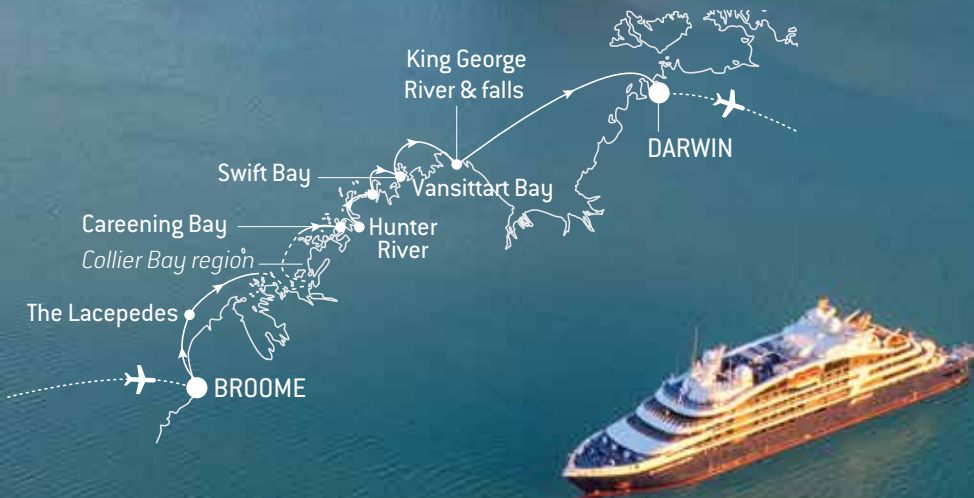


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\*Offer valid on new bookings only for 2025 Kimberley Luxury Expeditions itineraries. Advertised price is in Australian dollars (AUD), per person in a Deluxe Stateroom Deck 3 on board *Le Soleal*. Price is correct at time of publishing and may change at anytime without notice. More conditions apply. Visit [au.ponant.com/kimberley2025](http://au.ponant.com/kimberley2025) for complete terms and conditions. ABN:25 166 676517. Photo Credit: © Studio PONANT - Tim Faircloth.



## Silversea adds value

FOR two weeks, enjoy \$6,400 in savings with Silversea, including a \$1,400 discount per suite.

Expiring at the end of the month, passengers can enjoy up to US\$600 in shipboard credit, and business class flights from under \$500 - see **page 7** for more.

## Agent value spurs growth

**HELLOWORLD** says the services of trusted travel agents have never been more in demand or more valued as international travel increases in complexity.

The glowing appraisal of agents was a central theme in the company's investor presentation and full-year financial results released this morning (**TD** breaking news), which paint a healthy picture of Helloworld's recent financial performance.

Helloworld said its network of agents, brokers and mobile members thrive in any commercial setting and "reach across any geographic location", with loyal customers who return to them time after time.

Spurred on by the integration of Express Travel Group into the Helloworld Group portfolio (**TD** 22 Jun 2023), the company posted a 62.5% spike in Total Transaction Value to over \$4.1 billion, with customer revenue soaring to \$216 million.

Profits before tax skyrocketed 93.7% to more than \$40 million, with an underlying EBITDA margin of 30% highlighting improved cost efficiencies and productivity.

The company said it will continue to grow its workforce to meet demand, coupled with increased investment in technology and infrastructure to ensure TTV growth continues.

Helloworld said it is expecting the number of registered users of its mid-office solution Resworld, which is currently operational in 170 stores, to more than double over the next 12-18 months. *ML*

## Kimberley perks

**PONANT'S** comprehensive Fly, Stay and Cruise packages in the Kimberley are now available on the cruise line's 2025 schedule.

Packages include return flights and one night of accommodation prior to a 10-night Kimberley cruise - see today's **cover page**.



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### Today's issue of **TD**

**Travel Daily** today features six pages of the latest travel industry news including a cover wrap from **Ponant**, our **Sustainability** page, plus full pages from:

- Silversea
- ATIA - Beyond Borders

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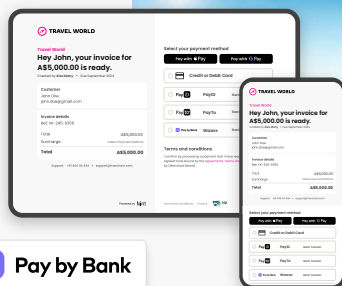
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## Goldman gears for growth

**GOLDMAN** Group is gearing up for future growth by making two key leadership appointments, with Anna Davies named Director of Leisure and Elizabeth Clarke Director of Cruise (**TD** breaking news yesterday).

The two pivotal appointments are designed to capitalise on the continued demand for leisure and cruise travel, and to accelerate Goldman's growth trajectory.

Davies is stepping into a new role for the company, to which she will oversee Goldman's leisure divisions, including Travelcall Sydney and Melbourne, Brisbane's The Cruise Centre by Travelcall, and SmartFlyer.

She brings a wealth of experience from around the travel industry, including having

most recently served as Virtuoso Account Director.

Meanwhile, Clarke will step into her new role based in Brisbane at The Cruise Centre.

She will spearhead efforts to amplify cruise sales across all Goldman businesses.

Clarke first joined the company following its acquisition of The Cruise Centre in 2017 (**TD** 24 Oct 2017), and has been a cornerstone in driving and maintaining robust cruise sales.

"Having collaborated with Anna extensively during her tenure at Virtuoso, I can confidently say she is the ideal person to help guide our leisure businesses into a promising future," Managing Director Anthony Goldman said.

The company's chief added Clarke stands out as one of Australia's premier cruise experts and has unparalleled knowledge in optimising its advisors' cruise sales and future growth. *MS*

## Regent event series

**REGENT** Seven Seas Cruises is inviting travel partners and their clients to a new event series across Australia and New Zealand to promote its new 2026-2027 Voyage Collection.

The in-person events will showcase 173 new itineraries around the world, as well as eight new immersive overnights, and 16 new ports.

The events will take place in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Wellington and Auckland from 10 Sep through 12 Nov.

Spots are strictly limited - to register and see the full list of dates and locations, **CLICK HERE**.

## Into the Beyond

**THE** upcoming Beyond Borders 2024 event presented by the Australian Travel Industry Association will discuss the future of travel through the eyes of its most prominent leaders.

Speakers will include Skroo Turner and many more - see **p8**.

Travel Daily  
ON LOCATION



MELBOURNE

Today's issue is coming to you from courtesy of AITCAP, which is today hosting its Accessible & Inclusive Tourism Conference in Melbourne.

**WE'RE** in Melbourne today for the Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Conference.

So far, we've heard from the Steve Dimopoulos, Minister for Tourism & Major Events, and Felicia Mariani, CEO at Victoria Tourism Industry Council.

It'll be a great day discussing inclusive employment and accessible experiences.

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Nicola's dream journey takes her back to the time when her parents were on a working holiday around Europe in the late 1970's. She'd start in Greece before heading to Italy and back up to Germany before hopping across to France and then up to the UK.

Her exact journey goes from Athens > Corinth with side trips to Kalamata and Nafplion > Patras > Brindisi by ferry > Rome & Vatican City > Munich & Schloss Neuschwanstein > Berlin. Then head to France to visit Toulouse > Carcassonne > Avignon > Paris > London > Stanstead Abbots.

Read Nicola's full entry on **Rail Europe's FB page**.

The best way to follow Nicola's dream route or travel around Europe is with a **Eurail Global Mobile Pass**. With access to unlimited rail travel across 33 countries, Pass options include 'Continuous' for continuous travel days over 15 days, 22 days, 1 month, 2 months or 3 months; or 'Flexi' for 4, 5 or 7 travel days within 1 month, and 10 or 15 travel days within 2 months.

Note, the Eurostar is equivalent to a day's travel on the Pass. Seat reservations on the Eurostar and all high-speed and/or international services are mandatory - see **here** for more information and instructions.

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## White Paper a white knight

A NUMBER of key stakeholders have welcomed the Federal Government's Aviation White Paper, with lobby group Airlines for Australia & New Zealand (A4ANZ) and consumer organisation Choice heaping praise on the report.

A4ANZ Chair Graeme Samuel said the White Paper strikes a good balance of ensuring temporary challenges do not drive long-term policy decisions.

Samuel, who helms the lobby group established by airlines such as Qantas Airways, Virgin Australia, and Air New Zealand, also said reduced disruption, better complaints handling, and affordable fares is a goal shared by airlines.

"With airfares and on-time performance returning to pre-pandemic levels, the government's announcement of an aviation ombuds scheme and a passenger rights charter represents a sensible and measured approach, and we welcome the opportunity to contribute to these policies, ensuring that they are built on principles of shared accountability for all parts of the aviation ecosystem," he said.

The group has also welcomed the government's new aviation complaints scheme, as well as the clearer customer rights provided by the Paper.

"Choice has been campaigning for fairer travel rights for years, and we know that making a complaint about an airline is frustrating and often far too slow," Director of Campaigns Rosie Thomas said.

"Last time we surveyed consumers about airline cancellations and delays, we found that of those who pursued compensation for a cancelled flight, one in five had to wait over six months," she said. *MS*

## SQ WSI's first carrier

WESTERN Sydney International Airport (WSI) has secured its first global carrier, with Singapore Airlines to operate from the hub in 2026 (*TD* breaking news).

WSI Chief Executive Officer Simon Hickey said the news was recognition of the airport's unique scheduling options, which will see airlines fly in and out of the facility 24 hours a day.

"This inaugural international airline arrangement is a fantastic milestone for Western Sydney International Airport and reflects the positive response we've had from airlines, especially in regard to the unprecedented opportunities our 24-hour capability unlocks," Hickey said.

SQ Vice President South West Pacific Louis Arul added the new agreement allows the airline to further enhance connectivity in one of its biggest markets.

## Hello to 40 years of travel



HELLOWORLD has celebrated with Selena Luscombe (pictured) from HelloWorld Travel Parkdale for marking 40 years working in the travel industry.

The impressive milestone was recognised with plenty of well wishes and congratulations from colleagues, as well as a dinner with her team.

"This industry has to be one of the most exciting, fun, sometimes heartbreaking and frustrating, but overall, the greatest and most rewarding industry to be a part of," Luscombe enthused.

"I am so very lucky to have had many brilliant industry colleagues over the years and I thank you all for sharing your wisdom and encouragement." *JM*

## The Pelican Brief

EXPLORE Louisiana will expand its PR and trade marketing effort in Australia and New Zealand by reappointing Gate 7 as its local representative for a second year.

The two parties successfully worked together on a variety of projects last year, with Gate 7 to also handle social media to raise local awareness of the state and its tourism opportunities.

More than 27,000 Australians visited Louisiana in 2023, making it the US state's third largest international source market.

Market projections show over 40,000 Aussie visitors are tipped to explore the state in 2025.

Gate 7's new partnership is its second in as many weeks, having last week secured New Orleans as another new client.

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## RateHawk launches in Aus

**RATEHAWK** has debuted in the Australian market this month, bringing its B2B booking platform to local travel advisors.

The Dubai-based company offers access to more than 2.5 million accommodations worldwide, and features book-and-hold capabilities, a customisable user interface, nett payments, a mobile app for seamless on-the-go bookings, and a rewards program.

RateHawk also offers fast API integrations, enabling partners to elevate their online presence and capture more business.

Leading the Australian charge is RateHawk's local sales team, including Head of Business Development Oceania, Danielle Leckenby (pictured), Business



Development Manager, Bronwen Milson, Account Manager, Michael Whitrod, and Sales Managers Jenna Mazor, Ben Allen, and Darren Chigwidden.

Those who register for RateHawk in Sep will receive 5% off their first booking and a chance to win an iPad.

RateHawk also recently opened its first Asian headquarters in Singapore in Jun.

The platform has performed well in Europe and the Middle East, and is now targeting Australia and parts of Asia through a localised platform and business operations. *MS*

## Bids on the Bledisloe

**IHG Hotels & Resorts** has announced a set of Bledisloe Cup experiences as part of its major partnership with the Wallaroos and Wallabies national rugby union teams for the 2024 and 2025 seasons (**TD** 29 Jun).

IHG One Rewards members will have the exclusive opportunity to bid for or redeem their points on a range of Bledisloe Cup experiences on the IHG One Rewards Access platform.

The highlight is the 'Ultimate Bledisloe Cup Weekender Package', which blends ultimate game access with a luxurious two-night stay in Sydney, marking the first time IHG has included accommodation in their experience offerings.

The packages, which dropped this morning, are expected to sell out fast - more info [HERE](#).



## Walk for a free trip

**INTREPID** is giving away a free trip valued at \$3,500 as part of its annual charity event, the Blue Dragon Marathon Walk.

Taking place on 08 Sep, Intrepid Foundation's flagship fundraising event will bring together over 1,000 people across major global cities like Melbourne, London, Hanoi, Singapore and Bangkok.

The event is aiming to raise \$500,000 for Vietnam's Blue Dragon Children's Foundation, a not-for-profit that provides rescue care, shelter, legal advocacy and long-term support to victims of human trafficking.

The company is inviting industry to gather their teams and sign up for either the full 42km marathon, or a smaller walk of 3km, 5km, 10km, or 21km.

Walkers will receive an entry into the draw to win an Intrepid trip of their choice for every \$350 raised - find info [HERE](#).

## ATIA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



**THE** Fed Gov't announcement of 56 initiatives within the Aviation White Paper marks a significant win for our travel agent members,

with ATIA's nine months of advocacy bearing fruit.

The Government has excluded travel agents from the new Aviation Industry Ombudsman Scheme, ensuring agents won't be burdened with cash-flowing refund schemes - a challenge seen in the US.

The Aviation Industry Ombudsman Scheme will hold airlines and airports accountable, investigating complaints, directing remedies, and issuing penalties to those in the wrong.

In the report it is clearly stated that the Government's intention is to not have travel agents included in this Ombudsman because they recognise the distinct role our members play in aviation.

Additionally, the new Aviation Customer Rights Charter will set clear standards for airlines and airports, ensuring customers are treated fairly during disruptions, with entitlements to refunds and

support for making alternative arrangements.

The Charter will also ensure that all stakeholders who directly impact services should be part of the consultation process for this new ombudsman.

In line with ATIA's advocacy, the Government will also pleasingly introduce aviation-specific disability standards.

These standards will require collaboration between airlines and airports to improve access for people with disabilities, reducing barriers and aiding travel agents in supporting these travellers.

We've also seen progress on aviation competition, with reforms to Sydney Airport's slot system, and on regional connectivity, with an investigation into regional airfares and advice on maintaining appropriate levels of regional air service at fair prices.

These outcomes reflect the Government's recognition of the vital role travel businesses play in positive consumer outcomes.

While we've achieved significant success, the consultation process continues, and ATIA will remain vigilant, representing our members' interests in Canberra to ensure these initiatives remain fair and beneficial for the entire travel industry.

## Two ships on the Murray

**MURRAY** River Paddlesteamers has announced it will offer two overnight riverboats for the first time from Aug 2025, in order to cater to "huge demand".

The operator has decided to keep current vessel, *PS Emmylou*, operating alongside the new *PS Australian Star*, which will debut next Jun, instead of following its initial plan to retire the older vessel from multi-day trips.

APT Travel Group will charter 38 sailings on *PS Emmylou* in 2025-2026 under its Travelmarvel brand, in addition to 31 seven-night sailings of the *Australian Star* for 2025-26 (**TD** 27 Feb).

After undergoing maintenance and refurbishment from Jun-Aug next year, *PS Emmylou* will offer a brand new four-night itinerary round-trip from Echuca from 12 Aug 2025, with Travelmarvel



exclusively selling four cruises per month, coupled with extended land touring.

"This means that, for the first time, we will have two, deluxe, overnight riverboats operating year-round on the Murray River from Echuca in Victoria from mid-2025, which is very exciting for us and the evolution of river cruising in Australia," Murray River Paddlesteamers Director, Craig Burgess, said. *JM*



### CTM falls short

**CORPORATE** Travel Management (CTM) has admitted it planned to make greater progress toward its renewable energy targets for the 12 months to 30 Jun, citing circumstances “beyond our control” as the primary reason for falling short.

The three big pillars CTM’s Climate Positive Program used to measure progress are achieving energy efficiencies for its operations such as carbon offsetting, delivering greener travel options to clients, and enhancing waste management policies.

While CTM initially flagged a 100% renewable energy target to be met by the full-year 2025, the company has been forced to revise this to just 30% by next year.

This recalibration will see the target lifted 10% each year until it reaches 100% renewable usage by 2030.

In 2025 and beyond, CTM has vowed to rationalise its physical footprint, reduce the energy consumption of existing offices, and engage with landlords and energy providers to obtain more access to green energy.

“Our customers have made clear the importance they place on sustainable travel and throughout the year we have sought improvements,” CTM CEO Jamie Pherous said.

## ELECTRIC REVOLUTION NEEDS GOVT LIFT

**THE** Federal Government has conceded that further support from the public purse is needed to accelerate the development of new low-emissions technologies in Australian aviation - such as electric aircraft.

Detailed in the Aviation White Paper released yesterday, cultivating more advanced low emission technologies through deeper investment will be “critical” to assisting the sector bridge the gap between preliminary research and the commercialisation and adoption of any mooted advancements.

In the longer term, new regulation and further policy responses will also be necessary from government to ensure the safe deployment of innovations like electric flying, stating go-to-market time frames are currently “uncertain” & longer-term policy interventions are “not yet clear”.

“The Federal Government will continue to work with industry through the Australian Jet Zero



Council and CASA to understand the development of technologies and implement policy responses,” the White Paper stated.

“This could include reviewing regulatory frameworks to ensure they can accommodate new technologies and certification of emerging tech for commercial use,” the report added.

Benefits to the industry associated with migrating to cleaner technology like electric planes include lower operating costs, a safer journey for passengers, lower noise impacts on the environment, and more financially sustainable business

models for aviation businesses.

However, the White Paper cautioned that the aviation sector needed to start investing now in areas like fleet renewal to make the most of these opportunities.

To help facilitate a faster take-up of green tech, the govt has confirmed it will provide further support for the industry through targeted funding programs.

“Over the long term, electric, hydrogen-electric and hydrogen aircraft are considered the most prospective and effective solution for the aviation industry to decarbonisation,” the Federal Government believes. *AB*

### Sheraton back to planting mangroves

**SHERATON** Fiji Golf and Beach Resort in Denarau has carried out the first of three mangrove planting activations planned for this year.

Led by the hotel’s Next Gen Business Council, the first planting mission took place last week, with senior hotel management joining local

associates to plant 427 saplings along the nearby Denarau river.

Guests at the resort can help the property achieve its annual sustainability agenda by planting fruit tree saplings, which help the Mamanuca Environment Society meet its annual quota of planting 3,000 native and fruit trees annually.

### Donna’s new gig

**WORLD** Expeditions has named Donna Lawrence as its full-time Corporate Social Responsibility Manager.

Lawrence has been with World Expeditions for nearly two decades and has helped form the brand’s partnership with World Animal Protection, World Vision and many more.

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## MONEY

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

### AU\$1 = US\$0.677

**THE** Australian dollar has declined against the USD overnight, despite hovering around a seven-month high.

The AUD/USD dropped by 0.3% to US\$0.677, primarily attributed to a broad US dollar recovery and cautious market sentiment in Australia.

However, the Reserve Bank of Australia's aggressive stance against rising inflation did initially dampen low market expectations for the AUD, which has risen against majors.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.677
UK	£0.513
NZ	\$1.092
Euro	€0.606
Japan	¥98.06
Thailand	฿23.08
China	¥4.820
South Africa	12.00
Canada	\$0.913
Crude oil	US\$79.02

## Windy Japan trips

**TYPHOON** Shanshan is expected to impact parts of Japan from today through to 31 Aug, and could significantly disrupt transportation and services.

Travellers are being advised by DFAT to check their plans before they travel and follow instructions issued by local authorities, as well as check the Japanese Meteorological Agency for the latest updates.

## Into the heart of the NT



**EIGHT** travel industry professionals from Australia and New Zealand were recently hosted on a picturesque journey through the Northern Territory, hosted by Tourism NT and Tourism Holdings Limited (THL).

Beginning their adventure in Alice Springs on 15 Aug, the group enjoyed a mix of unique activities, including a cultural tour at Karrke Aboriginal Cultural Experience and a five-course dinner under the stars at Kings Canyon, topped off with a helicopter flight over the canyon.

Agents enjoyed luxurious stays at the DoubleTree by Hilton Alice Springs, Discovery Resorts at Kings Canyon, and the Outback Hotel & Lodge at Uluru, and travelled by campervan and motorhome convoy from Alice Springs to Yulara and back.

The trip concluded in Uluru, where the group was treated to a sunset Wintjiri Wiru dinner and night show, as well as a sunrise breakfast and base experience at Uluru itself.

"This famil was about more than just seeing the sights, it was about feeling the spirit of the place, from the ancient stories of Uluru to the modern sustainability efforts at Earth Sanctuary," Tourism NT's Miriam Schreiner noted. *JM*

**Pictured:** Agents soaking in a spectacular sunset at Uluru during Wintjiri Wiru.

## Cunard tastes better

**CUNARD'S** third edition of its 'Great Australian Culinary Voyage', which departs Sydney on 06 Feb 2025 (*TD* 29 Feb), will feature some famous foodies.

Matt Moran will take over *Queen Elizabeth's* dining venue, The Verandah, with a six-course degustation menu, while Big Esso by Mabu Mabu owner, Nornie Bero, will impress guests with Torres Strait dishes.

Pastry maestro Darren Purchase will also return for a third year, offering sweets during Cunard's Champagne Afternoon Tea.

## Window Seat

**THOSE** who assume a first class air ticket is out of reach may need to think again, with Qantas recently selling cut-price fares at the front of its aircraft by mistake.

Qantas is now refunding or downgrading hundreds of passengers who were sold the first-class flights at first-class discounts, which occurred due to a coding error.

The erroneous offer was floated on the Qantas site on Thu, with around 300 sharp-eyed flyers quickly booking return flights between Australia and the United States and paying 85% less than the usual fare.

The mistake was not rectified by Qantas for about eight hours, with the airline saying it will now switch passengers who bought the bargain tickets into business class - one step down from first class - "at no additional cost" - but definitely still a win!

## Still visit Hawaii

**THE** Hawai'i Tourism Authority is advising travellers to not let Hurricane Hone, which is passing south of the Hawaiian Islands, to deter them from visiting.

Instead, visitors are advised remain vigilant and stay informed, and to consider postponing any outdoor activities, and heeding beach, park and trail closures.

Visitors can receive real-time updates on the storm as it develops by signing up **HERE** for text alerts.

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