



Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of the latest travel industry news including our **Corporate Update**, plus full pages from:

- Consolidated Travel
- CAPA Airline Leader Summit Asia Pacific

HLO united with Ensemble

EXCLUSIVE

HELLOWORLD'S recent decision to form a partnership with Canadian-headquartered Ensemble Travel Group (**TD** 17 Jul) was forged for several key reasons, but for Executive Director Cinzia Burnes, bringing something new to the Australian market was motivation enough to ink the contract.

"We're very fond of the word 'exclusive' and the fact that Ensemble was not in Australia was a great motivator for us," Burnes explained to *Travel Daily*.

"While we wanted to offer something exclusive to our network, we also found the values of the Ensemble business were very much in line with our values, and we were also already familiar with the business."

The familiarity that Burnes refers to is the connection between Helloworld's inbound business and Ensemble's parent group Navigatr, with the Aussie

agency looking after its bespoke private tour brand Kensington Tours in the local market.

Of particular value to Helloworld agents under the new deal is the option to access competitive rates and amenities at a range of luxury properties globally through the Ensemble's ADX platform.

Burnes also noted Helloworld and Ensemble are aligned on mutual benefits, with the Canadian business agreeing to terms knowing its sellers only have a need for its hotel program.

"We already have existing deals in place with cruise lines and airlines and that's something that Ensemble understands," she said.

Speaking more broadly about the business, Burnes said while there has been a slowdown in domestic bookings, the business is benefitting from "extremely strong" outbound luxury demand across premium cruise cabins and first class air tickets, and Jul 2024 was well ahead of Jul 2023. **AB**

\$50k prize bonanza

CONSOLIDATED Travel has \$50,000 worth of prizes up for grabs to lucky agents who book and ticket China Southern Airlines flights from Australia to Guangzhou and beyond, for travel through to 31 Mar 2025 - more information on **page eight**.

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Travel Daily
A conversation with
Kylee Kay

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Credit protection needed

EXCLUSIVE

THE group that called for Australia to adopt a Passenger Bill of Rights to protect the interests of air travellers (**TD** 30 Nov 2023) has this week added further calls for protections around credits.

Speaking with **Travel Daily** this morning, The Australian Lawyers Alliance (ALA) insisted that Australian travellers deserve more concrete regulations around the ambiguity of flight credits issued after flights are cancelled.

"We are seeking minimum requirements for travel credits so that passengers do not face these issues in the future," said ALA spokesperson and travel lawyer, Victoria Roy.

"In particular, we are calling for regulated expiry dates of at least three years, the ability for consumers to exchange for cash upon expiry, and minimum seat guarantees on the same route at the same cost," she added.

Roy believes that travel credits are essentially an unregulated

area of the aviation industry, and have exacerbated passenger frustrations during delays and cancellations because of tight expiry periods and the inability to use credits on preferred routes.

Roy added the pandemic created the conditions for airlines to exploit their terms and conditions, falling back on 'Act of God' fine print.

"Flight cancellations during the pandemic were not subject to the ACL consumer guarantees, passenger rights fell back to... 'force majeure' clauses," she said. "This caused many consumers to be subjected to cancellation fees & issued with credits." **AB**

Adventure report

TRAVEL Daily has just released a new edition of its special report series, this time covering the active world of adventure travel.

Jam-packed with features and news, the report discusses topics such as the evolution of the adventure travel sector and emerging destinations on travellers' bucket lists, from Uzbekistan to Colombia.

It also features a 10-page adventure travel guide for agents, showcasing experiences for a diverse range of clients, from luxury guests to solo tourists.

Think safaris in Uganda, family trips to Northern India or cliffside camping in Victoria.

CLICK HERE to check it out.

CAPA leaders panel

HUNDREDS of aviation heavyweights from across the Asia Pacific will gather in Brisbane next month for the 2024 CAPA Airline Leaders Summit to look at the latest trends and insights.

Register to attend on **page nine**.

Travel Daily
ON LOCATION

VIETNAM

Today's issue is coming to you from Vietnam where we are attending Express Travel Group's Xchange conference at the Sheraton Grand Opera in Ho Chi Minh City.

AFTER a big welcome party last night sponsored by Air New Zealand, where attendees enjoyed postcard views across the city, Olympic gold medal winner Brooke Hanson has opened the Express Travel Group's Xchange conference.

Coming today are sessions around air, cruise and marketing, as well as speakers including Tom Manwaring and ATIA Chief, Dean Long.

The day will end with more fantastic views as we mingle and enjoy networking drinks at The Deck, with thanks to The Travel Corporation.

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A mountain of a milestone



ROCKY Mountaineer recently marked a major milestone as it welcomed its 25,000th passenger.

American couple Shirley and Don (pictured above with train crew) were enjoying the 'Rockies to the Red Rocks' itinerary between Denver and Moab as part of a Tauck group itinerary on their 50th wedding anniversary. It was Shirley and Don's first

time experiencing the Rocky Mountaineer, with the couple enjoying a surprise when train staff presented them with a bag of goodies to celebrate.

Inside was a handwritten note of congratulations, a pair of binoculars, deck of playing cards, teddy bears and a copy of the *Train Beyond the Mountains* commemorative book. *ML*

Cover-More covers more

A **NEW** level of protection covering a wider variety of life's uncertainties has been introduced by Cover-More Travel Insurance on domestic and international trips.

Cancellation Plus Cover is a new optional add-on designed for common events not generally considered in standard cancellation conditions.

These include a close family member or friend falling ill; losing a job or starting a new one; an unexpected relationship breakup or unforeseen expense making travel unaffordable; pregnancy; or even anxiety seeding doubt or a change of mind about travelling.

Cancellation Plus Cover can be added for an additional premium to existing insurance policies in a similar way extra cover can be added for cruise or snow sports, with a maximum of \$10,000 able to be claimed per policy.

Cover-More Australia CEO, Todd Nelson, described the new policy

add-on as "first-to-market", which could be "a game-changer" for travel agents.

"Cancellation Plus Cover offers more cover for those times when life or other complications get in the way of travel plans," he said.

"It is an evolution of the Cancel For Any Reason (CFAR) product we had in market prior to COVID-19". (*TD* 11 Nov 2021)

The cover applies to expenses paid after taking out the policy or up to 48 hours beforehand, and must be purchased at least seven days before departure.

Cover can be added to single-trip or certain multi-trip policies.

Policyholders can claim on pre-paid and non-refundable airfares, accommodation, cruises, tours and transport costs.

"We can't offer cover for everything, but we have tried hard to offer cover for as many situations possible with this new policy," Nelson added. *ML*

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Vietjet eyes Aussie growth

EXCLUSIVE

VIETJET has confirmed plans to increase its flight connections for Australian travellers to major tourist destinations in Vietnam, including Da Nang, Nha Trang, Phu Quoc, and up north in Ha Long Bay.

Revealed exclusively to *Travel Daily*, the insights arrive on the back of recent news the budget carrier will be expanding its fleet with 20 A321neo ACF aircraft by the end of the year (**TD 26 Jul**).

Vietjet Vice President, Nguyen Thi Thuy Binh, said that by adding more new planes to its short-haul network, it will open more opportunities to expand important routes to regions such as Australia and Europe.

“We are currently operating more than 50 flights per week to serve the needs of family reunions, studying abroad, business and economic investment, as well as passengers who are Vietnamese, Indian, and from some Asian countries travelling to Australia,” Binh said.

“On the other hand, to meet the needs of Australian tourists looking to explore Vietnam, we will soon increase the flight network connecting Australia with [Vietnam], and with the new fleet, passengers can expect diverse and interesting experiences on our flights.”

When asked about Vietjet’s potential to connect Vietnam and Asia to more Australian ports, Binh confirmed the country

represents a great market for future investment.

“We are studying more information of new destinations in Australia, which are good places for tourism, investment, and educational experiences for Asian people,” she said.

“Vietjet’s criteria for choosing new destinations in Australia are those that will attract tourists of all audiences.

“In addition to serving the travel needs of millions, Vietjet aims to explore new destinations in Vietnam for Australians and vice versa, as well as for Vietnamese, Thai, and Indian communities living, studying, and working in Australia to meet VFR needs.”

Vietjet was one of the first airlines in the world to operate this A321neo ACF in 2019, which offers passengers an improved cabin design, and Vietjet with 16% in fuel savings, a reduction in noise by up to 75%, and an emissions cut of around 50%. *AB*

QF execs departing

QANTAS is continuing its corporate clean-out, with sustainability chief Andrew Parker to exit next month.

Parker’s exit will be closely followed by company secretary and general counsel Andrew Finch, who will leave in Oct.

The latest moves are understood to be part of the ongoing leadership shuffle instigated by CEO Vanessa Hudson over the past year.

Hyatt scraps Adelaide hotel



DEVELOPERS overseeing plans to return the Hyatt name to Adelaide have scrapped the project after years of delays and red tape caused by budget cuts and the site’s heritage status.

The \$180 million project first announced in 2019 (**TD 05 Aug 2019**) promised a 28-storey hotel on Pirie Street, later downsized to 21 storeys due to concerns over the facade of the former Bank of South Australia building and its heritage-listed status.

Singaporean developer Chip Eng Seng Corporation Limited was set to develop the property under its wholly-owned subsidiary CES Pirie Hotel, in a joint venture with Hyatt Hotels Corporation.

Original plans for the site included a 295-room hotel, multiple food and beverage outlets, a Regency Club lounge, swimming pool and rooftop bar.

A statement from the

developers this week confirmed the project had been axed.

“CES Pirie Hotel (SA) Pty Ltd regrets to announce that we will not be proceeding with the partnership with Hyatt Hotels to develop a Hyatt Regency in Adelaide,” the statement said. *ML*

A rendering of the original planned hotel is **pictured** above.

Wiggs off to eRoam

TRAVEL technology company eRoam has made its second major hire in as many months, with Maxine Wiggs joining as its new Global Head of Commercial.

Wiggs joins eRoam after nine years running her own contract human resources business, of which eRoam was a client.

Her appointment comes just a few weeks after eRoam appointed Dylan Hearne as its Head of Sales for the APAC region (**TD 29 Jul**).

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Window Seat

TRAVEL should be accessible to anyone, of all ages and abilities, but how young is too young to travel alone?

British TV presenter Kirstie Allsopp has sparked a debate after revealing her 15-year-old son just returned home from a three-week trip in Europe - without any adult supervision.

Oscar and his 16-year old friend travelled by train to European capitals, including Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Berlin, Munich, Marseille, Toulouse, Barcelona and Madrid, enjoying activities like bungee-style jumping.

The self-labelled "free range parent" rationalised the choice in a post on X, saying, "in this increasingly risk-averse world, it's vital that we find any way we can to give our children the confidence that only comes from trusting them".

"If we are afraid, our children will also be afraid.

"If we let go, they will fly."

Allsopp's X post has so far been viewed more than 2 million times and has drawn mixed opinions.

"That's absolutely crazy," wrote one, while another simply said, "too young".

Allsopp bit back at her critics, replying, "I know many people far older than my son who are far less capable".

Etihad boosts MEL

ETIHAD Airways will operate an additional weekly non-stop flight between Abu Dhabi and Melbourne from 30 Mar 2025.

The carrier says the extra service will provide better connectivity options to Europe and better opportunities for travellers to plan a stopover in Abu Dhabi.

The new service will fly as EY463, departing MEL at 0500 and landing in AUH at 1305.

Adventure is top of mind

THREE in four travellers say that outdoor adventure activities are "essential to their travels", new research from Arival shows.

The report, titled *2024 U.S. Outdoor Adventure & Activities Traveler*, found that water-based activities were the most popular among the 1,000 US citizens who were surveyed, with 49% participating in 2023 - up from 20% in 2019.

There is also strong demand for land-based activities, with 48% of those surveyed taking part in activities like hiking and biking in 2023, compared to 34% in 2019.

According to the research, activity travellers are more likely to be young and affluent, with 80% under 55, and 30% with incomes over US\$150,000.

Travellers spent an average of US\$300 per activity in 2023 - more than double the amount spent in 2019 but less than the 2021 surge of US\$404 - and are engaging in an average of four activities per trip.

More time for Rex

THE Federal Court will today hear an application from Rex administrators, EY Australia, for more time to find a suitable buyer for the airline.

According to EY, the court documents reveal several credible applications to purchase Rex have been received and it needs until 25 Nov to work through them.

According to *ABC News*, details of the extension application have been shared with 4,800 creditors of the beleaguered carrier, among which are hundreds of staff who have since been made redundant.

"It is our view that a comprehensive and competitive sales process will secure the highest possible value for the Rex Companies, and through securing the highest value for the Companies, that will ensure the highest possible return for creditors," the application stated.



"The enduring popularity of outdoor adventure activities demonstrates a consistent desire for these experiences among travellers," said Douglas Quinby, CEO and co-founder of Arival.

"The fact that three in four travellers who participated in activities rated them as essential to their trip underscores the value these experiences bring to the overall travel journey.

"This presents a significant opportunity for operators who can deliver high-quality, engaging outdoor experiences." *JM*

Singapore revs up

TEN days of Formula 1 related activations, events and festivities will take place across Singapore as the city celebrates 15 years of hosting its Grand Prix.

Grand Prix Season Singapore will kick off on 13 Sep, with race day scheduled for 22 Sep.

Large-scale Grand Prix themed activations are set to pop up in different locations around the city, including a 10-day music festival at the Singapore Sports Hub and a street culture showcase on Orchard Road.

In addition, the 'Street Style Speedway' at Clarke Quay will feature art installations projected onto cars, with light shows beamed onto local buildings and bridges and a drone show capping off entertainment each day.



Travel Daily FEATURE

Are your clients ready to plan their Europe 2026 adventure?

Ben Angell, Vice President and Managing Director Norwegian Cruise Line APAC



Norwegian Cruise Line has just announced our spectacular selection of 2026 European

sailings, providing guests with a series of unforgettable port-immersive journeys.

With a choice of eight incredible ships - including the all-new *Norwegian Viva* cruising the Mediterranean, Greek Isles, and Baltic cruises from Helsinki for the very first time - there's a perfect itinerary for your clients to experience more of Europe.

Guests can embark from 11 departure ports including popular cities like Lisbon, Barcelona, Civitavecchia, Istanbul and Copenhagen and we're excited to introduce several unique ports including Portree, Scotland, Leirvik, Norway, and Palamós, Spain, enhancing our already diverse offerings.

Our 2026 season also features 22 overnight stays, giving guests the chance to explore iconic destinations like Istanbul, Hamburg, Reykjavik, and Copenhagen in greater depth.

A standout is *Norwegian Sun's* Baltic sailing departing Helsinki on 13 Aug 2026, taking guests inside the region's history and culture, including an overnight in cosmopolitan Copenhagen.

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NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE

CORPORATE UPDATE

Gen Z travelling differently

THE ability to effectively communicate with Gen Z has been highlighted as a key area of importance at the recent Global Business Travel Association Convention in Atlanta.

The session revealed Gen Z travellers take greater risks and are less afraid of things that previous generations have considered as "dangerous".

FCTG's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Manager, Emese Graham, said it was vital for travel policy makers to take this into account when developing policies,

which she emphasised should include diversity, individualism, teamwork, technology, and organisational support.

"Gen Z's in Australia have different considerations than previous generations with as many as 32% now identifying as LGBTQ+1, only 15% believing they have 'excellent' mental health, and the fact they've grown up around crises - meaning their travel behaviours are different," Graham said.

Streamlined communication is the most effective way to flag updates with Gen Z travellers, like booking information, travel notifications and changes, as opposed to "being bombarded by too many channels", believes Lydia Paglierani, Marketing Executive for FCM Travel and part of Gen Z. *JM*

Vic comes to life

IN A bid to increase visitation to regional Victoria, the State Government has announced funding for 29 projects through its Enabling Tourism Fund 2024.

Grants of up to \$500,000 will help support regional tourism projects to reach investment-ready status by funding feasibility studies and designing future public infrastructure.

Among the recipients are the Art Gallery of Ballarat, which will use the funds on blockbuster exhibitions, and Bendigo's Great Stupa, which will look at opening a new visitor centre with a cafe and museum, as well as a wellness hotel and spa.

SL's visa-free policy

FROM 01 Oct, Sri Lanka will issue free 30-day visas to tourists from 35 countries, including Australia and New Zealand, for a period of six months.

Tourists who have entered Sri Lanka since the beginning of Aug are being issued a visa on arrival at the country's entry points.

The Supreme Court of Sri Lanka has also ordered the return to the electronic travel authorisation system, which has been suspended since 02 Aug due to issues with the allocation and management of the platform.

China flights back

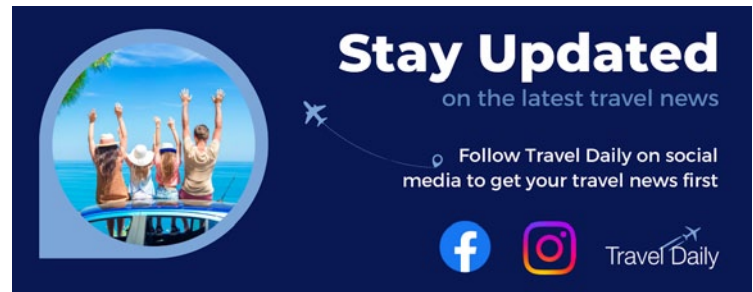
CHINA Eastern Airlines is bringing back its special non-stop flights between Perth and Shanghai in early 2025, connecting WA with mainland China over the Chinese New Year holiday period.

The seasonal service will be operated by an A330-200, providing 4,640 seats in total across 10 flights between 24 Jan-14 Feb 2025.

"This year's direct Shanghai flights delivered a major tourism boost, bringing thousands of additional visitors and pumping more money into local businesses and the economy," WA Premier Roger Cook said.

"It's great to see these flights back for another season, as part of our ongoing efforts to secure more direct flights into WA."

The announcement comes as China Southern Airlines prepares to re-launch its non-stop service between Guangzhou and Perth in Nov, bringing an additional 41,000 inbound seats to WA each year (*TD* 27 May).



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Travel skills in the spotlight



THE chief of the Australian Travel Careers Council (ATCC), Rick Myatt, attended the official launch of Skills Week and the announcement of the VET Review Report, which aims to provide a roadmap for rebuilding TAFE NSW.

Hosted by Skills One and Business Sydney, the event emphasised the importance of skills development and vocational training in shaping the future workforce of the state.

"It is imperative to ensure regional and rural business needs are carefully considered in these initiatives," NSW State Minister for Skills, TAFE, and Tertiary

Education, Steve Whan, told the several hundred attendees.

"As our travel sector qualifications lack visibility, ATCC needs to be present in congregations like these as much as practicable to ensure our voices are heard," said Myatt, who is **pictured** with Whan.

The *VET Review Final Report* is accessible via the NSW Government's Education website - see it **HERE**. *JM*

Baird gets new gig

FORMER Virgin Australia Velocity marketing chief, Steve Baird, has joined Christian charity organisation Compassion Australia as its new CMO.

Before departing the aviation sector in 2020 to join International Justice Mission Australia as CEO, Baird led the marketing efforts for VA's frequent flyer program, seeing its membership increase exponentially from 3.5 to 10 million over a span of five years.

Prior to working at Virgin, Baird spent a decade in marketing managerial roles at Qantas, working across various campaigns.

Sunshine rises on Baillie Lodges

BAILLIE Lodges has released *Sunshine Rising*, a documentary charting the revival of its flagship property, Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island, which was destroyed in the 2020 summer bushfires (*TD* 13 Apr 2023).

James and Hayley Baillie, the founders of Baillie Lodges, commissioned local South Australian filmmakers 57 Films to document the journey.

The 30-minute documentary captures the planning, construction, personal reactions and reflections from those who worked on the site over the lodge's four-year path to reopening - watch it **HERE**.

The luxury lodge began welcoming visitors back at the end of last year.

SPECIALS

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All Nippon Airways (ANA) is offering discounted return economy and business class fares between Australia and Japan. Prices between Sydney and Tokyo start from A\$988 for departures between 10 Feb and 15 Mar 2025, while travellers can score tickets between Perth and Tokyo from A\$993 if they fly between 14 Oct-02 Nov 2024. The 'Hello Blue Sale' ends 27 Aug - details [HERE](#).

Travellers can take advantage of a special offer from **Journey Beyond**, celebrating the launch of its 2025 Vintage Rail Journeys throughout NSW. There are savings of up to \$2,000 available on the 'North Coast Rail Tour' for bookings made by 03 Oct. Guests will spend four nights aboard the *Aurora Australis*, which takes in Hawkesbury River, Newcastle, Maitland, Port Macquarie, Kempsey, Coffs Harbour, Casino and Byron Bay, and includes all meals as well as off-train experiences, including a scenic lunch tour of Port Macquarie. Learn more [HERE](#).

Bawah Reserve, a luxury private island eco-resort in Indonesia's Anambas archipelago, has announced a deal for Grand Prix fans ahead of the motor racing event in Singapore next month. Travellers can enjoy a post-Grand Prix holiday at the resort, which is offering five nights for the price of four, available for stays until Nov. The property features 36 stand-alone suites, with rates inclusive of meals, non-alcoholic drinks, spa treatments, activities, wellbeing classes and laundry service. [CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

Travellers have more time to take advantage of **APT's** 'Discover the World' sale, which the luxury travel leader has extended until 31 Aug. By booking during the sale and paying in full 10 months prior to departure, guests can enjoy extra savings on select tours and cruises of 10 days or more. Contact 1300 336 932 to find out more.

Cruise Traveller has launched a fly, stay and sail package onboard Aurora Expeditions' new ship, *Douglas Mawson*, which departs for a circumnavigation of Tasmania on 01 Dec 2025. Priced from A\$12,315 ppts, the 10-night 'Tasmania Temptation' package includes a free return flight from Sydney, Melbourne or Adelaide to Hobart, one night in Hobart pre-cruise, and much more. Call 1800 507 777 to book by 30 Sep.

Holidaymakers can save \$800 on **Railbookers'** 21-night 'The Best of the United Kingdom and Ireland' itinerary, which takes in London, Cardiff, Dublin, Belfast, Glasgow, Fort William, Inverness, Edinburgh, and York. Savings are available on other itineraries as well - see [HERE](#).

On until 30 Sep, **Scenic River Cruises** is promoting its 'Fly Free' offer, which allows guests to enjoy a complimentary flight to Europe on select 'Romantic Rhine & Moselle' and 'Normandy & Gems of the Seine' departures in Jul and Aug 2025. Guests will also receive an additional \$800 discount per person. [CLICK HERE](#) for further details.

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Brisbane's new events Star



AHEAD of its phased opening next week, The Star Brisbane has offered a first look inside its event centre (**TD 18 Jul**), which is now accepting bookings.

Located on level six, the state-of-the-art facility will be home to the city's largest ballroom, with a capacity to seat 1,440 people.

The centre also features a striking central glass atrium, floor-to-ceiling windows, next-generation audio visual functionality, outdoor terrace and a pre-function bar with views to the Story Bridge.

It will be serviced by a high-tech industrial kitchen the size of half a football field, which will serve around 140,000 meals a year, using the best of Queensland produce with restaurant-style menus and dining.

The Star Brisbane Chief Executive Officer, Daniel Finch, said the introduction of the event centre will boost the city's already flourishing events and conferencing industry.

"We have just seen recent data that shows that Brisbane has become Australia's 'bleisure' capital, with business visitors spending more time and money in our city compared to any other state," he commented.

"With the ability to split the ballroom space into five separate event areas, or one giant ballroom, the size, scale and functionality of our purpose-designed event centre will not only complement but bolster the great work already being done in Queensland's business events sector," Finch added.

The event centre will launch as part of the first phase of the staged opening of the \$3.6 billion Queen's Wharf Brisbane precinct (**TD 08 Jul**), hosting a range of corporate functions from charity galas and international conferences to tourism showcases and award nights. *JM*

Qantas charity pact

QANTAS has formalised a new support partnership with the Australian Red Cross to assist in its effort to respond more quickly to communities in crisis.

The three-year funding deal will enable Red Cross personnel to travel around Australia and will help the organisation to recruit and train 750 new volunteers.

Qantas will also become a partner of the Red Cross Trauma Teddy, which is gifted to children for comfort during emergencies.

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Executive General
Manager Aviation
Brisbane Airport



Alex Featherstone
VP Revenue
Management
& Commercial
Planning
Philippine Airlines