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New insurer targets biz

NEW Australian travel insurer Professionals Travel Cover will debut next week with its sights set on the professional and small business market.

Selling both direct and through the trade, the company will offer a single annual travel insurance policy that covers up to 10 colleagues for multiple trips, domestically and overseas.

The new entity has been created by md and industry veteran Ian Jackson, a past head of online insurer Travel Insurance Direct.

Jackson said the company would offer commission to agents as well as selling direct online.

"Anecdotally we know that travel agents do get asked about providing a group policy for businesses," Jackson said.

"As the average premium exceeds \$1,000, it can become

Consolidated/EY deal

CONSOLIDATED Travel and Etihad Airways are giving agents the chance to win vouchers for every EY ticket issued to Europe between now and 14 Feb.

For details, see the back page.

profitable for travel agents."

The tax-deductible policies cover business and leisure travel and do not require pre-existing medical conditions to be declared.

Jackson said his firm would offer "the most cost effective travel insurance currently available".

"From \$167 per person for a single annual policy that covers up to 10 travellers, businesses can save more than 70%," he said.

Cover will be insured by underwriters at Lloyds, with Coffre-Fort issuing policies and managing claims.

RCI 72 hour flash sale

ROYAL Caribbean International has kicked off a 72 hour flash sale on two Explorer of the Seas sailings, which are priced from just \$75 per day.

Choose between the 12-day South Pacific & Fiji voyage (departing 04 Mar) or the 10-day South Pacific cruise (22 Feb).

Both depart from Sydney.

The flash deal is available from today through until 9:59pm (AEDT) on 10 Feb.

See the cover wrap for details.

U by Uniworld to be non-inclusive

UNIWORLD'S new European youth-based river cruise program will be a non-inclusive product, The Travel Corporation's global ceo Brett Tollman has revealed.

When it debuts next year with two ships, U by Uniworld will offer voyages from Paris and on the Rhine, Main and Danube.

Targeted at the 18-40 year old market, Tollman told TD it will be "non-inclusive", meaning all breakfasts and half meals (either lunch or dinner) will be included, along with a range of standard inclusions and plenty of free time for pax to take optional excursions.

U by Uniworld will be promoted in Uniworld's all-inclusive luxury program for 2018 and in Contiki 2018 brochure, coming out soon. More in today's Cruise Weekly.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has eight pages of news, a photo page for **Entire Travel**, a front cover page for RCCL plus full pages from:

- inPlace Recruitment
- Consolidated/EY promo





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Sydney storm

SYDNEY Airport is warning that flights travelling in and out of Sydney today may be affected by delays, diversions & cancellations due to a severe storm.

Passengers are urged to check with their airline for updates.



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Travel Corp air portal live

NEW online air portals have been activated by The Travel Corporation for holiday brands Trafalgar and Insight Vacations, designed specifically to simplify the handling of air booking for travel agents, TD can reveal.

TTC Australia ceo John Veitch told Travel Daily the portals were quietly rolled out 10 days ago to capitalise on the suite of air deals the companies have in market.

Currently, when booked in conjunction with most itineraries, Trafalgar has airfares to anywhere in Europe priced from \$899, while sister-brand Insight Vacations has the same promo, on top of a tactical fares to Italy, from \$599.

"We've really revolutionised the touring market with air deals this year and that's been incredibly successful and a key part of our offering," Veitch said.

"Our job is to try and make life very simple for agents and we understand consultants have a complex and very difficult task, therefore it is our responsibility to streamline processes to make their bookings seamless."

Veitch said the result was a portal for both touring brands that was easier and quicker to use, at the same time taking pressure off TTC's contact centre.

"It's got virtually every airfare that is available and agents can look at all availability and book." For complex itineraries or when itineraries, "it's probably best to contact the call centre team."

agents may top and tail two

"We encourage agents to have a look at it and to use it," he said.

Commending Veitch on the air portal's development, TTC global ceo Brett Tollman added the initiatives were introduced due to the sheer volume of enquiries, saying the latest promotions have seen "big increases" in bookings.

"Being able to do some of the admin online when agents want to do it obviously helps," he said.

Read more from The Travel Corporation on page four.

QFFF queries offshore

QANTAS is shifting some of its Frequent Flyer call centre operations offshore in a move criticised by the Australian Services Union (ASU).

The union says 100 Melbourne workers will be cut by Jun.

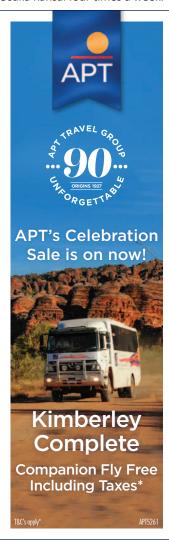
"The work will now be performed in Manila and New Zealand where presumably Qantas will benefit from doing business with off-shore providers that have cheap labour costs," an ASU statement says.

A Qantas spokesman told TD the airline had recently appointed a new partner, TeleTech, to respond to FF queries and that the vast majority of calls were answered in Australia or New Zealand.

He said some tasks including emails were performed offshore.

AAX HNL start date

AIRASIA X and sister-carrier Thai AirAsia X will launch Honolulu services on 28 Jun after its recent approval from the US. GDS displays show flights will operate from KUL to HNL via Osaka Kansai four times a week.















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Kangaroo Is Resort rubberstamp

A LUXURY tourist resort slated for Kangaroo Island (*TD* 26 Aug 15) has been given planning approval by the South Australian Government.

The 323-key development is set to be constructed at American River and will be spread across a four-storey hotel, 10 seven-storey lodges, 20 cottages and 20 cabins.

Amenities will include a restaurant and bar, cooking school and kitchen garden, conference facility for 400 people and spa and swimming pool.

City and Central Consulting (CCC), the South Australian Company behind the project, will begin work within two years, with the goal to have the resort completed in the next five years.

CCC said the cost of the project was estimated to be \$35 million, including \$22 million needed to develop the site.

South Australian Tourism

Minister Leon Bignell told the *ABC* yesterday that the resort would be a welcome addition to the island.

"We are very, very pleased to see more accommodation on the island," he said.

He said the council had been "driving and supporting" the project which was expected to boost high-end tourism to KI.

BA strikes begin

BRITISH Airways cabin crew walked off the job on Sun and are set to strike for most of this week following a dispute over low pay.

Members of Unite who work for BA's mixed fleet are expected to stop work until this Sat.

In an official statement BA said all its passengers would be able to fly to their destinations despite the industrial action, with just a few short haul London Heathrow flights having to be merged.

RCL in prime time

TV PERSONALITY Tom Williams will be delivering Seven News' Holiday Report from Royal Caribbean over the next six weeks.

The six part series, which kicked off yesterday, will be aired during *Seven News* at 6pm in New South Wales and Queensland.

Williams will share his hot tips on how to get the most out of a Royal Caribbean cruise holiday.

The series will cover dining, entertainment, technology, relaxation, adventure and family fun and will showcase megaliner, *Ovation of the Seas*.

New Daydream bdm

DAYDREAM Island Resort and Spa in the Whitsundays has appointed Karen Everingham as its business development manager - MICE.

Everingham joins Daydream from Tourism Fiji where she was state manager for Queensland.



Window Seat

ARUBA has invited the losers of the American SuperBowl to recuperate on the "happiest island in the world".

Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) is offering the Atlanta Falcons free flights to the Southern Caribbean Island and four complimentary days of accommodation.

"Our destination is famous for warm hospitality and happy locals, and we believe it's important to embrace both wins and losses in the pursuit of a happy, fulfilling life," ceo of ATA Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes said.

While we're unsure if any players have taken up the sweet deal to "rest and recover on the white sand beaches" of the island paradise, we think they'd be crazy not to!





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Adventure World program opens up the USA

WHOLESALER Adventure World, in partnership with Brand USA, unveiled its first standalone USA brochure to a crowd of trade partners, travel agents and media at the Australian Museum last night.

The 2017/18 USA guide has taken 18 months for The Travel Corporation's soft adventure brand to develop, with the end product a collection of unique tailor-made itineraries across vast areas of America untapped to sell in this market.

MD Neil Rodgers says
Adventure World has broken
new ground for a wholesaler in
terms of product procurement,
bringing previously non-market
ready hotels, lodges and other
suppliers into Adventure World's
res system and ready to sell, now.

By intention, the program bypasses mainstream US cities, instead delving into the primary regions of Alaska, West Coast, Rockies, the Southwest (Texas, Louisiana, Georgia, Mississippi) and Deep South, New England (Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine) and the Maritime region.

"So there's no New York in it. There's no Route 66, there's no Florida, there's no Hawaii. That's no where to be found," Rodgers told *Travel Daily* last month when previewing the program.

"It's all focussed on wildlife, wilderness, active adventures, photography, culinary, culture



and heritage," he said.

The 120-page brochure spotlights National Parks, Native America, cross border itineraries into Canada and there are options such as ranch stays in Texas, Bison migration 4WD safaris and historic wagon trail trips.

"The product is so specific to be aligned to Adventure World.

"That's taken the longest time to bring it together," he told **TD**.

Enlisting USA expert Andrew Hutchinson from Pinpoint to drive the program, Rodgers said he and Hutchinson evaluated past requests for USA non-brochured product with what was already available through competitors to plug a gaping hole in the market.

He said USA product that was previously a "nightmare" to book because suppliers required prepayment had been brought into the mainstream res platform "where it can be booked, held, secured and paid".

At the event, Brand USA director for Australia/NZ Matt Fletcher heaped praise on AW and the TTC for its continued promotion of the United States.

"For us it's a fantastic opportunity to highlight a product portfolio previously inaccessible to travel agents in this market.

"It's a product beyond the bright lights of New York, the fun of Florida. It's a wealth of experiences of adventurous America," Fletcher added.

Pictured from left are David Hosking, TTC Australia director; Neil Rodgers, Adventure World; Brett Tollman, TTC global ceo; Matt Fletcher, Brand USA and John Veitch, TTC Australia chief executive officer.

Houston: No problem

THE City of Houston has told the US Dept of Transportation it has no problem with Air China's application to renew its authority to fly between Beijing and George Bush Int'l, despite American Airlines filing its objection late last month (TD Thu).

In a submission to the DOT, the City of Houston said CA's IAH route was of "critical importance" to the Texan city, and AA's gripe should be handled in the context of the US-China air services bilateral negotiations.

Mantra Port Macq

THE Observatory in Port Macquarie on the NSW North Coast has joined Mantra Group's collection of hotels (*TD* 24 Nov).

Rebranded as Manta Observatory, it features 85 hotel rooms, one-, two- and threebedroom units and is positioned overlooking Town Beach, 400 metres from the town centre.

Orange to BNE direct

REGIONAL airline Fly Corporate says travel agents in Orange are already taking enquiries for its new direct interstate services to Brisbane, set to launch on 20 Feb (*TD* 16 Dec).

Fly Corporate's weekday service will be operated using Saab 340B Plus aircraft, seating up to 34 pax.

One way fares on the Orange-Brisbane route start at \$259.

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Whitsunday secrets

TOURISM Whitsundays will target the drive market with a new campaign designed to showcase the Queensland region's "hidden secrets".

Appearing on digital platforms through Feb and Mar, the push is aimed at those within a 400km radius and highlights attractions and activities that people might not have ordinarily considered.

Tourism Whitsundays ceo Craig Turner said the drive would also involve "cheeky ambush marketing" and was backed by special offers and a website.

See www.moretoexplore.com. au for more.

Hyatt Xiamen

HYATT Hotels Corp has opened a new property in the southern Chinese city of Xiamen.

The Hyatt Regency Xiamen Wuyuanwan has 301 rooms and 2,500m² of meeting space.

Evergreen in Asia

EVERGREEN Tours is offering a choice of five itineraries in its newly released 2018 Vietnam and Cambodia river cruise brochure.

The company will operate a second season aboard the *RV Mekong Navigator*, catering to 68 guests in 34 cabins.

Earlybird offers include a fly free deal and 2-for-1 flights, available until 30 Sep.

An 8-day Magnificent Mekong cruise leads in at \$2,595ppts.

Railway spa carriage

BELMOND has revealed it will offer a spa carriage aboard the Belmond Royal Scotsman luxury train, starting 17 Apr.

The Bamford Haybarn Spa will offer treatments for passengers on overnight rail journeys from Edinburgh through Scotland and other parts of the UK.

The carriage is a first for Belmond Trains & Cruises.

Catch up with APT's Geoff McGeary, as he tells us about his fortunate life in the February issue of travelBulletin.

travelBulletin



Helloworld says G'Day in LA



AMONG the many Aussies in LA for G'Day USA this year were Helloworld senior executives Cinzia Burnes and Gregory Lording who joined a VIP event hosted by Qantas at LAX.

"There are in excess of 680,000 Americans visiting Australia every year and they represent one of the highest per capita spends while on their holidays," said Burnes, Helloworld exec director.

"The USA is an important market to Australia and one that the wholesale arm of Helloworld, Qantas Vacations who are based in LA, continues to work towards growing," she said.

Pictured are Gregory Lording, group gm Helloworld Wholesale; Cinzia Burnes; Alan Joyce, Qantas ceo; Gareth Evans, Qantas cfo and Stephen Thompson, Qantas exec vp for the Americas.





Tuesday 7th Feb 2017

CZ to Mexico City

GDS displays indicate China Southern will commence a new thrice weekly service between Guangzhou and Mexico via Vancouver City from 10 Apr.

AC displays at Syd's Travel Expo



AIR Canada representatives Neil Ford and Fei Revel (pictured) were in Sydney over the weekend to promote the carrier's new products and destinations at the Travel Expo.

The carrier's general manager Paul McClean said "Air Canada's recent introduction of a new three-cabin inflight product, plus the fact that we now offer nonstop flights to Vancouver from Sydney and Brisbane, generated unprecedented interest this year from Australian travellers".

Air Canada representatives will continue onwards to Melbourne this weekend and Brisbane the following week to participate in the Travel Expo.

PPHG appointment

THOMAS Zhong has been named Pan Pacific Hotels Groups' new vice president of operations support and pre-openings.

He will be tasked with overseeing the opening of Pan Pacific Beijing in China and Pan Pacific Yangon in Myanmar.

Homewood Orlando

HOMEWOOD Suites by Hilton Orlando Convention Center South is welcoming its first guests.

The 133-suite property offers a combination of studio, one- and two bedroom accommodation and is situated within close proximity to tourist hot spots.

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AFTA update

From AFTA's chief executive, Jayson Westbury

OFF the back of the Chinese New Year celebrations just a week ago and moving into the year of the Rooster, I was honoured to take part in the launch of the China – Australia Year of Tourism 2017 (CAYOT17) over the weekend.

The events that took place were a celebration of the cultural diversity and depth of talent that China has to

offer. The China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and Tourism Australia hosted a wonderful concert at the Sydney Opera House and from the audience reaction, many from the travel industry, the event was a very big success.

The China and Australia relationship is clearly a very important one. This sentiment was expressed by the two senior representatives namely the Chairman of the CNTA Dr Li Jinzao and the Hon. Steven Ciobo, Minister for Trade, Tourism & Investment, who both provided strong commitment speeches about the importance of two-way tourism between the two countries.

China is clearly going to go on to grow as our number one inbound source market with over 1 million visitors already coming and a very strong plan by Tourism Australia to grow this more and more.

From the outbound side if the Hong Kong numbers are included, China attracts over 500,000 Australian visitors. The goal is to double that over the years ahead and as China becomes closer to Australia on a number of economic fronts and Aussies become more and more aware of just how diverse China is and the many and varied experiences that can be taken, it is bound to continue to grow and grow.

The CAYOT17 will help all this along as both governments look to work collaboratively on growing visitor numbers both ways. As a country, Australia engages with so many other countries in relation to tourism and it is exciting to see the Australian Government talking as they are about the outbound side of the discussion.

This may well be a first and I hope it is a template for more to come. As I have said many times in the past, if both inbound and outbound are not working together the opportunities for everyone in the travel value chain may not reach their full potential. This is what all of you who are in the travel industry who own Australian companies and employ Australians would like to see.

Trek North fined

LEIGH Alan Jorgensen, the former director of Trek North Tours, has been charged for allegedly lying to avoid paying out \$55,000 to the Fair Work Ombudsman for underpaying staff, SMH reports.

It's alleged that Jorgensen gave the misinformation on a form he lodged to voluntarily deregister his company in Feb last year.

The court ruled that he back pay five staff members \$29,956 following the action that was lodged to the Fair Work Ombudsman.

He will appear at the Cairns Magistrates Court on 21 Mar.

YTL 5th UK property

YTL Hotels has opened its fifth property in the United Kingdom.

The 74-key Threadneedles Hotel in London is situated near iconic landmarks such as St Paul's Cathedral, Tate Modern Museum and Tower Bridge.

bmi, Virgin trains pact

BMI Regional is partnering with Virgin Trains to make it more convenient for customers to connect to the high-speed train network after arriving at Birmingham Airport.

From today onwards, fares on Virgin Train routes will be available for purchase through flvbmi.com.

MEANWHILE, bmi regional's check-in desks at Frankfurt Airport will now close 40 minutes prior to the scheduled departure.

GHA selects Sabre

GLOBAL Hotel Alliance (GHA) is the latest company to sign on with Sabre Hospitality Solutions as an alternative distribution provider for its members.

Under the deal, GHA's 35 brands will now be able to access Sabre SynXis Central Reservations as its distribution solution while still utilising GHA's multi-brand DISCOVERY loyalty program.

Trave Daily First with the news

Tuesday 7th Feb 2017

TAHITI Travel Connection have just returned from the newlyopened Conrad Bora Bora Nui with showers of compliments.

Through their partnership with the hotel, Tahiti Travel Connection were lucky to be the very first agents to stay at the new resort before its Grand Opening on 01 Apr 2017.

Living the full experience is important for Tahiti Travel Connection's dedicated team of specialists, so they were treated to a night in the resort's ultra-chic overwater villas.

The team was blown away by the size, high-tech design and quality of their villas, featuring a large master bedroom with king size bed and panoramic views of the lagoon, a huge bathroom with a stylish free-standing bath tub and a walk-in wardrobe. The best bit was the outdoor area with spacious infinity plunge pools, catamaran nets and direct



lagoon.

The team was also exposed to the array of gourmet delights on offer at Conrad Bora Bora Nui.

From an enchanting lounge bar with mid-afternoon tea and French pastries followed by early evening tapas & cocktails, to a relaxed dining experience at the sandy-bottom Tamure Grill Restaurant, the food, service and setting was nothing short of heavenly.

a spread catering to every breakfast preference around the world.

To celebrate the Conrad Bora Bora Nui's Grand Opening, Tahiti Travel Connection has an exclusive special offer.

Book before 28



Feb and your clients could save up to \$4,500 per



Beauty queens head to Thailand



THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) will invite Miss World Australia 2017 and the runners up as Australian representatives to attend the opening ceremony of 'Womens Journey Thailand' in Bangkok.

"This campaign was very successful last year in encouraging female travellers whether travelling alone or with a group of friends," commented Rujiras Chatchalermkit, TAT's Sydney director.

"This year we aim to continue

to promote Thailand through the Unique Thai Local Experiences, encouraging women to discover Thailand's many amazing stories, through unique and memorable local experiences," she said.

Pictured on last year's Thailand getaway is 2016 Miss World Australia winner Madeline Cowe (centre) with runner-up beauty queens.



This month Travel Daily, Tempo Holidays and Tourism Ireland are giving agents the chance to win a trip for two

The winner will travel on a luxury coach around Ireland for a week, and the prize includes return flights.

To win, show your Irish spirit by dressing up in your best St Patrick's Day outfit and send a photo through. Best photo wins! Get your whole office involved! Send entries to tempo@traveldaily.com.au

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BW Rewards revamp

BEST Western has unveiled a new digital membership card, giving guests streamlined access to their membership number, points balance, current tier level and deals and offers.

Reward redemption begins at a lower point level requirement relative to competitors, with members able to redeem free nights at any Best Western branded hotel worldwide with no blackout dates

To sign up for the new program head to bestwestern.com.

Alibaba classes

THE Australia China Business Council and experts from the Alibaba Group are hosting a seminar in Brisbane on how to connect with Chinese tourists using the Alibaba Ecosystem.

Speakers include Tony Duan, vp, Alitrip and Maggie Zhou, md, Alibaba Group.

It will be held at the UQ Business School on L19 Central Plaza One, 345 Queens Street. **CLICK HERE** to register.

HU buys into Tianjin

HNA Group subsidiary, Hainan Airlines, has successfully acquired a 48.2% stake in Tianjin Airlines.

The new deal means Hainan Airlines is now the controlling stakeholder of the Tianjinheadquartered carrier with an 87.3% stake.

Tianjin Airlines still has two other shareholders: Tianjin Chuangxin Investment Parter Co with an 8.5% stake and Tianjin Bonded Area Investment Co, which holds a 4.2% stake.

Avis VISA checkout

AVIS Budget Group in the US has rolled out Visa Checkout as a payment option for Avis Car Rental & Budget Car Rentals.

The new offering is available on Avis.com, Budget.com as well as the Avis and Budget apps and gives customers the option to receive the lowest rates available by paying in advance.



Tuesday 7th Feb 2017

HWT photo itinerary

AUSSIE photographer Ken Duncan will lead a group of snaphappy travellers on Helen Wong's Tours new China Photographic tour from 10-22 Oct.

Highlights on the 13-day adventure include visits to Hangzhou, Tunxi, Huangshan, Chongqing, Huanglong, Jiuzhagou and Chengdu.

The trip is priced from \$11,500 per person twin share and includes accom, flights, daily breakfast and meals, visas and much more - learn more HERE.



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

\$1AUD = US0.763

THE Aussie dollar was lower against most currencies yesterday following poor retail sales numbers.

Versus the Japanese Yen, it was down 1.2% and declined 0.4% against the New Zealand dollar.

However in Europe the AUD was higher by 0.2% due to French presidential candidate Francois Filon's struggle with corruption allegations.

Today's Reserve Bank of Australia meeting will drive the AUD/USD pair, predicts Western Union strategist Steven Dooley, with the session to begin from 2:30pm (AEDT).

Wholesale rates this morning.

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\$1.038
€0.710
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ß26.21
¥4.795
R10.116
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Global Airline

Account mgt/BDM mix

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Sydney

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Sydney

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Excellent benefits

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- ▶ \$200 Voucher for every return Business & First class ticket to LON/DUB
- ▶ \$30 Voucher for every return Economy class ticket to Europe
- ▶ \$100 Voucher for every return Business & First class ticket to Europe



CONDITIONS: Valid for tickets issued by Consolidated Travel or via Quikticket between 25 January - 14 February 2017 on 100% EY itineraries ex Australia plated to EY (607) ticket stock. Applies to all tickets issued to Europe and countries west of Turkey, excludes Middle East, Child, Infant, Group sales, Wholesale, Reissues, Cancelled or Refunded tickets & bookings made in T/E class. Consolidated Travel and Etihad Airways reserve the right to alter or cancel the promotion any time. Vouchers are capped and all claims must be emailed to promotions@consolidatedtravel.com.au by 21 February 2017. Receipt of a prize may have Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) implications. To the extent that there is any FBT liability, this will be paid for by the employer of the recipient. The grossed-up value of a prize and any other Fringe Benefits the recipient receives during the course of the FBT year may be reported on the recipient's annual PAYG Payment Summary as required by taxation law. Consolidated Travel Group ABN 60 004 692 791. Date of issue 24 January 2017.



