

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news including our PUZZLE page.

Travel side hustle

NSW travel agents in need of some extra income during the travel shutdown can now register to work on the 2021 Local Council Elections being held on 04 Sep.

The NSW Electoral Commission is reaching out to the travel industry to be part of the voting team, with approximately 20,000 people needed to work in their local area to make the election process run smoothly.

There's a variety of positions on offer, including working on polling day and other short-term office positions, with no previous election work experience needed.

Election officials can earn close to \$450 for the day incl meal/training payments - apply [HERE](#).

Austrade surveys agents

EXCLUSIVE

THE Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) is gathering additional information on the travel industry, circulating an online survey to stakeholders, saying it is "seeking to better understand the current status of the consumer travel support sector".

The confidential poll includes questions about business downturn due to border closures, the value of bookings currently being held, staff numbers two years ago compared to now, and whether respondents operate from multiple locations.

Austrade also asks those who complete the survey whether they received payments under the first and/or second round of the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program, and whether they have applied for

a government-backed loan with their bank in order to survive.

There is a question asking whether businesses expect to still be operating in 12 months time if borders do not open, and whether owners have considered "closing or hibernating" their companies.

"Would you consider putting your business into hibernation or closing it if there was support to help you transition and/or retrain staff?" is also asked in the poll.

Respondents are assured that their answers will be kept confidential, and will not be used to audit any payments provided through the grants scheme.

The poll can be completed at surveymonkey.com/r/CTSsector, with Austrade seeking survey submissions by 15 Jul.

UK freedom day

DOUBLE-VACCINATED Britons will be able to travel freely without quarantine to "amber list" destinations from 19 Jul, according to an update from UK Transport Minister Grant Shapps. He said under-18s returning from amber list countries would also be exempt from the rules, which currently require 10 days of isolation upon return.

He confirmed officials were also working to extend the same approach to vaccinated passengers from important markets and holiday destinations, such as the USA and the EU.

Agent quest for health advice denied

ORBIT World Travel co-founder Michael Chase-Smith has attracted front-page attention in Qld today over a Right to Information request seeking details of the health advice used by Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk to keep the state's borders shut.

Chase-Smith lodged his application eight months ago, at a cost of \$960, but has now been advised by Queensland Health that there are issues accessing the emails of the state's Chief Health Officer Jeannette Young, because they "keep corrupting".

The *Courier Mail* has today highlighted the issue, with Chase-Smith questioning why the vital advice from Dr Young, which had caused such massive economic devastation, had been so difficult to locate.

"How could it not be readily at hand if the Chief Health Officer and Premier can stand up every day and tell us they're operating on health advice?" he asked.

New EK payments

EMIRATES has launched a new Emirates Pay solution in the UK and Germany, enabling consumers to buy tickets online without using a credit card.

EK is the first carrier to use the new system developed by IATA and financial partners, which directly debits bank accounts and thus bypasses credit card fees.

IATA said IATA Pay can save up to 93% in transaction costs.



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Travellers at risk of hack

ONLY 47% of travellers take the same online security measures that they would take at home when they're on holiday, according to a new White Paper authored by McAfee Global Threat Intelligence.

The software security company's report also found that only 52% of travellers check if the network they are joining on a trip is secure before connecting, and of that portion, 22% admitted they don't check because they believe the network is likely to pose no threat.

Just over a quarter of respondents conceded they might consider checking the credentials of the connection if they knew how to do it.

The concerning lack of online security awareness among tourists demonstrated in the study means travellers are

particularly vulnerable at places like airports and tourist hubs, NordVPN cybersecurity expert Daniel Markuson claims.

"Travellers can be easier to trick as they usually don't know what the legit wi-fi name in a certain place abroad may look like, this makes it easier for hackers to set up 'evil twins' - fake wi-fi hotspots - in places frequented by tourists, like airports or train stations," Markuson warned.

"If a traveller connects to such a hotspot, all their personal information, including credit card details, private emails and various credentials, will be sent to a hacker," he added.

The report recommends that travellers mitigate the risk of an online attack while on holiday by ensuring the use of security software on their devices when logging on to a wi-fi connection and to use a virtual private network (VPN) which can provide an extra layer of protection.

Oceania Aus canx

OCEANIA Cruises is the latest international cruise line to withdraw its Australian itineraries, with all *Regatta* scheduled voyage departures from 02 Oct through until 18 Feb 2022 cancelled.

The itineraries included a 35-day circumnavigation of Australia which had been set to depart on 01 Dec calling at about a dozen regional ports along the way, as well as a series of trans-Tasman voyages - for more details, see today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

Self-guided UK tours

EXODUS Travels has added 27 new self-guided walking and cycling tours in the United Kingdom in 2022, exploring areas such as Cornwall, Bath, Norfolk, Pembrokeshire, North Wales and Northern Ireland.

Australian travellers can book trips with a refund guarantee if tours can't go ahead, with prices for the itineraries leading in at \$1,449pp - call 1300 131 564.

Missing banana bender spenders

TRAVEL restrictions implemented because of the pandemic has caused Queenslanders to take close to 4.7 million fewer holidays, a new study by University of Queensland academics claims.

The report showed more than 2.2 million international trips were scuttled by COVID-19, while 2.4 million domestic holidays were withdrawn, including 800,000 trips within Qld alone.

The research revealed Asian destinations suffered the most internationally, with an estimated 750,000 trips to those destinations put on hold, followed by 500,000 to Europe.

New Zealand was also badly impacted with 330,000 cancelled from Qld since Mar 2020.

Outside of the obvious economic impact, the study identified a significant mental health effect due to reduced travel opportunities as well.

"More than half of the people we talked to identified the mental health benefits of escape - recharging one's batteries, simply having a break from day-to-day lives, or being able to spend time with family and friends - as the greatest benefit of travel," UQ Business School's Professor Bob McKercher said.

"I need it to relieve a stressful lifestyle," one respondent noted, while another said travel was desperately needed to "fight off depressive episodes".



Window Seat

A JUDGE on the United Kingdom's hugely popular *Strictly Come Dancing* has joined the chorus of praise for travel agents currently doing it tough around the world.

Shirley Ballas (pictured third from right), thanked the work of travel advisors who are helping to keep the global travel sector alive, acknowledging their role in creating the best personal holidays in her own life.

"I have used a travel agent all my life, they are so important," she told a room full of travel agents and guests on board a *Celebrity Silhouette* cruise of the British Isles.

"I am a person that has travelled all my life, when the [pandemic] hit, it was the hardest thing, it has been so difficult," she added.

There were 85 agents enjoying a trip on board the *Celebrity Cruises* ship as part of a special comeback voyage for travel agents in the UK, something we all hope our Australian agents can enjoy as well very soon.



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Travel Daily

CORPORATE UPDATE

EK incentivises SME travel

EMIRATES is attempting to gain more travel momentum by introducing rewards for small- and medium-sized businesses to join its corporate loyalty program by 27 Jul.

SMEs that join the program will receive a 10,000 Business Rewards points bonus, enough credit for one Economy class return ticket to any destination in Europe.

Further benefits of joining

include a streamlined enrolment process, easier earning and redemptions, greater flexibility on retaining and using points, and a wider array of upgrade opportunities.

See more details on the Rewards Program [HERE](#).

MEANWHILE Emirates has announced it is opening up First class lounges at Dubai International Concourse B as part of a phased rollout to reboot ground services for its premium customers.

Reopened First class lounges will operate with a range of bio-safety protocols in place, and will offer services such as facial treatments at the Timeless Spa, access to shoeshines, four fine champagne vintages at the dedicated Moët and Chandon bar, special offers at luxury wine and spirits retailer Le Clos, and limited-edition tea blends with Dilmah Tea.

EK has also restarted chauffeur drive services in more than 70 cities around the world, as well lounge operations in Cairo, New York JFK, Manchester, Boston, Milan, and Los Angeles.

WebBeds Babbles

CLOUD solutions provider Babble has signed a deal with Webjet-owned B2B division WebBeds to enhance its contact centre services using artificial intelligence capabilities.

The agreement will see WebBeds outsource customer service company-wide to meet its goal of automating the day-to-day work of its contact centre.

Babble stated the contract will see WebBeds speed up customer enquiries, reduce human error, and pave the way for staff to deal with more complex tasks.



On this episode:
Industry faces a big CHOICE

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to listen.

NEW EPISODE

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Welcome to our country



TOURISM Australia (TA) believes the travel industry has an opportunity to grow the demand for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism experiences, for both overseas arrival and Aussies.

The country's peak tourism body stated that it was its role to help create a greater awareness, understanding and advocacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through key partnerships to tap the segment's full tourism potential.

"This will ultimately increase the value of the Indigenous tourism sector and improve the tourism experiences of our holiday-makers," Tourism Australia said.

In 2019, 1.4 million international visitors (17%) participated in an Indigenous tourism experience whilst visiting Australia, representing a 6% year-on-year increase since 2010, while for domestic travellers the figure was one million, an increase of 13% each year since 2013.

"Choosing to spend your holiday with an Indigenous-owned business can bring big benefits to communities by preserving jobs, boosting the local economy, and continuing cultural identity," TA CMO Susan Coghill said.

To mark NAIDOC Week, TA has partnered with Blackfish and Message Sticks to produce a powerful Welcome to Country video, watch it in full [HERE](#).

Pictured: An indigenous tour taking place in Cairns.

100 hotels, 500 days

QATAR Tourism has revealed ambitions to add more than 100 new hotels and serviced apartments to its portfolio of properties in the lead up to FIFA 2022 World Cup.

The announcement is in line with the country's Qatar National Vision 2030 strategy, which will aim to make Qatar a world class tourism destination with diverse appeal over the next 10 years.

"We are continuing to expand our tourism offer to ensure guests enjoy the best of Qatari hospitality while being able to choose a hotel, resort or serviced apartment that accommodates to their budget and needs," Qatar National Tourism Council chief Akbar Al Baker said.

Hotels in the pipeline include the 53-storey, 297-room JWMarriott West Bay, the "futuristic" Steigenberger Hotel Doha and the stylish Pullman Doha West Bay, scheduled to open later this year.

QTIC backs Anna

THE Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) has defended Qld Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk's decision to travel to Japan to bid for the 2032 Olympic Games, citing a need for the state to secure the "once-in-a-lifetime" tourism event.

The Olympic Games are estimated to contribute \$8.1 billion to the Qld economy and for the Premier not to attend would be "incomprehensible self-sabotage", QTIC reasoned.

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Icon under a microscope



THIS landmark is iconic and easily recognisable when you see the whole picture, but can you identify it from this small portion of the image?

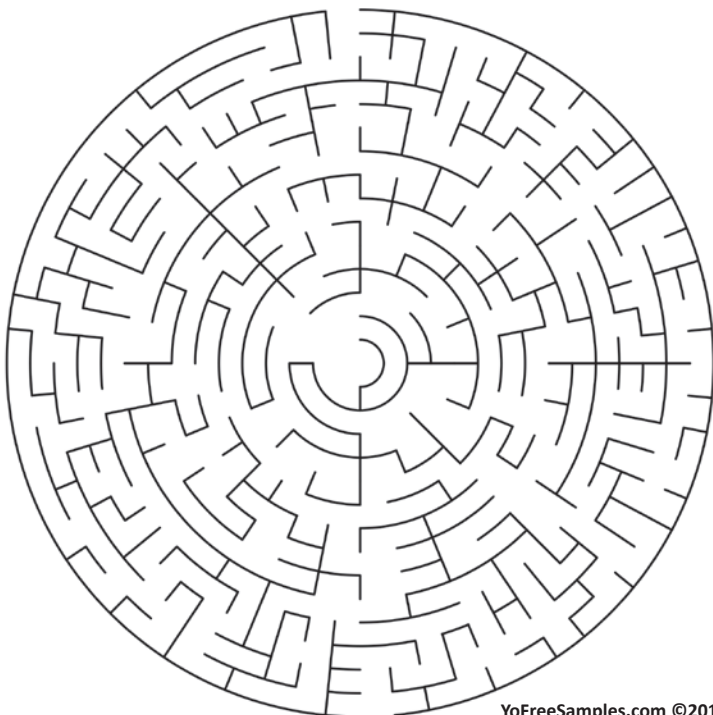
This stone circle has been the

subject of plenty myths and legends over the years, with experts still unsure exactly what the site was used for and even how it was built.

Can you name the site?

A-maze-ing

CAN you find your way through this maze? Start at the top and finish at the bottom.



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Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the *TD* Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 26 Aug 2014:

AUSTRALIA'S oldest operating graveyard could be latching on to a new niche growing in popularity - cemetery tourism.

West Terrace Cemetery in Adelaide has reported record visitor numbers for the 2013/14 financial year following the launch of guided tours and self-guided walking trails for guests.

The facility offers five trails that visitors can walk including "Beliefs, Attitudes and Customs", "Stories of the Everyday" and the "Trailblazing Women" walk.

For the truly fearless, a new evening series held on Fri nights which incorporates theatrical lights, sound and period actors is proving especially popular.

If you're "dying" to check it out, visit www.aca.sa.gov.au.

Famous faces



THERE are three different faces that make up this picture.

They are a mixture of famous celebrities and travel names.

Can you figure out who the

eyes, nose and mouth in this picture belong to?

And don't worry if you can't guess them all, two out of three ain't bad!

Icon under a microscope: Stonehenge, UK
Celebrity faces: Eyes - Elvis Presley, Nose - Ellen Degeneres, Mouth - Sture Myrnell, Carnival Corporation

ANSWERS 09 JUL

With a little help from my friends



ANDREW Jones Travel's (AJT) not-for-profit tour in support of fellow Tasmanian businesses returned on Mon, run in support of firms on the state's east coast, following the closure of the Tasman Highway.

In May, the Tasmanian Government announced the risk of the degradation of rock stability would mean a several-week closure of a section of the Highway at Paradise Gorge.

As a result, many local tourism operators experienced significant losses in revenue normally generated from passing traffic.

Empathising with the businesses following its own loss of revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic, AJT rallied support for its industry peers, partnering with The Compass Society to create a unique three-day tour to raise money, once the roadblock had been lifted.

The Great Escape to Support the East Coast itinerary departed

Hobart last Sat, visiting several local businesses, before returning this past Mon.

All profits generated by the tour were donated directly to the businesses affected, with AJT Travel Designer & Tour Escort Cathi Burnett-Cosgrove volunteering her time for the cause, alongside other operators such as Belbins Bus Services.

In total, the tour generated \$20,000, which supported local businesses including Boomer Creek Vineyard & Cellar Door, Darlington Vineyard, East Coast Cruises, Eastcoaster Tasmania, Orford Blue Waters Hotel, Spring Bay Mill, and a variety of local cafes and pubs.

"It is times like this that you see the true nature of the Tasmanian community as they come together to help and support each other," said East Coast Cruises Proprietor Michael Davis.

The tour is **pictured** filling up at Buckland Roadhouse gas station.



NT tourism support

THE second round of the NT Government's \$4 million Roadhouse to Recovery grant program is now open for select businesses to access.

Roadhouses, wayside inns and remote caravan parks can now apply for funding of up to \$150,000 to support infrastructure improvements to better their visitor experiences, with the Government to provide \$3 for every dollar invested.

Applicants must be listed or have applied to list on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse, and must be a member of a peak body such as a regional tourism organisation.

Applications close 30 Aug - **CLICK HERE** for more information.

Rarotonga boosted

MORE than 11,000 seats have been added to Air New Zealand's Auckland-Rarotonga route.

The additional flights will give travellers the choice of 11 different flights per week from 16 Aug, increasing to 12 per week over the Oct school holidays, up from the nine per week currently in operation.

Customers will be required to wear masks on board flights to and from Rarotonga, and additional screening questions will be asked at check-in.

Travellers will need to have been in NZ for the preceding 14 days, with the airline's Chief Customer & Sales Officer Leanne Geraghty stating she was "unsurprised" by the strong demand.

TRAVEL SPECIALS

WELCOME to Travel Specials, *Travel Daily's* Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of, send the details to specials@traveldaily.com.au

COMO The Treasury, Perth is currently offering four-night stays for the price of three when bookings are made by 31 Aug. The extra day will provide guests with the chance to indulge in the hotel's facilities, such as the Wildflower restaurant or Shambhala Urban Escape wellness centre. Call 08 6168 7888 for more details.

Intrepid is taking 25% off the price of select cabins for the 2021/2022 Antarctic sailing season when bookings are made by 31 Jul. Cruises available include the 11-day Bets of Antarctica itinerary starting from \$8,138ppts, departing Ushuaia in Argentina and visiting The South Shetland Islands and Deception Island to name just a few. **CLICK HERE** for further information.

You will need to pack your bags quickly but there are a few remaining Upper Deck Double Cabins remaining for **Murray River Paddlesteamers'** four-night explorer cruise departing Mon 12 Jul, offering savings of \$1,100. Call 03 5482 5244 and use promo code "120725" to access the deal.

Bookings made by 31 Jul for luxury Tasmania and NZ cruises with **Cruise Traveller** will receive US\$100 per person of onboard credit, as well as free laundry during the voyage. Call 1800 507 777 to make a booking.

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