

## A&K Australia & NZ

**ABERCROMBIE & Kent** is today showcasing its range of experiences in Australia and New Zealand, with small group exclusive tours in Tasmania, Australia's Top End, NZ's Fiordland and cycling in the South Island.

Departure dates are available in late 2021 and throughout 2022, featuring handpicked upmarket accommodation and the "privilege of rare access as only A&K can deliver" - see **page 7**.

## Dean Long returns to AFTA

**DEAN** Long, newly appointed CEO of the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (**TD** breaking news), says he is "incredibly proud to take on the role of AFTA CEO and to work with the AFTA Board and team to shape our sector's future and to help as many member businesses as possible get through these difficult times".

Long will join AFTA no later than mid-Oct, after a transition from his current role heading up the Accommodation Association which is in the process of merging with the Australian Hotels Association (**TD** 11 Sep 2020).

AFTA Chairman Tom Manwaring said Long was an ideal choice for the role, given he previously worked at AFTA for over five years as National Manager - Strategy & Policy between 2014 and 2019.

"He has a well deserved

reputation of collaboration to maximise impact and outcomes, and that's exactly what we need now and into the future," Manwaring said.

Long's career has seen a strong track record of achievement in travel, tourism, financial services, insurance and property development, including roles with Tourism NSW, American Express and the NSW Tourism Minister.

"There's a lot of work to be done but AFTA has a great Board, a highly committed and skilful team and a membership of passionate, skilled and essential businesses," Long said.

He also noted that AFTA would need to continue to work closely with other peak industry bodies like ACCI, BECA and the TTF, plus industry-relevant associations such as IATA, WTAAA and BARA.

"I also look forward to continuing AFTA's strategic collaborations with CATO and CLIA," the new AFTA CEO said.

## Today's issue of TD

**Travel Daily** today has six pages of news including **Business Events News** plus a full page from **Abercrombie & Kent**.

## The Ghan on track

**JOURNEY** Beyond has confirmed The Ghan will resume its journeys between Adelaide and Darwin from tomorrow, following a temporary suspension brought on by COVID travel restrictions.

The return is being marked by a special offer for the remainder of the month, with all Ghan journeys booked for Platinum and Gold Service earning savings of up to \$1,250 per person.

"These special fares are ideal for people who can travel at short notice and who may have been dreaming of a Ghan journey for a long time," Journey Beyond Chief Commercial Officer Peter Egglestone said.

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## Ransom wears host

**MEETINGS & Events Australia** (MEA) has revealed CEO of strategic advisory firm Emergent, Holly Ransom, will host its upcoming Evolve 2021 events industry conference on 08 Sep.

Taking place at the Sofitel on Collins in Melbourne, MEA said Ransom's history of interviewing global business leaders made her the perfect choice for the gig.

"Holly has worked with and interviewed diverse thinkers and pioneers such as Barack Obama, Malcolm Gladwell...Richard Branson...bringing extensive insights of real-world leadership from her interactions with these trailblazers to Evolve."

See **p5** for more events news.



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## Tourism, travel training update

**EDUCATIONAL** curriculums for the events, travel, tourism and hospitality sectors are set for a revamp, under a review being undertaken by SkillsIQ.

A consultation on the project has opened, seeking feedback on a draft of new training package products which aim to ensure new entrants to the industry are equipped to meet the current and future needs of the sector.

“Now more than ever it is important to ensure that the available training products are fit for purpose and provide the skills and knowledge required by the industry to allow new entrants... to be appropriately skilled in order to support the recovery of the industry post COVID-19,” according to SkillsIQ General Manager, Melinda Brown.

Key skills and knowledge gaps highlighted as a priority for future workforce development include communication, teamwork,

self-management, resilience and commercial skills, as well as product and service knowledge.

“Business operations have evolved significantly in line with technological developments, and the listed training package products need to be thoroughly reviewed so they continue to reflect current industry practices...this includes the facilitation of access to online and social media skills training to meet growing consumer demand.”

The process is being overseen by the Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Industry Reference Committee comprising various event, tourism and hospitality bodies including AFTA as well as Rick Myatt of the Australian Travel Careers Council.

The consultation closes on 09 Aug, with a series of webinars planned over the coming weeks as part of the process.

More at [skillsiq.com.au](https://skillsiq.com.au).

## First Travel signs up

**TRAVEL** risk management platform GOPASS Global has signed up several travel companies around the world to use its new COVID planning tool this week, including New Zealand-based travel agent alliance First Travel Group.

“GOPASS Global not only provides our members with up-to-the-minute data on the global COVID situation, it enables our customers to evaluate the risk associated with every country, city and airport they visit and every airline and aircraft type they fly on,” First Travel’s CEO Malcolm McLeod said.

“Knowledge is power and if the initial reaction from our members is any indication, they can’t get enough of it,” he added.

US-based corporate travel alliance Hickory Global Partners is also now on board with the platform, which provides travel planners with real-time COVID risk assessments.

## Jayride drives on

**JAYRIDE** has released a revenue update for the financial year 2021, reporting accelerated growth fuelled by the Northern Hemisphere travel markets which continue to gather pace.

The report showed total passenger trips grew 83% in Q4 of the financial year over the previous quarter, and were 208% higher against the quarter prior to that, with net revenue also growing by 79% during the same period to US\$350,000.

May proved to be the strongest of the year so far, with trips up 30% over the month to 19,800, with the bulk of those coming from North America (11,900).

Unfortunately for business closer to home, more than 85% of the revenue generated for the financial year has so far come from North American and European markets, with Oceania only accounting for 1,400 trips in the last quarter, down 800 rides on the prior quarter.



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Destinations: River Cruising

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## SYD rejects offer

**SYDNEY** Airport's Board has this morning formally rejected an unsolicited acquisition bid launched by a consortium earlier this month (**TD** 05 Jul).

The offer was rebuffed on the grounds that it was "not in the best interests of securityholders", with the Board stating that it was already well managed and capitalised with a long-term concession lease.

"The strategic and irreplaceable nature of Sydney Airport [makes it] one of Australia's most important infrastructure assets," Sydney Airport stated.

The Board also felt the bid, which put forward an offer of \$8.25 per security, undervalued its long-term value despite being above its current share price.

## Tucan Travel IP For Sale



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**Steven Jolly**

T: (02) 9262 1944

E: sjolly@rogersreidy.com.au



## Travel booking evolution

**NEW** data from Stayz has found Australians are adapting and changing the way they travel, with families turning to planning and booking their Christmas and summer holidays six months in advance - twice as long as historical lead-in times.

Aussies are also travelling much closer to home than ever before with all states picking "hyper-local" destinations for their getaways, such as the Snowy Mountains for New South Welshmen, Phillip Island for Victorians and Rainbow Beach for Queenslanders.

Shoalhaven has seen the biggest spike in bookings nationally, up 57% compared to 2019, followed closely by the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria, Queensland's Sunshine Coast, Melbourne, and New South Wales' Central Coast and the Hunter Valley regions.

The Stayz data also showed that travel restrictions had failed to dent the Aussie appetite for

holiday homes.

"Whilst we've had the obvious cancellations due to lockdowns in Greater Sydney and shutting of borders in other parts of the country, demand for holiday homes remains high when looking ahead to future holiday periods," Stayz spokesperson Simone Scoppa said.

"They're also travelling much closer to home than ever before with all states picking hyper-local destinations for their getaways... suggesting people are enjoying staycations, preferencing private homes over hotels or planning ahead to visit family and friends in other states that are based in metro areas."

Scoppa added that beach getaways are still top of the list for Aussies booking for Dec.

## May arrivals double

**THE** opening of the trans-Tasman travel bubble in May saw arrivals into Australia surge by over 100% to 114,520, but the figures continue to languish at a tiny fraction of pre-COVID levels.

The latest figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicated over 36,000 short-term visitors, of whom 79% came from New Zealand, while 89% of departures were also to NZ.

There were also 970 visitor arrivals from the USA and 860 from the UK, while the figures showed the three leading destination countries from which Australian residents returned were NZ (55,440 trips), the USA (810 trips) and India (50 trips).

The current COVID-19 outbreak in NSW, as well as the halving of inbound arrival caps under the first phase of the Government's COVID-19 recovery plan, is expected to significantly impact the ABS figures going forward, with many travel agents noting there is now practically zero availability on any inbound flights from many destinations over the coming months.



## Window Seat

**TRAVEL** advisors have taken a big hit in the past year and a half, and when it rains, it pours!

British travel advisor Rachel Finni (**pictured**) recently became the third contestant evicted from the UK's dating show *Love Island*, after being dumped by fellow contestant Brad McClelland.

Bringing no further fanfare to herself or her profession, Finni left in a blaze of glory, lashing out at her one-time suitor, labelling him a "fake".

"I was stupid enough to fall for Brad's gift, because it wasn't genuine," Finni bemoaned.

"Chuggs (another contestant) would have actually made the effort to get to know me...I went for Brad because he was more physically attractive."

A gentle reminder that looks fade but shallowness is forever.



## Vanuatu appoints

**THE** Vanuatu Tourism Office (VTO) has announced the appointment of its new Short-haul Markets Manager Paul Pio.

In the role, Pio will be responsible for developing the brand positioning of Vanuatu as a tourism destination in Australia and New Zealand.

"Aviation access will underpin our recovery success and Paul's expertise in this area will add immense value to the team, in addition to supporting the work of the Tamtam Bubble Taskforce," VTO CEO Adela Issachar Aru said.

More appointments on **page 6**.

## Skroo flags faster return

**FLIGHT** Centre MD Graham "Skroo" Turner believes international travel to and from Australia will begin to return to normality in the next six months.

Speaking from London to participants on an industry webinar about the new Flight Centre Independent division yesterday afternoon (**TD** 07 Jul), Turner said "my view is that it's not going to be quick, but it's not going to be as long as some people are saying".

"By the middle of next year the Government is talking about being pretty open...I think our major markets will come earlier than that, and you need to be prepared for that because the customers will go where they can get service and products," he said.

Interestingly, Turner also said rather than developing agreements with individual destinations, "I think it will be 'beyond bubbles' from now on".

He predicted the introduction of a traffic light system such as that in place for the UK, with different requirements for travellers returning from red, amber and

green list destinations.

"I believe the UK, Europe and North America will probably be the first to open up to a reasonable extent," he said.

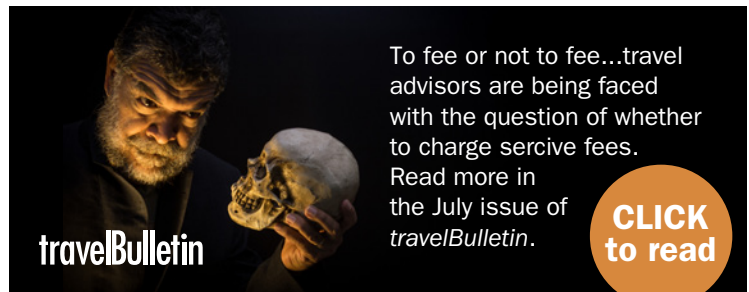
"You'll be able to come back into Australia maybe with a five-day home quarantine, with a negative test and if you're fully vaccinated," Skroo predicted.

Turner showcased Flight Centre's roadmap to recovery (**CLICK HERE**), mapping the Prime Minister's four-stage plan to timelines - but as he pointed out, it's all dependent on ensuring those who are most likely to become severely unwell from COVID-19 are vaccinated.

"Elimination is not a long-term strategy...vaccination of people who might get ill is crucial."

He said that with good supplies of the Pfizer vaccine coming in the "next couple of weeks" and plenty of availability of AstraZeneca, "I'm pretty hopeful that we will get to freedom before Christmas".

"I've been wrong in the past, but I just don't think we can keep borders shut for longer than that."



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**

## IATA attacks EU fuel proposal



**THE** International Air Transport Association's (IATA) Director General Willie Walsh has criticised an EU proposal put forward overnight to slug airlines with fuel tax to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, labelling the move "counter-productive" to the goal of sustainable aviation.

"Aviation is committed to decarbonisation as a global industry, we don't need persuading, or punitive measures like taxes to motivate change," Walsh argued.

"In fact, taxes siphon money from the industry that could support emissions' reducing

investments in fleet renewal and clean technologies," he added.

Despite IATA's objections, the EU said its raft of new proposals, which will put extra weight on businesses, are necessary to combat climate change.

"We're going to ask a lot of our industries, but we do it for good cause - we do it to give humanity a fighting chance," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said.

IATA added that a more effective way of achieving lower carbon emissions in the aviation sector is for governments to create frameworks for the increased production of sustainable air fuels - making it more cost-effective for airlines to adopt.

The EU's measures are also calling for a carbon border tariff & tighter controls on car emissions.

## Mudgee reshuffles

**MAJOR** expansion is afoot at Mudgee Region Tourism, with the industry body revealing plans to relocate the Mudgee Visitor Information Centre and Mudgee Region Tourism offices to a new state-of-the-art Mudgee Arts Precinct, set to open in Aug.

Following the relocation, the tourism body confirmed it will look to expand its management team under a new operational structure, which will include the recruitment of a new chief operating officer, while current CEO Cara George will transition to a new strategic consulting role.

Over the last seven years, Mudgee has enjoyed a boom in tourism numbers, increasing visitation by 48%, bringing more than \$199m a year to the region.

## ACS extends to Oct

**THE** Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) has confirmed the date to make final claims to the AFTA Chargeback Scheme (ACS) has now been extended to Oct.

Originally flagged to cease on 30 Jun, AFTA said it would meet all the ACS costs and expenses falling due past the original wind-up date to extend important cover for its members.

ACS members can make a claim for a chargeback due to end supplier insolvency that has occurred after 31 Dec 2020.

## Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly's fortnightly consumer magazine called **Keep Dreaming** is specially designed for agents to send their clients - giving you a reason to reach out to your database.

Click here to view **Keep Dreaming** magazine

Click here for a toolkit to help you share it with clients



Travel & Cruise Weekly





## GET DIGITALLY QUALIFIED

**THE** Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) has announced a collaboration with Marriott International to provide access for the Asia-Pacific business events community to the PCMA Digital Event Strategist (DES) course and qualification.

PCMA MD Karen Bolinger cited recent in-house research which indicated that more than 70% of meeting planners are now looking for venues with broadcast facilities and in-house expertise.

In addition 80% of respondents said they planned to give their in-person and virtual event attendees an opportunity to interact, with Bolinger noting "this means new skills are required to deliver on these business objectives".

Earning the DES certification involves undertaking a self-paced six-module training program,

followed by a final exam.

Participants gain the tools to plan, produce and measure digital and hybrid events; monetise digital events through fresh pricing and sponsorship strategies, and evaluate the most appropriate tech solutions.

The Marriott collaboration will allow eligible customers to select the PCMA Digital Event Strategist certification as an additional benefit when booking an event or meeting with the hotel giant.

Ramesh Daryani, Marriott VP Global Sales APAC, said working with groups like PCMA "allows us to leverage the industry's best and innovative practices and offer event professionals the solutions and insights required to navigate the current landscape to create engaging experiences and successfully host meetings and events" - see [pcma.org](https://pcma.org).

## SITE special Aussie certification offer

**THE** Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE) has announced a heavily discounted offer for business events professionals in Australia and NZ, enabling them to become Certified Incentive Travel Professionals (CITP) for a fraction of the normal cost.

The move is part of a push to boost the organisation's local membership, with in-person exams planned for Oct in Melbourne, Auckland and Sydney.

SITE is currently offering cheaper annual memberships for US\$275, and those who sign up as a new member now or renew their membership at the special price can also sit the CITP exam for US\$200.

Normally the CITP examination costs US\$985 for non-members, and US\$675 for members.

Applicants must have been

employed in the incentive travel profession for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 24 months, and have a total of five years' experience in the incentive travel industry.

In addition all candidates must have completed 40 hours of professional development activities over the past five years.

The examination is designed to test "knowledge on the broad scope of those professionals employed at the level to which the title 'Incentive Travel Professional' would appropriately apply," according to SITE criteria.

"Candidates are expected to have current, direct, hands-on involvement in the major processes associated with incentive travel sales, design and management," SITE said.

For more info and to register under the special limited offer see [siteglobal.com](https://siteglobal.com).

## MICE recognition for ASEAN

**THE** Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has hailed approval by the Thai cabinet of an amendment to the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement of Tourism Professionals which expands the pact to cover meeting and event professionals.

The original agreement signed by ASEAN tourism ministers in 2012 only covered workers in two tourism categories - travel services and hotel services.

The update means the qualifications of MICE and event professionals will be recognised across the region.

The move was agreed at a meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers in early 2020, but the pandemic has led to delayed adoption.

So far the amended protocol has been approved by Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Brunei, Vietnam and now Thailand.

The next phase sees the development of common competency standards, a project set to take place over the next three years.

## Novatech's new star

**NOVATECH** Creative Event Technology has unveiled OneSystem Constellation, described as a new "unique technical solution for the post-COVID world".

An expansion of the OneSystem event presentation and recording platform released a decade ago, the new Constellation platform is housed in a custom-made case containing a fully broadcast-capable engine room that can mix inputs from up to 20 cameras.

Three dedicated AV operators can work on OneSystem simultaneously, handling audio, video and broadcast streaming, while the platform can also be operated by a single technician for simpler events, or completely remotely over the internet for multi-site events.

Novatech MD Leko Novakovic said the company estimated the time for a single technician just to connect up equivalent equipment would be six hours.

"Having all of this pre-built and ready to roll will save everyone huge amounts in labour," he said.

The "gig in a box" system has already successfully handled the hybrid Australian and NZ College of Anaesthetists Conference at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre - for more info call Novatech on 08 8352 0300.

## King crowned AIPC Vice President

**MELBOURNE** Convention and Exhibition Centre CEO Peter King (**pictured**) has been appointed as Vice President of the International Association of Convention Centres (AIPC) Executive Council.

AIPC comprises a global network of about 190 key venues in 61 countries, with a mission of encouraging, supporting and recognising excellence in convention centre management.

King said he was thrilled to take on the position, saying "it is such a crucial time for



our industry right now, so to be part of the governing body which is steering us through is a real privilege".

He joins representatives from the USA, Denmark, South Africa, Colombia, Sweden and Denmark on the council.



## Vivid's light dimmed

**VIVID** Sydney has been rescheduled to 17 Sep-09 Oct due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak in the city.

Details of the revised program will be available online in the coming weeks as venues and event owners finalise logistics.

Ticketholders will be able to transfer their passes to the new event date or request a refund via their relevant ticket agent.

NSW Minister for Tourism Stuart Ayres said the state must work together to contain the current outbreak to allow the state to stride into recovery and be capable of holding major events.

"Destination NSW will continue to work with NSW Health and other agencies to deliver a COVID-safe Vivid," he said.

## Dreams crushed

**BOEING** has paused its 787 Dreamliner production and delivery targets following a design flaw being identified.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said it was currently evaluating how Boeing inspects its airplanes, but reassured the issue "poses no immediate threat to flight safety".

Boeing confirmed it had cut its delivery target for its undelivered 787 Dreamliner planes on the back of the flaw, stating it would temporarily lower production rates of the wide-body jets, however, maintained it would deliver the "lion's share" of the roughly 100 Dreamliners in its inventory this year.

The FAA said the flaw was found near the nose of the jets.

## Cloncurry surviving the shutdown



**THE** tourism appeal of the Queensland outback town of Cloncurry is about to receive a major shot in the arm as it plays host to the latest season of *Australian Survivor* gearing up to air on Sun.

The town, which is home to attractions such as the Crocodile Dundee's Walkabout Creek

Hotel, the John Flynn Place Royal Flying Doctors Museum and the Ballara Mining Heritage Trail, will accommodate contestants divided into "Brains and Brawn".

Production of the show showcases the town's spectacular sunsets, rugged rocky outcrops, and its population of a few thousand residents, who helped the town take out the "Qld's friendliest" title in 2013.

**Pictured:** The brains and brawn.

## Destination prizes

**AGENTS** have the opportunity to learn and win with three Destination Webinars educating the trade on Viking, Bunnik Tours and VisitBritain.

The Viking mini-series offers the chance of winning a \$150 Visa gift card, while advisors who watch Bunnik Tours episodes will be in the running to pick up a gourmet South Australian hamper.

Meanwhile VisitBritain is offering the opportunity to secure a gift by watching the Great Britain mini series - **CLICK HERE** to register and watch the Destination Webinar sessions.

## Hotel ticks crypto

**THE** Pavilions Hotels & Resorts has become the first international hotel group in the world to accept cryptocurrency for bookings.

The company has partnered with crypto-payment gateway, Coindirect, to enable customers to pay with Bitcoin, Ethereum and 40 other virtual currencies.

Payments via cryptocurrency are now available for direct bookings through a hotel's reservations centre - **CLICK HERE** for a list of supported currencies.

## APPOINTMENTS

**WELCOME** to Industry Appointments, *Travel Daily's* Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

**Nick Clarke** has been appointed to the position of Director of Sales and Marketing for **The Langham, Gold Coast** and **The Jewel Residences, Gold Coast**. Both properties are due to open their doors in early 2022, with Clarke arriving from prior stints with the Accor & Marriott brands.

Standard Hotels has announced the promotion of **Elli Jafari** to the role of Managing Director of **The Standard, London**. She has been with the hotel since Aug 2018, joining as the property's General Manager where Jafari presided over many dining accolades and design successes.

**The International Air Transport Association (IATA)** has recruited **Brendan Sullivan** to be its new Global Head of Cargo with immediate effect. He will be charged with strengthening air cargo's contribution to the global economy and to the airline businesses around the world.

**Karl Luxon** has been made Chief Operating Officer for the **Scenic Hotel Group** in New Zealand. In his new role, Luxon has pledged to further develop the company's tourism infrastructure to help navigate the business through the most challenging time in its history.

For confidential tip offs, connect with *Travel Daily* via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click **HERE**

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### EDITORIAL

**Editor in Chief and Publisher** – Bruce Piper

**Associate Editors** – Adam Bishop,

Myles Stedman

**Contributors** – Nicholas O'Donoghue,

Jenny Piper

[info@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:info@traveldaily.com.au)

### ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

Sean Harrigan and Hoda Alzubaidi

[advertising@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:advertising@traveldaily.com.au)

### BUSINESS MANAGER

Jenny Piper

[accounts@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accounts@traveldaily.com.au)

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd  
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia  
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia  
Tel: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8213 6350)

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Call 1300 851 800 to learn more about these journeys or visit [www.abercrombiekent.com.au](http://www.abercrombiekent.com.au)



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