

Travel Daily

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ATIA conf speakers

INDUSTRY leaders including Flight Centre MD Graham “Skroo” Turner and Luxury Escapes CEO, Adam Schwab, are confirmed to speak at the upcoming ‘Beyond Borders’ event in Sydney.

The event, which will precede the 2024 NTIA Gala, will be hosted by ATIA’s Richard Taylor, Roslyn Ranse from Travel Agent Achievers and Charlie Trevena from Destination Webinars - more details on **page 10**.

Sydney direct to Turkiye

TURKISH Airlines will begin a one-stop service from Sydney to Istanbul from 05 Dec 2024 ahead of a planned expansion to a direct flight within two years (**TD** breaking news yesterday).

The Istanbul-based carrier will launch a four-times weekly operation to the NSW capital, flying via Kuala Lumpur, using its Airbus A350-900 aircraft which offers 32 seats in business class and 297 in economy.

Sydney will become Turkish Airlines’ second Australian destination following the launch this year of flights to Melbourne via Singapore (**TD** 06 Mar).

Sydney will be the first Australian city to offer non-stop flights to Istanbul once Turkish Airlines takes delivery of its ultra-long range Airbus A350-1000, due in late 2026.

From Istanbul, travellers can then access a network of 340 global cities in 130 countries, among which are 110 destinations in Europe alone.

Sydney Airport CEO Scott Charlton welcomed TK to the city, saying it was the eighth new

airline arriving at Sydney Airport in the past two years.

“This announcement of direct flights marks a significant milestone for travel to Europe, offering passengers seamless access to hundreds of destinations from Turkish Airlines’ Istanbul hub,” Charlton said.

“We are proud that Turkish Airlines [chose] Sydney and NSW for their first non-stop service, which is a strong endorsement of everything our city and state has to offer.

“In the meantime, passengers will get to experience Turkish Airlines’ award-winning service from Sydney to Istanbul via Kuala Lumpur in December 2024.”

Destination NSW has estimated the new service will generate more than \$53 million in incremental visitor expenditure for NSW over its first year. **ML**

Today’s issue of TD

Travel Daily today features nine pages of the latest travel industry news including our **Corporate Update**, plus a full page from **ATIA**.



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Westbury returns

FORMER Australian Federation of Travel Agents (now ATIA) CEO Jayson Westbury has been named the new Chief Executive of the Franchise Council of Australia.

Westbury brings over 30 years in business experience and political connections to the role, including 13 as the head of AFTA.

The Franchise Council has also appointed CouriersPlease boss Richard Thame, formerly with Sabre, as its new Chair.

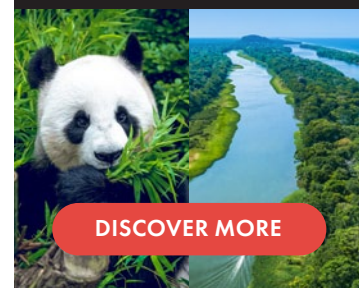


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Rex accused of stealing

REX Airlines is facing the prospect of sinking deeper into the red after American aircraft leasing firm Jet Midwest filed a lawsuit against the company in the NSW Supreme Court.

First reported in *The Australian Financial Review*, Rex's parent company Regional Express Airlines stands accused of stealing four Saab twin-engine turboprops at Kingman Airport, based in an aircraft storage facility in Arizona.

The allegations contend the collapsed Rex stripped the four aircraft for various parts before selling the rest, without having paid for them in full.

Court papers state Jet Midwest agreed to sell the Saab twin-engine turboprops in 2019 for US\$2 million, with Regional Express handing over a US\$200,000 deposit, however the US company argues the final payment was never received.

EY, the administrator for Rex,



was contacted for comment, however it confirmed Rex had no plans to comment on the allegations at this stage.

Travel Daily understands that such legal cases, if proven, may contribute to deeper understandings of how Rex was run prior to the collapse.

Jet Midwest is seeking damages of US\$7.2 million plus court costs, and if Rex fails to successfully fight the legal case, will add unwelcome debt to a company already laden with roughly \$500 million of outstanding debts to creditors (*TD* 12 Aug).

While there is no date set, EY is likely to reveal an update about Rex's position in the coming months, where the administrator may reveal potential suitors. *AB*

Travel Daily
ON LOCATION

BRISBANE

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of CAPA - Centre for Aviation, which is hosting its Airline Leader Summit Australia Pacific.

DAY two of the summit will see outgoing Virgin Australia chief Jayne Hrdlicka take to the stage to discuss the carrier's future vision for growth, and how VA has managed to plot a course through major headwinds.

In other key sessions, the Tourism and Transport Forum's Chief Executive Officer Margy Osmond will join other panellists to chat about how the aviation sector can benefit from forming strategic partnerships.

These include tie-ups with government and private entities across areas like sustainability.

Travel Daily
ON LOCATION

DONGTOU

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Viking Cruises, operating its inaugural China Discovery voyage aboard the *Viking Yi Dun*.

EXPLORING China's south-eastern coastline today brings us to Dongtou, a site rich in history and tradition where guests will experience local temples, culture and cuisine on a range of included and optional shore excursions.

As well as panoramic tours taking in the historic Wanghai tower overlooking the bay, other options include hiking, shell carving and a sea mud pottery class, before continuing south over the weekend with calls at Pingtan and then Xiamen, before a day at sea.

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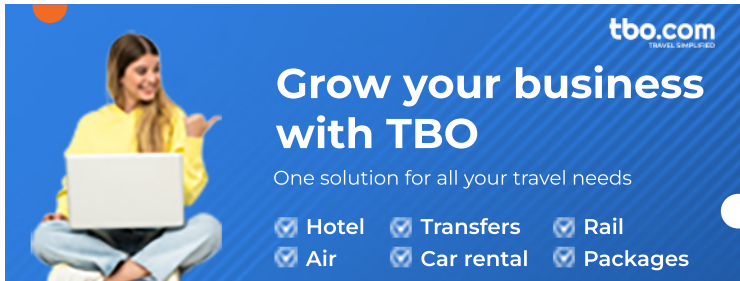
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Canada is calling

SUNSHINE Coast-based agency Global Journeys has expanded its operations to Canada, opening a new office in Toronto.

The company has described the move as a “significant milestone,” with CTO Michael Van Den Hout relocating to support the move.

VA fleet changes

VIRGIN Australia is converting 12 of its Boeing 737 MAX-10 orders into smaller MAX-8s, the airline has confirmed to **TD**.

These aircraft will be delivered from the 2H2025, according to Chief Strategy & Transformation Officer Alistair Hartley.

“This decision will safeguard our schedule, allow us to continue to explore opportunities for growth across our domestic and short-haul international network, and ensure we can continue to provide our guests with industry-leading reliability,” he said.

This move will bring Virgin’s total MAX-8 fleet to 26, while the airline retains firm orders and optional purchase rights for a number of MAX-10s in the future.

Virgin said the MAX-8 continues to perform very well, offering more fuel efficiency; it is also 40% quieter than the 737-800NG.

QF awards rights

QANTAS Chairman-elect John Mullen has been granted 12,859 rights under its Non-Executive Director (NED) Equity Plan, worth \$86,619 as a cash equivalent.

Under the plan’s rules, these rights will convert to shares in the airline after it releases its half-year results in early 2025 once a blackout period expires.

Fellow Directors Belinda Hutchinson (+4,871), Todd Sampson (+1,662) and Heather Smith (+8,629) have also received rights, in addition to shares each already hold in the company.

New MEL runway ticked

MELBOURNE Airport says the Federal Government’s approval for construction of a third runway will allow it to offer simultaneous take-offs and landings.

Federal Infrastructure and Transport Minister, Catherine King, today rubber-stamped Melbourne Airport’s plan, which will see a 3,000-metre parallel runway built 1.3km to the west of the existing north-south strip.

The approval however came with several noise restrictions including a legally-enforceable commitment to extending the east-west runway to share the noise loads.

A noise amelioration program will also be implemented on local communities most affected, while MEL will also record baseline data in the lead-up to the runway opening and for the first 20 years of its operating life.

Melbourne Airport CEO Lorie Argus said when the new runway



opens in 2031, the system will significantly increase capacity, reduce delays and give existing and new airlines room to grow.

“The new north-south runway will ensure Victoria’s primary international gateway has adequate capacity to serve the state’s needs for future generations,” Argus said.

“The new runway will require new flight paths, and as part of this project we will be facilitating noise attenuation for dwellings in the most impacted areas.

The new runway is expected to add \$6 billion to the Victorian economy every year. *ML*

Solis Travel into LTC

GOLD Coast-based Solis Travel has become the latest member of the Luxury Travel Collection, with the group’s membership now swelling to 15 luxury agencies.

Founder Chelsea Muscroft said she was proud to join LTC.

This membership represents a significant milestone for Solis Travel as we continue to push the boundaries of what luxury travel can be,” Muscroft said.

LTC General Manager of Sales and Operations, Nikki Glading, said she was excited to see the experiences Solis will procure.

Disney agent deals

DISNEY Cruise Line is extending exclusive travel advisor rates for a number of its sailings in 2024.

The line’s four-night sailing from Brisbane on 28 Oct is available for US\$800 USD for two; the seven-night sailing from Melbourne on 03 Nov is up for US\$560 for two; the five-night sailing from Auckland on 08 Dec can be had for US\$1,350 for two; and the three-night sailing from Sydney on 21 Dec for US\$840 for two.



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PTMs set to work smarter

TRAVELMANAGERS is gearing up its business to ensure its personal travel managers are "working smarter" - the theme for the company's annual conference taking place this week (*TD* yesterday).

Executive General Manager Michael Gazal, speaking to *Travel Daily* on the sidelines of the conference yesterday, explained how the business practices of TravelManagers' PTMs has changed since the pandemic.

"Advisors that survived the pandemic became a lot more focused on, 'What don't I want in my business anymore? What fees do I want to be charging to value on myself? What market do I want to chase?'"

"I think [PTMs] have become a lot more selective, 'these are the clients I know I want to deal with, I want to attract a good quality client into my business.'"

TravelManagers' Business Partnership Managers are helping PTMs in identifying their niche to base their business on, House of Travel Chief Executive Officer Joe Araullo added.

"BPMs, they're the ones actually helping PTMs find their niches," he told *TD*.

"We've always said, sell everything, but just find a niche and build a business around your niche," he added.

TravelManagers' new Flowjo tech, which *TD* detailed earlier this week, will be key to helping PTMs work smarter, the two

emphasised, with Gazal saying it will be a "game-changer".

The company is aiming for a 12-month roll-out for Flowjo, with up to 50% of TravelManagers' network hoped to have adopted the tech by this time next year.

"They're going to have a better work-life balance, and they can choose to either work more, make more, or they can choose to have more time out and feel less stressed," Gazal enthused.

Other goals for this year to help PTMs work smarter include an emphasis on education, particularly the CATO Touring Academy (*TD* 04 Mar).

Gazal said TravelManagers had witnessed a notably positive outcome in its PTMs who have become CLIA Masters.

"We do want to get as many people [on the Touring Academy] that have gone through CLIA, because we've seen the results of our cruise-educated guys that have gone all the way to Masters, and what that's meant in terms of their return on their business," Gazal enthused.

TravelManagers' working smarter approach also extends to its wider supplier partner family, as the company attempts to streamline its events.

"We're trying to make our gatherings a combination of work content, some learning, but we're trying to combine it with as much social, because the more PTMs collaborate, the greater the relationship will be." *MS*

MCEC affirms safety

VIOLENT protests in Melbourne yesterday by anti-war campaigners has prompted a rebuke from the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

In response to the Land Forces weapons and military event currently taking place at MCEC, protestors clashed violently with police in the city yesterday, leaving dozens injured.

A statement provided to *Travel Daily* said MCEC was committed to ensuring a safe environment for all guests attending events.

"The safety of our employees and attendees is always our number one priority.

"MCEC is working closely with event organisers, the Victorian Government and Victoria Police to deliver a safe Land Forces event," MCEC added.

Explora milestones

EXPLORA Journeys marked a triple celebration at Fincantieri's Sestri Ponente shipyard as the luxury brand took delivery of its second ship, *Explora II*.

The second ship in the fleet is now set for its maiden voyage on 16 Sep around the Mediterranean.

A keel-laying ceremony was also held for *Explora III*, where godmothers Verena Koetzle and Martina Giardina placed commemorative coins inside to bless the ship, launching in 2026.

The festivities concluded with the steel cutting for *Explora IV*, marking the start of construction for the ship expected in 2027.

Travel Daily
ON LOCATION

CAIRNS

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of TravelManagers, which is hosting its annual conference in Cairns.

TODAY is day two of this year's TravelManagers conference, themed 'Working Smarter'. The second day will see TravelManagers' PTMs hear from more suppliers - and each other - as many brave advisors take the stage to tell their own stories from the past few years. However the highlight will undoubtedly be this afternoon's trip to Green Island, located in the middle of the Coral Sea, in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park World Heritage Area. Attendees will enjoy an afternoon of snorkelling and relaxing on one of the gems of Far North Queensland.

Reflections in tents

THREE Reflections Holidays coastal parks in Bonny Hills, Lennox Heads and Seal Rocks have introduced new glamping safari tents, featuring outdoor baths and barbecues for a premium holiday experience.

This \$2 million investment, supported by a New South Wales government loan, is intended to enhance regional tourism.

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We can be a "SAF superpower"



AUSTRALIA is in the box seat to achieve a major "moon shot" moment in the local development of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF)," Airbus Chief Representative Stephen Forshaw declared on stage at CAPA's annual leadership summit yesterday.

"If Australia wants to play a role here as a global energy transition superpower, the country must sign up with the same commitment that America signed up with to put a man on the moon," Forshaw added.

"The question is 'do we want to do this or not?', because if we don't, by 2040 the aviation sector will be the second-largest contributor to Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

"If we're prepared to do this, we can be a SAF superpower."

Echoing Forshaw's sentiments was Qantas Executive Manager, Climate Change, Fiona Messent, who argued that time to develop SAF locally is not on the aviation industry's side, and more is needed to accelerate the industry's production.

"I think the power of partnerships is where we have to

think differently," she said.

"We have to get the economics right, otherwise there won't be an industry.

"Government has such a critical role to play here, and while I think they've taken some great steps, like [the creation of the] Jet Zero Council, which has got us all around the table...we now have to get the right policies in place because the supply side and demand side [have to be] together," Messent added.

The discussion mentioned several ways in which local SAF production could be expedited, these included similar mandates implemented in Europe to create a regulatory driver of manufacturing, more government subsidies to incentivise greater private investment, as well as the fast-tracking of state & federal govt approvals for SAF projects.

Recent data from the International Air Transport Association shows that while global SAF production by the end of this year will triple the volume produced in 2023, the amount available to airlines accounts for a miniscule 0.53% of the total fuel need in 2024. *AB*

The Chat

with Jenny

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A conversation with
Kylie Kay

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DOT tests loyalty review

AMERICA'S Department of Transportation (DOT) has launched an inquiry into potential unfair, deceptive and anticompetitive practices of four airline loyalty programs.

Letters have been sent to American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines, and United Airlines ordering detailed reports of their loyalty programs and the policies that govern them.

The government probe aims to look at how consumers are impacted by points devaluation, hidden or dynamic redemption pricing, fees and reduced availability of reward seats.

Under particular scrutiny will be terms and conditions attached to reward redemptions and the restrictions, if any, that limit flexibility or the duration of rewards or their cash value.

The DOT said many airlines reserve the right to change the terms and therefore, the value of rewards at their discretion.

"Points systems like frequent flyer miles and credit card rewards have become such a meaningful part of our economy that many view their rewards points balances as part of their savings," said US Transportation Secretary, Pete Buttigieg.

"But unlike a traditional savings account, these rewards are controlled by a company that can unilaterally change their value.

"Our goal is to ensure consumers are getting the value that was promised to them, which means validating that these programs are transparent and fair."

United Airlines CEO Scott Kirby has pushed back against the government inquiry, saying that legislative "meddling" is a threat to loyalty programs existing at all.

HX Foundation

HURTIGRUTEN Expedition (HX) has launched a dedicated charity arm to support local communities and environmental initiatives in regions where the line operates.

Building upon the success of the Hurtigruten Foundation, HX Foundation is focused solely on the areas where HX's expedition ships sail, including the Arctic and Alaska, the UK, Galapagos Islands, and Antarctica.

HX is encouraging communities, charities and organisations across its destinations to apply for its first independent grant before 01 Nov.

Speaking at the 2024 Global Aerospace Summit in Washington DC, Kirby said customers love its MileagePlus program, with three million members redeeming miles for seats in the past three months.

The DOT says it is aiming to take action against airlines found to be engaging in unfair or deceptive conduct or participating in anticompetitive practices.

"Our goal is to ensure consumers are getting the value that was promised to them, which means validating that these programs are transparent and fair," Secretary Buttigieg said. *ML*

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Competitors will emerge

QANTAS Head of International Cam Wallace (**pictured**) says two or three domestic competitors will launch to the market in the not-too-distant future, despite the recent high-profile collapses of both Bonza and Rex.

Speaking at the CAPA Airline Leadership Summit in Brisbane yesterday, Wallace said if history was any guide, new rivals will emerge because aviation is a “very seductive industry” and businesses are always looking for new market opportunities.

“I have no doubt that new competitors will emerge, but the constraints and challenges are always going to be there, like geography and the cost challenges associated with a relatively small population base,” Wallace said

Despite criticism from some politicians and competitors about Qantas allegedly embracing anticompetitive practices, Wallace welcomed the prospect of new players in the market.

“Frankly, for us, having more competition is a good thing,” Wallace claimed.

“It keeps us on our toes, it



means we have to provide better service for our customers day in and day out, and we want that competitive intensity.”

“It’s good for Qantas to have strong competitors, Virgin is based here in Brisbane and is a very strong competitor, and we also have 56 international competitors, and all of that makes us better because we are not after a free lunch here.” **AB**

Taxis say no to Uber

THE NSW Taxi Council is opposing Uber’s move to trial PIN technology from Sydney International, and is calling on the Government of NSW to overturn its decision to allow it.

The new feature, launching later this month, will see SYD introduce a dedicated kerbside Uber pick-up zone closer to the international terminal exit.

The move is hoped to reduce wait times, relieve congestion, and improve pedestrian safety ahead of the school holidays.

However, the Taxi Council believes the Government’s decision to exempt Uber from existing regulations to allow the trial is wrong, and jeopardises passenger safety.

Mornington collab

MORNINGTON Peninsula Regional Tourism (MPRT) has partnered with the local tourism associations of Hinterland and Western Port to collaborate on a series of new initiatives.

The organisations will unite under the Mornington Peninsula tourism brand to more effectively promote and advocate for thousands of local tourism businesses across the greater Peninsula, from Frankston to Portsea, through the Hinterland and across to Western Port.

“Together, we will enhance the appeal of our region, ensuring that both well-known and lesser-known areas benefit from increased exposure and opportunities,” said Angela Cleland, CEO of MPRT.



Window Seat

SHANGRI-LA Sydney is calling all candy lovers in preparation for the sugar-laden CandyFest High Tea buffet.

The hotel’s Grand Ballroom will be the epicentre, serving a feast of treats, confectionery creations and savouries.

Some of the highlights taking over the hotel from 28 Sep to 13 Oct will include a Giant Rainbow Swirl Lollypop Cheesecake, Fluffy Fairy Floss Fraise Gateau, a Chewy Goopy Marshmallow Brownie and a Jelly Bean Illusion Cupcake.



Tourism NT channels Priscilla



TOURISM NT last night wrapped up its annual NT Muster roadshow, with five events taking place over three cities for travel advisors and inbound specialists.

Drag was the theme for the events, with *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert* on full show to mark 30 years since the iconic Australian film hit screens.

Around 340 agents in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney registered for the events, which saw nearly 30 suppliers grouped into four collections based on

region and experience.

Tourism NT Executive Marketing Director, Tony Quarmby, told **TD** that without the crowds of Europe, Hawaii and the US mainland, Darwin and the Northern Territory are growing in appeal again, especially among value-chasing domestic markets.

Pictured above are drag queens ‘Stone Motherless’ and ‘Marzi Panne’ with the Tourism NT team of Mel Mutch, Tony Quarmby, Monika Tonkin, Dylan Dudley and Miriam Schreiner.

Golden Eagle 24/25

GOLDEN Eagle Luxury Trains has expanded its European Festive Collection for 2024 and 2025, with space left for both seasons.

Guests can choose from two itineraries across Central Europe visiting cities like Vienna and Prague, with departures from Budapest or Munich.

Off-train excursions feature sights and cultural highlights like Schonbrunn Palace, Christmas markets, a private classical concert, and a spectacular New Year gala celebration in Vienna.

There are six-, eight- and nine-day packages, fully inclusive of all meals and drinks, premium hotel stays, cabin selection onboard the Danube Express, all off train excursions, and portage.

“We are seeing more Australian guests choose to travel by luxury train for special milestone celebrations including birthdays, anniversaries and family get-togethers,” said Australian Business Development Manager, Megan Bardsley.

TravelManagers kicks off in Cairns

TRAVELMANAGERS kicked off its annual conference at Cairns Convention Centre yesterday, themed 'Working smarter'.

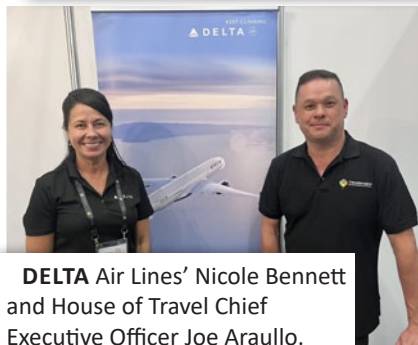
Highlights of day one included the new trade show, a keynote from motivational speaker Chelsea Pottenger, stories shared by PTMs, and a special performance from Australian singer-songwriter Christine Anu.

The day was capped off with drinks at Hemingway's Brewery Cairns Wharf, sponsored by Cover-More.

Head to **page four** for more from the 2024 TravelManagers conference.



THE World's Leading Cruise Lines team with PTMs.



DELTA Air Lines' Nicole Bennett and House of Travel Chief Executive Officer Joe Araulo.



ABERCROMBIE & Kent's Jacqui Tufala and Alexa Papoulis with PTMs Kim Mason and Penny Toon.



ONE of the most popular booths at the trade show was Regent Seven Seas Cruises', helmed by Elsa McLean - as evidenced by this flock of PTMs in her parlour.



CHRISTINE Anu belts out her iconic tune, *My Island Home*.



PTMS Rachel Portelli, Stacey Lekias, and Tanya Nielsen pay a visit to the APT booth.



EVOLUTION Travel Collective - representing Explore and Great Journeys New Zealand.



RAILBOOKERS' Craig Owens and Parsa Behbahani.



THE Globus family of brands team: Gia Acitelli, Melinda Wouda, and NTIA finalist Anji Tierney.



THE Intrepid team (Megan Lowe, Simon Small, Caitie Taylor) with PTM Danielle Goncalves



MSC Cruises' Bronwyn Knight and Air Canada's Janis McDonald.

CORPORATE UPDATE

Business booms in Brissy

BRISBANE is becoming a popular international travel hub among corporate travellers, new data from FCM Travel shows.

International outbound bookings from the Sunshine Capital were up 38%, and inbound bookings rose more than 50% in the first half of 2024, versus the first half of 2023.

The growth comes alongside a significant decrease in airfare prices from Brisbane, with international economy tickets dropping by 13%, and business class fares falling by 5% in the same period (H1 2024 compared to H1 2023).

“Brisbane’s international airline seat capacity is currently at 90% of what it was before the pandemic, which has it slightly lagging behind the Australian average of 96%,” stated FCM Travel General Manager ANZ Renos Rologas.

“I have no doubt that this news today will encourage both our international and domestic carriers to add more flights and more new routes in and out of Brisbane, which will of course drive more choice and better fares for travellers.”

He pointed out that San Francisco, Dubai, Paris, Rome and Auckland are some of the destinations which are seeing the biggest drops in fare prices, with savings of up to 26% on economy tickets on those routes.

“Flights to Port Moresby have been getting more expensive

for travellers, and that’s coming down to the sheer amount of demand we’re seeing on that route, which is one of the most popular across corporate travellers,” Rologas added.

Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom were the top international destinations for FCM Travel customers departing from Brisbane in the first half of 2024.

“Brisbane’s economy has shown resilience in recent years, rebounding strongly relative to other cities from the global pandemic, and faring more positively amidst economic challenges,” the GM explained.


“These trends not only reflect the resilience and strength of the travel sector but also underscore the growing confidence of businesses in international markets,” Rologas concluded.

According to Oxford Economics, Brisbane’s economy has outperformed most other APAC cities over recent years, and this trend is expected to continue with economic growth of around 24% forecast from 2024 to 2032.

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More will scrap targets

AN INCREASING number of airlines and travel companies are likely to concede they are unable to meet their stated emissions targets, Air New Zealand’s Chief Customer and Sales Officer, Leanne Geraghty, has predicted.

Speaking at a CAPA conference yesterday, the Air NZ executive said while net zero 2050 ambitions are still achievable, earlier goals in aviation are being hampered by high costs and little access to SAF, as well as supply chain delays regarding the introduction of lower emission aircraft to fleets.

The Kiwi carrier made headlines around the world in Jul when it became the first major carrier to scrap its 2030 carbon reduction targets, at the time blaming factors outside of its control for the move (**TD** 30 Jul).

Responding to the controversial decision yesterday, Geraghty said there is a need for companies to put their hands up and be more transparent about the likelihood of achieving carbon goals.

While Air NZ is obviously disappointed about falling short of 2030 objectives, Geraghty was adamant the airline would successfully source new pathways to hit future emissions targets.

“Our commitment to hitting our targets and taking out emissions is still absolutely there...we know that given the issues we have had with our engines... and the delay to accessing new aircraft have made it particularly difficult for us



to meet those targets,” she said.

Geraghty also spoke about the importance of a new pilot trial of electric aircraft via its Mission Next Gen Aircraft program (**TD** 06 Dec 2023), which will carry out demonstration flights early next year and could open up a range of new route options.

“All going well, people will see a bit more of that aircraft potentially in 2026... as the first step on our journey for next gen aircraft in the domestic fleet.

“So [electric planes] will have major implications and benefits, while also enabling the possibility of opening up new routes and this will be really important and critical as we move forward.” **AB**

Dorsett your way

DORSETT Melbourne has launched a spring package so you can do “Melbourne your way”.

The new offer provides discounted stays for a limited time, when booking through Dorsett’s website between 01 Sep and 31 Oct.

The package is available for stays from now until the end of Feb - for more specials, head to **page nine**



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VisitBritain mission wraps up



NEARLY 150 guests turned out at the Sydney Opera House this week for the opening gala event of VisitBritain's major travel trade mission to Australia, which wraps up today after a busy week.

Among the invited guests were 36 British destinations and supplier representatives and local travel industry heavyweights.

They were joined by VisitBritain's 'British Family' in Australia, the High Commission in Canberra, British Council and staff from the British Consulate Generals in Sydney and Brisbane.

After kicking off the week in Sydney, the delegation travelled to Melbourne before concluding the week in Brisbane.

Headlining the delegation was VisitBritain Chairman, Nick Du Bois, who makes no secret of Australians being a coveted source market and his desire to see more of them visit the UK.

Pictured at the Opera House are Vicki Treadell, British High Commissioner to Australia;

Nick de Bois CBE, VisitBritain; Maria Sykes, VisitBritain; Louise Cantillon, British Consul General in Sydney; and Paul Gauger from VisitBritain. *ML*

AC calls on govt

AIR Canada has urged the Canadian Government to step in to avert disruption for travellers, if the airline's contract negotiations with its pilot union fail (*TD* yesterday).

The carrier said a government direction for binding arbitration will be necessary to avoid a major disruption of air travel that would upset the plans of 110,000 or more travellers a day and delay time-sensitive cargo shipments.

"While we remain committed to reaching a negotiated settlement with ALPA, the federal govt should be prepared to intervene if talks fail before any travel disruption starts," said Michael Rousseau, President and Chief Executive of Air Canada.

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SPECIALS

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Fun Over 50 Holidays has an earlybird deal for its 'Japan Sakura Spring Splendour' tour, which departs 22 Mar 2025. During peak cherry blossom season, guests will embark on a Tokyo sightseeing tour, explore Miyajima Island and the sacred Itsumkushima Shrine, and visit Hiroshima's Peace Memorial. Book before 31 Dec to save \$200 per couple, or \$100 for a solo guest - [CLICK HERE](#).

Save \$800 per couple on **Railbookers** journeys of 15 nights or longer, like 16-day 'Grand Swiss Mountains and Italian Lakes', which takes in the spectacular scenery of Zurich, Interlaken, Zermatt, St Moritz, Milan, Lake Garda, and more. Travellers can also save \$700 per couple on any 10- to 14-night rail holiday, and a \$600 discount on journeys between seven and nine nights. The flash sale applies to tours from now until 2025 - view the deals [HERE](#).

Out of the Ordinary Outback has launched a new four-day adventure package that includes three tours and three nights the company's flagship property, Broken Hill Outback Resort. Located among red dunes 13km east of Broken Hill in far west NSW, the resort offers deluxe, self-contained cabins with expansive decks, king beds and spa baths overlooking the surrounding desert, as well as a historic pub. Available from 01 Oct to 30 Nov 2024 for \$1,650 per couple, the package also includes dinner for two on the first night, and one full day tour and two half-day tours with Overland Adventures. More details [HERE](#).

Snow sport enthusiasts can secure **Perisher's** 2025 Epic Australia four-day pass for \$549 before prices rise on 16 Oct. The pass provides four days' combined lift access on any day of the 2025 season to Perisher, Falls Creek and Hotham next winter. [CLICK HERE](#) to beat the price rise.

It's the perfect time for solo travellers to book their next cruise with **Aurora Expeditions**, which is offering 10 dedicated solo staterooms with no single supplement on every sailing during its 2026 Arctic and Beyond Season. Enjoy itineraries like the 15-day 'Jewels of the Arctic' polar expedition, which explores Svalbard and Greenland. Spots are expected to fill quickly - secure yours by calling 1800 637 688.

Scoot has kicked off a new sale on flights to Greece, Japan, Laos, Hong Kong and Malaysia, plus more. The discounted fares start from \$185, departing from Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. ScootPlus tickets are also on sale for those looking for added comfort, more baggage allowance, or priority booking. The sale ends 17 Sep - see more information [HERE](#).

Norwegian Cruise Line has launched its spring flash sale with a bonus \$500 discount off all sailings combined with savings of up to \$2,500 for bookings until 17 Sep. Travellers can pick from more than 280 voyages visiting 117 ports across Northern Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Greek Isles during the 2025/26 seasons. [CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

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October 25th, 2024 | ICC Sydney
9am-5.30pm