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## EK expands c'share

EMIRATES and Airlink have expanded their codeshare partnership, sealing an agreement to offer connections to and from South Africa and the United Arab Emirates.

EK travellers now have access to more than 40 domestic and regional destinations across 12 African countries, with the move coming as the UAE flag-carrier resumes its flights to South Africa.

Emirates Chief Commercial Officer Adnan Kazim said the expansion of the partnership marks an important step forward in our relationship.

"Our new codeshare agreement enhances our service offering and flexibility for customers travelling beyond our gateways in South and Southern Africa," he said.



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## Livn pilots Google trial

EXCLUSIVE

CONNECTIVITY hub Livn has been chosen by Google as a partner for a new pilot project called Things to do, an initiative designed to help operators in the tours and experiences space achieve better visibility via organic online searches.

The Australian-based company will use its unique tech to power the 'official site' button in Google's new project, which will see participating operators able to appear at the top of searches and therefore drive more direct traffic to their websites than was available previously.

Replacing the recently phased out Reserve with Google project (TD 01 Jul), Things to do will shift the bookings trail from online travel agencies (OTAs), who were previously partners in processing bookings for Google on the back end, to operators directly, a pivot that Livn CEO Mark Rizzuto believes will ultimately "level the playing field" - particularly for smaller players in the sector.

"I believe that through the pilot, tour operators and traditional operators are going to have significantly greater control of their own distribution and pricing strategy," Rizzuto told TD.

"Previously searches involving smaller tour companies would take users off to places like Booking.com and Expedia and they would complete the booking, and these smaller

### Sailings get bigger

HURTIGRUTEN is seeing travel advisors booking more larger groups than solo or smaller groups, with the line to host a webinar on the topic this Thu.

Beginning at 10am AEST, topics covered in the one-off special webinar will be the benefits of booking groups, what you need to do to put together a group adventure, and much more.

CLICK HERE to register.

businesses would then lose 30% of their product pricing through a commission to a large OTA who has bid on their name and stolen their lunch from beneath them."

The trial will see Livn provide the data for Google to create the listing, so that they have all the product information and photos, as well as power the link behind the button that will redirect the booking to the operator's website where they can complete the sale directly.

Rizzuto also believes the trial has the potential to vastly improve the traveller experience by bringing the silent majority of smaller operators to the surface of searches, only a quarter of which he stated are currently embedded in bigger res systems.

"There's a real opportunity here for Google to provide a much richer consumer experience by reaching far deeper into the pond, [so] when people search for 'what can I do in Sydney', they're not just getting the Sydney Opera House or a walk around the Rocks, they are potentially getting a surfing lesson with a world champion at Bondi Beach instead."

The cost to get involved will be a small monthly subscription fee (well under \$100) in time, but for now Rizzuto said the registrations are free for at least three months as the mobile-only pilot continues to take shape, which at this stage is only open to attractions companies, with a view to tour and activity operators to join the trial after that - register HERE.

### CVFR NDC is coming

CVFR Consolidation Services will launch its new NDC ticketing solution at the end of the month as an enhancement to the company's TravelTech platform.

The company has also joined the push to encourage COVID-19 immunisations - see the cover page for more details.

## Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news plus a front cover page from CVFR.

## Revenue summit

THE Australian Revenue Management Association has adapted its in-person annual Revenue Management Education Summit for accommodation and tourism businesses into a virtual event for this year, featuring a mix of live and recorded tutorials by world-class experts.

Participants can register for a free 24-hour access pass or an optional 90-day access pass and participate in the summit in their own time.

The event begins next Wed - CLICK HERE to reserve your spot.

Quiktravel

Consolidated Travel is launching the new Quiktravel on 23<sup>rd</sup> August

NDC TICKETING

MANAGE BOOKINGS

STREAMLINED TICKETING PROCESS

MESSAGING

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## Window Seat

**AN AUSTRALIAN** traveller has blamed an urgent call of nature on why he lied to authorities about which state he had flown to Adelaide from this week.

Bernard Shackcloth told police on arrival that he had flown in from Alice Springs instead of Victoria, which would mean skipping quarantine queues, so that he could head to the loo as soon as possible.

"I was in dire straits," he told police, with CCTV confirming Shackcloth headed to the bathroom immediately after touchdown, with the blame placed on the All-Bran cereal and skim milk he had consumed for breakfast.

The 49-year-old avoided jail for the fib and was handed a 13-day suspended sentence.

## AFTA rallies its members

**THE** Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) is calling on the support of its members to push forward the next stage of its lobbying efforts for wider travel agent financial support from the Federal Government.

The industry body wants all hands on deck to persuade the Government to pull the trigger on additional \$130 million support through the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program, or the implementation of a travel disaster relief package based on the country's east coast model currently supporting affected businesses.

AFTA said it was also campaigning to have previously excluded businesses included in any new grants program initiative moving forward, as well as increased support for multi-outlet businesses not catered for effectively under the previous funding models.

To achieve its goals, AFTA confirmed the it will be expanding its National Mobilisation Campaign over the coming weeks, incorporating lobbying at a state and territory level in addition to its ongoing Federal engagement.

"We thank the Government and Federal Tourism Minister Dan Tehan for the \$258 Million COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program received to date but we need ongoing support to protect the remaining 25,000 jobs and 3,000 businesses so we can keep supporting consumers," AFTA Chair Tom Manwaring said.

"We know that having our members share their pleas for support directly with their local Members of Parliament as part of a coordinated campaign works."

Access more details on how to lobby for support **HERE**.

More details from AFTA's initiatives available on **page four**.

## SEQUOIA in bloom

**TRAVELLERS** will be invited to "discover a South Australia you never knew existed" at SEQUOIA Lodge Adelaide Hills, the highly anticipated luxury lodge which gearing up to open its doors to the public this week.

The \$18 million SEQUOIA Lodge will officially open its doors tomorrow, offering guests the region's iconic food & wine, wellness, history and vast nature experiences

SEQUOIA Adelaide Hills is the first luxury lodge in Australia within an hour of an international airport, located on the grounds of Mount Lofty House.

The 14-suite luxury lodge sits high above Piccadilly in the Adelaide Hills, boasting panoramic views of a region currently being considered for UNESCO World Heritage status for its working agricultural landscapes, historic settlements, abundant wildlife, pure environment and more.

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## \$130 million for airlines

THE Federal Government has opened applications for a new round of support for airlines, under the Retaining Domestic Airline Capability Program.

A total of \$130 million is up for grabs, with the funding providing "time-limited, targeted and proportionate payments to assist domestic airlines ensure they have the capability to quickly ramp up as aviation activity increases when domestic travel and border restrictions ease, which will in turn help drive broader economic activity," according to the tender brief.

To be eligible airlines must provide interstate transport services, and be able to demonstrate a 30% reduction in their network following the declaration of a COVID-19 hot spot by the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer.

Funds can be used for eligible costs including wages, aircraft storage costs, machinery

maintenance, licensing and accreditation costs, but airlines are required to maintain their total workforce at the levels of 30 Jul 2021 in order to qualify.

The grant program closes on 24 Oct, and money cannot be used to help fund international or cargo-only aviation operations.

For further information, see [grants.gov.au](https://www.grants.gov.au).

The news follows a decision by Qantas and Jetstar to furlough around 2,500 staff for an estimated two months.

## Norse Atlantic primes for launch



SCANDINAVIAN airline startup Norse Atlantic Airways is starting to take shape, with the first jet (pictured) receiving its finishing touches in Norway this week.

The inaugural aircraft has been named in honour of Raet National Park in Arendal, Norway, with the budget, long-haul airline attempting to fill the vacuum left by Norwegian Air, which stopped its entire long-haul network as part of a major overhaul revealed earlier in the year.

The airline expects that its 15 Dreamliners will be flying by the middle of 2022, servicing cities such as Oslo, London, Paris, New York, Fort Lauderdale and LA.

AUSTRALIANS WILL BE ABLE TO TRAVEL WHEN WE REACH 80% OF THE POPULATION VACCINATED, SO LETS

#givetravelashot  
#letsgetto80



## Royal in West Med

ROYAL Caribbean International has made its return to the western Mediterranean this week, with *Harmony of the Seas* the first Oasis-class vessel to sail back to Europe.

Sailing seven-night cruises from Barcelona, *Harmony* has joined *Anthem of the Seas* and *Jewel of the Seas* in European waters.

Until Oct, *Harmony* will take passengers to Palma De Mallorca, Florence, Rome, and Naples.

Guests can also choose to begin their vacation in Italy and sail roundtrip from Rome.

"We are delighted to welcome back another ship to our European lineup this summer with the return of the award-winning *Harmony of the Seas*," said VP EMEA Ben Bouldin.

"*Harmony* is an incredibly popular ship and one of the most revolutionary in our fleet, so families are in for a summer of adventure," he added.

## Harvest vax reward

HARVEST Hotels is offering a \$100 allowance to its casual and full-time workers who decide to get fully vaccinated.

"We want to lead by example and help to stop the spread of the virus, so we are supporting our staff in getting vaccinated against COVID-19," Harvest Hotels Director Fraser Haughton said.

"We know that rolling up our sleeves for the job is the only way out of the pandemic, so this \$100 allowance is our small way of encouraging our employees who can, to get vaccinated."

## Trans-Tasman dip

NEW Zealand's travel with Australia decreased slightly in Jun compared to the month before due to interruptions to the quarantine-free travel bubble, Statistics New Zealand reveals.

More than nine in 10 (92%) of New Zealand's overseas visitor arrivals for Jun were from Australia, while almost 80% of residents arrivals in NZ were returning from an Aussie trip.

NZ's COVID-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins last week said the trans-Tasman bubble as we know it is over.

## Singapore showcases

SINGAPORE Airlines will showcase the best of Singapore to the world through a new initiative launched alongside leading local brands.

The Singapore Showcase will offer unique on-ground and in-flight experiences for its global customer base, with Singapore Airlines having worked with renowned local hawker brands to offer their distinctive dishes and products to travellers.

MEANWHILE, Singapore Airlines Group's passenger traffic (measured in revenue passenger-kilometres) grew on the back of available seat-kilometres last month, rising to around 32% of pre-pandemic levels.



## Okinawa makes the grade



IN A major boon for the Japanese prefecture of Okinawa, two islands in the region have been inducted into the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The northern part of Okinawa

Island and Iriomote Island (pictured) were both added to the prestigious listing, marking the first time in ten years that a nature site in Japan has been instated by UNESCO.

With nature-based tourism on the rise over the last few years among Australians, the accreditation has the potential to improve the prefecture's tourism credentials with prospective travellers, as UNESCO criteria requires unique natural topography, geology and biodiversity in order to be listed.

## Trio of GMs revealed

MARRIOTT International has made three General Manager appointments across its properties in Melbourne.

The appointees are all internal promotions at Marriott, with Stephen Ferrigno recently taking on the role at The Westin Melbourne, Chris Johns at Four Points by Sheraton Melbourne Docklands and Harry Singh at AC Hotel by Marriott Melbourne Southbank.

"These experienced and talented executives will lead three of our top-performing hotels in the Melbourne market," Marriott International Area VP ANZ and Pacific Sean Hunt said.

The appointments coincide with a period of strong expansion for the company, with 12 new hotels to open by the end of 2022.

## AFTA UPDATE

from the Australian Federation of Travel Agents

THIS week AFTA is releasing the next stage in our National Mobilisation Campaign with members able to access our toolkit to reinforce our collective calls for more support for more



supporting campaign. Once National Cabinet agreed on 30 Jul the magic release numbers for thresholds for Stages 3 and 4 of their national roadmap, we were able to progress these campaigns as

of the sector. This is timed to coincide with our most recent submission on wider support including the \$130 million Round 3 of the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program or implementation of a Travel Disaster Relief package based on the East Coast Package available now. Social media activation continues including via the #GetTravelReady #VaxReady campaign launched last week (<https://upload.vloggi.com/projects/EQQ-003>).

It's been wonderful to see Round 2 Grant payments coming through members' accounts. Federal Tourism Minister Dan Tehan and his office have been very receptive to working with AFTA on this which has been greatly appreciated. We also are grateful for the support of Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman Bruce Billson.

AFTA is also very proud to announce that we will soon have a full time resource to provide additional mental health support for members thanks to the Vic Govt's Small Business Wellbeing Project with in-person support for Victorian members and tailored webinars and workshops for the wider AFTA membership. AFTA along with many other peak bodies and individuals has been calling for many months now for faster vaccination rollout and take-up so that we can all get travelling again and back to living more normally again. You will have seen our increasing use of #GetTravelReady and #BeTravelReady as part of our commitment to boosting a sense of urgency around vaccination take-up. We had already added this to our advocacy priorities and had started to work on a

shared most recently via our 03 Aug Member Update Webinar.

As a member organisation, we are always happy to also support and promote our members' campaigns. So, when Linda Forster contacted us after our Tuesday webinar to ask for our amplification of her campaign, we were of course very happy to do so especially given its fit with our campaign of bringing the need to inspire Australians to be travel ready via media and social media. From individual initiatives like Linda's through to

*Travel Daily's* #givetavelashot and News Limited's Call To Arms campaign, we are all focused on the same end. Let's get to 80% as quickly as we can to end the lockdowns, and the devastating impact on lives and livelihoods. We also ask our members to maximise your databases to promote the vaccination cause so that open borders and international travel happens as soon as possible. Of course, parallel to this, as we find ourselves as travel agents and businesses in our 18th month of what is in reality an extended hard lockdown, we continue to press the case Federally and at a State and Territory Government level for ongoing, much needed financial support and relief. We are very grateful for the ongoing access to and support from Tourism Minister Dan Tehan and his office as well as Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, Bruce Billson and his team. It is pleasing to hear that so many of our members have now received payments from their applications for support for Rounds 1 and 2 of the Federal Government's COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Grants Program.

## RED CENTRE 'MATES RATES' SALE

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## CX sees Jul uptick

**HONG** Kong airline Cathay Pacific carried 54,092 passengers in Jul, new figures show, an increase of 25.8% compared to Jul 2020 but a 98.4% drop compared to the pre-pandemic volumes in 2019.

Encouragingly, CX's revenue passenger kilometres rose by 22.6% year-on-year, with passenger load factor also increasing by 5.1 percentage points to 28.5% on the previous corresponding period.

## MONEY

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

**AU\$1 = US\$0.731**

**THE AUD** was lower overnight as global growth slows down.

Weaker economic data from across the globe hit sentiment locally, with Chinese trends pressuring the Australian dollar yesterday through last month's lower-than-expected industrial production.

US numbers also weighed on the AUD, with weaker returns overall signalling a slowdown of rapid global growth.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.731
UK	£0.528
NZ	\$1.037
Euro	€0.621
Japan	¥80.07
Thailand	฿24.33
China	¥4.692
South Africa	10.80
Canada	\$0.916
Crude oil	US\$69.51

## Malaysia plans for bubble



**MALAYSIA'S** Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry has revealed plans to implement a tourism bubble to the tropical archipelago of Langkawi, indicating that select island resorts will be chosen to pilot the travel initiative.

The Malaysian Government said it was now liaising with stakeholders in Langkawi to create quarantine-free travel destinations for fully vaccinated visitors, and would only push

ahead when the local population had reached herd immunity.

Fortunately, the region's population of 108,400 people has already seen 88,137 receive a double dose, meaning that over 80% of locals are now protected from COVID-19.

**Pictured:** A Langkawi cable car.

## Lord of the flings

**NEW** Zealand is set to lose one of its biggest tourism draws, following news that the second season of Amazon's yet-to-be-named "Lord of the Rings" television series will be filmed in the United Kingdom instead.

Amazon said the move was motivated by a desire to expand its UK production enterprise, leaving New Zealand with a hole in its tourism strategy, as the franchise historically generated significant travel interest.

## Freeing up space

**DESPITE** all the recent fanfare of its first successful passenger flight, Virgin Galactic's founder Richard Branson is reportedly planning to sell a US\$300 million stake in the brand to help bolster his other travel businesses.

Branson's travel empire has been slammed by the pandemic, with media reports suggesting the majority of the funds will be used to prop up the struggling Virgin Atlantic airline, which has been seeking urgent funding from various sources in recent months, and also filed for bankruptcy protection in the United States last year (*TD* 05 Aug 2020).

If the sale goes ahead, it will be the third time Branson has sold down his share in the pioneering space tourism company, having divested US\$505 million worth in May 2020 and US\$150 million in Apr this year, but he still holds US\$1.2 billion worth of shares.

## Show us your best pineapple!

*The much-loved Big Pineapple on the Sunshine Coast is turning 50! To celebrate this icon's birthday, the team at Visit Sunshine Coast invite you to submit your best holiday photos at the attraction.*

*Photos will be judged by the team with prizes for gold, silver and bronze. The first prize will be awarded a Sunshine Coast prize pack featuring Sunshine and Sons Gin, Diablo Pineapple Liqueur and a few other surprises!*

*Second and third place will also be sent a box of Sunshine Coast goodies featuring Diablo Pineapple Liqueur.*

*Please send your submissions to [trade@visitsunshinecoast.com](mailto:trade@visitsunshinecoast.com) by close of business Monday 23 August.*



**Got a confidential tip? Contact Travel Daily via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click [HERE](#)** Travel Daily

Travel Daily

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Travel Daily is part of the Business Publishing Group family of publications.

Produced each weekday since 1994, *Travel Daily* is Australia's leading travel industry publication.

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