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Tuesday 12th August 2014

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Traveleague tickets

JUST 200 tickets remain for this year's Christmas Traveleague Luncheon, taking place on Wed 10 Dec at Melbourne's Crown Palladium, with the industry advised to book a spot asap - see christmastraveleague.com.

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NEW 'STAR SHIPS' ARRIVE



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Star Ratings names board

AFTA gm of accreditation Gary O'Riordan has been named as one of the members of a new high profile advisory board for Australia's Star Ratings scheme.

The board will work with the program's management and Australian auto clubs to "help re-invigorate the independent accommodation rating scheme."

Others on the board include Accommodation Association of Australia ceo Richard Munro, Julian Clark from the Lancemore Group and Quentin Long of *Australian Traveller* magazine.

"The calibre of our Industry Advisory Board speaks for itself,"

France workshops

RAIL Plus has announced the 2014 French Travel Workshops will be hosted at Sofitel Sydney, Wentworth on 02 Sep and Grand Hyatt, Melbourne on 03 Sep.

Hosted in partnership with Atout France, Etihad Airways, Air France and Monaco Tourism, the workshops will feature reps from hotels, tour operators, DMCs, city & tourism offices, wholesalers, cruise lines, airlines & more from France, New Caledonia and Tahiti.

Attendees have a chance to win a holiday to Monaco, plus all guests will receive a bottle of Alain Ducasse Champagne.

The shows run from 4-7pm, with a Monaco seminar at 6:30pm.

For more info & to register, see www.franceworkshop.com.au.

said gm Damien Hanger.

The scheme has undergone significant evolution this year (**TD** 30 May), becoming a wholly owned subsidiary of Australian Motoring Services.

There's keen interest in Star Ratings across the hospitality industry - particularly following the demise of the government's T-QUAL accreditation program.

The new advisory board will provide strategic advice, with plans including incorporation of consumer ratings and reviews, supporting best practices in asset management, and "increasing the value of the 'Stars' for operators and consumers alike."

Hanger said he was encouraged at the willingness of "such respected and qualified professionals" to join the board.

New role for Ager

NEIL Ager has been appointed as Senior National Agency Manager for Qantas Airways.

Ager's most recent role was QF regional manager for the Northern Territory, and prior to that he was British Airways regional commercial manager South West Pacific.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has nine pages of news & photos, plus full pages from: (**CLICK**)

- inPlace Recruitment jobs
- South African Tourism

FJ Amadeus deal

AMADEUS has signed a new contract with Fiji Airways that will enable Amadeus-connected agents globally to search and book the same range of airfares the Fijian national carrier offers through all its sales channels.

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Wotif hit by foreign sites

AUSTRALIAN OTA Wotif.com says its 2013/14 result was significantly impacted by "intense competition," with an 11% drop in room nights booked during the year (*TD* breaking news).

The company made major strides in shifting its business and revenue streams, but this was at the expense of lower margins.

Despite Wotif losing market share in its core domestic accom business, total revenue increased, and the previously announced hotel commission increases were also successfully implemented.

Other achievements included the roll out of Virtual Credit Card functionality to suppliers, website changes and app upgrades, more

SilkAir ups Darwin

A **NEW** sixth weekly SilkAir service will operate between Singapore and Darwin from 04 Dec to 29 Jan, GDSs indicate.

Operating on Thu using Boeing 737-800s, flight MI801 will depart SIN at 08:55 and arrive at DRW at 15:00, returning as MI802 which pushes back at 16:00 and touches down in Singapore at 19:00.

social media engagement and increased visibility of Wotif's 1.3m "authentic hotel reviews."

Digital marketing costs increased, with the Wotif brand continuing to have "market-leading brand awareness."

Bright spots also included a strong performance from the fledgling dynamic packaging operation, which chairman Dick McIlwain described as a "remarkable success."

This part of the business delivered an average of 4,500 rooms per month in the last quarter of FY14 - growth of more than 700% over the year.

Total profit was \$43.2m, down 15.4% on the prior year, with overall TTV dipping 2% to \$1.14b.

Accommodation TTV fell 8%, while the "Flights and other" division grew TTV by a healthy 44% to \$197 million.

MEANWHILE, the Wotif results also revealed payments to key management personnel, with ceo Scott Blume receiving a \$1.65m package and exec gm Flights & Packages, Helen Demetriou, paid a total of \$267,665.

air astana
 from the heart of eurasia

Air Astana will restart services from Almaty to Dubai from 01 September 2014 Starting at KZT 76,000 including taxes



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QF free First Class upgrade

BUSINESS Class passengers flying with Qantas to Hong Kong, Dallas/Ft Worth and London have the opportunity to upgrade to First Class at no charge one way as part of a short-life promotion.

The offer is applicable when booking QF Business Class seats from Sydney and Melbourne to London Heathrow by 15 Aug, for travel between 15 Aug-31 Jan, subject to availability in J/C/D/I seating classes.

For passengers flying to HKG, Qantas' free one way upgrade is

offered for departures and sales until 28 Sep in the same seating classes (excluding I50 and I21 Advance Purchase Fares).

For DFW bound pax, the booking window for the promo is much wider, and is valid for travel from 29 Sep to 31 Jul in J/C/D booking classes, for sales until 31 Aug.

MEANWHILE, QF is introducing a "more efficient and streamlined handling" of international ticket re-assessments and reissues for travel agents from next month.

Under changes to Qantas' int'l ticket reissue policy, effective 01 Sep, all tickets validated on QF-081 stock must be reissued (excluding Flex fares where after fare assessment there is no Change or No Show Fee collection or extra Fare and/or ticket taxes & carrier imposed fees resulting from a change).

Other changes relate to reissues of tickets with Emirates flights - **CLICK HERE** for full details.

Busabout 10% saving

YOUTH specialists Busabout, Haggis & Shamrock Adventures are offering a 10% discount on 2014 winter festive itineraries when booking before 30 Sep.

The price cut applies to trips including the 11-day Eastern Festive Trek, Paris & Amsterdam Festive Party and all Haggis Adv Christmas and Hogmanay trips.

Emirates airfare sale

EMIRATES has Economy class fares on sale to Europe from now until 26 Aug priced from \$1,627 to Dublin & \$1,690 to Barcelona.

Other destinations on sale incl Milan (\$1,697), Amsterdam (\$1,701), Athens (\$1,719), Paris (\$1,736), Frankfurt (\$1,780) and London (\$1,825).

EK has also dropped Business Class fares to Europe, priced from \$7,311 through to Dublin, \$7,435 to Paris and \$7,756 to London.

Fares on routes to the Middle East & Africa, the Americas, India and Asia are also discounted.

More at www.emirates.com/au.

New TMS chairman

TMS Asia Pacific md Steve Hamblin has announced the appointment of Mike Walmsley as chairman of the recruitment firm's board.

Walmsley is well known in the recruitment sector, and "will bring a wealth of online marketing expertise, online business implementation and knowledge," Hamblin said.

Departing TMS ceo Helene Taylor (**TD** Fri) has agreed to continue with the firm during a transition period to ensure there is no client disruption.

Hamblin, who is a director of Bangkok-based call centre provider CWA and also runs Parker Bridge Recruitment in Thailand and NZ, said Taylor had "made a huge impact on the business" and wished her every success in the future.



Window Seat

BRITISH Airways has gone to the dogs, with its latest inflight entertainment initiative being a dedicated channel showing footage of cute domestic pets.

Dubbed 'Paws & Relax' the new channel will be shown on long-haul flights, with BA saying that watching cavorting kittens and puppies can soothe and relax passengers.

"It might sound barking mad, but there's lots of research to suggest that watching pets can enhance overall wellbeing," said BA inflight entertainment manager, Richard D'Cruze.

"We have sniffed out some fantastic content that is cute, comforting and sure to appeal to travellers of all ages," he said.

THE latest tourism sensation in Budapest, Hungary is a series of so-called "escape games" where guests are locked up in a room and try to escape by solving a series of clues - watched via CCTV by staff who help out when players really get stuck.

Reuters reports that about 100 of the games have sprung up across the city in the last three years or so, taking advantage of Budapest's many "decrepit cellars and run-down houses".

Some of the locations are now top-rated attractions on TripAdvisor, with scenarios on offer such as ancient Egypt or the Middle Ages.

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Sarah's bound for Canada!



CONGRATULATIONS to Lisa Park from Flight Centre Weston who was the lucky winner of a trip to Canada during the Canada Specialist Agents training session held in Sydney last week.

Courtesy of Air Canada, Tourism Whistler, Rocky Mountaineer, Tourism Victoria & Tourism Vancouver, Lisa has won a trip to Canada where she will enjoy six

nights and activities in Vancouver, Whistler & Victoria & the Whistler Sea-to-Sky Climb rail trip, flying Economy Class with Air Canada.

Pictured with Sarah (centre) from left are Suzie Goumas, AC; Amy Bjarnason, Tourism Whistler; Julie Golding, Rocky Mountaineer; Neil Ford, AC; Michelle Edington, Tourism Victoria and Ainsley Dixon, Tourism Vancouver.

South Goldie website

A **REFRESHED** online presence has debuted for the Southern Gold Coast region of Queensland at southerngoldcoast.com.au.

The new website provides info on local businesses while showcasing tourist attractions and accommodation options to potential visitors.

Connecting Southern Gold Coast chief executive officer Peter Doggett said the new portal highlights the appeal of the area as a holiday destination and will be the key source for info on events and festivals.

Skalsky TIME speaker

ALTUSQ business coach Pat Skalsky has been named as the Guest Speaker for the next TIME Graduation on 03 Sep.

The ceremony will be held at the Parkroyal Darling Harbour on 03 Sep from 6-8pm.

Send your RSVP by 22 Aug to time@travelindustrymentor.com.au.

SQ A380 to Auckland

SINGAPORE Airlines yesterday confirmed plans to deploy Airbus A380 aircraft to Auckland starting 27 Oct following approval of its new alliance with Air New Zealand (**TD** Fri).

SQ will upgauge the aircraft used on the daily SQ285/286 flights (currently 278-seat Boeing 777-300ERs) to the 471-seat double decker, representing more than a 40% seat capacity growth.

Singapore Airlines also operates five weekly 777-200ER aircraft between Singapore and Auckland - capacity which will be taken over by Air New Zealand as part of its alliance with SQ.

MEANWHILE, Tourism New Zealand yesterday welcomed the Ministry of Transport's approval for the tie-up with Singapore Airlines, with chief executive Kevin Bowler saying the route provides a "vital connection" to South East Asia, India and the wider Asia region.

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fr **\$1,219** per adult fr **\$245** per child

Tahiti Nui price cut

ECONOMY and Business class airfares between Australia and Tahiti have been discounted by \$150 with Air Tahiti Nui for bookings until 31 May.

The promo reduces Economy fares to \$1,220 and Business to \$3,299, on sale to 05 Oct.

Air Tahiti Nui operates thrice weekly between Auckland and Papeete with connections from Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane in partnership with Qantas.

For bookings, call 1300 657 190.

Locomote recruits

ST KILDA-BASED business travel technology platform Locomote has announced the appointment of Fiona Gribbon as director of client services.

Gribbon has over 20 years travel industry experience, with prior roles at Ansett, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, HRG & most recently ANZ Bank as global travel manager.

Last week, Travelport announced it was investing in Locomote after acquiring a 49% stake in the business (**TD** 05 Aug).

Overland self-guided

TASMANIAN Expeditions has introduced new self-guided walking holidays of the iconic Overland Track in the Apple Isle.

Designed to save money from pricey organised group tours and save time by being pre-planned, the six-day walks operate daily from Oct to May.

All food, fuel and a stove, sleeping bag & innersheet, maps, a backpack and EPIRB are included in the \$995 per person price tag, with hikers needing to only bring clothing.

A bus transfer from a hotel in Launceston to the start of the walk in Cradle Mountain and end at Lake St. Clair, permits and passes are also included.

Bookings made before 30 Aug will save 10% on the price - see tasmanianexpeditions.com.au.

Blue Lagoon combos

BLUE Lagoon Cruises has teamed with First Landing Resort in Nadi and Sofitel Fiji Resort & Spa in Denarau to offer a range of 'cruise and stay' combos for bookings between 01 Sep-31 Mar.

Options include two free nights at the Sofitel when booking a seven night cruise for two adults or two free nights at First Landing Resort when booking a three-night cruise before 31 Mar.

Chile - be there or be square



TURISMO Chile kicked off its Australian four-day roadshow for the trade in Melbourne yesterday at Showtime in Southbank.

The sales mission includes 15 Chilean businesses & continues in the Victorian capital today, culminating with a 'Chile Night' party at 5pm.

Guests at the party can sample some of the country's wines and traditional drinks, including the Pisco Sour, artisan beer and many favourite street foods.

On Thu & Fri, the roadshow heads to Sydney where retailers and wholesalers will also have the opportunity to meet with

delegates from Chile to learn more about the South American gateway for Aussie travellers.

There is also a Chile Party planned for Sydney at 5pm on Fri.

Places are still available to meet with Turismo Chile delegates while in the country, if interested contact Sonia on (03) 9670 8350.

Pictured at yesterday's launch event is Pablo Retamal, Turismo Chile Asia Pacific markets manager (centre), with Debbie Feldman, Turismo Chile's global marketing manager (third from left) and Maria Guarda, Turismo Chile's project manager (third from right) flanked by staff.

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We are seeking an energetic and professional District Sales Manager to join our National Sales Team, to develop accounts in the Melbourne Metropolitan and Victoria Region.

The role will be responsible for growing guest numbers and revenue, increasing market share and building strong and profitable business relationships.

Proven success in Sales/Business Development and Account Management in the travel sector, or a product-based selling capacity for a corporate organisation, is essential. Prior cruise industry experience is an advantage.

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We're looking for an exceptional individual to join our Australia & NZ team as PR Manager.

You'll need at least five years' experience in a PR agency or in-house role, a creative mind and an ability to juggle multiple priorities. This is a busy role so you have to be well-organised and have the confidence to make sound decisions.

A passport will be required! As you may expect, there will be travel involved in this role as we have extensive media relations activity that require attention to detail in the planning and execution.

For more information, contact Danielle Riley on (02) 9937 5418 or send your application to recruitment@rcclapac.com. Applications close 5pm Friday 22 August 2014



Viator signed over

FORMAL contracts to make online tour and activity platform Viator part of the TripAdvisor Group have been formally signed. The acquisition of Viator for around \$200 million (**TD 28 Jul**) will see Viator maintain all existing offices and staff numbers globally, and will continue to be headed by current ceo Ms Barrie Seidenberg.

Great migration app

CAPE Town based safari operator Discover Africa has launched a new app which tracks the great wildebeest migration in real-time. Dubbed 'HerdTracker', the app shows instant updates of the migration's precise location, based on updates from pilots flying over the Serengeti and Maasai Mara, safari guides, rangers and lodge staff. Paired with a migration map that predicts wildebeest movements, the HerdTracker aims to make it easier for visitors to determine where the herd will be at the time of travel. **CLICK HERE** for more details.

TZ/TT tie-up go-ahead

SCOOT and Singaporean low-cost carrier Tiger Airways are now able to coordinate on a range of operational matters, having received anti-trust immunity from Singapore competition authorities. Papers for the anti-trust immunity were formally lodged earlier this year (**TD 07 Feb**).

The carriers can now collaborate on pricing, routes, scheduling, sales and connection times for passengers transiting through the shared hub at Changi Airport.

Singapore Airlines owns 100% of Scoot and currently holds a 40% stake in Tigerair, with the immunity now expected to help SIA restructure both carriers to boost traffic and improve yield.

Turtle season escape

HERON Island has released a three night Turtle Season Escape package for travel between 06 Oct-31 Mar priced from \$477ppts.

Motorbike rentals

EUROPCAR is offering a range of BMW GS motorbikes as part of its rental fleet options from Melbourne Tullamarine airport and CBD locations.

The motorbikes range from 650cc to 1200cc, and riders can also hire safety gear and helmets.

Qantas NOVA JV

QANTAS has confirmed a new tie-up with NOVA Entertainment in an effort to expose the brand to a younger audience.

In partnership with Optus, Sony Music Australia and Marquee Nightclubs, QF has launched a consumer competition in which 26 listeners will join radio host Kent 'Smallzy' Small on a four city "Red Room Global Tour."

The seven-day tour begins at The Star Sydney where pop group Justice Crew, Dami Im and Bonnie Anderson will perform.

It then moves to Los Angeles where Samantha Jade will hold the first ever performance in Qantas' new Los Angeles Business Lounge at LAX, then proceeds onto Red Room gigs in New York to see Usher and ends in Las Vegas to hear G.R.L.

Cook Islands stay pay

CROWN Beach Resort & Spa in Rarotonga has rolled out a new deal, offering NZD\$100 in-house credit and a three day car hire when booking a stay pay deal for travel between 01 Jan and 30 Apr.

Available when booking either a 'Stay 5, Pay 4' or 'Stay 7, Pay 5' before 31 Aug, the package also includes daily brekkie, return transfers and more - contact your preferred wholesaler to book.



CONGRATULATIONS

Louise McAlpine
from *The Travel Corporation*

Louise is the top point scorer for Round 22 of *Travel Daily's* NRL footy tipping competition, and has won a double admission pass to SKYWALK at Sydney Tower Eye, courtesy of Merlin Entertainments Group.



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2nd Prize: 5-night holiday to Vanuatu, courtesy of Air Vanuatu & The Grand Hotel and Casino Vanuatu



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Europe	\$1,675*	South America	\$2,137*
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Garuda ceo switch

GARUDA Indonesia has begun the search for a new chief executive officer to replace Emirsyah Satar who will step down from Oct.

According to *Bisnis.com*, government regulations in Indonesia limit GA ceos to serve a maximum of two five-year terms.

Satar took on the ceo role with Garuda Indonesia back in 2005.

Free travel seminar

FORMER Contiki tour director/trainer/leader in Europe, turned presenter, Mark Carter will host a free travel seminar in Sydney for a handful of sales managers and senior leaders next month.

Carter possesses a wealth of experience working with market leaders across several industry verticals including media, e-commerce, advertising, recruitment, hospitality, banking, telecommunications, government and not-for-profit.

The session will cover topics such as sales psychology, method of sales leadership & behavioural science.

Just 20 spots are available for the two hour session, to be held on Fri 05 Sep at Regus, Lvl 5, Plaza Building, Australia Square, 95 Pitt St, Sydney from 10am to 12pm.

RSVP your interest to attend to Lisa Maroun - **CLICK HERE**.

Travelmarvel Africa

A 48-PAGE Africa program has been rolled out by Travelmarvel for 2015, made up of nine trips including two new itineraries.

The tour operator has doubled the number of departures in its second season to Africa, and introduced extensions to Zanzibar and an upgrade opportunity to a two-night Ichobezi Safari cruise on select Chobe River dates.

The program contains a range of *Insider Experiences*, such as a visit to a Maasai Village in Kenya to learn about the local way of life or a 'taste of Africa' culinary experience bush dinner.

Two earlybird specials are in market including a Companion Fly Free (just pay taxes from \$750) on all itineraries, and a Business Class fare deal of \$5,295 + tax flying with South African Airways, available for bookings until 31 Jan - see www.travelmarvel.com.au.

SIA/Tata's new Indian carrier



SINGAPORE Airlines and Tata Group last night revealed the name of their new full service Indian venture (**TD 20 Sep**) on social media as Vistara.

Based out of Delhi, Vistara is slated to launch in Oct (subject to regulatory approvals) when it takes delivery of its first plane, an Airbus A320-200 aircraft - four months later than first planned.

It's understood Vistara will initially operate to five cities, with Mumbai, Bangalore, Goa and Hyderabad all earmarked, before expanding to 11 destinations with 87 weekly flights.

Vistara will also extend its operation to int'l destinations.

CEO of the start-up Phee Teik Yeoh said the airline would boost its fleet to five within the first calendar year.

Within five years, Tata-SIA Airlines Limited expects to have a fleet of 20 aircraft, including A320neos for its Indian venture.

According to Vistara's Facebook site, the carrier will "transform the air traveller's experience, with an obsession for quality in every aspect of passenger engagement with the airline, treating guests as unique individuals & delighting them with intuitive thoughtfulness."

Aircraft livery (**pictured**) features an eight pointed star "made of fluid interconnecting lines that reflects an unbounded universe," the carrier commented.

Cabin crew uniforms have been crafted by designer duo Abraham & Thakore, and capture the spirit of Vistara - elegant, practical and embodying the best of Indian tradition, the new carrier's website says.

Chile RETAILERS

Sales mission to Australia

Chile's travel industry is in Sydney on Friday at 4pm for a special retailer briefing.

Chile Night Friday Win 1 of 3 LAN flights to Santiago.

To book your place, contact Sonia on (03) 9670 8350

Click here to RSVP

Chile WHOLESALERS

Sales mission to Australia

Chile's travel industry is in Sydney on Thursday and Friday for wholesaler briefings.

Chile Night Friday Win 1 of 3 LAN flights to Santiago.

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Peninsula joins Elite

UPMARKET hotel group chain Peninsula Hotels has accepted an invitation from DestinationElite to join the hotel alliance, which now features 200 properties globally.

Kings & Queens tour South Island



AGENTS from around Australia headed across the ditch recently to check out the reinvigorated and rebuilt Christchurch on a famil tour hosted by AAT Kings.

The group of 21 Flight Centre agents came from five different states for the trip, which was escorted by Qld sales manager Nichole Steadman and NSW/ACT sales manager Daniel Toby.

Kicking things off was a custom sightseeing and shopping tour of the burgeoning city, with plenty of wallets emptied, plastic swiped and bags loaded onto the coach.

After leaving Christchurch, the group embarked on the famous TranzAlpine Railway for a scenic venture to Arthurs Pass, where the views of Lake Pukaki and Lake Tekapo were waiting to amaze.

Plenty of first class local cuisine was dished up over the course of the trip, capped off by tasting freshly picked fruit in Cromwell.

A trip to Queenstown was

also on the itinerary, with the daredevils in the group suiting up for a white-knuckle ride on the Shotover Jet, while others took on the AJ Hackett Bungy Jump.

Other highlights included the Sky Gondola to Bob's Peak, where the group marvelled in the vast panoramic vistas on show, and cultural experiences such as an authentic Haka performance.

Pictured above is the group, made up of Jason Ruler, Kate Sullivan, William James Hawking, Karen Turner, Laura Monaghan, Danielle Campbell-Small, Sarah Louise McRoberts, Kate McDonald, Joanna Luke, Danika Peeters, Hannah Morgan, Cherie Lavin, Michaela Pound, Julie Mahoney, Kavita Vanvliet, Nicole Mendonca, Christina Gavirelatos, Robert Thomas Baddams, Evelyn Edmonds, Michelle Louise Evans, Krista Michelle Suwidji, Tahlia Amanda Wadad Nehme and Elizabeth Mae Agostino.



AFTA UPDATE

The latest updates from AFTA's Chief Executive, Jayson Westbury

TRAVEL agents across Australia are embracing the new industry regulatory environment, with the number of accredited ATAS locations now rapidly approaching 2,000.

To support this take up and as another excellent step in the process, the state government consumer agencies will shortly roll out their new "Pack Some Peace of Mind" campaign across a range of media outlets.

Importantly, one point that will be made strongly in the government-backed campaign is that consumers should be on the lookout for ATAS accredited agents.

This is an important item that should not be missed, and it has been part of the strategy to hold off on the campaign to ensure that the industry has had some time to get accredited.

Meanwhile, AFTA has been working with the accredited agents to ensure that the "find an accredited agent" feature on the ATAS website at www.atas.com.au will be ready to go to coincide with the kickoff of the campaign - all good news for those agents that have embraced the change and joined the scheme.

There has also been some information released in relation to the travel hub that will be operated by CHOICE.

This outcome forms a part of the original Ministerial decision that was expressed back in 2012 when the various grants from the TCF reserve were identified.

In accordance with the decision, AFTA continues to engage with CHOICE to ensure that the travel hub provides sound and appropriate information to travellers.

So keep an eye out for the campaign "pack some peace of mind" which will look to educate consumers about the changes to the laws, the introduction of ATAS and some important messages to consumers about things they should look out for and consider when booking travel.

The new environment is off and running and it is really fantastic to see just how many travel agencies have joined ATAS. We continue to have many applications every day and the team at AFTA are working as efficiently as they can to get those applications ATAS accredited.



Results steady for IHG

INCREASED underlying revenue and operating profit has been reported by InterContinental Hotels Group in its half year stats.

Across the group, underlying revenue climbed 4% to US\$788m, while operating profit surpassed \$300m, up 6% year-on-year on total gross profit of US\$1.1b.

IHG ceo Rick Solomons said it remained committed to reducing its asset base, with the disposal of two owned hotels and progress made on remaining owned hotels.

Japan Seminar invite

TRAVEL agents in Sydney are being invited to learn more about Japan at an upcoming roadshow featuring nine visiting suppliers.

The Japan: Endless Discovery Seminar 2014 will take place at Customs House Sydney on 04 Sep from 5pm, with presentations & networking opportunities on offer.

Exhibitors will include the Japan National Tourism Organisation, Tokyo, Hiroshima, the Central Japan Railway Company & more.

To RSVP to attend, **CLICK HERE**.

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Expo owners change

MARKETS and events organiser OFM Exhibitions has finalised the purchase of the Adventure Travel Expo Series, it has been advised.

Former owner Andrew Paltridge says he will help in the transition of the organisation for the next two events in Sydney in Nov and in Melbourne in Feb next year.

STA Travel will remain onboard as a sponsor of the Expo events.

Money

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

\$1AUD = US\$0.92

TALK of the Reserve Bank having to cut interest rates further, past already record low levels, is starting to build after poorer than expected growth forecasts.

While the world watches events unfolding in the Ukraine, Gaza and lately, Iraq, markets remain somewhat in a state of limbo, which is leaving the AUD short of any real day-to-day direction.

Geopolitical tensions continue to show signs of easing, leading to recovery in some markets.

The local dollar dipped slightly overnight against the UK Pound, the US Dollar and the Chinese yuan, despite some improvement by other major currencies.

Wholesale rates this morning:

US	\$0.925
UK	£0.551
NZ	\$1.095
Euro	€0.691
Japan	¥94.63
Singapore	\$1.116
China	¥5.695
South Africa	R9.833
Canada	\$1.011
Crude oil	US\$98.08

Rewards & Miles pact

MARRIOTT International has joined forces with Etihad Airways to link their respective loyalty programs for mutual cooperation.

Members of Marriott Rewards can now convert their points into Etihad Guest Miles, while also earning Miles through staying at all Marriott properties worldwide.

Etihad Guest Miles are earned at different rates, with two miles accrued per US dollar spent on all qualifying charges at high-end brands such as JW Marriott and Autograph Collection properties.

Two miles are earned on room rate only at Ritz-Carlton, EDITION and Gaylord Hotels, while one mile is earned per US dollar spent on room rate at economy brands including Courtyard by Marriott, AC Hotels and Moxy Hotels.

Conference organisers can also earn miles per US dollar spent, with a minimum ten room nights.

Russia airspace threat

AIRLINES could be forced to reroute services between Europe and Asia after Russia threatened to close its airspace in retaliation to recent financial sanctions.

The sanctions have already resulted in the full grounding of Russian low-cost carrier Dobrolet, an Aeroflot offshoot (**TD** 04 Aug).

Any such action will force flights from Europe to Asia to avoid the traditional route over Siberia, which would result in up to 50% higher fuel costs & longer flights.

Flights to Japan, Korea and China would be most affected if such a ban was implemented.

Florida Four Seasons

LUXURY hotel firm Four Seasons has opened its third property in Florida in the form of a 443-room resort in Orlando.

The hotel is positioned near to Walt Disney World theme parks and also offers a kids zone named Explorer Island, which features water slides & an ancient mansion set encircled by a flowing river.

WIN A LUXURY SOUTH OF FRANCE RIVER CRUISE

Throughout August, **Travel Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a luxury all-inclusive river cruise, courtesy of **Scenic Tours**.

The all-inclusive prize includes return economy class airfares to Europe, a 13 day South of France Luxury River Cruise for two adults with private butler service, all meals, complimentary beverages all day, all tipping and gratuities and airport transfers.

Every day this month **TD** will ask a different question about Scenic Tours France River Cruises. The subscriber with the most correct entries and the most creative response to the final question will win this great prize.

Email your answers to: scenictourscmp@traveldaily.com.au.

Q8: Why is cruising in Bordeaux quite different to any other style of cruising in Europe?

Click [HERE](#) for hints



Brides in Hyatt mag

HYATT Australia has launched a new interactive digital magazine aimed at promoting its wedding facilities to couples and planners.

The new Hyatt Weddings digital offering will be released annually & will feature the latest offerings and trends from photographers, florists, designers and stylists.

Honeymoon destination listings will also feature in the guidebook.

Record month at LHR

PASSENGER numbers through London Heathrow hit their highest levels on record in Jul, with 6.97 million using the facility. Even though the figure was a new record, it was still only 0.5% up on the level set in Jul 2013.

Heathrow regularly operates close to absolute capacity and remains at the centre of a tussle over its future growth prospects.

1

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Resume Photos: “But I like that photo of me taken at the pub!”

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Successful, dynamic and forward thinking Online Travel company based in Sydney's CBD is constantly growing & seeks 2 new staff members for their teams. Delivering unique & exciting activities & tours worldwide they offer 3 shifts; Day shift, Afternoon shift and Evening shift. Every shift works week on then has the entire next week off - so in effect you are working half a year!

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