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Rail Europe changes

THE recent appointment of Grant Robertson to Regional Manager for Australia and New Zealand at Rail Europe (**TD** 27 Feb) was part of a wider restructure in the region, **Travel Daily** understands.

Changes in the local market have seen the departure of long-serving GM Asia & Pacific at Rail Europe Richard Leonard.

The rail executive had been in the position for over seven years.

HA ends Velocity tie-up

VIRGIN Australia and Hawaiian Airlines will end their reciprocal loyalty partnership on 30 Jun.

The decision by the American carrier to walk away from VA follows a previously revealed plan to join the oneworld alliance after its merger with Alaska Airlines (**TD** 04 Dec 2023).

Hawaiian Airlines' decision also reinforces closer ties with VA's main rival Qantas, which announced in Jan that its international Classic Reward seats will soon be activated for Hawaiian Airlines flights for the first time.

A spokesperson for VA confirmed to **Travel Daily** that guests will continue to accrue points on either airline's travel program until 30 Jun, and they will also be able to redeem tickets until the same date.

Any ticket booked before the aforementioned date will also be honoured for future travel bookings up to 28 Feb 2026.

Airline bookings will continue until 30 June 2025, and all reservations after that time will be converted to interline



agreements, VA said.

Virgin also stressed that despite the loyalty agreement ending, Hawaiian Airlines will continue to be an interline partner, with the airline still selling itineraries connecting to and from the Virgin Australia network. **AB**

KrisFlyer promotion

SINGAPORE Airlines' KrisFlyer rewards program is marking its 10 million member milestone with exclusive promotions and bonus mile accrual opportunities.

KrisFlyer members - of which there are 1.7 million in Australia - will enjoy a 20% miles redemption discount on economy saver flights across the Singapore Airline Group network between 07 and 23 Mar.

The promotion is also available on selected premium economy flights between Singapore and the United States for travel between 01 May and 15 Nov.

Members can also benefit from 30% off at KrisShop and Pelago.

Home Ex goes live

IT'S still not too late to register and access a swathe of inspiring and informative presentations from leaders across the sector as part of **Travel Daily's** exciting new virtual conference, Home Ex.

The first presentations can be viewed and will be available for the next six months - see **cover**.

The Star to be saved?

AMERICAN gambling company Bally's Corporation has solicited an 11th-hour, \$250m offer to save the ailing Star Entertainment Group, reports *The Australian*.

The offer is with the ASX-listed company's board, and if approved, could rescue it from potential administration.

Bally's would provide a capital raise of at least \$250m, under which Star would issue convertible notes.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news, plus a full page from Paul Gauguin.

Paul's flights on us

AGENTS can claim a \$1,500 flight credit to help clients travel to Tahiti and embark on a Paul Gauguin voyage.

The promotion is valid for bookings made by 30 Apr and for a limited number of departures.

More details on **page seven**.

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CLIAs recognise the big achievers

NOT even Tropical Cyclone Alfred could dampen the spirits of the cruise industry on Sat night, which celebrated its 22nd CLIA Awards in Sydney.

Close to 500 industry representatives donned their finest outfits at The Star to celebrate awards handed out on the night to travel agencies and individuals for their efforts in selling cruise holidays and supporting the sector.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia MD, Joel Katz (pictured), said the awards were all about recognising the wealth of talent on display in Australia and New Zealand.

"Tonight is a celebration of the exceptional talent, dedication, and passion that drive the success of the Australasian cruise industry," Katz said.

"Travel agents are the heart and soul of this industry, you are the trusted experts, and the



navigators of dreams."

There were many highlights on the night, but perhaps none more memorable than Stuart Allison being inducted into the industry's Hall of Fame.

Allison was revealed as the 19th member of the Hall of Fame by CLIA Australasia Chair Peter Little, who described the cruise exec as a "visionary leader with an analytical mind and unwavering passion for the sector".

Allison recently moved to the UK where he now serves as P&O Cruises Chief Commercial Officer, and previously led Princess Cruises locally as Senior VP, Asia Pacific, UK & Europe.

Other notable winners on the night included Samantha Renvoye

from Clean Cruising, who took out the Cruise Consultant of the Year - Australia honour.

Ignite Travel Group also had a busy night, taking home the Cruise Agency of the Year, multi location/brand - Australia award, and an individual honour for the brand's Michael Middleton, who secured the coveted Cruise Champion - Australasia.

Destination HQ was recognised for its ongoing contribution to the cruise sector, awarded Cruise Agency of the Year, single location - Australia, while Shane Black from SW Black Travel in Sydney snaffled the high-profile Rising Star - Australia category.

Between Oceania Cruises standard cuisine and touch-ups at the RSSC make up centre, guests were also treated to a surprise performance from The Wiggles.

See the full winners list [HERE](#), and stay tuned for a special edition of **CW** later today. **AB**

Security reform call

BIPARTISAN support at state and federal levels of government has been given to a review and reform of security at Australia's regional airports following a man boarding a Jetstar flight armed with a shotgun at Avalon Airport last week (**TD 07 Mar**).

The Australian Airports Association (AAA) said it is awaiting more detail on the investigations underway by the Department of Home Affairs.

AAA CEO Simon Westaway said the association stood ready to work with members and the government in response.

"Security-controlled airports meet strict requirements as directed by the Department of Home Affairs and individual security plans are approved under rigorous assessment processes, including airport perimeters," he said.

Westaway added incidents such as this are "extremely rare" and aviation is "incredibly safe".

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Ama delays agents

DUE to recent weather events in Qld, AmaWaterways has postponed travel agent events scheduled for the state, with new dates to be announced soon.

“The well being of our guests, partners, and community comes first,” said Christine Oliver, Regional Sales Manager.

HLO visits regional Victoria



HELLOWORLD'S 2025 Holiday Showcase rolled into the regional town of Colac in Victoria's South West on 01 Mar.

Eighteen travel industry partners had stalls at the event, which was held at the COPACC performing arts centre.

Here, they shared with attendees a diverse range of holidays on offer, from small group touring to cruising.

“We want to introduce people to the diverse travel options available,” said Candice Holt, Owner of Helloworld Colac.

“There are some amazing destinations out there that people are yet to discover.”

Meanwhile, the team is already preparing for next year's showcase in Mar. *JHM*

Pictured: Hello from Helloworld's staff: Tilli, Natalie, Mick, Dena, Karen, and Candice.

RSSC chops 40% off

LUXURY cruise line Regent Seven Sea Cruises is offering 40% off select 2025 itineraries from its Exclusive Europe range, including sailings to popular ports such as Barcelona and Portugal.

The significant saving is available for bookings between now and 30 Apr.

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Alfred aftershocks

THE travel industry is slowly returning to normal, off the back of the downgrading of Tropical Cyclone Alfred.

Gold Coast Airport reopened yesterday, following a three-day closure, however many flights have been cancelled from major Queensland hubs.

“There will likely be some disruptions to scheduled services, so we encourage passengers to continue to monitor the status of their flight via their airline before heading to the airport,” said Queensland Airports Limited COO Marion Charlton.

Brisbane Airport has reopened as planned, although some operations will be impacted as a result of staffing shortages.

Greyhound has cut services from Byron Bay to Sydney and cancelled all services in SE Qld.

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Sno'n'ski lights up Colorado



THIRTY agents now have a new appreciation for the US state of Colorado and its great outdoors, having just returned from a nine-night mega-famil to the state.

Hosted by Sno'n'Ski Holidays and Colorado Tourism, the trip opened the eyes of the group to four of the major world class ski destinations across the state.

Flying with United Airlines, the group began its adventure in Denver with a stay at The Rally Hotel and a night out which included the excitement of a Denver Nuggets NBA game.

With Colorado's ski season far from over and plenty of fresh powder to be enjoyed among its 300-plus days of annual sunshine, the first stop was Steamboat Ski Resort, set amid the twinkling lights of a quaint winter village.

Next, it was time to get serious with Vail waiting in the wings.

The purpose-built ski town left the group impressed with a huge range of accommodation options and experiences including a Kemo Sabe hat-making activity.

Aspen Snowmass was next, with two of the lively city's four mountains providing a unique challenge for skiers of all skill levels, an experience coupled with a look at some of the region's top hotels and resorts.

The final stop was Telluride Mountain Resort, which provides a link between the town and the mountain village via a free gondola public transport system.

In addition to taking to the slopes once again, the group enjoyed hearty dining set to live music and a vibrant nightlife.

Other highlights in Telluride were a snowmobile tour and the Sheridan Opera House.

The group is **pictured** above.



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Travel Daily

GFOB offers lifeline

GLOBUS family of brands' #GlobusAllStars Survivor incentive is offering eliminated advisors a second chance, with its new 'Redemption Island Week'.

Featuring encouragement from 'King' George Mladenov from *Survivor Australia*, eliminated agents can still win the grand prize - **CLICK HERE** for more info.

Gong makes Travel Associates proud

TRAVEL Associates General Manager Rachel Kingswell has paid tribute to the efforts of her team as it took home two awards at the CLIA Awards on Sat night.

The brand snagged Network Cruise Promotion of the Year for its Luxury Cruise Season activation, and Cruise Consultant of the Year New Zealand for Natasha Warfield at Toussaint & Turner Travel Associates.

"This award is a testament to Natasha's dedication, expertise and undeniable passion for cruising," Kingswell said.

"To my team, I cannot thank you enough - this award is all yours."



Window Seat

1997 F1 World Champion Jacques Villeneuve recently found himself trapped in a toilet cubicle Milan's Malpensa Airport, threatening to delay his trip Down Under for the upcoming Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne.

While waiting for help to arrive, a glum-looking Villeneuve posted to Instagram that he had already waited for close to 30 minutes for airport assistance.

"Security incapable of getting me out...toilet flushing every 30 seconds - having a blast".

As his thousands of followers followed every moment of the drama online, Villeneuve ultimately made the executive decision to smash through the door himself.

"I managed to get out after 30 minutes but had to kick the door down and avoid a block from the ceiling falling on my head - now am ready to get down under," he posted,

While the image of a smashed cubicle evoked a flurry of humorous responses and plenty of toilet humour, perhaps none were more apt than the user who simply replied, "s*#t happens".

Villeneuve criticised the slow airport response and said it would've been more serious had a child been stuck.



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Ready to lead?

HOME-BASED agents looking to boost their leadership skills are invited to check out a session at Home Ex today from business coach, Cameron McDonald.

During his session in the auditorium, McDonald offers practical advice and insights for home-based advisors as to how remote business owners can thrive.

In his experience, McDonald believes the best leaders have solid systems in place and know how to use technology to maximise the effectiveness of their team, so they can build an engaged workplace culture.

According to McDonald, the common challenges remote leaders face include:

Communication gaps:

“Without in-person chats, things can get lost in translation. It’s important to set up regular check-ins, use clear communication channels, and keep updates flowing without overwhelming your team.”

Keeping people productive and accountable: “When there’s no office, it’s easy to lose focus.”

Building a strong culture:

“It’s really important to make time for virtual hangouts, celebrate wins publicly with the team, and invest in team growth to keep people engaged.”

HOME EX IS LIVE FOR EVERYONE TO ATTEND

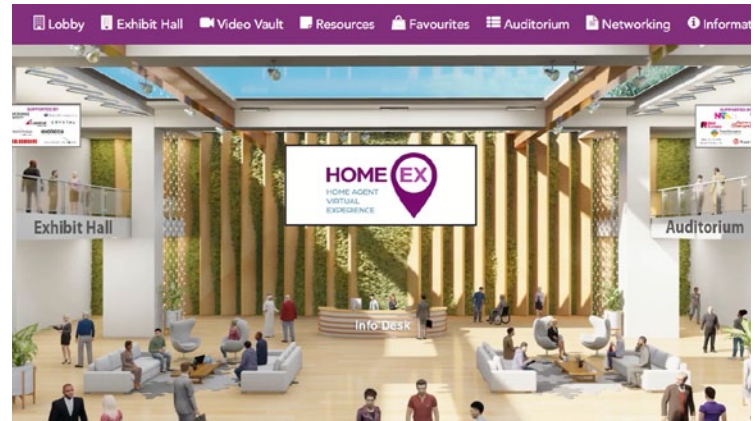
TRAVEL Daily’s virtual experience Home Ex is now ready for attendees to access and will be online for six months.

Thanks to platinum sponsors CVFR, Expedia and Royal Caribbean, Home Ex is a new on-demand virtual event aimed at home-based agents.

The Home Ex virtual event is split into two sections.

In the auditorium, our event features speakers who will inspire and motivate you, including MTA CEO Don Beattie; TravelManagers Executive General Manager Michael Gazal; Helloworld COO and Executive Director Cinzia Burnes; Envoyage Global Chief Operating Officer Astrid Richardson and a raft of other industry experts.

Topics include how agents can scale up their businesses,



inspiring the next generation and how to create an engaged remote workplace culture.

Sessions from our sponsors will also be available in the auditorium, including updates from Carnival, Globus family of brands, Rail Europe and more.

In the exhibitor hall, attendees

can access supplier updates and videos that will help shape key advice to clients, with the chance to hear from brands such as Oceania Cruises; AmaWaterways; Viking; Journey Beyond; Tourism WA; and others.

Registration is free and open to the whole industry - **CLICK HERE.**

Business tips and insights from Helloworld COO and Executive Director

HELLOWORLD Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director Cinzia Burnes is revealing the success behind the business at virtual event Home Ex, and what home-based agents can learn from her vast amount of experience.

In her fascinating 30-minute session in the Home Ex virtual auditorium live from today, Burnes candidly discusses the lessons and mistakes she has made along the way, the risks that were worth betting on, as well as the evolution that



has taken place across her substantial career.

Burnes also discusses focus areas including product range, the value of exclusives, customer service insights and

what agents can learn from the Helloworld business.

Some of Burnes’ pearls of wisdom include the importance of agents offering fees for their services - and being comfortable talking about them with customers - and continuing to cultivate tightknit relationships with suppliers.

“Without suppliers, none of us would have a business and they needed to be treated with the same gratitude and respect that we reserve for our clients,” Burnes shares in her session.

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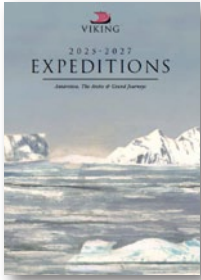
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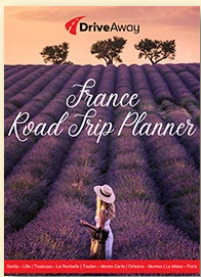
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Viking - 2025-2027 Expedition Voyages

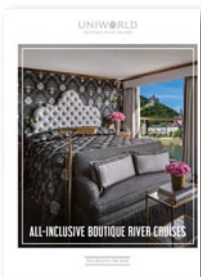
Viking has released its 2025-2027 Expedition Voyages brochure, with voyages which will take passengers to the wilderness of Antarctica, the glaciers of the Arctic, and the natural beauty of the Great Lakes. The cruise line's expeditions merge comfort and exploration, with Scandinavian design featuring a science lab, and Nordic balconies. The brochure also profiles Viking's new expedition Grand Journeys, including the 87-day 'From the Arctic to Antarctica, the 14-day 'Argentina & The Chilean Fjords', and the 42-day 'The Americas & Antarctica Explorer'. Other Grand Journeys highlights include 20-day 'Panama Canal & The Americas' cruise, and two new journeys: a 13-day 'Chilean Fjords & The Science Shores' itinerary, and a 69-day 'Fourth Longitudinal World Cruise' from Buenos Aires to Milwaukee.



DriveAway - France Road Trip Planner

DriveAway has launched a new France Road Trip Planner, designed to inspire and assist travellers in crafting their perfect French road trip. The new brochure, part of DriveAway's 'Roads to Remember: Discover the UK, Europe & Ireland Your Way Campaign', features five incredible drives across France, including must-see attractions, accommodation tips, essential travel advice, and even a dedicated Spotify playlist.

Access the planner now **HERE**. DriveAway is also planning to offer exclusive deals throughout Mar and Apr, across destinations featured in the brochure, making it easier than ever for travellers to secure their dream road trip.



Uniworld - 2025 World Brochure

Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection has unveiled its new 2025 World Brochure, as the line prepares to welcome two new ships to its fold. The new brox details Uniworld's traditional cruises along the Rhine, Main, and Danube, as well as its indulgent voyages in France, Italy, and Portugal. Other extraordinary destinations featured include the Amazon Rainforest and the Mekong Delta.

One of the highlights will be the 55-day 'Rivers of the World' cruise, while the season will also see Uniworld introduce no less than five new Cruise & Rail journeys, combining some of its most popular river itineraries with luxury train journeys in the Swiss Alps, Istanbul, the Balkans, and more.

PTMs draw big in Cairns



CAIRNS-BASED TravelManagers agents Kellie Grace and Patty Poutanen recently hosted a travel expo in Cairns, exceeding their own expectations with more than 1,500 attendees.

The inaugural event has already resulted in almost \$500,000 in confirmed bookings, while close to 900 leads signed up for the duo's newsletter.

More than 30 major suppliers, including airlines, tourism boards, and tour companies, were represented on the day.

The expo was the first major collaborative effort by the two PTMs, who acknowledged the support provided by TravelManagers' National Partnership Office.

"Our goals for the expo were originally quite low-key: we wanted to generate new leads and enquiry while getting our names out in the community," Grace notes.

"We thought we might attract up to 500 attendees, but we ended up with around 1,500

visitors throughout the day."

"The support we received from locals and suppliers alike has made all the late nights and hard work worthwhile."

Grace noted the local Cairns Airport as a standout on the day, spreading the word of the expo to its 50,000-strong database via e-mail and social media. *MS*

New Fullerton GM

JOHN O'Shea has been appointed General Manager at The Fullerton Hotel Sydney.

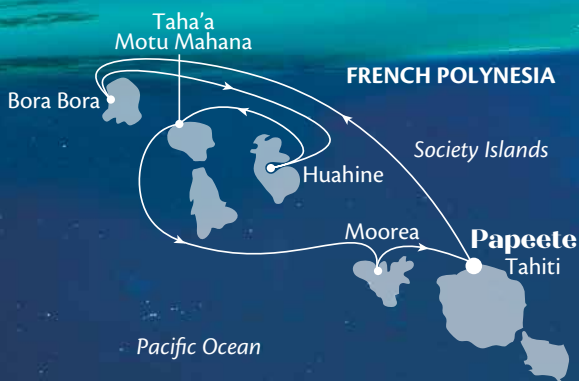
O'Shea has more than 40 years of experience in the hospitality industry, having successfully managed numerous hotel openings and renovations in Australia and across the Asia Pacific, including China, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, and Fiji.

The veteran hotelier only recently returned to Australia in 2022 after 30 years overseas, which saw him lead the successful opening of The Langham Gold Coast.

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