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Air NZ bomb scare

AN AIR Zealand service flying from Wellington to Sydney on Saturday landed safely on the tarmac after a bomb scare on board.

The plane carrying 140 passengers was greeted in Sydney by 40 emergency units, but after an hour of checks, passengers were able to disembark and response crews stood down.

A return flight to Wellington was cancelled as a result of the incident, with Air NZ apologising for the inconvenience caused.

Qantas to pay out millions

QANTAS could be facing a total payout in excess of \$100 million if a test case handed down this morning involving three illegally sacked workers is any guide.

Justice Michael Lee ordered the carrier to pay close to \$170,000 to the three workers after the airline was found guilty of illegally firing 1,700 staff during the pandemic (*TD* 13 Sep 2023).

The sacked workers will receive \$30,000, \$40,000 and \$100,000 in recognition of the non-economic loss they suffered as a result of being terminated, with the trio to return to court in Nov to determine the final amount of compensation awarded.

In response to the ruling,



Qantas CEO Vanessa Hudson said she hoped the decision would bring "closure" to those affected.

"We recognise the emotional and financial impact this has had on these people and their families," Hudson said.

The test cases will now be used as the basis to determine individual compensation payments, and Qantas has sought the assistance of the Transport Workers Union to speed up compensation through a new mediation process.

Qantas is also facing a penalty hearing in the Federal Court, which could see it slugged with a multi-million-dollar fine. *AB*

QF, VA capacity wins

THE International Air Services Commission (IASC) has granted Qantas 300 third country seats a week on flights to Italy for codeshare services with Emirates and British Airways for another five years.

The latest determination gives Qantas permission to operate the capacity for an extended period from 08 Jun 2025, and was first awarded in 2019.

MEANWHILE, Virgin Australia has been given the green light by the IASC to increase capacity between Australia and Samoa by 30 seats a week in each direction.

In its application, VA stated that due to the airline's fleet reconfiguration program, the capacity on the Boeing 737 aircraft used to operate up to five services per week on the Samoa route will increase from 176 seats to 182 seats.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news, including a photo page from **CruiseHQ**.

Silversea opens 160

SILVERSEA has launched general sales on a new collection of 160 ocean voyages departing in 2026, with the sailing collectively calling in 150 destinations across 33 countries.

The newly added voyages will set sail between 15 Mar and 09 Dec 2026, including more than 100 cruises in the Mediterranean, 30 voyages in Alaska, 25 options in northern Europe and the British Isles, and four sailings in Canada and New England.

Silversea's 'Save. Indulge. Explore.' promo is available on most of the voyages for bookings made before 31 Oct.

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Events sector in danger

THE future of Australia's events industry will be adversely impacted unless more steps are taken to address the shortage of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), Meeting and Events Australia (MEA) Director Thomas Staunton has warned.

Speaking with the *AFR*, Staunton said the events sector has managed to maintain its competitiveness with other markets for the time being using carbon offsets, solar power and batteries, but that ultimately SAF is the only path to truly lowering delegates' footprint.

"The carbon emissions connected to getting to [and] from an event are the largest carbon emissions associated with live events," Staunton said.

"When you've got thousands of delegates flying in and when the carbon per capita is so high per person attending, it does make people stop and think," he added.

Australia is viewed by many in the industry as having the potential to become a major SAF manufacturing hub, with Qantas pouring millions of dollars into funding projects in partnership with other blue chip brands.

Outside of launching its own SAF coalition in 2022 (*TD* 11 Nov 2022), Qantas also joined the SAF Financing Alliance in Jul (*TD* 24 Jul) alongside Airbus and Air France-KLM, which will collectively spend US\$200 million on SAF tech projects in the US.

At the recent CAPA conference in Brisbane, Airbus Chief Representative for Australia and New Zealand, Stephen Forshaw, suggested Australia was in the box seat to achieve a major "moon shot" moment in the local development of SAF (*TD* 13 Sep).

The volume of SAF available to airlines accounts for 0.53% of the total fuel need in 2024, despite a tripling of production last year. *AB*

Explore marketing

EXPLORE Worldwide has a new Marketing Manager for Australia and New Zealand, after Emma Fehon was appointed to the role.

The tour operator had previously flagged its intentions to recruit more boots on the ground in Australia after the market showed a significant surge in revenue this year (*TD* 18 Apr).

Fehon brings plenty of industry experience to the role, having held a marketing manager role with airports in Cairns and Mackay between 2022 and 2023, and leading sales and marketing for the Kimberley Experience Group for close to three years.



Five journos selected

FIVE finalists for the Most Outstanding Travel Journalist category have been chosen for the upcoming National Travel Industry Awards (NTIAs).

A competitive pool of submissions were submitted by consumer travel writers from across the country, with Carrie Hutchinson, Jessica Lockhart, Kerry van der Jagt, Michael McHugh and Stephen Scourfield in the running for the big gong.

"We are proud to celebrate the role of travel journalists in this year's NTIAs, and I congratulate our finalists for their exceptional work in promoting the industry," Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) Chief Executive Officer Dean Long observed.

Finalists were rated on the basis of thought-provoking impact, tourism promotion that inspires travel, diligent research, industry advancement, as well as the promotion of ATAS-accredited travel businesses.



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Travel Daily
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AA skiplagging win

AMERICAN Airlines has successfully litigated a website in the United States which showed travellers how to save money on air tickets through skiplagging.

A jury awarded the carrier more than US\$9 million in damages, ruling Skiplagged Inc had breached AA's copyright and generated "ill-gotten" revenues.

Skiplagging allows travellers to save money by booking a flight with a stopover in their intended destination, before skipping the rest of the connecting flights.

The issue was highlighted by the World Travel Agents Associations Alliance in Apr, when the body called on airlines to cease sending regular debt collection memos to travel agents when their clients engage the practice (**TD 24 Apr**).

Airport survival at stake

THE establishment of an aviation industry ombuds scheme proposed by the Aviation White Paper could hurt the recovery of regional and rural airports, the Australian Airports Association (AAA) has warned.

In a submission to the Federal Government's consultation paper on the topic, the AAA recommended that only airports processing more than one million passengers a year be subject to the jurisdiction of the scheme.

The AAA stated that if its suggestion was adopted, the ombudsman would still cover more than 90% of air travellers.

Recent ructions in regional air travel were also called out as reasons to protect regional hubs, specifically the high-profile failures of domestic carriers which were major drivers of passenger traffic in country areas.

"Many smaller regional and rural airports often operate at a loss and are still dealing with the fallout of the Rex Airlines financial collapse," AAA Head of Policy Natalie Heazlewood said.

"Smaller Australian airports should be exempt from the

scheme to help safeguard their current survival, while passengers would still be covered by Australian Consumer Law."

Submissions received through the 2024 Aviation White Paper process made clear that travellers are currently dissatisfied with how Australian airlines and airports have interpreted their obligations relating to complaint handling, and accessing refunds and redeeming credits for flight delays and cancellations.

The AAA has also called for Federal Government agencies such as Airservices Australia to be included in the scheme, as well as the aviation industry ombuds scheme being made independent through a staged rollout. **AB**

Scrafton re-elected

AUSTRALIAN travel executive Denise Scrafton has been elected World President for another 12 months at the 83rd Skal World Congress in Turkiye.

Skal is comprised of tourism leaders from around the world, with the mission to promote the sector and goodwill.



Window Seat

DUNEDIN Airport has struck at the hearts of many Kiwi travellers by introducing a hard three-minute time limit on farewell hugs at drop-off.

The announcement was accompanied by the somewhat harsh advice, "for fonder farewells please use the carpark".

In defending the new policy, Dunedin Airport CEO, Daniel De Bono, became unusually clinical during a radio interview, suggesting airports are "hotbeds of emotion", and that a 20-second hug is enough to release the love hormone oxytocin.



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The Samoa Tourism Authority is requesting proposals from reputable media planning, buying and placement agencies for the period:
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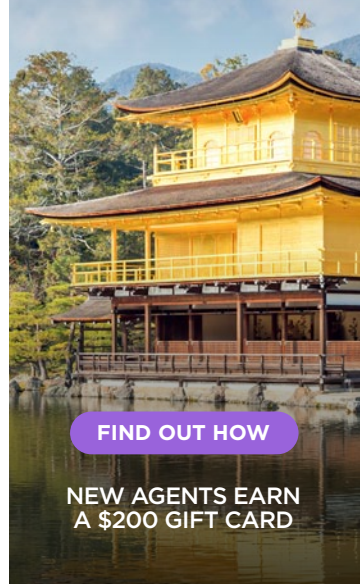


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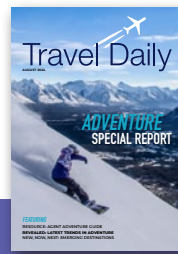
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New Tahitian chief

AIR Tahiti Nui has appointed former secretary general Philippe Marie to lead the airline as CEO.

"[Marie's] deep-rooted knowledge of the islands of Tahiti and his airline industry expertise are invaluable to us as we look to solidify our stronghold as a leading carrier in the competitive Pacific region," Air Tahiti's Vice President of the Americas, Caroline Borawski, said.

Marie (pictured) served in a senior executive position with Air Tahiti Nui for close to three years between 2004 and 2007, and most recently was President of Papeete-based finance company Marara Paiement.



YHA removes travel block

YHA Australia has launched the Travel to Learn Foundation, a new philanthropic initiative designed to remove the financial barriers for children and families wanting to access more curriculum-driven travel opportunities.

Introduced last week to much fanfare in Sydney (pictured), YHA's new program will subsidise the cost of travel for young people who are unable to participate in critical learning experiences due to financial circumstances or geography.

Crucially for the labour-stricken tourism sector, the Travel to Learn Foundation will also help facilitate career pathways in the sector for young people facing barriers to employment.

"By removing barriers that would prevent these young people from accessing meaningful travel experiences, whether it be on excursions or extracurricular learning, we aim



to inspire personal growth, foster education, and build confidence in those who need it most," YHA Australia CEO Paul McGrath said.

In the coming years, the foundation added it will offer scholarships and programs that enable young people to learn new skills and connect with diverse communities.

Opportunities will be sourced by engaging with schools and community groups, and partnering with established experience providers. AB

Bhutan's secrets

TRAVEL agents are invited to attend a webinar hosted by The Department of Tourism Bhutan and Destination Webinars to learn more about the country's ancient traditions, festivals, monasteries and landscapes.

Those who attend the live session on 22 Oct at 1pm AEDT will have a chance of winning a \$100 gift card.

[CLICK HERE](#) to register.

DXB pager ban

PASSENGERS travelling on flights departing from, or transiting through, Dubai International Airport (DXB) will no longer be allowed to carry pagers or walkie-talkies in their checked and cabin baggage, according to the hub's new safety rules.

The decision follows a prohibition on pagers by Emirates two weeks ago in the wake of an Israeli attack on Hezbollah using the devices in Sep.

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CruiseHQ sparkles with VIP partners

ON THU 17 Oct, CruiseHQ proudly hosted an unforgettable VIP partner celebration event at Crown Sydney, bringing together over 60 cruise line suppliers, Flight Centre Travel Group executives, and trade media.

The celebration showcased the dynamic partnerships that have propelled CruiseHQ as the premier B2B marketplace for cruise travel.

Guests enjoyed insights into the newly launched agent booking portal, which enhances booking technology and resources for travel advisors.

With customisable white-label websites and a focus on international sailings, CruiseHQ is excited about the growing opportunities in cruise travel.

This celebratory event marked a vibrant new chapter in collaboration and innovation within the cruise industry.

JEN Pagett, Uniworld; **Scott** Graham, Regent Seven Seas Cruises; **Rachel** Kingswell, Travel Associates; and **Jason** Worth, Oceania Cruises.



JAMES Kavanagh, CEO Flight Centre Travel Group; **Astrid** Richardson, Envoyage; **Nicole** Costantin, Explora Journeys; and **Anna** Burgdorf, Luxury Travel Collection.



CAITLYN Paris and **Astrid** Maier, CruiseHQ; **Brigita** Devries, MSC Cruises; **Victoria** Chigwidden, Azamara; **Carina** Mullen, CruiseHQ; **Tenille** Hunt, Quark Expeditions; and **Cassandra** Kerr, Silversea.



CROWN Sydney's hot new pool deck.



DJ CLAIRE Elliott.

MATT Gleaves & **Alex** Oakly, Cunard; **Michael** Betteridge, Travel The World; and **Katrina**, McAlpine Cunard.



FLIGHT Centre Travel Group.



DAVE Humphreys and **Roberta** Chaplin, Royal Caribbean; and **Brad** Kennedy and **Andrea** Burgess, Cruiseabout.



MENU by a'Mare at Crown Sydney.



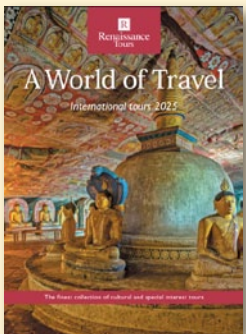
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Viva Holidays - Greece 2025

Viva Holidays has released its 2025 Greece brochure, with plenty of inspiration to plan for an amazing holiday to the mainland and islands. From the historic city of Athens to hopping across the islands on a Greek odyssey, this brochure is packed full of accommodation, touring and transport options to make the most of this idyllic country. New to the 2025 brochure is an expanded range of luxury hotels in key locations, for those travellers who truly want to spoil themselves. Choose from popular itineraries like the six-night 'Classical Greece & Meteora' tour and the 10-night 'Classical Greece and Cyclades' holiday.



Renaissance Tours - International Tours 2025

Travellers seeking special interest tours should look no further than Renaissance Tours' 2025 collection, which offers the best of opera, music, ballet, art, architecture, gardens and historical sites around the world, led by experts in their field. Creative minds can discover why the French Riviera has been a source of inspiration for countless writers and artists over the centuries by joining the 12-day 'Authors and Artists of the South of France' itinerary, while music lovers can enjoy the best seats in the house for opera and orchestral performances in Salzburg, Baden-Baden and Munich on the 'European Easter Music Festivals' tour.



Fun Over 50 Holidays - 2025 1st Edition

Fun Over 50 Holidays has officially released its first brochure for 2025, showcasing a range of immersive and inclusive tours designed to create lasting memories and inspire meaningful connections. Guests can journey to iconic locations around Australia in gold and diamond coaches, whether it's experiencing the colours of autumn in Victoria's high country, glamping in outback Queensland, or feasting on culinary delights in the Eyre Peninsula. There's also a selection

of international tours, including an exploration of New Zealand's natural wonders and a trip to Japan during cherry blossom season.

A fresh change is in the wind



WINDSTAR Cruises vessel *Wind Surf* is preparing for phase one of renovations in Spain next month, with the five-masted yacht to emerge with a fresh look in time for Caribbean cruise itineraries departing 21 Dec.

The multi-million-dollar refurbishment entails a redesign of several public spaces with new layouts, furniture, wall and floor coverings, and lighting.

Amphora, the main restaurant, will be refreshed to feature new seating arrangements that incorporate curved booths to seat between two and eight people, as well as larger dining chairs.

The pool deck and bar area will also be reimagined (render **pictured**), with the space to maximise *Wind Surf's* ocean views and create a more convivial vibe for pool-side lounging.

Phase two of *Wind Surf's* renovation will see her staterooms receive new furniture, soft goods and decor, as well as new interactive TVs.

The same phase will also see updates to Stella Bistro, Veranda,

and the fitness studio.

"Many of our guests return each year to sail on this yacht, and we're thrilled to offer a refreshed atmosphere and updated technology on board to enhance their comfort," the cruise line's Chief Operating Officer Stijn Creupelandt said. *AB*

Julie bops for a cause

SEALINK Whitsundays will participate in the 2025 Dancing CEOs initiative, with Business Development Manager Julie Telford joining Team Whitsundays to support Women's Legal Service Queensland (WLSQ) to raise funds for women and children affected by domestic violence.

"This cause is close to my heart, and I look forward to working alongside my teammates to help women and children in need," Telford said.

Telford founded Red Cat Adventures with her husband Asher, which was acquired by SeaLink Marine & Tourism in Nov last year (*TD* 13 Nov 2023).