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First with the news

Wednesday 29th June 2011

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ISSN 1834-3058

Greek strike chaos

THE Dept of Foreign Affairs & Trade is advising a 48-hr 'general strike' in Greece, flowing from yesterday into today, could affect services throughout the country, incl air, rail and sea transport.

Yesterday Olympic Air cancelled 39 flights and delayed 24 others.

Gold Coast targets SQ LCC

QUEENSLAND Airports Limited has sent a team of officials to Singapore this week to pitch for direct air services from Singapore Airlines' yet to be named low cost carrier, **Travel Daily** has learnt.

It's understood the QAL group is attempting to lure the new Singapore-based budget airline to the Gold Coast, to kick start tourism to the region.

The Gold Coast's tourism industry has suffered from a slow down in international visitors in recent months, specifically from the Japanese market, which has seen Jetstar reduce flight

frequencies out of the hub.

Gold Coast airport is a hotspot for LCCs, with domestic carriers like Tiger and Jetstar, and int'l carriers such as AirAsia X using it as a Queensland gateway.

After their meeting in Singapore the QAL delegation is flying to Guangzhou, Beijing and Shanghai in China as part of a two week roadtrip, where they will meet with Chinese carriers.

It's likely while in China, QAL will hold talks with airlines including China Southern Airlines, Air China and Shanghai Airlines in an effort to lure direct routes to the Gold Coast.

Earlier this month CZ revealed at the Australia China Travel Summit that it was looking at launching flights to the Gold Coast (**TD 09 Jun**).

Any new non-stop int'l flights to the Gold Coast from China are not expected for a few years.

Contiki mates rates

CONTIKI Holidays is offering 'Mates Rates' of up to \$340pp on its 2011/12 Europe Winter tours of 12 days duration or longer.

The deal is valid for first time or multi-Contiki tour travellers, on trips departing before 31 Mar 2012, if booked before 31 Jul.

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Travel Daily today has six pages of news and photos, plus full pages from: (**click**)

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Aircalin introduces 'Choose Day'

From 12 July we fly to Nouméa every day, including Tuesday.

CLICK HERE

Cheapflights relaunch

THE Australasian version of the UK-based Cheapflights website has today been relaunched with a range of expanded features including airline guides, travel tips and more deals on offer.

Initially launched in 2009, cheapflights.com.au has attracted a range of partners including Flight Centre, Expedia, Zuji and Best Flights, with domestic and international deals on offer on both fares and holiday packages.

Cheapflights' global sites attract over 11m monthly visitors.

SIA/Virgin aim at Qantas

VIRGIN Australia and Singapore Airlines have set their sights squarely on Qantas in the ACCC submission for authorisation of their planned alliance (**TD** 07 Jun).

Virgin says the deal will allow it to "offer an international network and attractive frequent flyer program that closely matches that of Qantas," while both carriers admit that without the deal they both have "relatively weak competitive corporate offers" against QF.

The alliance will see Virgin Australia "better placed to challenge Qantas' leading position for international air travel to and from Australia, and its dominant position in relation to the supply of services under corporate and government

contracts, providing more choice and better value for customers."

Inbound travel is also part of the proposed alliance, which will see SQ-coded flights to ports across Australia, NZ and the Pacific Islands.

"This will enable new online international flights to key tourist destinations beyond the major gateways, such as Cairns, Darwin and Hobart," the submission says.

The carriers say they will work together to promote travel to Australia internationally, including the development of an Air Pass product for incoming tourists.

For more details from the SQ/DJ submission see **page three**.

Silversea restructure

KAREN Christensen will take responsibility for Silversea Cruises operations in Australia and New Zealand, under a global reorganisation of the cruise line's executive team announced late yesterday (**TD** breaking news).

Current Asia Pacific head Steve Odell will relocate to London next week as senior vice president of sales and marketing for the UK, Europe and Asia Pacific.

Christensen will report to Odell, who will also have responsibility for Silverseas' Monaco office and a newly established operation in Frankfurt to target the German, Austrian and Swiss markets.

UK senior vp Trudy Redfern will leave Silversea tomorrow, while Kenneth Watson will maintain global sales responsibility from Silverseas' Fort Lauderdale office.



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Cheaper Rail Plus pass

RAIL Plus this morning unveiled a new "60-plus" category for 2011 Eurail passes, offering discounts of up to 20%.

Eurail Select, Global Flexi and Global Continuous passes are valid for the deal for customers aged over 60 travelling with at least one companion.

Ash cloud returns

YET more flights are being disrupted today due to the Chilean volcano ash cloud which continues to cause havoc for some Australasian carriers.

Qantas and Jetstar have both suspended flights to Queenstown until further notice, while QF and JQ Christchurch services are suspended from 2pm today.

QF flights to and from Buenos Aires have also been delayed by more than 24 hours.

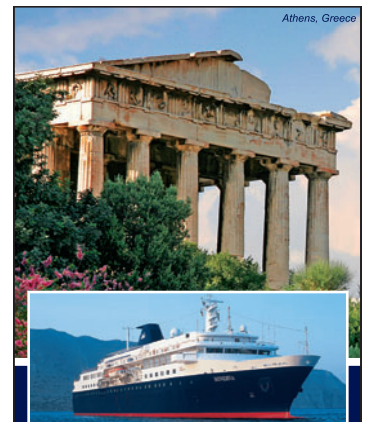
Air New Zealand, Emirates and Pacific Blue are continuing to operate their Tasman services.

Makepeace opening

ONE of the hottest tickets in town would have to be an invitation to the official opening of Sir Richard Branson's new resort on Makepeace Island in Noosa Heads on Qld's Sunshine Coast.

The event is set to take place on the same night as the National Travel Industry Awards, Sat 09 Jul, meaning some lucky invitees in the travel industry will have a difficult choice to make.

In true Branson style the Makepeace event will include lots of pampering - and (naturally) a winter pool party.



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Virgin Australia's global network

VIRGIN'S proposed alliance with Singapore Airlines will complete DJ's virtual international network by giving it access to "increasingly important Asian destinations," according to the joint Virgin/SIA ACCC submission (see p2).

The 100+ page document has a number of maps showing the overall network (below) indicating Virgin Australia's comprehensive expansion in global coverage if the alliance is approved.

(The orange lines indicate the routes operated by Singapore Airlines and its subsidiary, SilkAir).

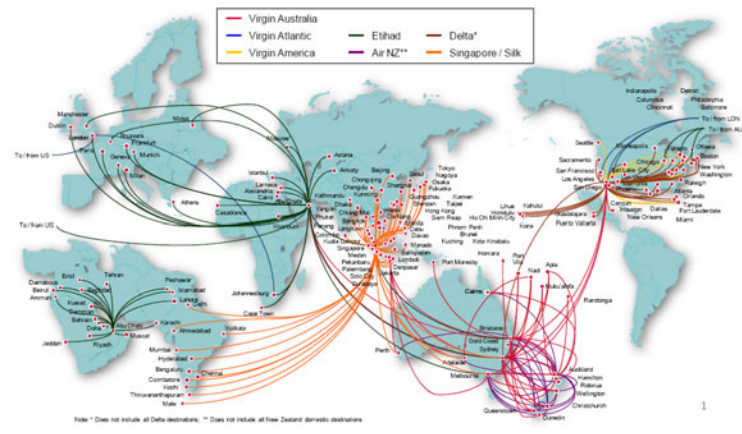
And further online direct flights to Singapore are also envisaged, with blanked out sections in the submission, possibly indicating new routes to Darwin and/or

Cairns in Far North Queensland.

"The ability to connect to other Australian destinations is particularly important because international travellers to northern Australia typically visit multiple destinations as part of an itinerary," the document says.

It also details the minimal overlap between the SQ routes and those of Virgin's other alliance partners, with the SIA deal specifically excluding routes to Abu Dhabi, Brussels, Dublin, Frankfurt, London, Manchester, Moscow, Munich and Paris as well as Brisbane-Singapore.

SQ is "particularly interested" in access to 14 routes from SYD, 11 ex BNE and ADL, 10 ex MEL, 4 ex PER, as well as capital city routes.



Seamless product

"**CONSIDERABLE** funds and resources" will be invested on the planned alliance between Virgin Australia and Singapore Airlines, the carriers say.

The airlines say they aim to "create a seamless product and experience" which will cover booking check-in systems, product alignment and marketing.

Improved connections

AMONG the public benefits Virgin Australia and Singapore Airlines propose, are better connection times, more direct routing and easier bookings.

Aussies will have access to online international journeys on a single code basis, such as between Canberra to Beijing, Kolkata, Chennai or Bangalore.

DJ/SQ FF benefits

UNDER the proposed Virgin Australia/Singapore Airlines alliance, SQ Krisflyer members will be able to for the first time ever redeem their points on travel within Australia.

The comprehensive pact also proposes a major expansion of Virgin's Velocity loyalty scheme, allowing its 2.4m members to earn and burn points across the entire SQ international network.

Premium travellers will also have reciprocal access to each airline's airport lounges.

SQ to boost capacity

SINGAPORE Airlines expects that additional feed into its Australian services from the proposed Virgin Australia alliance will enable it to increase capacity on a number of routes.

The ACCC joint submission from the carriers say the boost could come in the form of "deployment of larger capacity aircraft such as the A380 on its current routes".

DJ to ditch MAS ties

VIRGIN Australia has confirmed it intends on ending its interline partnership with Malaysia Airlines as it has "no prospect" of being broadened.

Within the DJ/SQ submission to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission for the proposed alliance, Virgin Australia said it would look to discuss the "termination of their existing relationship", that also covers a reciprocal frequent flyer pact.

The move comes a few weeks after Qantas announced it would sponsor Malaysia Airlines entry into oneworld (**TD** 06 Jun).



Window Seat

ROCKY Mountaineer is hoping to provide some true travel inspiration in its newly released 2012 brochure, which was officially launched yesterday.

Special features this year include tours priced in Australian dollars, new experiences and excursions under the 'Journey of the Senses theme'.

And those who peruse the brochure can use an extra sense to experience the destination before they get there - because it also includes a special scratch-and-sniff panel on an included Field Guide to Local Wildlife insert, which allows them to "bring a touch of the Canadian wilderness into their homes," according to Rocky Mountaineer gm Australia Robert Halfpenny.

LONDON'S Crowne Plaza Hotel is hoping to offer its guests a quiet night's sleep, by this week trialling a 'Snore Absorption Room', for snorers and their suffering partners.

The special room includes egg-shell foam insulation and a sound absorbing headboard, while guests also enjoy an anti-snoring pillow, as well as a device which encourages the snorer to sleep on their side.

There is also a white noise machine to "help drown out the droning snoring noise".

"We've all been there - lying wide awake at three o'clock in the morning burying our head under a pillow to drown out our partner's snoring," said a hotel spokesperson.

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Another Excite-ing fam in USA

EXCITE Holidays hosted a group of travel agents on a five night fam to Los Angeles and Las Vegas recently.

Highlights included two shows in Las Vegas- Phantom of the Opera and the Elvis Cirque Du Soleil - as well as 'The World of Color' show at Disney's California Adventure Park.

The group stayed at the Palazzo in Vegas and the Anaheim Marriott.

Pictured above in

front of the InterContinental in LA after being chauffeured around in a stretch limo **from left** are: Cathy Baker, HWT Hope Island; Katrina Lathouras, Excite Holidays; Bianca



Giles, Reho Travel; Leanne Flanagan Smith, MTA Travel; Georgie Banovic, iTravel; Kylie McAlister, Excite Hols; and Chris Cogan, TravelManagers.

Name change for GAP Adventures?

GAP Adventures has been ordered to change its name and logo by 01 Sep, with a judge in New York ruling that the company is infringing the trademark of clothing retailer The Gap Inc.

GAP Adventures founder Bruce Poon Tip told **TD** this morning the company will be appealing the decision, which he said is only applicable to the company's operations in the USA.

"As ridiculous as this has sounded to everyone who has heard about it, it is what it is and we can't control the outcome," Poon Tip said.

The long-running case was first filed by the clothing firm in 2007.

A blog entry on the GAP Adventures website stresses that the company's operations in the other 18 countries where it has offices, and the more than 100 where it operates its tours, are not affected by the decision.

And although GAP believes it has good grounds for the appeal, "we're actually pretty excited by the opportunity to re-imagine ourselves.

"We remain the world leader in adventure travel, no matter what we're recalled," the blog says.

Poon Tip added that "ultimately our culture is our brand and it is what makes us the great company that we are".

New FJ NZ manager

AIR Pacific has announced the appointment of Shannon Currie as its new Commercial Manager for New Zealand.

Auckland-based Currie will take up his new role from 05 Jul, moving from his most recent position as New Zealand gm for Princess Cruises and Cunard Line.

He will report to Air Pacific Regional GM Australia, NZ and Asia, Victor Sharan.

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Canada blocks AC/UA

CANADA'S Commissioner of Competition has ordered that the proposed Air Canada and United Continental Holdings alliance be prohibited as "competition will be eliminated" on common routes.

TG to add Brussels

THAI Airways International will operate a new thrice weekly service between Bangkok and Brussels from 17 Nov, according to GDS displays, resuming the route after almost 15 years.

\$2,058 Danish fare

EMIRATES has introduced sale fares to Denmark priced from \$2,058 return ex SYD/MEL/BNE and PER in Economy Class, for travel 31 Jul to 23 Aug.

Business Class fares are priced from \$7398 return.

EK launches the new Danish route from Dubai on 01 Aug using A330-200 aircraft.

Hong Kong visits up

HONG Kong Tourism Board has reported a 2.1% year on year increase in arrivals from Australia for May, up to 49,388 visitors.

Virgin numbers slip

VIRGIN Australia saw a 1.1% year-on-year decline in domestic passenger numbers during May. Capacity was down 0.9% and the revenue load factor improved by 3.6 points to 78.9% for the month, according to figures released this morning.

International Virgin Australia traffic decreased by 19.2% due to the major revamp of its network over the past year, while international passenger numbers were down 10.3%, mainly due to the withdrawal of Pacific Blue from the NZ domestic market.

Virgin's international revenue load factor was up 6 points to 73.8% during May, while total pax numbers dipped 2.4% to 1.48m.

New at Sea World

SEA World on the Gold Coast will introduce a new activity called the Penguin Antarctic Adventure from 01 Jul.

The program sees guests don special snow gear and interact with King and Gentoo penguins in the Penguin Encounter exhibit.

Dorchester adds 1

DORCHESTER Collection will add the 109 room Le Richemond Hotel, in Geneva to its portfolio from 01 Aug.

The hotel will undergo a refurb of its public areas before its reopening, to bring it in line with the Collection's standards.

Wendy agents in Siem Reap



ABOVE: Wendy Wu Tours in conjunction with, Pandaw River Cruising and Vietnam Airlines hosted this group of agents on a nine-day faml through Vietnam and Cambodia earlier this month.

The educational included a Pandaw voyage between Saigon and Phnom Pehn, and a visit to the Ta Prohm temple in Siam Reap (as shown here).

Pictured from left are: Jennifer Henderson, Harvey World Travel Kalamunda; Claire Duband, East Burwood Travel; Connie Dziwoki, Jetset Modbury; Kylie Bevan, Wendy Wu Tours, QLD bde; Leah Fuller, Harvey World Travel The

Ridge; Zoe Mckinnon, Travelscene Warrnambool; Angie Arathoon, Travelworld Carlingford; Lynnette Johnson, Jetset Northlands; Lyn Carter, Jetset Mt Gravatt; Michelle Turnbull, B&P Travelworld Mt Gambier and Pamela Grill, Jetset Travel Rose Bay.

AAA training academy

THE Accommodation Association of Australia has unveiled a new training Academy, which will offer tailored knowledge of various sectors in the industry.

Launched in partnership with the Franklyn Scholar Hospitality and Futura Group the training will support people in their roles in the accommodation sector from housekeeping to reception and chef services.

Lorraine Duffy, Accommodation Association Chief Executive has said the launch is a positive step for its members.

"Investing in workforce development and initiatives to upgrade the quality of our industry service levels is a really a worthwhile process," she said.

Insight Euro price cut

CLIENTS booking early for travel to Europe & Britain in 2012 can take advantage of savings of up to \$350pp on Insight Vacations just released Preview Brochure.

Preview tours paid in full by 12 Sep save \$250, and Gold Preview trips are discounted by \$350.

Early Payment discounts cannot be used in conjunction with the promo - insightvacations.com.au.

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Please email your CV and cover letter to: satc@satc.com.au

Agents get a taste of Malaysia



LAST night Sydney's exclusive Tea Room in the iconic Queen Victoria Building was transformed to accommodate a slice of Malaysia, for the Malaysia Truly Asia Interactive Roadshow 2011.

Over 100 agents attended the evening, relishing the opportunity to speak with representatives from airlines such as Malaysia Airlines and Singapore Airlines, to hotels including the Mandarin Oriental and the newly opened Golden Palm Tree, as well as an array of tour and group operators, cruise lines and dive specialists.

Networking was followed by dinner, plentiful prize giveaways and scintillating presentations from a selection of wholesalers.

Agents learned about the ease of air travel to Malaysia, as well as the vast array of natural wonders and modern spectacles that tourists can look forward to, with

Shahrin Mokhtar of Tourism Malaysia's Sydney office joking that Malaysia was geographically and destination-wise, the "meat in the hamburger" of Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia.

Closing the evening, agents were urged to "do what you do best, and sell, sell, sell Malaysia".

Pictured top left is the team from Tourism Malaysia: Mohd. Roslan Bin Abdullah, Tourism Malaysia Sabah; Muhammad Rudy Khairudin, Consulate of Malaysia; Syed Muhadzir, Tourism Malaysia international marketing; Shukri Hanafia, Tourism Malaysia Perth; and Shahrin Mokhtar, Tourism Malaysia Sydney.

For lots more pictures from last night's event see our website at www.traveldaily.com.au/photos.



ABOVE: The team from Harvey World Travel North Ryde: Pauline Elias, Annette Carrboyd and Paul Bayyok.



LEFT: Malaysia Airlines' representatives at the event: Kristina Kiss, Gabrielle Vicari and Sergio Gomez.

Travel Daily

First with the news

Wednesday 29th June 2011

Delta flat beds fitted

DELTA Air Lines has completed the installation of full flat-bed seats in BusinessElite on its Boeing 777s and 767-400ER jets.

New BA LON routes

BRITISH Airways has added four times weekly services to Faro and thrice weekly services to Malaga from London City Airport.

Hotel Sacher reno

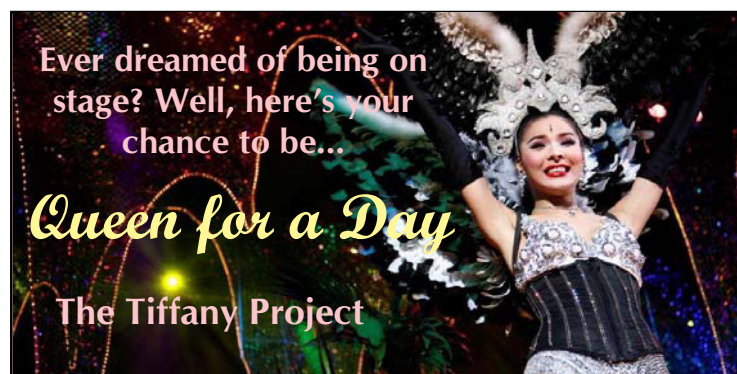
VIENNA'S Hotel Sacher has completed renovation work on the first rooms and suites on the 4th floor, available now to book.

Further refurbishments are still underway on some other floors.

Arkaba fly-in package

SOUTH Australia's Arkaba Station has a 'Fly to the Flinders' weekend escape on offer in Sep priced at \$1,960ppts which incl flights from Adelaide.

Guests have an option to stay at the homestead or take a two-night walking safari - full details at www.arkabastation.com.



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Queen for a Day

The Tiffany Project

Can you hold tune? Shake your tail feather? Love to perform? Here's your chance to appear on stage in Thailand's famous Tiffany's Show, Pattaya.

Throughout the month of June, **Travel Daily**, **Tourism Authority of Thailand**, **Thai Airways International**, **Siam Hotels and Resorts** and **Tiffany's Show** invite travel consultants to join us for a once in a lifetime "Queen for a Day" experience.

Send your audition video and you could join our group on a special famil trip to Thailand that includes flights with THAI, 5 nights courtesy Siam Hotels & Resorts (two in Bangkok & three in Pattaya) and a makeover, dress up and performance at the famous Tiffany Cabaret Show in Pattaya.

To enter, simply send in an audition to the Tiffany Show as a short video clip of yourself (30sec-1min, .mov or .wmv file) lip syncing to your favourite song. You can use props and/or dress up if you wish.

All the clips will be uploaded to **Travel Daily's** YouTube page. At the end of the month five winners (a representative from NSW, VIC/TAS, WA, QLD/NT and SA) will be chosen by the judging panel..... and one additional.....as voted by the industry.

So grab your video camera or mobile phone and release your inner performer!

Send your entries to:
tiffanysaudition@traveldaily.com.au

Click here for more information



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If you already have experience in product management and are looking for a change, this challenging and dynamic role could be the one for you! You will be responsible for driving growth and product development in the Fiji and South Pacific portfolio across our brands. You must have an entrepreneurial spirit, with drive and determination to get the best commercial gains from your portfolio. Naturally a strong negotiator and communicator, with established industry connections the role will encompass contracting, product development, research, analysis, brochure production & flyer development in line with promotional activity. Your time management skills in a multi-tasking environment are critical to success and you must be able to travel overseas to fulfil the demands of this role. Full knowledge of Calypso is essential with a minimum of 3 years product management experience.

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A unique opportunity awaits motivated individuals to enhance their product skills in a diverse role with the Pinpoint product team. You will have responsibility for day-to-day operations including loading contracts and specials, agent and supplier liaison, developing special offers for promotional activity, competitor analysis and some reporting. You will be a self-starter, highly motivated with superior time management skills and remain calm under pressure. A positive "can do" attitude is essential if you are to succeed in this role. Candidates with Calypso experience will be given preference.

PRODUCT COORDINATOR – INVENTORY

In this role you will have responsibility for the day-to-day operations within the inventory team, including inventory management, managing help desk calls and developing room night reports. Success in this role requires a good understanding of wholesale product and Calypso, with excellent attention to detail, the ability to work as part of a team, initiative and a positive can-do attitude.

PRODUCT ASSISTANTS x 3

In this role you will have a core focus on loading contracts, tactical specials, problem solving and some reporting. These roles will initially be on a casual and or contract basis subject to individual performance and on-going business growth. Essential skills include: Word, Excel and attention to detail with ability to interpret supplier contracts. Time management, strong interpersonal and communication skills are also essential, along with an excellent command of English grammar. Candidates with Calypso experience will be given preference.

Please forward a cover letter and resume in confidence to:
anne.larkin@au.pinpoint.biz with the title of the role you are applying for by COB on 1 July.