	24 Oct	18:00-20:00
The Lakehouse, Sunshine Coast, (QLD)	26 Oct	07:15-08:45
1 London Circuit, Canberra, (ACT)	31 Oct	18:00-20:00
1908 Cronulla Social Restaurant & Cocktail Bar, Cronulla, (NSW)	1 Nov	18:00-20:00