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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of the latest news including a photo page from AmaWaterways, our Business Events News feature, plus full pages from:

- Air Mauritius/AviaReps
- Air Tickets & Express Tickets

FCTG names Scott Dunn MD

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has appointed a new leader for its luxury brand Scott Dunn, with Alison Zacher named as the successor to Sonia Davies.

Assuming the role of Global Managing Director for Scott Dunn, Zacher (pictured) was promoted by FCTG internally, moving across from Corporate Traveller, where she held the role of Global Director of Operations and Sustainability.

"We are delighted to welcome Ali Zacher to the Scott Dunn family," said Danielle Galloway, FCTG's Global MD for Luxury and Independent Brands.

"She brings a wealth of experience and a deep passion for travel that aligns perfectly with Scott Dunn's values.

"We are confident that her leadership and vision will drive the next chapter of growth and innovation at Scott Dunn, ensuring we continue to set the standard for exceptional, tailored



travel experiences," she added.

Zacher is known for being a passionate advocate for women in leadership, and was considered instrumental in developing many executives within the FCTG group and driving its fast-track leadership program.

Reflecting on her appointment, Zacher said her vision is to build on Scott Dunn's heritage of exceptional service, while also exploring new ways to elevate its offerings and inspire more people to experience meaning in travel.

Zacher replaces Davies, an exit TD exclusively revealed in Jul (TD 02 Jul), with the new recruit to report directly to Galloway. AB

Escape to Mauritius

AIR Mauritius is offering up to 30% off until 30 Sep, for travel from now until 15 Aug, making now the ideal time to book clients on a holiday to destinations like South Africa and Madagascar.

See page nine to take advantage of the offer.

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Encanto opening up Iberia

EXCLUSIVE

AGENTS putting together in-depth FIT itineraries in Spain and Portugal for their clients now have the expertise of a new boutique wholesaler specialising in the Iberian region.

Encanto Travel is the newest brand to join the Impulse Travel network and is an evolution of the well-known Ibertours, under the tutelage of experienced Iberian expert, Fiona Ford.

The new wholesaler features a collection of seven bespoke multi-day FIT itineraries in Spain and six in Portugal, taking travellers beyond the major cities to smaller villages and lesser-known sites.

For travellers eager to explore popular cities, Encanto also offers mini breaks in Barcelona, Madrid, Bilbao, Grenada, Seville, Lisbon and Porto among its range.

Speaking to **Travel Daily**, Ford said Encanto Travel was trying to show a side to Spain and Portugal



that people might not know.

“Spain is the second-most visited country in the world, but our experience and expertise mean that we can show a different side that people might not expect,” Ford told **TD**.

“[Think] medieval villages and special experiences that really add something special to the trip like chef tours, visits to botanic gardens and olive oil tastings.

“We specialise in designing itineraries from scratch, be they self-drive, with a private driver or even independent by rail...and we also have luxury trains like the Al-Andalus or the El Transcantabrico Gran Lujo where you sleep on board,” Ford added.

To find out more about Encanto Travel, **CLICK HERE**. *ML*

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OFFICIAL PARTNER



Booth takes top job

TOURISM Whitsundays has appointed Tim Booth (pictured) as its new Chief Executive Officer, moving into the role after a stint leading Mudgee Region Tourism for the past two years.

The selection followed a rigorous recruitment process examining 100 candidates from around the globe, with Tourism Whitsundays Chair, Julie Telford, stating Booth’s 17-year track record in tourism leadership and strategic development will steer the Qld tourism body into “a new era of success”.



Big month for Int'l

INTERNATIONAL passenger movements continue to edge closer to 40 million for the year ending Jun 2024, according to the latest BITRE data out today.

Sixty airlines flew scheduled services into Australia, collectively moving 39.2 million passengers.

Capacity for the month climbed 11.6% year-on-year, creating a 1% change on load factors to 82%.

Qantas and Jetstar claimed 28% of the total market for the month, followed by the familiar cohort of Singapore Airlines (9.4%), Emirates (6.5%) and Air NZ (6.3%).

Low-cost carriers claimed 20.3% of the market, up slightly from 19.5% recorded one year earlier.

Savings with SIA

AGENTS can access huge savings on Singapore Airlines’ NDC fares for travel in 2025, when they book in their GDS or via Shop Book Tickets or Express Tickets Portal - see **page 10**.

NCL'S 2026 EUROPE SEASON IS HERE

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Farrell kicks off ACA

THE Australian Cruise Association (ACA) Conference commenced today with an opening address from Federal Tourism Minister, Don Farrell.

The Adelaide event will conclude tomorrow - see today's **Cruise Weekly** for all the details.

Touring Academy in NZ

THE Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) and the New Zealand Outbound Travel Suppliers Association (NZOTSA) have partnered to distribute its Touring Academy to Kiwi travel agents under the NZOTSA banner.

Launched in Australia earlier this year (**TD** 04 Mar), the Touring Academy is an e-learning certification program developed to enhance the knowledge of retail travel agents on the value of land-based touring.

Rolling out the venture across the Tasman with NZOTSA follows a Memorandum of Understanding inked between the two peak industry bodies last year to explore synergies and potential benefits for all members.

CATO Managing Director Brett Jardine said the partnership not



only strengthened the bond between the bodies, but also amplified the opportunities for growth and innovation in the land-supply sector.

Reflecting on the newly inked deal, NZOTSA Chair, Joe O'Sullivan (**pictured**), said championing the Touring Academy locally will support the development of tour operators and travel agents, and ultimately for all travellers from across the region.

More details on CATO on **p5. AB**

A220s come to SYD

QANTASLINK'S new A220-300 aircraft will begin service from Sydney from late Oct, marking the debut of the aircraft in NSW.

According to GDS displays, the A220-300 will begin service on the Sydney to Launceston route from 27 Oct and Sydney to Hobart from 19 Nov.

The aircraft will also serve Melbourne to Launceston flights from 14 Oct and Melbourne to Coffs Harbour from 27 Oct.

QantasLink has taken delivery of three Airbus A220-300s so far, out of its firm order of 29, with the three planes serving flights to Brisbane, Canberra and Hobart from Melbourne.

Catch the new Wave

THE latest edition of CLIA Australasia's sustainability magazine *New Wave* is now available, focusing on coastal communities that benefit from cruise tourism, sustainable tourism, and net-zero emissions by 2050 - **CLICK HERE** to view.



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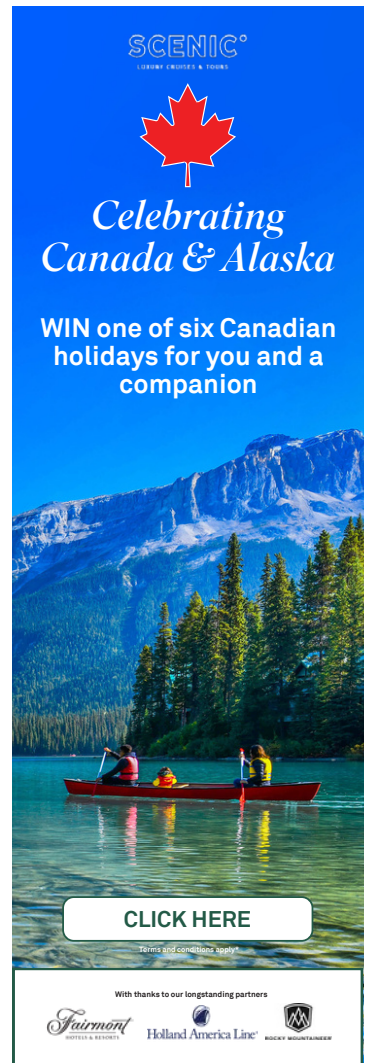
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Agents vent frustration with Turkish Airlines

EXCLUSIVE

A NEW player in the local market has been accused of poor customer service and a spate of involuntary seat reassignments by a growing list of agents in recent weeks across multiple flights.

Turkish Airlines made a splash in the local market when it launched its first flights linking Melbourne and Istanbul (**TD 06 Mar**), however for many Aussie agents, the excitement has already waned in the face of a myriad of customer service issues.

Speaking with *Travel Daily* on condition of anonymity, several travel advisors relayed a similar story of having clients' travel plans ruined by last-minute seat reassignments, and then exacerbated by apathetic responses from the carrier.

When contacted for an explanation as to why so many seat allocations were changing so close to departure, Melbourne-



based TK General Manager, Ahmet Halid Kutluoglu, said that ongoing renewal work on its seat map display was the likely cause of recent issues.

"Our revision work will be completed in a short time, and the grievance of our pax in this direction will be concluded," Kutluoglu said.

Multiple agents have also claimed the agent help desk in Sydney is regularly unresponsive, and while not responding directly to accusations of poor trade relations, TK insisted to **TD** that travel agents remain key to its success in the local market.

"Our most important business partners are undoubtedly the agencies we work with and our most sensitive point is...customer

satisfaction," Kutluoglu said.

"At TK, we are a brand that is committed to continuous development in this context."

One agent revealed that to contact TK, she had to pretend to be her client and call its offshore call centre, and even when she reached a human customer agent, they allegedly laughed and declined to assist with the seat allocation issue.

Another criticism levelled at the airline was from an agent who made a wheelchair request during a booking, only for it not to be provided when the client arrived for the flight.

When asked about this, TK's local GM denied there is an ongoing issue with accessibility failures, conceding there have been "one or two isolated incidents", but that the airline has since established a common working order with a local handler to solve the problem. **AB**

Burnes buys more

HELLOWORLD Travel Group CEO Andrew Burnes has paid \$98,500 for an on-market purchase of 50,000 shares in the retail travel group.

The purchase was disclosed in a Change of Director's notice document lodged with the Australian Securities Exchange.

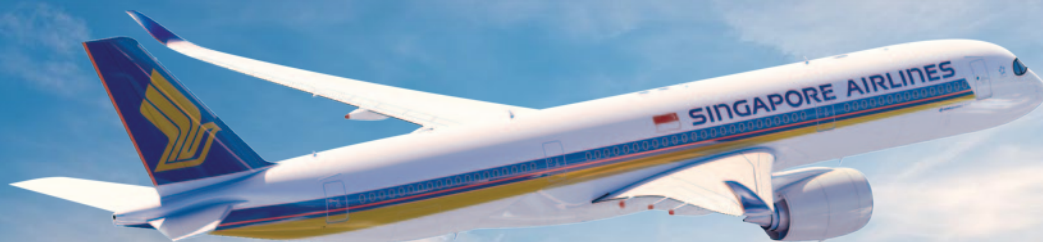
Burnes now holds just over 10.5 million shares in the organisation directly, with a further 18.3 million under his private trust.

ADL scans further

ADELAIDE Airport will install body and 3D x-ray bag scanners across all security screening lanes as part of a significant upgrade of its central security screening point, starting this weekend.

Once completed, customers will no longer need to remove laptops, tablets or aerosols from their carry-on luggage at the security checkpoint, with the full rollout to be finished by late '25.

SOMETHING IS COMING, 
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Window Seat

BRITISH Airways recently went to great lengths to return a beloved teddy bear to a young passenger, who accidentally left his cherished companion behind in the airline's lounge at London Heathrow Airport before his flight home to Dubai.

The British carrier spoiled the bear with VIP treatment on the journey to reunite him with his owner, nine-year-old Alex - who's had the teddy since he was a baby - after his father enlisted the help of BA crew member, Ed.

The British carrier shared snaps of the beloved bear with its anxious owner, as the stuffed toy waited for its flight to Dubai a couple of days later, appearing to enjoy a coffee and views of the aircraft.

Upon landing, cabin crew took the bear to reunite with Alex and the rest of the family in arrivals.

"My son was so relieved - words could not express how grateful we are to Ed for his kind act and dedication to getting the teddy back to us," said Stuart, Alex's parent.

"I have been flying with BA for many years - this is the best experience I have had by far and I am overwhelmed by Ed's efforts."

A chance for collaboration



THE Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) recently hosted an exclusive networking event in Brisbane, mingling with a group of Queensland-based members at the QA Hotel in Fortitude Valley.

Led by CATO Managing Director Brett Jardine and CATO Board Member, G Adventures' Sean Martin, the gathering was an opportunity for members to share insights, discuss industry trends, and explore opportunities for collaboration.

"In the current market, collaboration is key to staying ahead," Jardine said.

"Our members are at the forefront of shaping the future of travel, and events like these are critical for sharing ideas and building stronger partnerships."

Attendees were served gourmet hors d'oeuvres and fine wines as they formed new connections and nurtured existing relationships.

This event formed part of CATO's commitment to supporting its members with initiatives that promote industry growth and success. *JM*

Pictured: Sharon Thrupp, Ekno Tours; Vanessa Wallace, V-Travel Network; and Jardine.

MH slashes capacity

MALAYSIA Airlines will cut capacity on int'l flights by 10% following safety issues highlighted by the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (**TD** 30 Aug).

Beginning this week and running until the end of 2024, Malaysia Airlines will slash the total number of flights from KUL to Sydney from 115 to 77.

Similarly, Melbourne will only see 78 flights compared to the previously scheduled 112.

The damage is slightly less in Adelaide, with the total number of flights dropping from 43 to 40, while Perth will fall from 96 to 91.

"Our sales support team and account managers are supporting agents to re-accommodate their clients to alternative flights," a statement from the airline said.

Beyond Exhibitors

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has unveiled some of the exhibitors for its upcoming Beyond Borders Travel Summit on 25 Oct in Sydney.

Major tourism marketing bodies locked in for the event include: Tourism Australia; Tourism Ireland; the Singapore Tourism Board; the Tourism Authority of Thailand; Destination Canada; Tourism Solomons; Travel South USA; the Australian Passport Office; and Smartraveller.

Some of the esteemed speakers to present include FCTG's Graham 'Skroo' Turner, CEO Flight Centre, NCL's Ben Angell, and Globus's Gai Tyrrell - info **HERE**.

GX names speakers

G ADVENTURES and Planeterra have revealed the speakers and music act for its second GX World Community Tourism Summit, which takes place in Jaipur, India on 27 Sep.

Tony Wheeler, co-founder of Lonely Planet, and Elizabeth Becker, author of *Overbooked: The Exploding Business of Travel and Tourism*, are among the speaker line-up.

Additionally, dance music act C+C Music Factory has been confirmed to perform at the summit's pink-themed party.

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- page 5

AmaWaterways famils make waves

AMAWATERWAYS recently hosted 24 advisors and their travel partners on two river cruises, braving the hot European summer, as part of the company's first famil trip in the local market.

The first group, hosted by Kim Vaughan, travelled between Budapest and Giurgiu on the Danube, enjoying the 'Gems of Southeast Europe' itinerary.

Meanwhile, Kylie Chapman escorted her group from Budapest to Vilshofen on the company's flagship *AmaMagna*.

Many advisors shared their favourite parts of the experience including the size of the ship, quality of dining, and breadth of amenities from balconies and pools to the spa, bikes and pickleball court.

They also loved the wide variety of shore excursions, which are all included for every guest.



HELLOWORLD agents and their travel partners with Captain Radoslav Metodiev on *AmaBella*.



VIRTUOSO advisors pose with Captain Nils and Cruise Manager Abel during an Oktoberfest celebration.



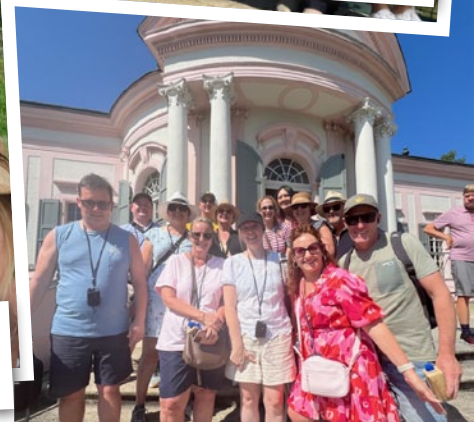
JOCELEN Griffiths, Elisa Gesualdi, Amy White, Jennifer Supple and Soraya Holbrook on a Croatian wine tour of the Principovac Wine Estate in the town of Ilok.



JULIE Ashworth and Rosa Zanin enjoying the scenery in Sighisoara, Romania.



LIORA and Mark Sarif (back), Craig Wheatley, Natalie Hadikin, Mark and Lisa Maddox.



GLENN Haslem, Darcy Grealy, Angelene Haslem, Liora Sarif, Mark Sarif, Leanne Fink, Kylie Chapman, Nada Kovac, Shayla, Lisa Maddox, Mark Maddox, Natalie Hadikin and Craig Wheatley visiting Melk Abbey.



SUNSET drinks on *AmaMagna* - Mark and Lisa Maddox; Nicole Grant and Leanne Fink; and (back) Stacey Lonergan and Bec Maquire.



JULIE Ashworth, Ben & Kate Richardson, Catherine Donahy & Alexia Wang during Sip & Sail cocktail hour onboard *AmaBella*.



LAUREN Clarke, Katie Ellis, Kate & Ben Richardson in Ilok, Croatia.



MARK Sarif, Leanne Fink, Kylie Chapman, Nicole Grant, Bec Maquire, Liora Sarif, Stacey Lonergan and Darcy Grealy.



Scientific Cairns

THE Cairns Convention Centre (CCC) is expecting to attract over 21,000 medical and scientific delegates from around the world between now and Jun 2025.

The pipeline of science-focused events includes the Australasian Genomic Technologies Association Annual Conference in Oct, followed by the Australian Archaeological Association Annual Conference in Dec.

The momentum is set to continue into 2025, with the Congress of the Asia Pacific Orthopaedic Association in Apr, & the Aus & NZ College of Anaesthetists Annual Scientific Meeting in May.

“These conferences not only stimulate the Cairns economy but also provide a platform for collaboration & learning,” said CCC GM Janet Hamilton.

AIME SAYS KNOWLEDGE MATTERS

THE Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME) has announced details of its Knowledge Program for 2025, which will be shaped around the theme, ‘We Matter’.

The highly anticipated schedule will highlight and celebrate the global business events industry as an important driver of broader economic growth.

AIME has also introduced a Knowledge Program Advisory Committee made up of eight leaders from the Asia Pacific meetings and events industry, tasked with guiding the development of the program’s topics and speakers.

The committee is comprised of Head of Events & Connections, Workplace Experience at Atlassian, Paul Boustani; Charter Hall Events Manager, Ashleigh Cooper; MCI Australia Account Director, Maggie Diasinos; and



Events Travel Asia Group Founder and CEO, Max Jantasuwana.

Joining them are Business Events Strategist at Think Event By Think Tank Productions, Ronald Lim; ICMS CEO, Sarah Markey-Hamm; Australian Dental Industry Association Director of Events, Denise Sorrell; and Felicity Zadro, founder and MD of Zadro.

Hosted and curated by BEAM Founder El Kwang (pictured), the Knowledge Program will kick off AIME on 10 Feb, with keynote speakers from AIME’s speaker

bureau partners, along with industry business leaders.

AIME Event Director Silke Calder said that, according to feedback from the business events community, the Knowledge Program has become a key part of the AIME experience.

“We are thrilled to once again collaborate with El Kwang and his talented content curators at BEAM, who have brought together this year’s esteemed content advisory committee of industry leaders,” she stated.

The Knowledge Program is a ticketed event for hosted buyers, hosted media and exhibitors, with visiting buyers able to buy an upgrade to attend the program.

AIME 2025 Knowledge Program speaker expressions of interest are now open, along with applications from buyers from outside of Australia - [CLICK HERE](#) for more information. JM

Pay what you like

THE in-house provider of audio visual services at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, AV1, has brought back its Pay What You Like drive, in support of local First Nations drop-in centre, Redfern Youth Connect (RYC).

Event organisers can choose how much they would like to pay for AV equipment for their events in Jan 2025, and AV1 will donate 20% to RYC - find out more [HERE](#).

The initiative raised more than \$10,000 for the community service in Jan this year.

Sunshine Soiree reaches new altitudes

BUSINESS events organisers recently gathered at new Sunshine Coast venue, Altitude Nine, for the Sunshine Soiree.

Hosted by Visit Sunshine Coast, the tropical-themed luncheon showcased products from 24 of the region’s premier business events suppliers.

Sixty delegates enjoyed food, entertainment, industry panel sessions, and prizes, including a ‘day-cation’ at the luxurious



Makepeace Island, valued at more than \$8,000.

Applications are open to attend the final Sunshine Soiree of the year in Melbourne on 10 Oct - register [HERE](#).

Fine Food is 40

FINE Food Australia, a major trade event for the food industry, wraps up its 40th anniversary today at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre.

The four-day event was packed with 900 exhibitors, ranging from live celebrity chef demos to innovative food tech, bringing together chefs, producers, suppliers and food professionals from around the world.

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APPOINTMENTS

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The Langham, Gold Coast, has boosted its leadership team with three significant appointments. **Arpad Romandy** has taken on the role of General Manager, bringing with him over 30 years of extensive hospitality experience, including his most recent role as General Manager of InterContinental Hayman Island Resort. Also joining the team is **Mark Marshall** as Executive Chef, and **Megan Reid** as Director of Human Resources.

Henry Jones has been announced as the new Global Marketing Leader for **FCM Meetings & Events**, where he will manage the Flight Centre Travel Group (FCTG) brand's marketing and communications strategy. Jones has been with FCTG for eight years, working across multiple brands and several regions. He was most recently Head of Marketing for FCM Travel Asia based in Singapore, where he played a key role in overseeing the expansion of marketing efforts into China.

Esteemed luxury tourism industry professional, **Hannah McGregor**, has been appointed by **Baillie Lodges** to run its Barossa Valley property, The Louise, as General Manager. McGregor has worked at the luxury lodge for two years as its Assistant General Manager, during which time she built a local sales and marketing strategy, established a network of regional advocates, and fostered relationships with the close-knit community in the Barossa Valley.

David Kondo is preparing to step into the role of Executive Manager, Inflight Experience at **Qantas Airways** at the end of this month. Kondo will be responsible for leading the carrier's next generation of product, including the introduction of Project Sunrise and the direct Sydney-London/New York flights. The appointment signals Kondo's departure from his current role as Senior Director, Brand Experience at Austrian Airlines, and will see him return home to Australia after spending a decade working in Europe.

The Luxury Travel Collection (LTC) has welcomed **Nadiya Massingham** as its new LTC Product Designer. With 14 years' experience in the travel industry, Massingham has both a wealth of knowledge and a deep passion for redefining luxury travel experiences. Prior to joining LTC in Sep 2022 as its Global Product Director, Massingham clocked up nearly six years of experience at Travel Associates Australia. Previously she worked at FCTG for almost two decades.

Scott Williams has joined **Hyatt Place Melbourne Essendon Fields** as General Manager, bringing over 25 years of hospitality industry experience. Throughout his career, Williams has successfully led initiatives that have boosted numerous luxury hotel brands across Australia and the Asia Pacific. He boasts a proven ability to develop and mentor teams, as well as manage multiple properties and consistently meet revenue and customer satisfaction goals.

Travel advisors go west



TOURISM Western Australia recently hosted a group of travel agents and partners from the East Coast on a family to Broome and the Dampier Peninsula.

The lucky travellers experienced Cable Beach, a Snubfin dolphin cruise on Roebuck Bay and an Aboriginal Cultural Tour along Town Beach.

Some of the major highlights of the trip were the breathtaking Talbot Bay and Horizontal Falls, followed by an overnight stay at Cygnet Bay Pearl Farm in the Dampier Peninsula.

Here, the group learnt the fascinating history behind the pearling industry and how the pearls are cultivated.

They also witnessed the giant tides of the spectacular Kimberley Coast.

Attendees at the tropical family included Bianca Volcic, Flight Centre Wetherill Park; Vanessa Sokolji, Flight Centre Epping Plaza; Kate Cummins, Frank Ford Travel; Callie Francis, Goldman Travel; Sandra Brasier, Helloworld

Travel Berwick; Tracy Pereira, Helloworld Travel Spring Hill; Brad Sward, Trendell & Turner Travel Associates.

The event was hosted by Christine Poole, Trade Account Manager at Tourism Western Australia/The Walshe Group. *JHM*

EK to Madagascar

EMIRATES made its debut flight to Madagascar yesterday.

The much-anticipated arrival of EK707 at Ivato International Airport in Antananarivo was celebrated with a water canon salute and greeted by VIPs, govt officials and industry guests.

The inaugural flight operated with an almost full passenger load from Mahe, the Seychelles.

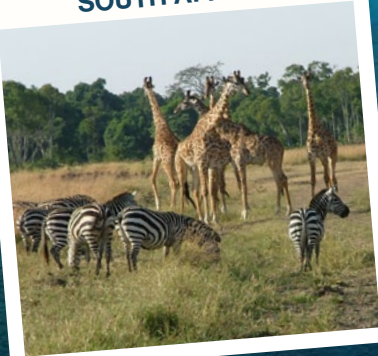
Following the welcome, Emirates Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer Adnan Kazim showcased the Boeing 777-300ER aircraft flying on the route in a three-class configuration to His Excellency President Rajoelina and other guests.

ESCAPE TO Mauritius AND BEYOND

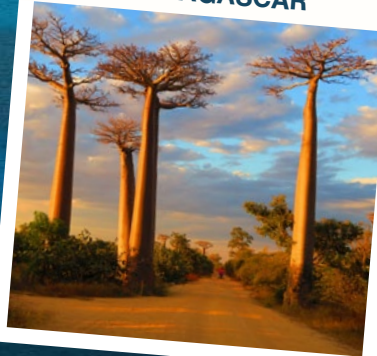
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