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VIEW DETAILS

Accor considers stake in AF/KLM

ACCORHOTELS has confirmed it is considering the potential acquisition of a minority stake in Air France-KLM.

The hospitality giant said over the past years the companies had held talks with a view to developing joint digital projects, as well as a joint loyalty and services platform.

“The aim was for both these world leaders in the travel space to offer their customers an enriched global range of mobility services,” AccorHotels said.

In a statement issued this week AccorHotels said it had “resumed its reflections on the matter” and was at the “very early stage of assessing the feasibility and potential terms and conditions which will be discussed with Air France-KLM in due time”.

The company said there was no certainty the initiatives would lead to any agreement.

VA Hainan c’share launch

VIRGIN Australia yesterday announced a significant expansion of its presence in China, with a new codeshare agreement with shareholder Hainan Airlines, along with a closer frequent flyer partnership.

The pact will see guests travelling from China able to access a wider network of VA domestic connections within Australia and across the Tasman, including flights to Cairns, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide, Perth and Auckland.

Reciprocally the VA code will be placed on Hainan operated services ex Sydney to Xi’an, Changsha and Haikou; ex Melbourne to Xi’an and Changsha and flights to Shenzhen from Brisbane and Cairns.

Velocity Frequent Flyer members will earn points and status credits when flying with either airline under the

codeshare, while the same will apply to members of HU’s Fortune Wings Club program.

In addition, priority check-in, boarding and extra baggage allowances will apply for eligible guests when travelling on Hong Kong Airlines operated flights (excluding services to North America) and on international services from Australia & NZ to Greater China on HU offshoots Tianjin Airlines & Capital Airlines.

VA group executive Rob Sharp said the pact would build on the success of the airline’s Hong Kong routes, saying “we are confident that Hainan Airlines is the best partner for us to expand into Greater China with”.

Today’s issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news and photos plus a full page from:

- TMS Talent/inPlace

Hounsell, Burnes buy more HLO

HELLOWORLD ceo Andrew Burnes and chairman Garry Hounsell have been boosting their respective shareholdings in the company, according to ASX notifications this morning.

Hounsell bought 10,000 shares for about \$46,300 to increase his stake to 78,500 shares, while Burnes paid just over \$36,000 for 8,000 additional shares to boost his holding to 31,389,486.

All shares purchased were acquired on-market, with the firm currently trading at \$4.49.

EK A380s to Osaka

EMIRATES today announced it would deploy its A380 superjumbo aircraft on flights from Dubai to Osaka in Japan.

The expansion is effective from 28 Oct this year, and will replace existing 777-300ER services to boost capacity by 38%.

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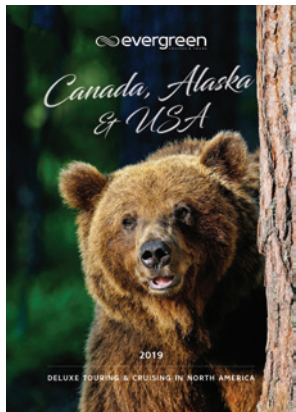
Skyscanner chair

SKYSCANNER has announced its co-founder and chief executive officer Gareth Williams will become its chair, with current chief technology officer Bryan Dove to move into the ceo role.



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Best Western goes direct

BEST Western International has confirmed the restructure of its Sydney-based affiliate office, as it moves to a new "Property Direct Relationship" (PDR) with member hotels in Australia and NZ.

The change, effective 01 Jun, brings to an end a 37-year arrangement with the Motel Federation of Australia, with the day-to-day local management of the Best Western brand now in the hands of the company's head office in Arizona, USA.

The firm said the move would enable it to "better compete in a rapidly evolving & increasingly complex marketplace," with moves to a PDR structure in

other markets resulting in better communications and enhanced service levels for guests.

"The goal is to have a more cost-efficient and effective organisation which unifies and leverages the existing staff in Australia with the Best Western global team to drive superior revenue and service," the company said.

The Best Western network in Australia & NZ is comprised of 115 independently owned and managed properties.

Best Western Int'l said it was focused on "ensuring a smooth transition, so revenue delivery & support for member properties is enhanced & not compromised".

Webjet directors

TONI Korsanos has been appointed as an independent non-executive director of Webjet, effective 01 Jun, replacing Rajiv Ramanathan who will step down due to other commitments.



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It's SOO time!

TRAVEL Daily is once again inviting the industry to join the fun of the NRL's State of Origin competition, with a SOO or NRL team jersey on offer to the **TD** reader who can most accurately answer nine questions across the three match series.

The first three questions, relating to the kick-off game tomorrow night in Melbourne, are:

1. Which player will score the first try in game 1?
2. How many tries will be scored by the losing team of game 1?
3. What will be the final score at the end of game 1?

Give us your best guesses before 7:40pm AEST Wed 06 Jun to socomp@traveldaily.com.au.

SkyTeam launches ancillaries program

THE SkyTeam airline alliance yesterday announced a new "Digital Spine" system which allows member airlines to cross-sell ancillary products.

The new functionality bridges the technology differences between carriers, allowing them to exchange seat maps and other information so customers can purchase seat products for their entire journey when flying on an itinerary across multiple airlines.

Future applications of the platform will allow baggage capture and tracking, seamless check-in and real-time seat availability displays.



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HLO retail changes

HELLOWORLD Travel today announced the appointment of Lynda Wallace as national manager network development.

Wallace has been with HLO for more than a decade, most recently as national sales mgr within the Branded Network.

Nicola Nanninga has also been named as national manager, Helloworld Travel Associate Network, moving from her previous role as NSW/ACT senior state manager for Branded and Associate Networks.

Lufthansa appoints

LUFTHANSA Group Airlines has named Alain Chisari as its new vice president sales Asia Pacific.

Effective Sep, Chisari will be charged with managing and directing sales activities of the Lufthansa Group Airlines (Lufthansa German Airlines, SWISS and Austrian Airlines) and Brussels Airlines, in Asia Pacific.

Chisari was most recently cco and member of the management board at Edelweiss Air AG, sister company of Swiss International Air Lines.

Airports warn on QF-NZ

AUSTRALIA'S peak airports body has warned of risks posed by the planned codeshare deal between Qantas and Air New Zealand, and is calling for measures to ensure it does not adversely affect travellers.

The Australian Airports Association (AAA) has urged regulators on both sides of the Tasman to address the anti-competitive effects of the tie-up, in which Qantas and Air New Zealand will add their codes to dozens of domestic routes in each others' network (**TD** Fri).

AAA ceo Caroline Wilkie warned the arrangement would lessen competition and had the potential to constrain the trans-Tasman market.

"This arrangement seems likely to make it harder for Virgin Australia to compete in the Australian market," Wilkie said.

"We are particularly concerned this arrangement will further strengthen Qantas' dominant position in the Australian market to the detriment of both Virgin Australia and the Australian travelling public," she said.

Having the ability to distribute each others' passengers across the Tasman would give Qantas and Air New Zealand improved market positions, Wilkie said, and make it harder for Virgin Australia to compete on important trans-Tasman routes.

"It is essential the details of this agreement be publicly examined by the competition authorities to ensure it has no anti-competitive effects," she said.

"This is the only way to ensure competitive and affordable aviation markets in and between Australia and New Zealand and a visitor economy spanning the two countries that delivers to everyone the economic benefits associated with trans-Tasman travel," she said.

Emirates pass back

EMIRATES has brought back "My Emirates Pass", allowing pax travelling to or through Dubai to access a range of offers.

Customers of EK can avail the deals through to 31 Aug by showing their boarding pass & ID.



Window Seat

FOR those who simply "do-nut" know where to travel to next, Topdeck believes it has the answer, with five new ways to eat your way around the United States.

From the smokey barbecue flavours of Texas to the Krispy Kreme donuts in LA, the tour operator's USA/Canada 2019/20 brochure has it all.

To celebrate, Topdeck sent the **Travel Daily** team some tasty Krispy Kreme donuts (**pictured**) to snack on for International Donut Day last week.

From the bottom of our slightly weaker hearts we extend you a warm thanks.



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Quasar targets Aussies



ECUADOR-BASED adventure company Quasar Expeditions is on a mission to increase its footprint in the Australian market, with sales manager Eric Andrews currently in the country meeting with wholesalers, airlines and South American specialists.

Founded in 1986, the company offers adventure cruises in the Galapagos Islands, Overland Safaris in partnership with Jeep in Patagonia and tailor-made journeys in Ecuador and Peru.

Speaking to *Travel Daily* at an event in Sydney last week, Andrews said the company was “ready to position itself in the Australian market by educating the trade, public and press, and developing and engaging new partnership opportunities”.

While Australians rank in the top 10 for visitors to the Galapagos, Quasar Expeditions

revealed that only 1% of its business comprised of travellers from Australia.

The company owns two luxury yachts, *M/Y Grace* and *M/V Evolution*, accommodating 18 and 32 passengers respectively on seven-night Galapagos cruise itineraries.

On the vessels guests can expect spacious luxury cabins, ample outdoor seating, an almost 2:1 crew to passenger ratio and Ecuadorian cuisine prepared by onboard chefs from the mainland.

Quasar Expeditions’ product can be booked through Chimu Adventures, Classic Safari Co., Adventure World, SATC, Eclipse Travel, Natural Focus Safaris and Micro-Cruising.

Pictured above at Subsolo Restaurant & Bar in Sydney is Eric Andrews and Rob Gurr of marketing agency Ynot Concepts.

SENIOR DESIGNER SYDNEY BASED



We are looking for a talented designer to work within an integrated marketing department producing creative, high quality printed and electronic marketing collateral.

The role will be responsible for producing bespoke collateral for trade and consumer audiences, driving creative idea generation, managing print production, upholding brand guidelines and ensuring quality control.

The position would suit a creative designer with 10+ years experience, formal training in graphic design or desktop publishing and the ability to work collaboratively in a fun and fast-paced environment.

Please send a short cover letter and resume to: jobsau@vikingcruises.com. Applications close Friday 15 June 2018.



MPs targetted in Airbnb campaign

THE hotel sector has mounted a fresh campaign for regulation of home-sharing sites like Airbnb after the NSW Government last month deferred a decision on the issue (*TD* 23 May).

The Accommodation Association of Australia (AAA) has written to all NSW Coalition MPs as part of a bid to achieve tighter restrictions on the operation of “quasi hotels”.

“This is a critical decision because it will have a direct impact on the safety of people visiting NSW and many of the 88,800 people who work in Australia’s accommodation industry,” said ceo of the AAA Richard Munro.

The concerns of key Coalition MPs are believed to have stalled plans for new laws in NSW.

QF bows to China

QANTAS has confirmed it will abide by the demands of the Chinese Government and refer to Taiwan as a territory of China on its websites, joining other carriers internationally in a bid to avoid threats of sanctions.

The carrier is one of dozens targetted by China with threats to curtail their access to Chinese markets, resulting in criticism at diplomatic levels in Europe and the United States, which initially dismissed the warnings as “Orwellian nonsense”.

At the IATA conference in Sydney yesterday, Qantas ceo Allan Joyce told media the airline would adjust references to Taiwan and China’s special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macao, but said more time was needed.

Carriers including BA, LH and AC have also complied.



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VA christens Tinamirakuna



VIRGIN Australia, in partnership with environmental organisation Greening Australia, has named one of its new Boeing 737 aircraft "Tinamirakuna".

The name is the indigenous title for the Macquarie River, which flows through Tasmania's east and was chosen to acknowledge the environmental restoration

work of Greening Australia in this region.

Pictured are: Robert Wood, sustainability gm Virgin Australia; Daisy Allen, Palawa Kani Language Worker, Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre; Jonathan Duddles, Greening Australia and Andry Sculthorpe, project officer Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre.

Peppers Silo opens

TASMANIAN Premier Will Hodgman has welcomed the opening of the Peppers Silo Hotel in Launceston.

The \$30 million development offers 108 rooms and has involved the remodelling of the city's North Bank silos which had been abandoned for 10 years.

"The Peppers Silo Hotel is expected to attract 27,000 visitors each year, injecting around \$8 million into the local economy," Hodgman said.

TTC cuts out plastic

THE Travel Corporation has pledged to phase out all single-use plastics from its companies over the next five years.

Under a "Multi-Year Plastics Elimination Strategy" guided by TTC's not-for-profit TreadRight Foundation, it's estimated the ban has the potential to eliminate the use of millions of plastic water bottles annually.

Helen Wong Viet

HELEN Wong's Tours has released a 12-day Highlights of Vietnam group tour designed for budget-conscious travellers.

Priced from \$2,400ppts, the tour includes return flights from Sydney or Melbourne.

AFL

AFL ROUND 11 WINNER

Congratulations

RITA D'AMICO

from *Helloworld Wynnum*

Rita is the top point scorer for Round 11 of *Travel Daily's* AFL foody tipping competition. She's won \$100 travel credit courtesy of Expedia.

TAAP



The major prize for the 2018 foody tipping competition is return economy class airfares to Dubai flying with **EMIRATES**.

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Antalya	from AUD	1,195
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Istanbul (Sabiha Gökçen)	from AUD	1,095



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* Offer valid until 17 June 2018, unless sold out prior. Fares quoted above are for departures from Perth and are the lowest adult return prices per person including taxes, fees, and airport charges. Economy Class fares are valid for travel between 5 June – 14 June, 27 September – 30 November 2018, and 13 January – 31 March 2019. Other sale dates may be available. Other sale fares are available from Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, and Adelaide. Fares may vary due to currency or tax fluctuations. Seasonal surcharges and weekend surcharges may apply. For all other terms and conditions please review at time of booking. Flights to Bodrum start 12 June 2018, and flights to Antalya start 13 June 2018.

Finnair team in town



SENIOR management from Finnair are visiting Sydney this week for the 74th International Air Transport Association annual general meeting, and made the most of the opportunity by meeting with key Australian industry partners high above the city at O Bar & Dining in the Australia Square tower.

The pre-IATA breakfast yesterday included presentations from outgoing Finnair ceo Pekka Vauramo, who is also the chairman of the oneworld governing board, as well as AFTA ceo Jayson Westbury who highlighted the key role travel

agents play in distributing AY product in Australia.

Also on the spot were Antti Niemela from the Embassy of Finland in Canberra and Timothee Goulain from the European Australian Business Council, who spoke of trade, tourism and the close economic links between Australia and Finland.

Pictured above at the event are, from left: Pekka Vauramo, ceo Finnair; Sanna Ruuskanen, interim general manager Australia AY; Jayson Westbury, ceo AFTA; Vesna Pandza, bdm NSW AY; and Juha Jarvinen, chief commercial officer Finnair.

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I AM currently attending the 74th IATA Annual General Meeting and World Air Transport Summit in Sydney. It is so nice to be at home for a conference for a change, and it's particularly funny when talking with a range of airline ceos who complain about how far away Australia is and how difficult it is to take such a long haul flight. My advice to them is to "get over it" - we Aussies love to fly and fly plenty, and long haul for us is 17 hours straight. It's all very humorous, but in fact it's an important point to ensure that airlines continue to fly to Australia, and from what I can tell, more and more will be going forward, as Australia is now the eighth largest outbound travel market in the world. That is not per capita, but by list of country by numbers. We are a serious market on the global stage, which is why so many airlines and other travel product providers want to be in, and in deep within the Australian travel industry. This is all good news for travel agents, and more broadly the travel industry.

Some interesting stats were presented during the IATA conference over the last few days, including that this is the ninth year in a row that the global airline industry is in profitability. In fact, in 2018 it is expected that the global airline industry will top some US\$30billion in profit - that's a big number. Moreover, some 4.3 billion passengers will take to the sky in 2018, but in fact the average per airline seat profit will be US\$7.60. This seems very low when you think about what is involved in flying an aircraft, all the moving parts and support, but it is what it is.

There is all this positive airline talk in one place, yet unfortunately here in Australia we are facing another airline collapse in the form of JetGo. While it will not be anything like the size of the Air Australia collapse, the fact is we have another airline going broke and one has to wonder, given the global position of airlines, how this could happen. AFTA will be working with IATA and the industry more broadly to see what the ultimate exposure will be, and I hope that some agents who have elected to take part in the ACS chargeback scheme may find themselves with a solution if they are stuck in the middle of this supplier failure with a client chargeback.

There is plenty going on within the aviation industry both here in Australia and around the globe, and what is particularly nice for me is the fact that travel agents are part of the conversation, and a significant and important part of the future state of aviation when it comes to distribution.

Regent to Turkey

LUXURY cruise line Regent Seven Seas Cruises has announced it will return to Turkey in 2019, with 11 itineraries scheduled to depart from Apr.

Guests on board *Seven Seas Voyager* will have the chance to visit Istanbul, Ephesus, and Bozcaada, with shore excursions, unlimited premium wines & spirits, and wi-fi included.

For more, call 1300 455 200.

Araluen funding

PERTH Hills nature attraction Araluen Botanic Park has received a funding boost from state government in a bid to improve tourism and boost local jobs.

The \$300,000 cash injection features alongside a new 10-year management agreement that will provide "certainty and stability" to the park, ensuring it continues to "diversify" the local economy.

Seaview delivered

MSC Cruises yesterday welcomed its new flagship *MSC Seaview* at a delivery ceremony held in Italy.

The 5,331-guest vessel is now sailing from Monfalcone to her new home port of Genoa.

Caesars branding

CAESARS Entertainment Corporation has revealed plans for new strategic branding at four of its properties, designed to expand the global reach of each.

Caesars Palace will be known for "Indulgent & Fun Luxury," Flamingo as a "Vibrant Vegas-Style Resort", The Cromwell a "Luxury Lifestyle Boutique" & The Linq, "Social, Sensory & Modern".

MEANWHILE, The Culinary Workers Union has reached a tentative five-year agreement with Caesars to cover 12,000 workers on the Vegas strip.

Movenpick Tunisia

MOVENPICK Hotels & Resorts has signed an agreement to take over the management of the Plaza Sfax & Spa Hotel.

The property will relaunch under the Movenpick brand later this year, marking the brand's fourth property in Tunisia.



Money

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

\$1AUD = US0.764

THE Australian dollar has charged ahead in the global economy this week, having hit its highest level since late Apr.

The change was boosted by a surge in stronger than expected retail sales in Apr, as well as general business indicators for the Mar quarter.

A detailed report outlining the Australian balance of payments and government expenditure figures will be released today, which will impact quarterly GDP growth across the board.

The Jun interest rate is also due to be announced by the RBA this afternoon.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.764
UK	£0.573
NZ	\$1.086
Euro	€0.653
Japan	¥83.94
Thailand	฿24.45
China	¥4.898
South Africa	R9.603
Canada	\$0.987
Crude oil	US\$64.75

Guatemala eruption

GUATEMALA City's La Aurora Int'l Airport has suspended flights following the eruption of Volcan de Fuego on Sun.

Smarttraveller is advising Australian visitors to check with their airline or tour operator before travelling to the airport.

The level of advice for Guatemala remains at "exercise a high degree of caution".

United appoints

UNITED Airlines has named John Slater as its senior vice president of inflight services.

He was previously vp of United's inflight team and will step into the new role on 11 Jun.

Eurostar & TP pact

EUROSTAR has inked a deal with Travelport which will see it become the first rail operator to use the merchandising solution, Rich Content and Branding.

The deal links Eurostar with Travelport-connected online and offline travel agencies and travel management companies.

US\$60k for Palau

THE Pacific Island of Palau will receive US\$60k from the Australian Government to help it overcome the negative impacts on its environment from its 160,000 tourists a year.

Funding will go towards the next phase of an initiative which encourages visitors to be more environmentally conscious.

The next phase will aim to engage Palau's private sector.

Malaysia Airlines Back to Brisbane



WIN TICKETS TO KUALA LUMPUR WITH MALAYSIA AIRLINES

This month, *Travel Daily* together with Malaysia Airlines are giving agents the chance to win two tickets to Kuala Lumpur flying with Malaysia Airlines return from BNE/ADL/SYD/MEL/PER.

In celebration of the resumption of Malaysia Airlines new Brisbane to Kuala Lumpur flights commencing Wed June 6, you and a friend will fly Economy Class to KUL with Malaysia Airlines.

To win, have the most correct answers to the questions throughout the month, and the most creative response to the last question. Send your answers to mhcomp@traveldaily.com.au

Q2: MH is a member of which global alliance?



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W LGBTQ+ guides

A SERIES of LGBTQ+ travel guides is being rolled out by W Hotels, aiming to "celebrate the unique qualities of each location" while allowing guests to explore "destinations that aren't always the first that come to mind for queer travellers".

The guides are accompanied by a series of video diaries starring a cast of progressive personalities, with W Mexico City, W Istanbul, W Atlanta and the newly opened W Brisbane (*TD* 01 Jun) the first properties to be featured.

JetBlue.com refresh

A NEW website for airline JetBlue has been unveiled, featuring a fresh look, improved homepage navigation and optimised screen performance.

The redesign follows updates of the carrier's app.

Cradle investors

THE Tasmanian Govt is now seeking private investors to transform the Cradle Mountain Gateway Precinct "into a new world-class experience".

Once complete, the precinct is expected to attract up to 80,000 additional visitors per year, and inject around \$29 million to the local economy.

Biofuel for Cathay

CATHAY Pacific has revealed it plans to use an alternative blend of jet fuel across its fleet of Airbus A350-1000 aircraft.

The airline currently has 20 of the aircraft on order for delivery over the next four years, with a target to achieve carbon neutral growth by 2020.

The new biofuel is claimed to reduce life cycle greenhouse gas by up to 80%.

2018 AFTA TRAVEL PAGES, NOW WITH A COMPREHENSIVE SUPPLIER DIRECTORY.

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