

Today's issue of TD

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

Govt agrees to SA home isolation trial

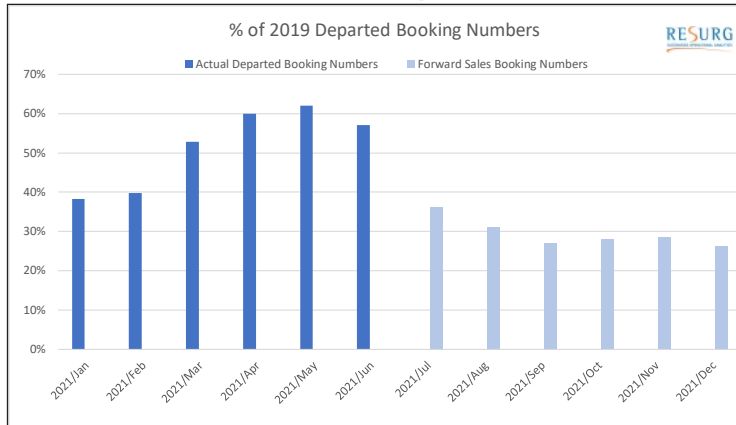
THE Federal Government has agreed to a trial with the South Australian Government that will see returned vaccinated travellers undergo home isolation instead of hotel quarantine.

The decision was made after a National Cabinet Meeting on Fri, with Prime Minister Scott Morrison stating the pilot program would pave the way for a commencement of international travel.

Kicking off in Sep, the trial will extend to 100 people initially and encompass only low-risk countries, sanctioning travellers to spend two weeks in their own home monitored with GPS tracking, bypassing the current hotel quarantine system.

South Australian Premier Steven Marshall said that he expected other states to adopt the system after its trial in Sep.

Fees vital for agent survival



EXCLUSIVE

NEW figures from industry data analyst Resurg indicate that travel agents are spending more time on fewer, lower value bookings in the current environment, creating a further structural threat to business viability.

Resurg Group provides the Agency Recovery Monitor, which measures new bookings each month and provides insights into both departed bookings and forward sales through a live link with participating agencies.

The most recent results (pictured) show that the current

average value of individual bookings is less than half that from the same period in 2019.

Numbers of departures have been recovering to be slightly over 50% of levels two years ago, but it is currently taking much longer for agents to transact due to COVID complications and access to inventory.

"The unfortunate reality is that while domestic bookings are creating activity, they are typically at a much lower transaction value," said Resurg's Mark Jenkins.

"There are only two options - agents must either transact these lower value bookings more quickly to reflect the lower return, or they supplement the transaction value with service fees to reflect the time spent.

"The reality is that at the moment most agents are happy to be servicing customers, and the profitability of the transaction may be secondary to the desire to create some activity," he said.

The key issue of fees was also reflected in demand for a webinar last Fri convened by The Travel Community Hub (TD 07 Jul).

With more than 300 online attendees, the session included a robust discussion of options for service fees from three leading independent agents - while some participants noted similar industry-wide pushes from as far back as the late 1990s.

The webinar, which gives key insights for agents, can be viewed online at vimeo.com/572885434.

QR agent promo

QATAR Airways has introduced a new sales incentive that will see agents who sell tickets from Australia between 12 Jul and 08 Aug given the chance to score two return Economy class tickets from Australia to Europe.

The grand prize will go to the travel advisor with the highest cumulative value of tickets during the promotional period, while remaining entries will go into the draw to win a double Platinum experience at Palace Cinemas and a QR Business class hamper.

Submit a form with the valid booking reference numbers [HERE](#) to enter by 5pm AEST 14 Aug.

Singapore delayed

THE introduction of a green lane between Australia and Singapore has been delayed to the end of the year, Australia's Tourism Minister Dan Tehan confirmed.

A bubble between the two countries had been initially flagged to commence as early as next month, however Tehan stated over the weekend that the third wave of COVID-19 had ultimately put the plan on ice in the short-term.

"This is something that we want to continue to progress and it'll be part of discussions, so that when the time comes and we can get the medical experts to tick off on it - Singapore still remains a potential next step when it comes to future travel bubbles," he said.

Kiwi return flights

KIWIS stranded in NSW will be able to return home from tomorrow thanks to new repatriation flights being offered by Air New Zealand.

Bookings opened this morning and will be limited to the number of spaces available in managed isolation facilities rooms provided by the New Zealand Government.

Check availabilities for seating and make bookings for flights [HERE](#) - and for future alerts on flight capacities, see [HERE](#).

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Window Seat

THE Governor of Tennessee, Bill Lee, has joined the chorus of influential people globally trying to lure travellers back to book after the worst of the pandemic.

The US state is currently offering free US\$250 airline vouchers for the first 10,000 people who book a two-night stay in the state, a campaign that is being helped along by local and Grammy Award-winning country artist Brad Paisley (**pictured**).

More than 60 hotels are participating in the US\$2.5 million campaign, which includes a promotional video featuring Lee and Paisley, where the latter makes it clear that the vouchers will be paid for by the state and not him.



CT Partners names CEO

EXCLUSIVE

MATT Masson has been appointed as CEO of travel buying group CT Partners, succeeding the late Ian Edwards who had been in the role for more than 12 years prior to his untimely death in late 2020 (**TD** 05 Jan).

Masson takes up his new role effective immediately, joining CT Partners with extensive industry experience including two years as GM of the McLachlan Travel Group, two years based in Singapore as MD of Buffalo Tours, and six years in Ho Chi Minh City with Trails of Indochina.

CT Partners Chairman Barry Mayo said the appointment comes at a pivotal time for the Australian travel sector.

"Like everyone in the industry, we are waiting for a clear road map from the government as we are confident there is a huge amount of pent-up demand.

"Matt, ably supported by CT Partners General Manager Supplier Partners, Nicole Boyer, is the ideal person to lead CT Partners' strategic growth out of the forced pause created by COVID-19," Mayo said.

"Matt has a strong record of

developing mutually rewarding business partnerships," he added, with Masson's tenure at Buffalo Tours seeing him responsible for operations across the globe with over 500 full-time staff and an annual turnover of \$100 million.

Masson said he was attracted to CT partners by "the quality of its membership, its financially transparent business model and the fact that it is 100% owned by its members."

"I appreciate the trust given by the board, and one of my early objectives will be to attract new members, with my main priority being to increase the profitability of both existing and new members," the new CEO said.

CT Partners describes itself as the "largest and most influential independent travel buying network in Australia," with an annual TTV in excess of \$1 billion.

The group last week announced the addition of former Magellan Travel Group members Benalla Travel and Where2Travel (**TD** 08 Jul), while having also earlier this year welcomed Tribe Travel and Dwayne Good's In Travel Group to the CT ranks (**TD** 12 Feb).

Branson sees stars

VIRGIN Australia Chief Executive Jayne Hrdlicka has congratulated the airline's founder Richard Branson on boarding his first personal Virgin Galactic flight overnight (**pictured**), hailing the travel mogul for opening space tourism for "all mankind".

"I have fond memories as a young girl watching the first moon landing...and I was thrilled to share a similar experience with my husband and sons as the Unity 22 spacecraft exited our atmosphere," she said.



Meet your MP: CLIA

IN LIGHT of its omission from the Federal Government's recently announced four-phase plan to travel normality (**TD** 05 Jul), the Aussie cruise sector is now mobilising to put further pressure on politicians to create a road map to resumption.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia has launched the next phase of its Ready, Set, Sail campaign, calling on all key stakeholders in the cruise industry to arrange a meeting with their local MPs to communicate "the enormous human cost of the suspension".

"The grass-roots involvement of travel agents, suppliers and other stakeholders will help support our efforts and highlight the devastating personal impact of the cruise suspension," CLIA Australasia MD Joel Katz said.

The industry body has also launched a new online toolkit which provides resources needed to seek face-to-face or virtual meetings with state and federal representatives - more info **HERE**.

For more on this story, see today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

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Travel Daily

Easter eggs on domestic

THE improvement in domestic travel noted in recent months continued in Apr, with the Easter holiday period spurring on a spike in overnight spend, according to new figures from Tourism Research Australia.

The month saw \$8.2 billion in overnight spend recorded, a 7% increase on the same period in 2019, while Apr also saw Australians take more overnight trips than in any month since the start of the pandemic.

Taking advantage of a largely unrestricted travel market free of significant border restrictions, Apr notched up 2.9 million total interstate trips, up 33% on Mar, and \$4 billion in cross-border spend, a 45% rise on the \$2.8 billion recorded in Mar.

Intrastate travel also continued on its strong upward trajectory, with 7.2 million overnight trips taken by Aussies, up 16% on Mar, as well as a 27% increase in spend to \$4.1 billion.

Despite the encouraging rally in recent months, Apr was still down compared to pre-pandemic levels across several areas, recording a 9% fall in overnight trips taken in contrast to Apr 2019.

Domestic day trips also dwindled by 17% on Apr 2019, while nights stayed fell by 6%.

Capital cities remain the hardest hit in the COVID era, with a 20% reduction in overnight trips noted for Apr on 2019, as well as an 11% decrease in spend.

Disability in focus

THE International Air Transport Association (IATA) has launched the Mobility Aids Action Group, a body charged with improving the transport journey for disabled travellers with mobility aids.

The group will examine how to minimise the damage caused to disability aids such as wheelchairs in transit, an issue IATA concedes is happening too regularly.

"Every year, thousands of wheelchairs are transported safely, however damage or loss is still occurring," IATA Director General Willie Walsh said.

"We acknowledge that we are not where we want to be on this as an industry," he added.

Aging global populations are tipped to make travellers with disabilities a fast-growing customer segment for airlines.

Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly's fortnightly consumer magazine called *Keep Dreaming* is specially designed for agents to send their clients.



Orchard bears big fruit



HILTON has revealed more details about the giant 1,080-room Hilton Singapore Orchard hotel it plans to open to the public from Jan next year.

Now open for reservations, the property is in the process of being converted from the Mandarin Orchard Singapore, and will feature two 24-hour fully equipped fitness centres, an outdoor pool, an Executive

Lounge, as well as direct access to a four-storey luxury shopping gallery boasting fashion brands, cafes and restaurants.

The hotel will offer guests the choice of five gourmet restaurants including the award-winning Chatterbox and the two Michelin-starred Shisen Hanten.

Event organisers will also have the option of choosing between 16 renovated event spaces, in addition to two pillarless ballrooms which can accommodate up to 1,000 attendees, fitted with LED walls, the latest sound technology and a dedicated pre-function area.

"Hilton Singapore Orchard will be one of the most anticipated hotels to open in 2022 and an exciting addition to the vibrant scene in Orchard Road," the hotel's GM Cedric Nubul said.

Pictured: One of the five dining spaces on offer.

Rex doubles down on QF complaints

REX Airlines believes a recent call by consumer group Choice for refund reform in the travel sector (*TD* 08 Jul) vindicates its ongoing offensive on the issue against rival Qantas.

Seizing on several complaints made against the Australian carrier noted in the report, Rex Deputy Chairman John Sharp claimed they were indicative of Qantas' dodgy refunds practices.

"Qantas claims to embody the 'spirit of Australia' but thinks nothing of ripping off hundreds of thousands of families at a time of their greatest need with its unethical practices," he said.

"Unscrupulous refund practices like these not only hurt the consumers but undermine confidence in travel."

Rex ran attack ads against Qantas in newspapers across the country last month (*TD* 01 Jun).

Seabourn passes go

CRUISE line Seabourn has redesigned its travel agent portal to make it easier to navigate and quicker to manage reservations.

Among the updates for the new GoSeabourn.com.au is an updated promotional toolkit offering users customisable email templates and up-to-the-date info on current promos and deals.

Agents can also view upcoming events and access new brochures.

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Where in the world?



© O Palsson

THIS curious looking building was first constructed for the World Fair held in the city where it can be found.

It stands 102m tall and has nine 18m-wide stainless steel spheres connected in the shape of a unit cell or atom of iron crystal.

The tubes connecting the round balls enclose stairs, escalators

and a lift, and you can access six of the spheres which today contain exhibit halls and other public spaces including the top one, which houses a restaurant with panoramic views of this European city.

Do you know where in the world this structure can be found?

Pick the nation

COUNTRIES have unique geography, ethnicities and cultures which come together to often form very distinctive symbols.

Based off the four different symbols and famous faces, see if you can figure out which country they represent.



Pub quiz

1. What is the largest country in the world without a river?
2. What airport used to be known as the "busiest square mile in the world"?
3. After Australia, which country hosts the next largest barrier reef?
4. Which American state is known as the Sunshine State?
5. King Sound is a gulf found in which Australian state or territory?
6. Which four neighbourhoods does Melbourne's Lygon Street run through?
7. What infamous company introduced bounties on the thylacine, and is now largely responsible for its extinction?
8. What is the most southerly town in New South Wales?
9. Angkor Wat means what in Khmer?
10. Which airline's slogan is "the Nordic way"?

Sudoku

FIENDISH

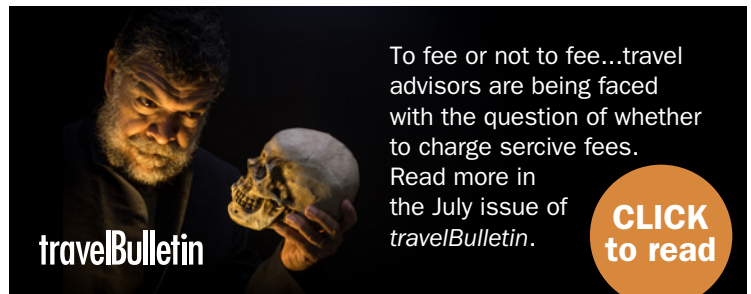
THE aim of Sudoku is to complete the entire grid using the numbers 1-9. Each number can only be used once in each row, once in each column, and once in each of the 3x3 boxes.

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

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

5	7	1	3	6	8	9	2	4
4	3	9	5	2	1	8	6	7
8	2	6	4	7	9	3	5	1
6	5	3	7	9	2	1	4	8
9	4	8	6	1	5	7	3	2
2	1	7	8	3	4	6	9	5
6	Branswick East, Carlton, North							
1	6	4	9	5	7	2	8	3
3	8	2	1	4	6	5	7	9
7	9	5	2	8	3	4	1	6

ANSWERS 12 JUL
 Where in the world: Atomium, Brussels, Belgium
 Pub quiz: 1 Saudi Arabia, 2 Chicago Midway International, 3 Belize, 4 Florida, 5 Western Australia, 6 Brunswick East, Carlton, North Carlton and Princes Hill, 7 Van Diemen's Land Company, 8 Eden, 9 City of Temples, 10 Finland
 Pick the nation: Indonesia



To fee or not to fee...travel advisors are being faced with the question of whether to charge service fees. Read more in the July issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read

US exerts power

A COALITION of two dozen American industry groups have released a blueprint to reopen international travel.

The 24 trade organisations are renewing urgent calls to lift restrictions on international visitation to the United States through *A Framework to Safely Lift Entry Restrictions and Restart International Travel*.

The document identifies policy principles for finally welcoming international visitors back to the US while keeping health and safety as the top priority.

Goolwa upgrades

WORK has kicked off on Discovery Parks' \$22 million Goolwa park upgrade in South Australia.

Big ticket additions to the site should be ready in time to capitalise on a pandemic-driven surge in summer road trips, the operator stated.

The works will double the park's capacity, with 60 new cabins and 100 extra sites for caravans and campers, as well as a raft of new attractions including an outdoor cinema, a water park, multiple pool areas & a nature playground.

Corporate Traveller toasts EOFY



FLIGHT Centre's B2B team recently held its EOFY corporate sales call, capping it off with a nice dinner with the team.

Corporate Traveller Australia's Project Development Team BDR/SDR Erin Johnson said "it was the toughest year the travel industry has ever faced and we pushed through to still help an incredible amount of businesses who needed us more than ever."

"Here's to another year of working together across Australia and globally, to assist in this ever-changing environment - and of course, many more beverages & laughs with my team."

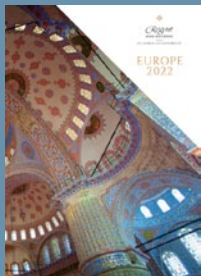
The gang is pictured with plenty to celebrate for the future of corporate travel.

BROCHURES

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



Star Clippers Unique Sailing Adventures 2021-23
Tall ship sailing company Star Clippers has released its Unique Sailing Adventures brochure with dates from Nov through to Mar 2023. The digital collection features 60 destination-intensive itineraries, including voyages through the Mediterranean, Caribbean, Panama Canal, Thailand and Transatlantic crossings. The 2022/23 season will also see Star Clippers return to Costa Rica with two new itineraries exploring one of the world's great biodiversity hotspots. All sailings include a range of water sport activities plus opportunities to explore independently or take part in excursions to discover hidden gems of interest to each passenger.



Regent Seven Seas Cruises Europe 2022
Regent Seven Seas Cruises has introduced its 2022 Europe brochure, featuring four of its luxurious ships across seven popular ports. Destinations include Salerno in Italy, Bantry Bay in Ireland, the Finnish city of Kotka and Norway's port of Olden. Itinerary highlights in the brochure include the Charming Windmills to Fine Chocolates sailing from Stockholm to London, offering a "fairy tale" experience across Europe in cities such as St Petersburg from approximately \$15,823pppts.

Rival bid for SYD?

A CONSORTIUM led by Macquarie Group is weighing up a rival bid for Sydney Airport to challenge IFM Investors' \$22.3 billion offer, *The Sydney Morning Herald* reports (TD 05 Jul).

The investment bank has been speaking with potential partners, including local superannuation funds, about making a joint offer.

The bidding group could include funds managed by Macquarie Infrastructure & Real Assets, with the bank also reportedly considering using its own capital for the deal, & could also seek to include some of the MIRA funds' investors to join the consortium.

Creek gets paddle

YACKANDANDAH Creek in Victoria has launched a new master plan that will guide the development of new and upgraded tourist facilities.

The planned upgrade will see the creation of new camping areas and improved access between sites which are popular with day visitors, horse riders, as well as mountain bike and trail bike riders.

Protecting historic sites, adding a carpark, and creating new walking trails and visitor information centres are also part of the \$290,000 plan.

Stage one of the development, which includes campsite improvements, will begin towards the end of the year.