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Travel Daily First with the news



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Virgin accelerate

VIRGIN Australia is inviting agents to get their corporate clients to join its Accelerate SME loyalty scheme, with benefits including two Velocity Pilot Gold memberships offering lounge access, priority boarding & more see the cover page for details.

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Tuesday 25th June 2019

Ignite adds tours division

IGNITE Travel Group has announced the launch of an "all-new powerhouse touring division," bringing the group's expertise in holiday packaging to the touring space.

The company's CEO, Ryan Thomas, said tour deals would be offered through Ignite's My Holiday Centre and Holiday Exclusives business units, "fulfilling unprecedented demand for affordable, bespoke packages that offer customers incredible savings, excellent booking flexibility and the opportunity to

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has eight pages of news, a front cover page for Virgin Australia, a photo page for Vanuatu Tourism, plus full pages from: • TMS Talent

- Viking Cruises
- CAPA Centre for Aviation

explore new and popular regions with curated tour experiences that showcase the very best of each destination".

Open choice of suppliers

Ignite has appointed Raymond Han, formerly with Nexus Holidays, to lead the new touring operation, saying he had "pioneered ground-breaking success in the competitive space of heavily discounted touring".

Han said the new division was the "next frontier for Ignite," with the company's touring packages "designed to empower customers and amplify opportunities for tourism partners".

Ignite Travel Group is currently 49% owned by Flight Centre, and with more than 200 staff is one of the largest private corporations on the Gold Coast.

Flight Centre also has options to acquire the remainder of the business in a series of tranches based on "Ignite earnings and time hurdles being met".

New 2020-2021

VIEW HERE

cean Brochure Out Now



VIKING Cruises has launched a "Win With Wimbledon" incentive, giving consultants the opportunity to win a share of 100,000 Rewards by Viking points by correctly picking the winner of the men's and women's Wimbledon final - see page 10.



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AFTA 'overreaction' fears TRIPFUSER

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CLICK TO ENTER

THE collapse of online agency Bestjet Travel Pty Ltd late last year (TD 21 Dec 2018) sent shockwaves across the industry, but should not "give rise to an overreaction which has unrealistic implications for those that continue to have well-run, professional, honest and strong travel businesses," according to AFTA Chairman Tom Manwaring.

Writing in the AFTA Annual Report released on Fri, Manwaring said that while the majority of consumers affected by the Bestjet fiasco had been either uplifted by airlines or provided with a chargeback, "the problems that have flowed are significant.

"AFTA has been central to getting to the bottom of the events that brought about this collapse, and has played a collaboration role across all stakeholders who have been seriously impacted by this largescale collapse," he said.

Manwaring noted AFTA's strong stance in the Supreme Court against Bestjet to disallow the company's ATAS participation (TD 13 Apr 2016), saying the \$26 million failure of the business

"is a stark warning to the future of how strong and vigilant AFTA and ATAS must remain, given the circumstances that ultimately have resulted with this OTA".

However the AFTA Chairman said that "one disgraced agency does not mean that the industry framework needs an overhaul".

Investigations into the Bestjet collapse continue, with summonses served on founder Rachel James and her husband Michael ordering them to testify as part of a Public Examination in the Federal Court in Brisbane next month (TD 28 May).

CAPA air training

CAPA Centre for Aviation is promoting a "must attend course" for people wanting to know more about the fundamentals of airlines and the aviation industry.

The one-day session is being offered in both Melbourne and Sydney, with an optional extension offering more in-depth information.

For further details and to register, see the last page.

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APPLY



QBT WoAG deal extended

HELLOWORLD Travel subsidiary QBT Pty Limited will continue to serve the government's travel management needs for a further two years, after the Department of Finance exercised an option for the extension of its existing contract (*TD* breaking news).

QBT originally won the Whole of Australian Government (WoAG) deal in 2015, when the organisation was led by the now

Nand leaves Avalon

WALTER Nand has resigned from Avalon Waterways, stepping down from the Business Development Manager role he has held since late 2015.

Nand is establishing a new business alongside David Reeves, with the pair's Ride the World venture aiming to "deliver exciting motorcycle memories for those who want to see the world on two wheels". departed Russell Carstensen who received a \$100,000 bonus for sealing the deal (**TD** 28 Aug 2015). Helloworld's Group General Manager Corporate, Nick Sutherland, said the news of the contract extension to a new total of six years was "the result of the hard work and dedication by QBT's team in delivering excellent service and capability over the initial deed period".

The extension sees QBT's mandate taken through to 30 Jun 2021, with a further one year extension still available, at the option of the department.

MEANWHILE Helloworld has also confirmed the departure of Ana Pedersen, the company's Global Director of Corporate Sales, Marketing and Supplier Relations, with responsibility for both QBT and the NZ-based APX operations, after about two years in the role (*TD* 16 Jun 2017). Your mouth will water reading about Thailand in the June issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read traveBulletin

New Disney chief

THE Walt Disney Company has announced the appointment of Andrea Robinson as its new Asia-Pacific Travel and Business Development Director for Walt Disney Parks & Resorts.

Robinson, who has been Country Director for National Geographic Travel Australia/ NZ,for the last 12 months, will lead the Australia and New Zealand office of Disney Destinations.

The role will also see her with responsibility for Disney Destinations' new business development in Southeast Asia and India.

Prior to working at National Geographic, she was with STA Travel for over a decade including two years as Country Manager for Australia (*TD* 16 Mar 2016).

Robinson takes the role recently vacated by David Clark, who has taken up a new position with Journey Beyond.





SOME jobs really are guilty of throwing you in the deep end! Hotels.com is currently seeking a "Poolhop", a specialist whose duties include travelling across the country and "researching the most epic hotel pools".

The successful candidate will earn themselves \$10,000 to dive in and take on the assignment, plus travel and lodging expenses.

"The Poolhop's 'Gram-worthy' photos will be featured on Hotels.com and its social channels for hotel pool lovers to enjoy as they plan their own pool-inspired getaways," the company said on its site.

Let's face it, you would have to be pretty wet behind the ears to turn this gig down.



*Ponant Bonus discount subject to change based on availability. Ponant Bonus fare per person, in AUD, based on a double occupancy, including port taxes, yield managed, correct at time of writing – 17/06/2019. Refer to auponant com for T&Cs. Welcome Offer of AS800 saving is in AUD, per stateroom based on a double occupancy, AS400 per stateroom for single occupancy. Offer valid for guests travelling with PONANT for the first time. Offer is not redeemable for cash, not retroactive, and not combinable with any other offer, unless stated otherwise. Valid for bookings made before 15 July 2019. Conditions apply. (1) For the 22nd Feb. 2021 cruise in a Superior Stateroom. (2) For the 3rd Nov. 2020 cruise in a Deluxe Stateroom. (3) For the 19th Feb. 2021 cruise in a Superior Stateroom. Photographys: @ PONANT Laurence Fischer ABN: 35 166 765 17

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Departs 17th & 19th February 2021. 16 nights from \$20,280 pp*(3)

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RCL destinations

ROYAL Caribbean Cruises (RCL) and ITM Group have partnered to form a new destination company named "Holistica".

As per the brand's name, Holistica will work to create a "holistic" model for destination development to meet the needs of coastal communities, local governments and travellers.

Holistica's first project, a \$275 million development in Freeport, Bahamas, is under review, with plans for further locations in Mexico, Honduras and Japan.

Caesars merger

CAESARS Entertainment has adjourned its 2019 Annual Meeting of Shareholders without conducting any business in order to consider information regarding its recently announced merger with Eldorado Resorts.

Caesars was also last year in talks to merge with MGM Resorts (*TD* 07 Nov 2018).

Tuesday 25th June 2019

Avg stay downturn

AUSTRALIANS who vacation overseas do so for an average of 21.6 days, according to Mar 2019 Roy Morgan data, markedly down from a 2002 high of 31.9.

Domestic travel however has remained stable, with an average length of 5.6 days compared to Mar 2002's mark of 5.8.

"Even with 140 million days accrued of annual leave, Australians are taking shorter holidays when going overseas," said Michele Levine, Roy Morgan Chief Executive Officer.

"When they do go overseas, the locations that top the list are New Zealand, England, United States, Bali and France.

"Looking at intention to travel overseas, the places that we would like to go are: New Zealand, United States, England, Japan and Canada.

"Shorter overseas holidays present Australian tourism with the opportunity to increase their share of the market."

AAT's Lord of the Famils

A GROUP of agents recently embarked on a famil in New Zealand over five days, taking in the best of the North and South Island thanks to AAT Kings.

Arriving in Wellington, the team toured some of New Zealand's most notable sites, including Parliament, Mt. Victoria and Lambton Quay.

Next was Rotorua, where the agents experienced some of the country's best nature and thrills, including Lake Taupo, Huka Falls, Te Puia and the Polynesian spas, plus some luge and ziplining.

After a hearty Maori "hangi", the participants visited Matamata,

home to the *Lords of the Rings'* Middle Earth, for some photo opportunities, before heading back to Auckland and home.

Pictured is the gang at Middle Earth, in the back row: Evelyn Awad, Italk Travel Castle Hill; Josephine Tavernese, Italk Travel Hornsby; Rachel Newton, Travel Bug Shellharbour; Mary, AAT Kings Travel Director; Sharee Burgess, Air NZ Host & Natalie Grant, We Know Travel Dubbo.

In the front row: Briennen Carter, Holiday World Salamancer Bay; Caroline Screen, Firstlight Travel; Deb Evans, Firstlight Travel & Chloe Thompson, Active Travel.

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KiwiRail open air

A SERIES of safety modifications have been made on KiwiRail's Great Journeys of New Zealand trains, including redesigned handrails that offer "better protection" by preventing passengers from extending themselves or their photography equipment outside the carriage.

The modified open-air viewing carriages installed for passenger safety are on all viewing carriages used for the TranzAlpine and Northern Explorer.

Collette 2020 sale

TOUR operator Collette has released its 2020 Preview brochure, offering a range of special deals on select departures throughout 2020 and 2021.

Customers who book a 2020 tour before 05 Jul 2019 will receive up to 15% off select tours to Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas, with the deal valid for travel between 01 Jan 2020 and 30 Apr 2021.

For more information on the sale, **CLICK HERE**.

Tuesday 25th June 2019

Biz class collectibles

HONG Kong Airlines has released a series of new Business class amenity kits designed by four local artists.

The collectible sets, which highlight Hong Kong's culture, feature work by Lock Lai, Founder of TinBot local toy company, Li Han Kong Kai Font Creator Lee Kin Ming, Tattoo Artist Lily Cash and illustrator Jane Lee.



Last min Intrepid

INTREPID Travel has released a range of deals on journeys departing next month.

Travellers can save \$492 on the eight-day Portugal Real Food Adventure, departing 11 Jul, while the 15-day China's Silk Road journey is offering \$750 off its 22 Jul departure. For info, **CLICK HERE**.

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- Capacity to build collaborative and lasting relationships with our key retail partners
- Target driven, highly motivated, proactive and enthusiastic individual
- Have excellent communication and influencing skills with a strong attention to detail

If you're looking for your next challenge. Head to https://www.aptouring.com.au/about-us/careers/current-opportunities to find out more.

Applications Close: Wednesday 10 July, 2019

Glamping like a King in the NT



KINGS Canyon Resort, located in the NT's Red Centre, has launched six new glamping tents for visitors looking to explore the region (*TD* 20 Feb).

Three tents are designed for couples, while the remaining three feature a king bed plus two single beds and are ideal for families, with children 12 years and under staying free.

The new tents offer more than 85m² of interior space, **pictured**



above, with canvas walls & large windows to maximise the views.

In addition, each tent is fitted with furniture sourced from Australian homewares company, Temple & Webster to create a "contemporary, stylish vibe".

Kings Canyon Resort GM Michelle Ikin said the new tents were designed to appeal to the modern traveller, keen to experience the landscape, food and culture of the region.

"With all the comforts of a hotel stay, we think this style of accommodation will be a reason for guests to linger longer at Kings Canyon and explore more of this fascinating region."

Pictured inset: The tent exterior. **Left**: Inside one of the new glamping tent bedrooms.

THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS AIRPORT WEST

Helloworld Travel Airport West is seeking a **full time consultant** who is wanting to join a business ready to embark on the most exciting journey. Our store is currently closed for a complete refit and is scheduled to reopen bigger and better on Monday, 01 July 2019.

Do you have a strong work ethic, understand and practice good team work and genuinely care for your clients then, you will be perfect for our agency.

If successful you will be paid above award salary, receive continued support for professional development, including educational travel and all the benefits of working with a successful and highly recognised brand.

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- · Be reasonably well travelled
- Willing to work in a shopping centreMost importantly, offer a very high standard of customer service.

Send your resume to kathie.airportwest@helloworld.com.au Position is available for an immediate start.



Centara parties like it's 2019



CENTARA Hotels & Resorts recently hosted a Thailand Travel Mart event at its Centara Grand Mirage Beach Resort Pattaya property in Thailand.

The beach party-themed event saw many of the hotel's key partners in attendance, where approximately 100 guests enjoyed some summer-inspired food cocktails, before partaking in some fun party games including hopping on the Bucking bronco.

Also on show was a preview of the hotel's new Lost World

Accor expands Asia

ACCOR has announced plans to add a further two resorts to its pipeline in Asia with Raffles Bali set to open in 2020 and Raffles Sentosa Resort & Spa Singapore planned for 2022.

The new additions bring the total number of properties in planning on the continent to four, growing its presence in the region by almost 50% when completed.

Raffles Bali features 32 private villas with private swimming pools, a luxury wellness spa, and the brand's popular institution, the Writers Bar.

Raffles Sentosa Resort & Spa Singapore will include a bar, multiple restaurants, a fitness centre, and sprawling tropical gardens.

Adventure Land which opens to the public next month.

The installation allows kids to enjoy a combination of trampolining, riding on zip wires, and scaling some high ropes. Pictured: Rebecca Goodin, Flight Centre New Zealand; Jamie Crisp, Centara Hotels & Resorts; Gordon Bayne, Travelr; Josina Dewhurst, GO Holidays New Zealand; and Simone Nankervis, Fusion Holidays.

WS buy green light

THE Canadian Ministry of Transport has approved Onex's proposed acquisition of WestJet.

The purchase is still subject to regulatory approvals and the go ahead from WS shareholders.

APT Biz class flights

APT is offering reduced Business class fares for seats with Emirates when bookings are made on its Magnificent Europe, Voyage Through the Balkans or Imperial Europe cruise holidays.

The deal is valid for travel between Aug and Nov 2019, with prices for cruise trips, including air fares, starting from \$7,990pp.

To take advantage of the promotion bookings must be made by 16 Aug.

Call 1300 196 420 for more info.

AFTA UPDATE

from Jayson Westbury



year end looms, it is the time of the year for most in the travel industry to prepare returns

and reports in order to comply with the never ending amount of red tape and regulation that Australia loves to place upon business.

The new single-touch payroll arrangements appear to have made life a little easier for the person responsible for producing all the end of year reports and employee statements and member's feedback about this has been overall positive.

If you don't know what I am talking about CLICK HERE for access to the Australian Taxation Office information page.

It is also the time of year when AFTA releases our annual report and prepares for the Annual General Meeting which is set to be held on the 19 Jul in Sydney - for a copy of the AFTA Annual Report, CLICK HERE.

Most pleasing for AFTA and the members is that we had a terrific year with the sale of the property in Pitt Street Sydney, which was held for 36 years, we have managed to gain a big windfall which has already been put to good use in advertising travel

Rex's Dubbo stoush

REGIONAL Express (Rex) has labelled Dubbo Mayor Ben Shields "hypocritical" and "shameful" for critical comments he made about regional airlines in the Daily Liberal newspaper.

Shields called regional carriers "greedy" with regard to the price of air fares, calling for the sector to lower prices to stop inhibiting the growth of Dubbo's economy.

Rex has slammed the comments, calling the Mayor's views "political grandstanding".

"The constituents of Dubbo should question the Dubbo Regional Council on why it is extorting annually about \$1.5m more from passengers than necessary," Rex said.

MEANWHILE, Rex has praised Airservices Australia for lowering its air navigation services fees.

"The Airservices Board and management should be highly commended for their...efficient management of assets," Rex said.

agents and the benefits of using a travel agent to consumers.

Consumer engagement is now one of the key planks for AFTA as we continue to identify the value of using an ATAS accredited agent.

It all adds to the value of membership, with the continued push by AFTA in advocacy work with government and other stakeholders both in Australia and across the world.

So I hope for *Travel Daily* readers that this financial year has been a good one and that results are strong, as the industry appears to be maintaining a successful stream of good business practice and profitability - both equally as important.

And on a final note in particular for smaller travel agents, which in fact is some 75% of the industry, you have a few days left to consider the ATO rule of Instant Asset Write-Off which may allow you to make a purchase of an asset for the business and claim that immediately from your tax.

Best to Google the subject to establish if it applies to you and your business and if you can get in before the deadlines.

So happy end of financial year, I hope that the second half of 2019 continues to be a cracker for the travel and tourism industry.

Nepal strike warning

DFAT is advising Australian travellers to Nepal to avoid protests and public gatherings following a call for strikes from the Communist Party of Nepal.

Several explosions occurred during a similar call on 26 May, resulting in injuries and fatalities.

Wellness summit

QLD'S Noosa will host the Global Wellness Institute's twoday Wellness Tourism Summit on 19-20 Mar next year.

The event will be held at the Sofitel Noosa Pacific Resort to showcase the opportunities that exist for tourism businesses in the growing wellness space.

Research shows the wellness sector accounts for \$639 billion a year in global visitor spend, with 10 million wellness trips taking place in Australia each year.

Earlybird registrations close 31 Aug - CLICK HERE for more info.



Air Vanuatu celebrates Melb route

AIR Vanuatu, Vanuatu's national carrier, and the Vanuatu Tourism Office (VTO), had a big week celebrating the launch of their new direct flight connecting Melbourne and Vanuatu's capital, Port Vila, with a series of exciting events in the Victorian capital.

The new services are operating year-round three times a week, with departures on Tue, Thu, and Sat out of Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport at 7am with a flight time of just over four hours.

Kicking off at Federation Square's Transit Rooftop Bar last Tue evening, guests donned customary floral garlands and enjoyed a taste of the South Pacific archipelago with organic Tanna Coffee espresso martinis, while being entertained by a Vanuatu string band.

Guests toasted to making Vanuatu even more accessible for Aussies while hearing from a handful of key speakers including Air Vanuatu's CEO Derek Nice, VTO's CEO Adela Issachar Aru and Melbourne Airport Chief of Aviation David Hall.

It was then on to Melbourne's busy Southern Cross Station on Wed morning where, in conjunction with Flight Centre (FC), commuters were treated to their morning brew island style - with a pop-up beach bar themed coffee cart serving Tanna Coffee espressos and macchiatos, while FC agents tempted Melburnians to book their next holiday with an exclusive flash sale to Vanuatu.

With the support of Melbourne Airport, the celebrations culminated early Thu morning with formalities and speeches, including a few words from the Right Honourable Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas, taking place ahead of the official inaugural flight.

Passengers were also greeted with a 'welkam' performance from a Vanuatu string band. The non-stop route marks a new era in travel for Air Vanuatu, expanding the airline's

offering in Australia and bringing the South Pacific nation closer to Victorians. For more information or to book, visit www.airvanuatu.com / www.vanuatuspecialists.com.



LAUREN Phillips excited to be an Air Vanuatu Melbourne inaugural flight ambassador.



EXPEDIA team celebrating the new route - island style!



NF CABIN Crew, High Commissioner Jenny Da Rin, Head of Aviation David Hall, Vanuatu PM Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas and Derek Nice NF CEO.

INAUGURAL flight getting ready for takeoff in Melbourne. Photo credit: SDP Media.

AIR Vanuatu Commercial Manager, Paul Forbes, addressing guests at Tue evening's trade event.



to warm up commuters.



Banks Islands.



VANUATU industry, VTO and NF team.



CELEBRATORY cake



VTO'S CEO Adela Issachar Aru, with Air Vanuatu's CEO Derek Nice.



NI-VAN dancer from the



WARM Vanuatu smiles await passengers on board Air Vanuatu.

e info@traveldaily.com.au Travel Daily



TIME's 35th intake

FOUR more have joined the Travel industry Mentor Experience (TIME) ranks at a Sydney meeting last week.

Hosted by sponsors The Travel Corporation, the event saw the program's 35th intake of mentees since its foundation in 2009.

Currently, more than 250 travel, tourism and hospitality industry professionals have graduated from the program.

The latest intake sees joinees from the cruise sector, group touring and corporate travel.

Guest speaker for the night was Qantas Group exec Megan Flynn.

MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US0.696

THE Australian Dollar finally started to make gains last week after previous plummets, and has stayed on course at the start of this week.

AUD has maintained its buoyancy thanks in large part to no excessive economic shakeups locally, nor in key international markets, with the rising tensions between the United States and Iran contributing to stability also. Wholesale rates this morning.

| \$0.696 |
|-----------|
| £0.547 |
| \$1.052 |
| €0.611 |
| ¥74.74 |
| ß21.35 |
| ¥4.789 |
| 10.002 |
| \$0.918 |
| US\$65.20 |
| |

Mt. Rinjani tents

HEAD of the Mount Rinjani National Park Agency (TNGR), Sudiyono, says the mountain has cancelled a plan to separate male and female tents along its hiking trail amid public outcry.

Previously, Sudiyono said TNGR planned to introduce the initiative, stating the idea had come from the people living around Rinjani, who believed last year's earthquakes were caused by disrespectful activities of hikers.

The plan was also part of TNGR's effort to support halal tourism endorsed by the West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) administration.

AY is No/where

FINNAIR has launched a new digital service to make travel to the Nordics more accessible to international tourists.

"No/where" combines "inspirational" content with realtime inventory and availability for experiences, hotels and flights from a number of sources.

Starting out with purely Finnish content, the platform plans to expand to other Nordic countries.

"With this new service, international leisure travellers can find curated travel experiences," said Kristiina Kukkohovi, No/ where program head.

SQ Phuket service

STARTING next week,

Singapore Airlines will resume its daily service on the Singapore to Phuket route.

SQ will operate its Boeing 777-200ER on this route during morning hours from 01 Jul to 26 Oct. with operational schedules varying from 02 to 29 Sep.

new brand, Ormond Hotels...[it] will showcase great design and service...we're confident it will be

IN FLIGHTS TO SINGAPORE

This month Travel Daily and Singapore Airlines are teaming up to test agents' knowledge on Singapore Airlines for a chance to win two return Economy Class tickets to Singapore.

Simply enter by answering the weekly questions during the month and have the most creative response to the last question to win. Send your answers to singaporeairlines@traveldaily.com.au

4. Tell us in 25 words or less 5 things that you would put in your Singapore stopover itinerary from the Singapore Stopover Holiday Plus package or the Singapore Explorer Pass Plus package and why. Please click here for more information.

SINGAPORE AIRLINES A great way to fly

Chow Kit in KL

ORMOND Hotels is set to debut its first boutique property, the Chow Kit in Kuala Lumpur.

The accommodation will be located in the heart of the neighbourhood of the Old Kuala Lumpur area later this year.

Boasting 113 rooms and studios. Chow Kit is Ormond Hotel's maiden offering, with locations also set to open in Melbourne and Dublin by 2022.

New York-based designers Studio Tack will handle the property's architecture and interiors, with stays to start from \$85.

Gareth Lim, CEO of Ormond Group, says "The Chow Kit is the perfect introduction to our an interesting addition."

11 dead in Hawaii

A HAWAIIAN skydiving plane crash on Fri has killed 11 people. The State's transportation agency confirmed there were

no survivors on the twin-engine flight near Oahu's north shore. The plane reportedly flipped at least once before crashing in flames near where it took off at

Matetsi Virtuoso

Dillingham Airfield.

MATETSI Victoria Falls has joined exclusive luxury travel network Virtuoso, comprised of over 1,800 suppliers.

One of three representatives from Zimbabwe, the 55,000-hectare property is located on the banks of the Zambezi River, within its own private wildlife conservation area.

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FDITORIAL

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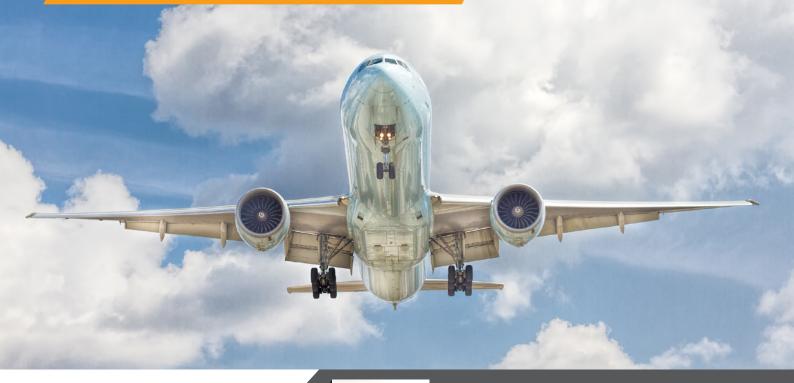
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