



Rediscover Swift

CALLING all Swifties!
Rediscover Travel is giving agents the chance to win a trip to see Taylor Swift live, complete with a VIP experience, accommodation, a flight credit, and more much - see the **back page** for details.

Time to axe airline caps

UNRESTRICTED access for foreign carriers to Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth would potentially lower the price of air tickets and lead to a better choice of aviation services, the Productivity Commission has told a Senate meeting this week.

In its submission, the Federal independent advisory body argued for a "staged approach" to removing limits on international airlines to operate in Australia, starting with some of the country's largest airports.

The body suggested that liberalising Australia's air space would likely be immediately felt where capacity limits are currently stifling demand, such as Fiji, Qatar, and Hong Kong.

"There is no guarantee that additional air services will be provided to particular airports if unrestricted access is granted,

as airline route decisions are ultimately based on the commercial interests of airlines," the Commission noted in its submission.

"However providing unrestricted access would simplify airlines' and airports' assessments of what services to operate and enable decisions to be driven solely by commercial considerations."

The body stated that reforming the way air capacity is granted would pave the way to rid the country of a "complex web" of government-to-government bilateral air services agreements, which it argued impedes competition, reduces the range and quality of services offered, discourages innovation, and perhaps most crucially, can lead to increased prices for pax. **AB**

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of news, including our **Corporate Update** page and a full page from **Rediscover Travel**.

Ama recruiting team

AMAWATERWAYS Director Gary Murphy is in Australia this week conducting interviews with prospective leaders for Ama's new local operation (**TD 17 Aug**).

Murphy is also meeting with trade partners, telling **TD** this morning that everything is falling into place for the launch.

"We have a website with pricing in Australian and NZ dollars, and we're looking forward to being able to promote the full range of AmaWaterways product in the local market," he said.

An introductory flyer being offered to the trade highlights the AmaWaterways heritage and river cruising expertise.

"We're the only river cruising company that only does river cruising," Murphy said.

The 29-ship AmaWaterways fleet includes ships across Europe as well as in Portugal, Africa, Southeast Asia, Egypt and from next year, Colombia.

AmaWaterways' Australian launch includes an expansion of the company's global partnership with Virtuoso, with local GM Fiona Dalton today welcoming Ama to the market - more in **CW**.

Queenstown SOS

A STATE of emergency has been declared in the Kiwi tourist mecca of Queenstown this morning amid heavy rain which has caused flooding and landslides.

The Queenstown Lakes District Council advised visitors and residents to avoid travel through or around the town centre.

"If travel is essential, please take extreme care, follow safety signage or the instructions of traffic management staff," the Council urged.

Int'l outpaces domestic at SYD

SYDNEY Airport has recorded stronger international passenger recovery compared to domestic for the second month in a row, with a total of 1.23 million travellers passing through its international terminal in Aug.

The figure represents an 89.7% recovery rate on pre-COVID Aug 2019, while the domestic pax recovery rate was 88%.

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Adventure in Africa

ADVENTURE World is offering a series of immersive itineraries in Africa, in celebration of World Rhino Day (22 Sep) and World Gorilla Day (24 Sep).

The Authentic Africa Collection supports anti-poaching and local conservation projects - to find out more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Border closures examined

EXPLORING whether Australia was right to close its international borders to travel for an extended period will form a key pillar of a newly announced review by the Federal Government into the country's COVID-19 response.

Yesterday the Federal Government revealed an inquiry will take place to gather insights into Australia's pandemic policies at the national level, with a view to "improve responses...in the event of future pandemics".

"The inquiry will consider the findings of previous relevant inquiries and reviews and identify knowledge gaps for further investigation," the govt stated.

Also under the microscope will

be the support handed out to businesses such as JobKeeper payments, which kept many companies afloat during the downturn, as well as specific industry packages like the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program (CTSP), which was essential for travel agents.

However, the slated review has already come in for heavy criticism from the Federal Opposition for its absence of analysis for state and territory governments, whose border and vaccine decisions will be omitted from any scrutiny.

Speaking to **Travel Daily** this morning, CATO Chair Dennis Bunnik called for "a full inquiry" into all levels of government response with a view to formulating a whole-of-country response in the future.

"The closure of Australia's international borders at the beginning of the COVID pandemic saved lives, however the actions and vastly different approaches by various state governments regarding state border closures, arbitrary lockdowns and lack of support caused an untold amount of devastation to the travel industry for minimal additional health benefits," he argued.

"We strongly believe that the terms of reference should be expanded to include full analysis of state govt decisions...the travel industry cannot afford to be placed in this situation again." **AB** Read ATIA's response on [page 3](#).

Explora adds two

EXPLORA Journeys has placed firm orders for two hydrogen-powered ships with Italian shipbuilder Fincantieri, due to be delivered in 2027 and 2028.

The newbuilds will bring the cruise line closer to its goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

See today's **CW** for more details.

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Music to TA's ears

TOURISM Australia has the chance to add an ARIA to its trophy cabinet after being nominated for Best Use of an Australian Recording in an Ad.

The recognition was for the peak tourism body's re-interpretation of the classic Australian anthem *Down Under* by band King Stingray, which scored the high-profile M&C Saatchi Sydney-created *Come and Say G'day* campaign.

But Tourism Australia is not the only tourism body in the running at the ARIAs, with Tourism WA also scoring a nod for its use of Empire of the Sun's *Walking on a Dream* tune for its campaign adopting the same name.

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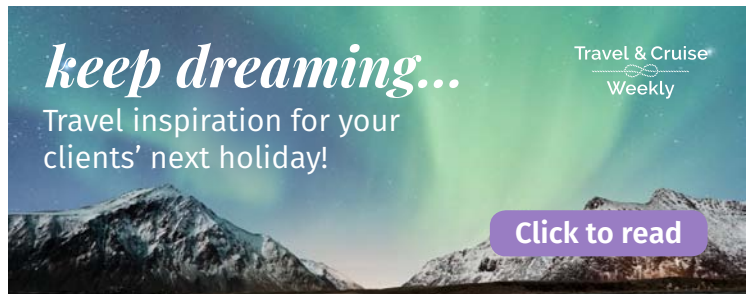
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Lessons needed on CTSP

EXCLUSIVE

AN INDEPENDENT review of the Consumer Travel Support Program (CTSP) conducted by Austrade needs to be submitted to an upcoming Federal inquiry into the government's response to the pandemic, the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) CEO Dean Long believes.

Speaking with **TD** this morning, Long said the yet-to-be published report into how financial support was allocated to key segments of the travel industry needed to be submitted in its entirety so that future support packages can operate more effectively.

"There's no doubt the [CTSP] can be designed better and we are going to need...to learn some lessons from that," Long said.

"There were a lot of recommendations that we put forward about processes and definitions that weren't adopted by the government of the day, so

[ATIA] will make some substantial submissions into that.

"But what we've also got to recognise is the money that was put out to the industry saved thousands of businesses and that's something we're proud of."

Reflecting on the omission of state and territory lockdowns from the COVID review, Long said it is a "significant shortcoming" that needs to be changed.

"[Domestic border restrictions] were the most harmful to the economy...we want to see a unified national approach and we need the review to look at that because we want to keep travelling," Long said.

"The review has to look at those decisions because the most significant impact on everybody's lives was the restriction of movement and that needs to be front and centre of any review."

A report into COVID policies will be published in Sep 2024. *AB*

Whitsundays strike

CRUISE Whitsundays workers have gone on strike for seven days beginning this Wed, after the North Queensland maritime transport company offered them a "pocket change pay rise".

The crews' refusal to work has been caused by "management's reckless refusal to offer a reasonable deal", the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) said.

The Journey Beyond subsidiary has released a statement saying it is "saddened for the many holidaymakers who have been left disappointed by the extreme measures taken by the MUA".

"We will endeavour to keep critical services in operation as a priority and sincerely apologise for any inconvenience this may cause," Cruise Whitsundays said.

The operator went on to explain that it has implemented pay increases totalling 6% and has "continued to negotiate in good faith", while the MUA demands a 30% increase in all pay rates.



Window Seat

JUST when you thought the mania over Taylor Swift could not be more madder among Australian event goers, the academics of Australia have declared 'hold my beer'!

The Swiftposium 2024 in Feb will be held at the University of Melbourne and will aim to examine the pop star's massive influence on the music industry, culture, and even economies around the world.

Organisers of the novel tertiary gathering say it will help scholars engage in critical dialogue about Swift's popularity and its "profound implications for a range of issues including gender, fandom, popular culture, literature, the economy, the music industry, and more".



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CORPORATE UPDATE

Biz travel spurs innovation

EIGHT in 10 businesses around the world recognise that embarking on a greater number of business trips for face-to-face meetings unlocks a higher level of innovation, a new report compiled by American Express Global Business Travel (Amex GBT) & Harvard Business Review Analytic Services has found.

The *Investing in Travel to Drive Business Growth: A Strategy for Thriving in Disruption* report showed just shy of 85% agree that their organisations enjoy “tangible business value” from trips to meet with clients, with the majority of respondents also indicating that in-person meetings create stronger

relationships with customers and is still the best method to close sales and initiate discussions.

Business travel was found to be a “key lever” in bringing staff at companies together - especially in a corporate environment that has seen teams more dispersed and embracing hybrid and remote working models.

Highlighting just how far companies have migrated to remote working scenarios globally, only 7% of respondents surveyed in the report said their workplace model is completely office based.

Colleen Kearney, Global Corporate Travel Leader at aerospace company RTX argued in the report that business travel is more important now than it was pre-pandemic.

“The results from returning to business travel have been clear, we’re finally getting together with no limitations and people are just more invested,” she added. *AB*

Booking made easy

REAL-TIME traveller tracking and risk assessments are just some of the benefits for travel management companies using a new combined tool launched by Magnatech Travel Management Solutions & Agentivity this week.

The two companies have announced a strategic integration of their services that the pair claim enables users of Magnatech’s SafeToGo app to enjoy a streamlined experience.

“TMCs have moved from GDS-centric to more disparate booking sources...we have solved this puzzle by collecting travel bookings from a variety of systems and structuring them in a consistent format,” the pair said.

Luft upgrades Biz

LUFTHANSA is set to upgrade its Airbus A380s with a new Business class.

The new Allegris Business class suites and “thrones” are set to make their way onto all eight of Luthansa’s superjumbos.

LH has joined Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways in rolling its double-decker jets out of storage to cope with the surge in post-pandemic travel, and a backlog in new aircraft deliveries.



The Chat with Jenny
Travel Daily
A Conversation with Robyn Sinfield
Home Travel Company
[CLICK HERE to listen](#)

TIME catches up in Qld



THE Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME) Queensland Community recently got together at the Lina Rooftop in South Brisbane for a networking event hosted by Amadeus.

Attendees enjoyed drinks and canapes at sunset by the pool, followed by an inspiring panel discussion addressing the future of retail travel, tips on staying relevant and resilient, the latest travel tech updates, and sustainability trends.

Hosted by James Sitter from Oceania Cruises, panel speakers included TIME founder and Chair Penny Spencer; Amadeus MD Kaylene Shuttlewood; and G Adventures MD for Australia, NZ & Asia, Sean Martin, who is also a CATO Board member.

The memorable evening concluded with a collaborative discussion between mentee graduates and mentors around the benefits of the TIME program. “With so much enthusiasm and

energy in the room it is a tribute to the Qld representatives, and I look forward to attending more Queensland TIME events,” Spencer emoted.

Pictured leading an intriguing discussion on the panel are: Shuttlewood, Spencer, Martin and Sitters. *JM*

No UK airport taxes

PRIME Minister of the United Kingdom Rishi Sunak said the country will not raise airport taxes, revealing the plan as part of his “watering down” of the state’s climate goals.

Sunak said he will instead take a realistic approach to reach net zero by 2050, defying the calls of environmental activists.

The United Kingdom’s Air Passenger Duty has become one of the world’s most expensive taxes for airline passengers, occasionally costing as much as £601 (A\$1,149).

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SPECIALS

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Holland America Line has launched its Seven-Day Sale, offering Australian travellers huge savings on close-to-home cruises. Available until 26 Sep, travellers can snag up to 35% off cruise-only fares plus US\$200pp onboard credit for departures through to 2024. Aussies will be able to enjoy culinary delights, onboard entertainment and more throughout their journey. **CLICK HERE** to see the offers.

Sydney Airport is offering savings of up to 15% off on all valet parking products across domestic and international terminals through its latest School Holiday Deal. Apply "SPRING2023" when booking online before 24 Sep for entries up until 31 Oct to secure the deal. T&Cs apply - book your parking spot **HERE**.

To celebrate the upcoming Mid-Autumn Festival in Vietnam, low-cost carrier **Vietjet** is inviting Aussie travellers to discover the wonders of the Southeast Asian country with one-way fares for as low as A\$200. The deal is available now until 29 Sep for travel between 09 Oct 2023 and 31 Oct 2024. Learn more at www.vietjetair.com.

Cruise Traveller has announced a massive saving of \$5,895 per person, with solo travellers given the chance to snatch up whopping savings of up to \$22,565, on the 12-night all-inclusive Kimberley Kaleidoscope package. Sailing with Ponant from May to Sep 2024, the package also includes flights from Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide or Perth. Call 1800 507 777 to book before 30 Nov.

Unlock 2024 Early Bird Travel Deals at **Trafalgar** and save up to 10% on select trips if you book now. Subject to availability, the tour operator is offering savings of up to \$591 on its Best of Britain itinerary, savings of up to \$1,481 on its Best of South Africa journey, and more. Learn about all of the offers **HERE**, or call 1800 915 875 to book.

Valid until 30 Sep, **Emerald Cruises** is offering savings of up to \$2,500 per person on select 2024 luxury European river cruises through its Earlybird offer. Cruise on the Danube and Rhine Rivers, sail through the splendors of the Rhone River in Provence, France, or experience the magic of Portugal's Douro River, plus so much more. **CLICK HERE** to book your next getaway.

Viking has added two new voyages to its Deal of the Week. Priced from \$17,545pp, the new 28-day Jewels of Australia and Asia traverses from Sydney through Indonesia and Thailand, before concluding in Singapore, while the 69-day Longitudinal World Cruise V will take travellers to the Antarctic Peninsula from Ushuaia, priced from \$77,595 per person. Call Viking on 138 747 to book.

PER's \$90m expansion plan



TO ACCOMMODATE a growing number of regional passengers, Perth Airport has announced \$90 million worth of upgrades to its terminal precinct.

The WA hub revealed plans to expand its Terminal 2 apron, providing a 45% increase in capacity, along with building a new maintenance hangar for Virgin Australia Regional Airlines (VARA) and a new Aviation Support Precinct.

"Since opening more than 10 years ago, the terminal has experienced a 54% increase in passenger numbers," acting CEO Kate Holsgrove explained, noting the airport experienced its highest single month on record

for regional pax last month.

The works are expected to be completed by Sep 2024. **MW**

Spring into Brooklet

THE Brooklet in the Byron Bay Hinterland, NSW, has announced a special promotion offering guests a third night free when they book a two-night stay.

The retreat offers one- and two-bedroom villas plus a treatment room, pool, hot tub, gym, sauna, ice bath, and tennis court, plus several dining options, with rates starting from \$750 per night.

The exclusive offer is bookable via travel agents only, and will be available until 22 Dec - contact katey@uniquetourism.com.

Smerdon steps down

CHRIS Smerdon has announced he will step down from the board of tourism business Kelsian Group at the end of the year.

The decision was detailed in the company's Annual Report released today, with the parent for brands such as SeaLink also revealing that Chair Jeffrey Ellison will seek re-election.

Jamaica reminder

AUSTRALIAN travellers who are visiting Jamaica are being reminded that they will need to complete an online immigration form that kicked in on 01 Sep.

The digital Immigration/ Customs C5 form has replaced the paper document, and can be submitted ahead of arrival **HERE**.

Got a confidential tip? Contact **Travel Daily** via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click **HERE**

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