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18 August 2025

7 nights on board *Le Boréal*

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\*All advertised price is in Australian dollars (AUD), per person and subject to change at any time without notice. Special offer is a 10% discount per person valid on a selection of polar expeditions, on new bookings made between 3 January and 14 February 2025 included. Offer is not retroactive, is subject to availability and may be removed at any time. Offer is combinable with PONANT Yacht Club discounts, Join The Club offer, the PONANT Bonus Offer and standard permanent back-to-back offer (COMBO10). Offer not combinable with Flight Credit offers, Free Single Supplement, Shipboard credit or any other offer. To take advantage of this offer, please quote code HOLIDAYS when speaking to a Ponant consultant or your preferred travel agent. Disko Bay & Inuit Villages: advertised discounted fare is based on a 10% discount calculated on a Deluxe Stateroom cabin double occupancy on BO180825 departure; advertised maximum saving based on Prestige Suite Deck 5 category on BO180825 departure. Emblematic Antarctica: advertised discounted fare is based on a 10% discount calculated on a Deluxe Stateroom cabin double occupancy on AU231125 departure; advertised maximum saving based on Prestige Suite Deck 5 category on BO111225 departure. Baffin Bay Secrets: advertised discounted fare is based on a 10% discount calculated on a Deluxe Stateroom cabin double occupancy on LY210825 departure; advertised maximum saving based on Prestige Suite Deck 5 category on BO200725 departure. <sup>†</sup>Advertised saving is calculated on 10% savings on Prestige Suite Deck 5 category onboard *Le Boréal*, based on double occupancy on Baffin Bay Secrets departure on 2 July 2025. <sup>†</sup>Included flights, accommodation and transfers are operated by PONANT's preferred airline and local suppliers and subject to special terms and conditions; included flights are operated in economy class, business class available under certain conditions. All pricing and discounts correct as of 10 December 2024, and may change at anytime. Other terms and conditions may apply. Visit [au.ponant.com](http://au.ponant.com) for more information. Photograph: © Studio PONANT - Mike Louagie.

### Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features five pages of news, plus a front cover page from **Ponant**, and our **Sustainability** page.

### Intrepid shifts gears

**THE** creative agency that boasts clients such as Camplify and Air New Zealand has this week added Intrepid to its list.

Given the green light to head up the operator's PR in Australia and NZ after a competitive pitch, alt/shift/ will continue Intrepid's brand positioning as leading the responsible travel charge.

"Intrepid is proud to be a force for good in travel, and partnering with alt/shift/ will allow us to share our commitment to responsible tourism and connect with audiences in Australia and NZ in meaningful ways," Intrepid Head of PR and Communications, APAC Jo Crisp said.

Intrepid wants to grow its ANZ client base to 250,000 by 2030.

## Virtuoso adds wholesaler

**SMALL** ship wholesaler Micro-Cruising has joined Virtuoso's exclusive network as a regional partner focused on serving Australia and New Zealand agency members.

According to Managing Director Nicola Caygill (**pictured**), the inclusion of her business in Virtuoso will present new sales and marketing opportunities to the network's 1,800 travel advisors in the region.

"Virtuoso's dedication to curating one-of-a-kind travel aligns perfectly with our passion for small ship cruising, where every voyage is a boutique and personalised," Caygill said.

"Luxury is about choice, and with Micro-Cruising, Virtuoso members can select from the largest selection of the world's most unique small ship cruises and charters," she added.

Virtuoso agencies worldwide sell an average of US\$35 billion



annually, making the network the most significant player in terms of volume in luxury travel.

Micro-Cruising offers a portfolio of small ships, all accommodating 100 passengers or fewer.

The business specialises in offering cruise passengers a very high degree of personalisation, as well as access to hidden treasures that larger ships can't access.

More recently, Micro-Cruising has been tapping into the growing demand for 'slow cruises', which go to smaller ports and don't impact destinations. *AB*

### Ponant's big savings

**PONANT** is offering agents' clients front row seats to the poles, with up to \$5,399 per person in savings on polar luxury expeditions - head to the **cover page** for more information.

### McAlpine disembarks

**CUNARD** Commercial Director Katrina McAlpine will depart the company at the end of Apr, after 13 years with the cruise line.

McAlpine's leadership was described as "instrumental" in shaping its success in the Australian market by VP Commercial Matt Gleaves.

"I would like to thank Kat for her incredible leadership throughout her time with Cunard...she has delivered iconic events and campaigns, built outstanding networks and has been instrumental in our success in the region," he said.

Read more about the story in today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

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\*Visit OceaniaCruises.com/terms for full Terms and Conditions.



## Explorer's new home

**AUSSIERS** who have loved sailing aboard P&O Cruises Australia's *Pacific Explorer* over the years will be able to scratch the itch well after the brand is retired.

Resorts World Cruises (RWC) has announced the former P&O ship will join its fleet and be transformed into *Star Scorpio*.

The ship (render **pictured**) will homeport in Singapore for Resorts World from Mar, following her final voyage for P&O Cruises Australia.

*Scorpio* will also homeport in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam, arriving in time for a number of school- and religious-based holidays.

"*Star Scorpio* will be the first cruise ship to homeport in Ho Chi Minh City, allowing...affordable cruises to Singapore and Melaka," RWC President Michael Goh said.

Prior to commencing operations, *Star Scorpio* will undergo a US\$50 million renovation in Singapore, with a new array of restaurants, bars, showroom and other recreational facilities to be unveiled shortly.

In her new home, the vessel will cater primarily to Asian cruise guests in Singapore and Vietnam.



## Apply pressure to airports

**THE** International Air Transport Association (IATA) believes a lack of global airport capacity could threaten the growth prospects of the travel and tourism sectors.

The global aviation body said that large-scale airport developments such as new runways are less likely to be built in the current political climate, meaning airports must find new ways to ensure capacity is able to keep pace with a growing demand for travel.

To address the shortage, IATA is calling for airports to have the same obligations that airlines do regarding maximising slot use.

"Under the slot regulations, airlines are obliged to utilise the slots they are granted efficiently or face penalties for cancelling flights, or not operating to schedule," IATA's SVP for Operations, Safety and Security Nick Careen said.



"But airports face no penalties if they don't deliver promised capacity; they have little pressure to meet global benchmarks.

"There is often insufficient transparency for the capacity declarations that they do make and this needs a major rebalancing so that airports and airlines are equally obliged to maximise the potential social and economic value of airport capacity," Careen added.

Specifically, IATA wants airports to review capacity declarations on a regular basis, have greater transparency about where potential capacity increases are being neglected, and consequences if declared capacity is not delivered as promised. **AB**

## HLO releases shares

**HELLOWORLD** has advised that 5,471,996 fully paid ordinary shares in the company held by Dragonhills Pty Limited (2,735,998 shares) and CTG Investments Pty Ltd (2,735,998 shares) have been released from voluntary escrow on 02 Jan.

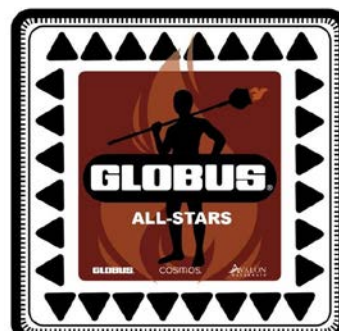
The shares were issued as partial consideration for the purchase of Express Travel Group, and were subject to voluntary escrow for a period of 12 months.

## Globus has spoken

**GLOBUS** family of brands is smearing on the war paint and getting in shape to run a new *Survivor*-themed set of challenges for travel advisors this year.

Weekly challenges on the company's Facebook page have kicked off, with the winners to be flown to Sydney to compete in the ultimate 'tribal council' to win an Avalon Waterways river cruise for two people.

The stakes are high and the game is on, so are you ready to prove you've got what it takes?



## Travel jobs surge

**TRAVEL** specialist jobs in Australia are among the fastest growing job types in the country, according to a new study published by LinkedIn.

Based on unique data from its platform, annual rankings combined for the last three years show that travel advisors have been the third-fastest growing role type sought by employers.

The growth in travel roles finished behind only English teachers and food and beverage servers in the study.

LinkedIn Career Expert, Cayla Dengate, said the report also showed that upskilling should be an important factor for workers.

"With 80% of the roles on the list being new, it underscores the importance of upskilling to future-proof careers," she said.

Holland America

Explore Europe with Holland America Line.

Make a booking during our Start your Journey sale and WIN 10 days Athens & Adriatic Allure August departure cruise for you and one guest.



T&Cs apply. Visit GoHAL for full competition details.

## SENIOR RESERVATION CONSULTANTS

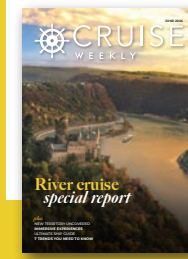


### Senior Reservation Consultants Wanted

Due to rapid sales growth across our key destinations, we are seeking experienced and passionate **Senior Reservation Consultants** to join our dynamic team!

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## Discover our River Cruise Special Report

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## Montague makes his return

**FORMER** Regent Seven Seas Cruises (RSSC) CEO Jason Montague (**pictured**) will return to Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) on 17 Feb to spearhead the company's future luxury growth plans.

In his new position as Chief Luxury Officer, Montague will take charge of the future direction of RSSC and Oceania Cruises.

The appointment will see Andrea DeMarco resign from her role of RSSC President on 04 Mar, while Oceania President Frank A Del Rio will remain, however he will now report to Montague.

After retiring as RSSC CEO in 2022 after more than six years steering the brand, Montague took on an advisory role with NCLH early last year.

He steps into the position at an encouraging time for NCLH, which is currently in a significant fleet expansion and renewal phase.

Oceania has slated plans to introduce three new ships through to 2029, including *Oceania Allura*, which is scheduled to join the fleet in Jul.

Meanwhile, RSSC plans to launch two new ships between 2027 and 2029 and refurbish *Seven Seas Mariner* in 2025 and *Seven Seas Voyager* in 2026.

"With over 20 years of expertise in luxury hospitality and a strong track record of driving excellence, Jason brings exceptional strategic expertise to our company and to our executive team," NCLH Chief Executive Officer and President



Harry Sommer said.

"Having already led Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises in the past, Jason is uniquely positioned to shape their future," he added.

**MEANWHILE**, in the local region NCL has promoted Damian Borg to the role of Senior Director of Sales Strategy & Operations, effective immediately.

The promotion follows continued strong growth from cruise brand in Australia, marking the second role upgrade for Borg in less than 12 months.

In Apr, he was elevated to Director of Sales Strategy & Operations, with his latest expanded remit seeing Borg continue to support Vice President and Managing Director Ben Angell in growing bookings.

"Damian has already been a critical part of our success, and his appointment comes at an exciting time for NCL as we continue to capitalise on the strong cruise demand across the region," Angell said. *AB*

## Storms cause havoc

**WINTER** storms and heavy snow have hit the United States and Europe, causing travel disruptions and grounding flights.

Storms in the US have caused nearly 200 flights in and out of St Louis to be cancelled, with Missouri hit particularly hard.

The weather has also caused havoc for the nation's railways, with dozens of cancellations.

Flights have also been grounded in Europe, particularly in the Germany & the United Kingdom.

Frankfurt Airport cancelled 120 planned takeoffs and landings on Sun, while Munich International Airport only had one of its two runways in operation.

Liverpool, Manchester, and Leeds airports all had to close runways over the weekend.

A number of British train services were also cancelled, with National Rail warning of disruption continuing well into the working week, while rail services in Frankfurt also experienced various irregularities.

## Serko buy complete

**SERKO'S** acquisition of Sabre's GetThere travel management solution closed today, as originally planned (**TD** 29 Oct 2024).

The closing of the US\$12 million acquisition also marks the official commencement of the partnership between Serko and Sabre, with the travel management company keen to push its expansion ambitions in the North American market.



## Window Seat

**FANS** of the 2000 film *Gladiator* should take note of the following amazing fact recently revealed on the *No Such Thing As A Fish* podcast.

One listener and keen traveller wrote into the show to deliver a pretty cool way to combine the love of flying with the adoration of the Russell Crowe classic period action.

If a traveller starts playing the movie on take-off from London to Rome - barring any unusual delays - the passenger with a window seat on the right-hand side of the plane should have a view of the Colosseum right as Maximus and Commodus duke it out at the famous landmark.

After all, what we do in life echoes for eternity.

## Star shines on buy

**QUEENSLAND-BASED** hospitality company Star Group has purchased Rydges Mackay Suites, doubling down on its expansion in the state.

The purchase of the 90-room property is believed to cost around \$30 million, and follows on from Star's acquisition of Rydges Gold Coast Airport.

Star's portfolio now totals eight hotels across Queensland, in addition to more than 100 retail liquor outlets, and more than 50 licensed venues.

**SPEAKERS**



**Wendy Wu**  
Founder,  
Wendy Wu  
Tours



**Cinzia Burnes**  
COO &  
Helloworld



**Steve Labroski**  
CEO,  
itravel

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# INTREPID RALLIES FOR THE GOOD OF ELEPHANTS

**INTREPID** Foundation has joined forces with World Animal Protection in Thailand to improve welfare standards for elephants in tourism and promote ethical travel practices.

The adventure operator's charity arm will support World Animal Protection's mission to create better living conditions for elephants and educate the tourism industry on welfare-focused alternatives.

"World Animal Protection Thailand's efforts to transform exploitative practices into ethical, high-welfare models is hugely inspiring," said Mike Stewart, General Manager of Intrepid Travel, Thailand.

"Their approach ensures elephant carers retain their livelihoods, elephants are



well cared for, and travellers can experience these animals respectfully, all while contributing positively to communities and the environment," Stewart added.

Intrepid will work with the animal protection NGO to transition more elephant riding venues to elephant-friendly sanctuaries like ChangChill and Following Giants, where visitors

no longer interact directly with the animals.

Biheng Zhang, General Manager of The Intrepid Foundation hailed the partnership as a major step in Intrepid's commitment to responsible tourism.

She said, "while almost 3,000 elephants are still being used for entertainment and hauling logs, the work of World Animal

Protection Thailand to support responsible projects like ChangChill and Following Giants can inspire other venues to make the switch and show it's possible to be a successful venue that acts with animal welfare first".

"Together, we strive to encourage global practices that prioritise animal welfare, alongside supporting local communities," Zhang added.

The partnership comes as Intrepid marks more than 10 years since banning elephant rides (**TD** 21 May 2014).

Intrepid customers can see World Animal Protection's work and support ethical animal welfare venues on the operator's 'Explore Northern Thailand', 'Thailand Family Holiday', and 'Beautiful Northern Thailand' itineraries. *JM*

## UK SAF mandate

A **SUSTAINABLE** aviation fuel (SAF) mandate has come into effect in the UK, requiring flights departing the nation to be powered by at least 2% sustainable jet fuel.

The mandate aims to help boost SAF's share of jet fuel capacity to 10% by 2030.

"From this moment on, aviation will be a greener, more sustainable form of travel, and today marks a significant milestone," UK Minister for Aviation Mike Kane said.

## BNE becomes first airport in Australia to achieve net zero

**BRISBANE** Airport has become the first airport in Australia to achieve net zero emissions, with 100% renewable-backed energy now powering the hub.

The airport reduced its scope 1 and 2 emissions by 97% by purchasing 100% renewable electricity generation from Stanwell, expanding onsite solar to 10MW, and replacing 24 traditional internal combustion engine fleet vehicles with electric-powered vehicles.

The remaining 3% of emissions have been offset through native



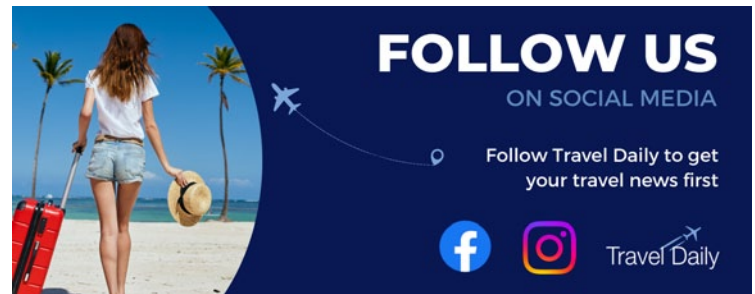
bush regeneration projects in southwest Queensland via Tasman Environmental Markets.

Brisbane Airport Chief Executive Officer, Gert-Jan de Graaff, said the airport is proud

to achieve the milestone, but recognises that there is "far more" work to be done.

"Our renewable power purchase agreement kicked in with Stanwell [on 01 Jan], providing up to 185 GWh of renewable backed wind and solar energy per year from regional Queensland.

"It means renewable backed power will operate everything from the systems you use at check-in...right through to the runway lights that guide your aircraft safely into the sky."



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## MONEY

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

### AU\$1 = US\$0.624

**THE** Australian dollar has crashed to five-year lows, with experts revealing even grimmer predictions for the local currency moving forward.

The AUD hit its lowest rate since Apr 2020 during earlier trading, before rallying to USD\$0.624 by the end of the day's trading; however experts fear it may fall below 50 cents.

The AUD has also fallen against the GBP, buying £0.499. *Wholesale rates this morning.*

|              |           |
|--------------|-----------|
| US           | \$0.624   |
| UK           | £0.499    |
| NZ           | \$1.107   |
| Euro         | €0.601    |
| Japan        | ¥98.53    |
| Thailand     | ฿21.61    |
| China        | ¥4.569    |
| South Africa | 11.59     |
| Canada       | \$0.895   |
| Crude oil    | US\$76.11 |

## Man charged over assault of VA crew

**A FIJIAN** man has been denied bail after allegedly raping and sexual assaulting a Virgin Australia crew member.

The 21-year-old Melbourne woman was in Nadi, Fiji during a during a layover on New Year's Eve, and was allegedly assaulted on her way to her hotel after being separated from the rest of her crew during a night out.

The alleged perpetrator will appear in High Court in Lautoka on 20 Jan, and faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted.

In a separate incident, a male member of the same flight crew was robbed and sustained facial injuries after returning from the same club - the attack is still being investigated.

A VA spokesperson said the airline is aware of the incidents and "our focus is on the wellbeing of our team members affected".

## Closure for S Korean airport extended

**SOUTH** Korea's Muan International Airport will remain closed until 14 Jan due to an ongoing investigation into the crash of a Jeju Air flight that killed 179 passengers on board.

The airport had originally been expected to reopen today following the 29 Dec crash, which has become South Korea's deadliest air accident.

The Boeing 737-800 slammed into a concrete wall around 250 metres past the end of the runway, after the plane's landing gear failed to deploy, with the tragedy raising questions about the airport's design and the positioning of the wall.

## Whyalla to soar through funding



**THE** Federal Government is investing more than \$16 million into the Whyalla Airport (**pictured**) to help improve travel experience and boost capacity.

The funding will also help boost tourism in the Eyre Peninsula.

Whyalla's runway needs to be upgraded to accommodate the larger aircraft which will fly to it in the future.

QantasLink, the only airline serving Whyalla, recently announced it will phase out the smaller aircraft from its rural fleet, replacing them with faster, newer, and larger planes.

Minister for Transport Catherine King said the govt believes in a strong rural aviation network.

"This investment will ensure Whyalla locals and surrounding communities remain connected and have access to the critical services they require," she said.

Senator Karen Grogan added her excitement at the delivery of the upgrades.

"Whyalla Airport is not just a transport hub - it is a key facility

for local business, a connection to vital services in the city, and a crucial healthcare facility enabling access to specialist and advanced care," Grogan explained. *MS*

## Caribbean warning

**SMARTTRAVELLER** is reminding Australians to exercise a high degree of caution in Trinidad & Tobago, after the country's government declared a state of public emergency due to heightened criminal activity.

Travellers can expect an increased police and military presence in the country, as well as minor disruptions, such as roadblocks, Smarttraveller said.

The travel advisory service is encouraging Australians to follow the advice of local authorities, and to monitor local media for updates on the situation.

The state of emergency was declared on 30 Dec, following a weekend of violence, as well as a year of associated gang violence and organised crime.

## Explore Big Blue Sale

**EXPLORE** Worldwide has launched its 'Big Blue Sale' offering up to 20% off more than 1,500 trips.

Travellers can choose from hundreds of European summer departures for this year, with the offer ending 23 Jan.

Also on offer is destinations such as Japan, Sri Lanka, the Baltics, Albania, and Italy.

Explore recently announced it had achieved 50% of its annual sales target for 31 Oct 2025.