

## New role for Ponte

**ADVENTURE** holiday specialist Explore Worldwide has announced that its CEO Joe Ponte will become head of its parent company, Hotelplan UK.

Ponte, who held a number of roles in Australia including as local head of Brand USA, GM of the former Helloworld offshoot Insider Journeys and as Asia-Pacific GM of Flight Centre's Topdeck Tours, became London-based MD of Explore just over two years ago (**TD** 04 Jun 2018).

In this latest move he will replace Hotelplan UK chief Paul Carter, who is stepping down later this month for personal reasons which are unrelated to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ponte will become part of the Hotelplan Group's executive management team, overseeing brands including Explore as well as Inghams, Ski Total, Intravel, Esprit and Santa's Lapland.

Explore's deputy MD John Telfer will run the business while a search is undertaken for a longer term replacement for Ponte.

In Australia Explore is represented by Adventure World.

## CLIA testing for all

**CRUISE** Lines International Association (CLIA) member lines across the globe will implement 100% COVID-19 testing of all passengers and crew before boarding, in an industry-leading measure to help cruising resume - more in today's **Cruise Weekly**.

## AFTA pushes for support

**AFTA** CEO Darren Rudd will this afternoon meet with the office of the Prime Minister, as he continues to urge sector specific support for the travel industry.

The Federation posted an image on LinkedIn last night showing Rudd and KPMG NSW Chairman Doug Ferguson "awaiting their call with the Prime Minister at 8.30pm", which would have been just as Treasurer Josh Frydenberg's formal Budget speech concluded.

It's unclear whether that call took place, but Rudd is in Canberra today and AFTA told **Travel Daily** this morning talks were ongoing, despite no details being included in the Budget papers (**TD** breaking news).

A further update from AFTA is expected following this afternoon's meeting.

Economy-wide measures in last night's Budget included a decision to enact provisions allowing current year losses to be carried back to FY19 and/or FY20, providing a cash flow boost for previously profitable businesses.

The measure was one of the supplementary recommendations in AFTA's Budget Submission which also called for \$125 million in funding for travel agents, tour operators and wholesalers including \$5,000 per business to undertake financial assessments to determine if they are eligible for an associated grant and concessional loans program.

In a statement issued after the Budget was announced, AFTA welcomed the carry-back provisions as well as an increased investment in mental health.

"The Federal Budget contains a number of new and innovative measures for small businesses that should provide much needed initial relief to travel agents, travel wholesalers and tour operators, businesses which will only be able to recover after international travel is again possible," Rudd said.

He noted that the industry across the country had been meeting with Federal parliamentarians to explain the "brutal reality of being on the pandemic frontline".

"We know our united voices are being heard. We are working with Federal Government on sector-specific support," Rudd added.

The Budget did include a range of measures to support the domestic tourism sector, as well as the previously announced \$50 million to reboot business events.

There is also a new JobMaker Hiring Credit which encourages businesses to hire people aged between 16 and 35.

More from the Budget on **p3**.

### Today's issue of **TD**

**Travel Daily** today has five pages of news including our **PUZZLE** page and a full page from **Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau**.

## Okinawa training

**THE** final module in the new Discover Okinawa training platform has been released, allowing travel advisors to boost their knowledge of the fast growing destination - for more details see the **last page**.

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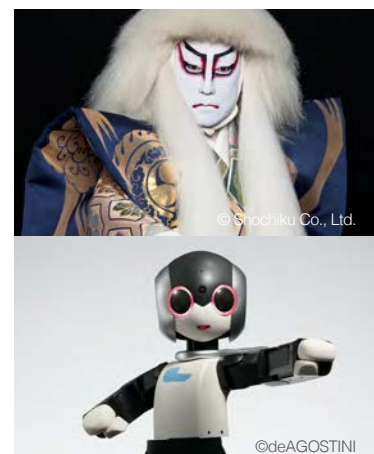
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## FCTG axes cievents brand

### EXCLUSIVE

**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group this morning confirmed another one of its long-time global brands will disappear, with its cievents operation to become part of the FCM Travel Solutions brand.

The move will see cievents Global General Manager Natalie Simmons leave after 21 years, with a leader for the newly branded FCM Meetings & Events to be announced shortly.

"cievents has been an industry leader in the MICE market for over 30 years and will continue to deliver the award-winning meetings and events it is known for under the new name of FCM Meetings & Events," a spokesperson for the company told *Travel Daily* this morning.

"While our name will change from cievents...many of the people and teams you know and trust remain," the company said, with the global transition to the

new identity to be phased in over the upcoming months.

"This integration with FCM Travel Solutions, one of the top four travel management companies globally, will combine the unique expertise of cievents with FCM's market-leading technology and extensive world-wide network.

"Customers will benefit from global reach, seamless travel, meetings, group travel and event capabilities, all under the FCM brand," the spokesperson said.

The company said it had taken the opportunity during the COVID-19 shutdown to reflect on the business "and make the changes we believe will provide our customers with an enhanced offering to fit the new meetings and events landscape".

Other FCTG brands which have been retired this year include Infinity Holidays (*TD* 20 Aug), and Universal Traveller (*TD* 30 Mar).

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## Air NZ Aug dive

**AIR** New Zealand's revenue passenger kilometres declined 91.1% in Aug, down from 262 million in the same month last year to just 2.94 million.

Also plummeting for the month was its volume of passengers, which decreased by 73.6% to 350,000 passengers.

## Azamara/Celeb out

**THERE** will be no local summer season for Azamara or Celebrity Cruises, after parent company Royal Caribbean Group announced a further suspension to its cruise operations.

Celebrity's full 2020-21 summer program in Australia and Asia will no longer go ahead, while Azamara will not restart operations until Europe's summer season in 2021.

Royal Caribbean's Group-wide pause is now in place until the end of Nov - more details on this story available in *Cruise Weekly*.



## Window Seat

**FAT** shaming is frowned upon in the human world, but when it comes to wild bears, bigger is simply better!

That's why the annual tradition of Fat Bear Week is so much fun for travellers, because it provides an opportunity to crown who is the largest bear at the Brooks River in Katmai National Park, Alaska.

In preparation for the long winter ahead, bears eat as much as they can so they can pack on the kilos and survive the hibernation period - sometimes tipping the scales at a hefty half a tonne.

Match-ups are posted daily in a tournament-style competition where contestants bare it all to be declared the biggest.

**CLICK HERE** to cast a vote for your chubbiest bear.



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## Budget boosts domestic

LAST night's Federal Budget (see page 1) saw the Government unveil a raft of funding measures designed to kickstart a strong shift toward domestic tourism.

Part of the package included an additional \$51 million channelled through the Regional Tourism Recovery initiative, which will be set aside to help Aussie regions, typically thriving on international arrivals, pivot toward attracting domestic tourists by creating new products, experiences and marketing campaigns.

"As we shift to the next phase of our tourism recovery plan, new budget measures will further support the sector and jobs by stimulating domestic visitation to our tourism regions and encouraging domestic business travel," said Federal Trade, Tourism and Investment Minister Simon Birmingham.

Tourism Australia was another major recipient of funding, with an extra \$231.6 million for the 2020-21 period allocated to increase domestic marketing activities to encourage Australians to take a holiday and explore their own backyard.

Birmingham said the Tourism Australia funding would also ensure the organisation was "well placed to aggressively execute new campaigns to again attract international visitors when overseas travel is back on the agenda".

Further tourism relief was

issued via the Government's COVID-19 recovery fund, with a previously announced \$61.7 million cash injection (TD 01 Oct) to help reinvigorate heritage sites, as well as fund conservation work and reef building to create more fishing and diving tourist experiences.

Australian Tourism Export Council Managing Director Peter Shelley welcomed the budget's funding for domestic tourism, claiming the package would provide "support across the economy and for regional tourism businesses specifically".

"Our industry has been the hardest hit in 2020, from the bushfires which saw mass cancellations from international and domestic visitors, to the coronavirus, which brought travel to a standstill," Shelley said.

"What the tourism industry needs right now is support for businesses to get back on their feet and, where they are reliant on international borders being open, support to hang in there."

While the travel industry did not get a mention in the Budget papers, the business events sector will benefit from a \$50m grants program, also previously announced (TD 11 Sep), which will "encourage domestic travel and get people flowing through our airports, on planes, spending money in restaurants and shops as well as staying in hotels," Birmingham enthused.



## SME relief package

SMALL- to medium-sized businesses in the travel and tourism sectors will receive a moderate degree of financial relief following a number of measures revealed by the Federal Government yesterday.

The package for SMEs detailed as part of the Federal Budget include allowing companies with a turnover up to \$5 billion to offset losses against previous profits where tax has been paid to generate a refund.

Small businesses earning between \$50m to \$500m will also be able to apply full expensing to second-hand assets of less than \$150,000, while organisations with a turnover of less than \$5bn will be eligible to deduct the full price of capital assets purchased from today and by 30 Jun 2022.

The Government announced further relief by exempting SMEs from the 47% fringe benefits tax for retraining or redeploying staff to other roles in the company.

## Mental health tick

THE Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) has welcomed an increased investment in mental health and suicide prevention from the Federal Government as part of its budget released last night.

The budget included additional psychology rebates, costed at \$100.8 million over two years, with \$5.7 billion overall committed to mental health for the 2020-21 period, including front line services and suicide prevention.

Upon making the announcement, Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg noted mental health and suicide prevention were "a national priority" for the country, particularly during the current health crisis.

AFTA had previously launched a four-week mental health initiative in Aug, designed to provide travel agents with support tools during the shutdown (TD 25 Aug).

## Budget plans for low int'l activity

ASSUMPTIONS built into the Federal Budget handed down last night incorporated modelling that suggest international travel is expected to remain low through most of 2021, followed by a gradual recovery in outbound international tourism.

The Budget envisages a population-wide COVID-19 vaccine program late next year.

## Hire young, not old

HOPES that the thousands of travel industry workers currently seeking new roles could benefit from the Federal Budget's new JobMaker plan were dashed last night, unless they are under 35.

The JobMaker program announced by Treasurer Josh Frydenberg will help fund employers who take on new staff, but just like a Contiki tour, only applies to additional employees aged 16-35.

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## Sudoku

### DIABOLICAL

THE aim of Sudoku is to complete the entire grid using the numbers 1-9. Numbers can only be used once in each row, column, and 3x3 box.

		7	9					
	9					3		7
		6	7		3		9	5
					4		1	
	8		1		9		2	
	7		6					
2	6		3		7	9		
7		8						6
					2	4		

www.sudokuoftheday.com - visit them and get a new Sudoku every day!

## Pub quiz

- Scheduled to enter the Carnival fleet next year, which is the only ship owned by the line not to feature "Carnival" in its name?
- When was Hawaii annexed by the United States?
  - In 1888
  - In 1898
  - In 1908
- How many islands make up the Pitcairn Islands?
  - 4
  - 40
  - 400
- Which are the five recognised nuclear weapon states?
- Does 'Tokyo International Airport' officially refer to Haneda or Narita airport?
- St. Andrew's Cross is the dominating feature of which country's flag?
- Nike is headquartered in which American state?
- Which city's gambling industry is larger: Las Vegas' or Macao's?
- Japan's Okinawa Prefecture is located on which chain of islands?
- Lautoka in Fiji is noted for being a hub for which industry?

## Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the TD Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 06 Jan 2012:

**MORE** than 150 sculptures at the Louis Tussauds House of Wax in the UK town of Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, dubbed the "world's worst" have been sold to a Czech Republic buyer.

The attraction had been run for the past 58 years by husband and wife team Peter and Jane Hayes until last year when it closed after being ridiculed for its statues looking nothing like the public figures purported.

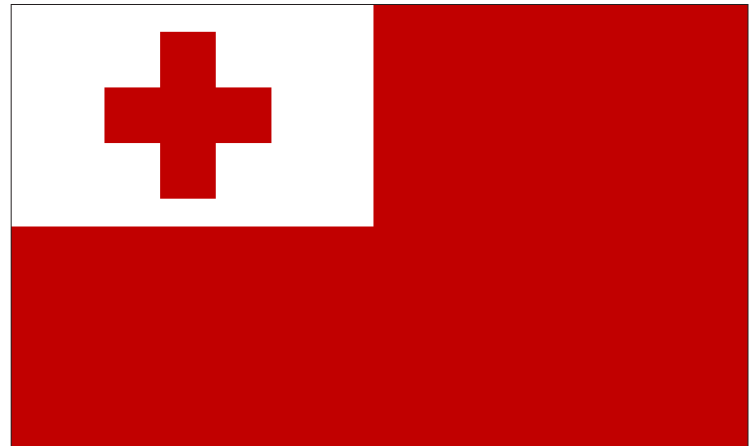
"We had a lot of bad press and I feel a bit irritated that the local people didn't stick up for us a bit more," Mrs Hayes said.

**BEER** pong is a staple activity among college and high-school parties in the United States, and all that practice for some may now finally start paying off.

This past weekend, Las Vegas played host to the ninth edition of the World Series of Beer Pong, which took place at the Flamingo, with more than \$50,000 in prizes up for grabs.

Hundreds of teams from around the world participated in the tournament, with the aim being very much to win, as opposed to the high school goal of simply getting drunk faster.

## Whose flag is this?



THE independent kingdoms of countries in this region usually adopt red and white as the main colours for their flags, which were often introduced in the late 18th century.

The first flag of this country was no different with a white background and a red or blue

cross in each corner and the initials representing the king in the centre.

This flag design was officially adopted in 1866 and the cross represents the main symbol of Christianity, as most of the country followed that religion.

Do you know whose flag it is?

### ANSWERS 06 OCT

Pub quiz: 1 Japan Airlines, 2 Bergen, 3 Budapest, 4 Alaska, 5 Cudgegong River, 6 Southport, 7 Melanesian, 8 South Brisbane, 9 Ten, 10 Grapes, 11 Pilbara - pill + bar + ah

Unscramble: amen, ante, earn, eaten, enema, enrapt, enter, entrap, mane, manner, marten, mean, meaner, meant, name, nape, neap, near, neat, neaten, neater, neep, pane, pant, parent, paten, pean, peen, penna, pennate, pent, pentane, PERMANENT, preen, rane, rant, remnant, rename, rennet, rent, repent, tanner, tarn, teen, tenner, tern, treen, trepan

Where in the world: Mont Saint Michel, Brittany, France



## Jetstar Hobart/GC

**NEW** Jetstar flights are set to take off between Hobart and the Gold Coast from Dec, operating three times per week.

The services will provide 1,200 seats between the two cities each week, with the flights available to be booked from today.

When the first Jetstar Airbus A320 takes off in Dec, it will represent the only direct link between Tasmania and the Queensland destination.

Book tickets [HERE](#).

## WA travel bubbles?

**WESTERN** Australia is reportedly considering a travel bubble with some Australian states, and with New Zealand, according to the state's Chief Medical Officer Andy Robertson.

The CMO told local media he would provide further advice to the Western Australian Government on border restrictions in the "next couple of weeks", which would include the consideration of creating select travel bubbles.

## ATAC members in safe hands



**DESPITE** the obvious challenges posed by the travel shutdown, that didn't stop the resilient spirit of Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC) members, who recently attended the organisation's virtual Annual General Meeting last week.

The event acted as a forum to update members on ATAC's financial position, monetary returns, as well as providing

advice on how best to ride out the challenges of the pandemic.

"From a head office point of view, we have been really working hard to give our members the tools they need to get through this crisis the best way they can," said General Manager Michelle Emerton.

**Pictured:** ATAC members lending each other a hand - view a video from the event [HERE](#).

## ACCOMMODATION

**WELCOME** to Accommodation Updates, *Travel Daily's* Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to [accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au).



Set to deliver "the pinnacle of privacy", **COMO Parrot Cay, Turks & Caicos** has unveiled sleek new two-bedroom and Family Beach houses, for groups in the pursuit of solitude. The new additions offer a combined 1,000 acres of space, and introduce a new adults-only pool, large living areas, an alfresco lounge & decking area and uninterrupted views of the ocean. Each Beach House also incorporates a personalised butler service.



Newly renovated rooms, amenities and safety protocols have just debuted at the re-opened luxury resort **Viva Wyndham Dominicus Beach**, located in the Dominican Republic. A new saltwater infinity pool has also opened at the property, which has now

completed its total transformation, featuring "colonial and modern-inspired decor", and also boasting a new lobby, nature-inspired areas, and restaurants and bars.



**Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas**, which recently opened, sprawls across 3.5 kilometres of private beaches filled with 30 villas, and is all now available for booking. A further 246 rooms and suites are due to open early next year, with guests able to

enjoy a range of "upscale features" during their stay, such as restaurants and a range of treatments, including a restorative Volcanic Stone Massage, at the Eforea Spa.

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