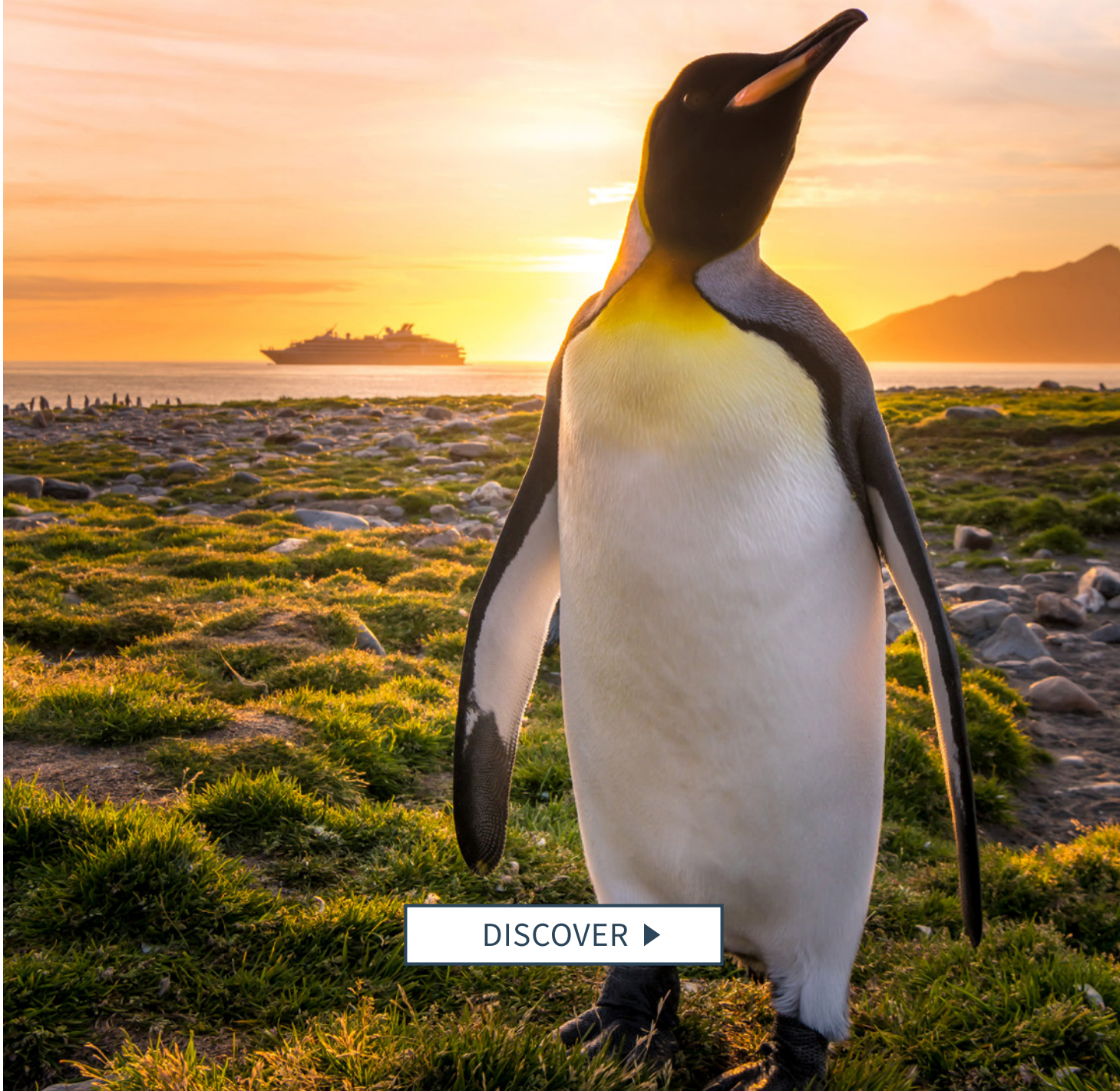


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 **PONANT**
YACHT CRUISES & EXPEDITIONS

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news including **Business Events News** plus a front cover page from **Ponant**.

Get icy with Ponant

PONANT is inviting travellers to enter the realm of the unexpected, with the cruise line's Antarctica 2022 & 2023 summer departures now available.

The season will see Ponant depart on 15 polar voyages, including Emblematic Antarctica roundtrip from Ushuaia aboard *L'Austral*, The Great Austral Loop roundtrip from Ushuaia aboard *L'Austral*, and an expedition to New Zealand's Subantarctic Islands out of Dunedin.

Head to the **cover page** of today's **TD** for more information.

QF adds more Embraers

QANTAS this morning announced an expansion of its agreement with Alliance Airlines, which will now see options for a total of 18 Embraer E190 regional jets operating under the QantasLink banner.

Five planes are already in operation, with three more to enter service in Oct, with QF saying the aircraft's five-hour range makes it "well suited to linking regional centres with smaller capital cities".

The introduction of E190s also frees up QF 737s to be redeployed across the domestic network, with today's announcement also confirming more Canberra-Adelaide flights.

QF CEO Alan Joyce also

confirmed the temporary redeployment of three Airbus A320s from the Jetstar Asia fleet in Singapore into the Australian market, to help meet demand seeing the JQ domestic network grow to 120% of its pre-COVID network in 2022/23.

"Expanding our long-standing relationship with Alliance gives us access to a different aircraft type without spending any capital.

"The E190 is perfect for connecting capital cities and regional centres...its size, range and economics have already let us start seven new routes that wouldn't have worked with our existing fleet," Joyce said.

The QF CEO also said with restrictions easing in Melbourne "we expect to see a quick rebound in travel demand, just as we have in other cities when lockdowns ended".

QR agent platform

QATAR Airways has launched a new NDC-enabled platform for travel agents, enabling consultants to "build tailored travel experiences for their customers," the carrier said.

Dubbed Oryx Connect, the system allows access to rich content via an "intuitive and user-friendly web-based portal" powered by the Accelya Farelogix SPRK tool, while the carrier said agents are also now able to access NDC content via a number of aggregators.

Travelfusion, Travvise, Duffel, Verteil and Aarongroup are already connected, with QR saying the Amadeus Travel Platform would be added in early 2022 while "discussions are under way with a range of other Global Distribution Systems".

QR CEO Akbar Al Baker said agents would be able to access a full suite of capabilities including booking, servicing, ticketing and payment for all classes as well as ancillary products and services.

Payment options include ARC and BSP cash and card as well as IATA EasyPay - for more info see qatarairways.com/tradepartner.

New Celebrity CMO

CELEBRITY Cruises has announced the appointment of Michael Scheiner as its Senior VP & Chief Marketing Officer.

Scheiner is new to the cruise industry, joining Celebrity from his previous role as Global Chief Marketing Officer for apparel giant Tommy Hilffiger.

He will join Celebrity on 12 Jul, and will oversee all aspects of driving new customer acquisition, brand loyalty and e-commerce.

More appointments on **page 5**.

Travel Daily on location in Queenstown, NZ

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Destination Queenstown which is hosting a VIP trade fam in Queenstown, New Zealand.

WITH the trans-Tasman travel bubble up and running, Destination Queenstown is hot off the mark with a fam this week for some of its key industry partners.

We flew direct to Queenstown from SYD this morning with Air New Zealand, offering the quickest way to experience the year-round destination in all of its winter glory.

Staying at The Rees Hotel Luxury Apartments located on the shore of Lake Wakatipu, the group has a full itinerary on offer over the next three days.

Tonight is a meeting with local suppliers and tour operators, providing updates and information on the region's huge array of tourism offerings.

Activities over the next couple of days include visiting the Kiwi Birdlife Park, a breakfast cruise on *Pacific Jemm*, the adrenalin rush of iFly Queenstown, as well as enjoying the rich variety of the region's huge array of fabulous food and beverage offerings.

Keep an eye on *Travel Daily* as we discover Queenstown.

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TTC pledges agility

THE Travel Corporation (TTC) has recommitted to its pledge to encourage consumer confidence by offering innovative solutions to industry partners and “respond to market trends with agility and leadership”.

The company continues to deliver refunds as requested, but is also able to offer clients the most flexible travel arrangements in the market via its extensive brand portfolio including AAT Kings, Trafalgar, Insight Vacations, Contiki, Luxury Gold, Cost saver, Uniworld, Inspiring Journeys and Adventure World Travel.

“Our flexibility policies are about giving travel agents and their clients choices and absolute confidence, no matter what may disrupt their travel plans,” said CEO Dave Hosking.

Customers have the option of transferring future travel credits to any TTC product they like, “so whether they want to postpone their trip, take future travel credit, transfer that balance to another person or TTC brand, or get a refund, their investment is always safe with us,” he said.

Hosking also highlighted TTC’s century of operation and strong financial foundation as a family-owned business, as well as its commitment to sustainability.

Free trade benefits

A NEW in-principle free trade agreement between Australia and the UK will allow Aussies to stay in the UK for three years until they are 35, and likewise for Britons in Australia.

The new deal raises the age by five years and also removes rules for British visitors on 12-month working visas to work 88 days on farms to stay another year.

Both countries still need to ratify the agreement which will likely take effect mid-2022.

Qld flights deal ext

THE Queensland Government’s discount flights scheme has been extended for another year, offering more affordable travel to Far North Queensland residents.

The Local Fare Scheme provides a discount of up to \$400 for a return fare for eligible residents in Cape York, the Gulf of Carpentaria and the Torres Strait.

40,000 and counting!

CRUISE Lines International Association’s (CLIA) Ready, Set, Sail campaign has reached the 40,000 emails mark (**TD** 13 May).

Managing Director Australasia Joel Katz said the response to the campaign had so far been “beyond expectations”.

EK’s first loss in 30 years

THE ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on the aviation sector has seen Emirates deliver its first yearly loss in more than 30 years.

The carrier posted a US\$5.5 billion loss for the financial year ending 31 Mar, a massive plummet from the US\$288 million profit recorded in the previous corresponding period.

Emirates also saw its revenue decrease markedly during the same 12 months, dwindling by 66% to US\$9.7 billion, while the company’s cash balance was reduced by 23% to US\$5.4 billion following travel restrictions across all its core business divisions.

Helping to keep the business afloat was a significant capital injection of US\$3.1 billion from the Government of Dubai, as well as more than US\$2 billion raised from industry support programs.

“These helped us sustain operations and retain the vast majority of our talent pool, unfortunately, we still had to make the difficult decision to resize our workforce in line with reduced operational requirements,” Emirates

Chairman and Chief Executive Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum said.

The airline has reduced its workforce by close to a third through a broad redundancy program, with staff currently employed now numbering just over 70,000 internationally.

Emirates added that it had invested US\$1.3 billion in new aircraft, facilities, company acquisitions, and new technologies to help position the carrier for a strong rebound when international travel resumes.

No Lizzie for Oz

CUNARD has announced that *Queen Elizabeth’s* scheduled sailings in Australia from 18 Oct to 09 Mar 2022 has been cancelled due to ongoing travel restrictions.

All affected guests will automatically receive a future cruise credit worth 125% of the standard deposit terms, as well as 100% of any additional cash paid.

For more details about Cunard’s revised program, see today’s **CW**.

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Window Seat

RICHARD Taylor from The Travel Community Hub is one of the thousands of *Travel Daily* readers who eagerly await our popular puzzle page - and yesterday clearly enjoyed solving the "Word Search".

However his unusual approach saw him do more than look for the designated items in the grid.

"They say that the first two words you spot in these things describe you, or something like that," he said - sending a very revealing screen shot of his findings (pictured).



Airline industry recovering

INCREASED consumer confidence, lower airfares and greater competition between airlines has helped drive the recovery of the airline sector, the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission's (ACCC) *Airline Competition in Australia* report has revealed.

The report showed that total passenger numbers in Mar this year were up by 41% when compared to Dec 2020, with airlines continuing to report growth since Mar 2021.

However, recent lockdowns and border closures have impacted forecasts from local carriers earlier this year, which predicted a return to pre-pandemic levels by the second half of 2021.

"Prior to the recent Victorian outbreaks, the domestic airline industry had experienced relatively fewer and less significant disruptions for a number of months, and

the combination of cheaper airfares and growing consumer confidence to travel interstate was critical to the recovery," said ACCC Chair Rod Sims.

The report also contends the airline industry is currently offering greater choice for consumers, with ACCC figures showing that 18% of Australian domestic passengers flew on routes where there was a choice of three airline groups, compared to 1.5% prior to the pandemic.

This number is expected to rise even more following Rex's move into the busy eastern cities market (**TD 01 Mar**), with Sims contending the greater choice will also see air tickets become more affordable for travellers.

Qantas Group's share of total domestic passengers also fell slightly to 69% in Mar, down from 74% in Dec 2020, however the carrier remains higher than its pre-pandemic share of 61%.

Hurti includes flights

HURTIGRUTEN is offering all-inclusive packages with flights for Australian travellers, with fares from \$10,999pp until 18 Dec.

The Antarctica All-Inclusive Packages feature international flights ex-Australia, local charter flights, additional pre- and post-accommodation to experience South America, all transfers and an expedition jacket - more information [HERE](#).

Gulf Air ups Greece

BAHRAIN flag carrier Gulf Air has operated inaugural flights to Mykonos and Santorini, with both routes to be served by the airline's new Airbus A320neo offering two weekly flights each.

The airline will fly to the destinations until at least Sep this year, part of a wider strategy to target more honeymooners and families to its services over the northern summer and coinciding with restrictions in Europe easing.

STOP DREAMING ABOUT NEW ZEALAND AND GO

Wakey wakey, it's time for a virtual journey and actual flights!

A new day has dawned, the Trans-Tasman Quarantine Free Travel Zone is now open and it's time for us to get reacquainted. Join us for a virtual journey around each region of New Zealand with a chance to win flights during each session.

Register for your spot on the virtual journey and your chance to win flights to New Zealand.

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GRANTS SCHEME UPDATE

THE Federal Government's \$50 million Business Events Grants program, which closed on 30 Mar this year, was oversubscribed to the tune of \$6 million, meaning the scheme's funding was fully exhausted, according to an update from Austrade last week.

A total of 1,729 eligible applications for funding were received, of which more than 1,500 were awarded, the agency overseeing the scheme said.

The controversial program was announced nine months ago (**BEN** 15 Sep 2020), providing funding for 50% of the costs for delegates and exhibitors to participate in approved business events.

Then in Mar this year (**BEN** 16 Mar), after ongoing consultation with the industry, the program was "tweaked" to lower the application threshold to \$10,000 and permitting funding to apply to events through until Mar 2022, after yo-yoing domestic borders forced further cancellations and uncertainty for the sector.

The Business Events Council

of Australia was particularly critical of the scheme, with then-Chair, Dr Vanessa Findlay, who stepped down this week (**TD** 15 Jun) saying the program had been "misaligned" and had not delivered support to the industry in the scale or time frame that was critically needed - particularly in the wake of JobKeeper's cessation (**BEN** 06 Apr).

At that stage only \$8 million of the total had been earmarked for distribution, however now that processing is complete the total funding requested by applicants was \$56 million.

There are now suggestions of a possible extension to the scheme, with Austrade's update last Fri noting that "the Australian Government is currently considering options regarding the program, including in relation to eligible applicants who did not receive funding due to the program allocation being exhausted, as well as potential new applications under a program extension".

EEAA safety pilot

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australia (EEAA) has launched a pilot program to provide risk and safety training and consultancy services to the business events sector.

A new pact with Beaspoke Safety will allow EEAA members to access custom support such as event and venue management plans, COVID-safe risk assessments, Safe Work Method statements, and training.

EEAA Risk & Safety Subcommittee Chair Paul Elliott said the organisation was confident that Beaspoke had "both the expertise and personalised approach to assist our members with their return to traditional business events".

Coogee on radar

THE recently refurbished Crowne Plaza Coogee Beach in Sydney is now welcoming a significant amount of business events delegates, after the launch of a new purpose-built events centre in its seaside location.

Eight new flexible meeting spaces with movable walls and state-of-the-art technology are complemented by a range of new group dining concepts and menus.

Also appealing to the leisure market, the property's culinary options include Estate Kitchen, Estate Terrace and a funky Taqueria serving up Mexican classics right across from the beach - as well as the Shutters Bar with a wide array of cocktails and an extensive wine list.

After a long day of conferencing groups may want to wind down in Confessional, a "private karaoke hideaway" - for more **CLICK HERE**.

Lister on the list

HARVEY Lister, ASM Global Asia-Pacific Chairman and CEO, has been named a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in last weekend's Queen's Birthday Honours list.

Lister was cited for "significant service to the arts, tourism, sport and to the venue management and events industries," having spent half a century involved in the development, presentation and management of events across sport, the arts, conventions, exhibitions, concerts and entertainment.

Lister thanked the "many people who have been there throughout my career for their generosity, loyalty and camaraderie".

Vic grant details

THE Vic State Government has provided further details of the \$20 million Victorian Events Support Package (**BEN** 01 Jun), which aims to acknowledge the "heavy and ongoing impact of the May-Jun restrictions" on the business events sector.

Payments of up to \$250,000 are on offer to major event organisers, hosts and suppliers who have seen a minimum 50% decline in turnover, with a payroll of over \$3 million in metro Melbourne or \$500,000 in regional Victoria.

Grants of \$25,000 are also available to organisers of events with crowds above 1,001 people, while suppliers to these events can access \$10,000 - business.vic.gov.au.

YES MINISTER, EVENTS MATTER!



EXHIBITION & Event Association of Australia CEO Claudia Sagripanti was up close and personal with Tourism Minister Dan Tehan earlier this week, taking the opportunity to highlight the importance of the business events sector in the wider economy.

In a LinkedIn update, Sagripanti said the Minister "clearly understands and is prepared to discuss the key issues, including the need for clarity around the Business Events Grants Program results, and also future direction and support for the sector".

Right way to snow

FOUR major ski operators in the United States have created a unified document in a bid to combat climate change.

Alterra Mountain Company, Boyne Resorts, Powder and Vail Resorts have agreed to operate their locations adhering to a new suite of sustainability objectives, including waste reduction, scaling back energy usage, sharing best practices to accelerate change and increasing business focus on the natural environment.

The new charter will affect major resorts including Deer Valley Resort, Vail Mountain, Whistler Blackcomb, Park City Mountain and Big Sky Resort.

Royal's new Icon

ROYAL Caribbean has unveiled more details about its first LNG-powered ship, scheduled to enter service for the line in 2023.

Construction on *Icon of the Seas* commenced at Finnish shipyard Meyer Turku this week, and will be the line's first of three ships to be powered by LNG and boast a range of new sustainability features such as shore power connection & energy efficiencies.

"We look forward to revealing more of the game-changing features our guests and crew have in store as she begins to take shape," Royal Caribbean International Chief Executive Officer Michael Bayley said.

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Travel Daily



Ponant farewells long-time PR



PONANT Cruises hosted an event to celebrate the service of Michael Corbett yesterday, who has been the line's local Public Relations Manager for the last eight years.

Corbett has had a long association with Ponant Asia-Pacific Chairman, Sarina Bratton, over the last 24 years working with her on a range of ventures including Norwegian Capricorn Line, Orion Expedition Cruises and now Ponant.

The event took place overlooking a stunning winter harbour vista at the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, where Ponant is also a seasonal sponsor of the weekly Fri twilight club races.

Effective 01 Jul, Corbett's Ponant PR role is being taken over by

communications agency Elysee Collective, which has a number of other travel clients including Aman Resorts, Soneva, Otahuna Lodge near Christchurch, Ovolo Hotels, Resplendent Ceylon, and Eichardts' Hotel in Queenstown.

The Ponant team at the event is **pictured** from left: Deb Corbett, Commercial Director; Michael Corbett (no relation), outgoing PR Manager; Sarina Bratton, Chairman Asia Pacific; Charles Boutet, Director of Marketing & Communications; Maxime Farrenq, Finance Executive; and Mick Fogg, Expedition Manager.

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.

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer **Tash Wheeler** has announced her resignation. She will remain with the destination marketing organisation until 18 Sep, during which time she will assist the transition to a yet-to-be-revealed replacement.

Windstar Cruises has appointed **Paul Barrett** as its new Vice President of Marine & Technical Operations. He assumes the role having formerly been Vice President of Technical Operations, with his new position to include marine operations, safety, compliance, and fuel procurement, in addition to his prior capacity of the efficient technical operation of the fleet, including repairs, maintenance and upgrade projects at dry docks.

Deveekaa Nijhawan will lead the International PR & Communications for **Qatar National Tourism Council**. With over 10 years' relevant experience, she will assist in selling Qatar in key markets as part of the country's strategy to become a world-leading tourism destination.

GTI Tourism has announced the appointment of **Jenny Pham** as General Manager Marketing & Strategy. She will lead the tourism PR agency's marketing division, with responsibility for strategy, media and consumer marketing, while founder and Managing Director Sarah Anderson remains as the day-to-day lead of the PR division.

Snails for Skal Syd

SKAL Sydney will host its next networking lunch with a French twist on Bastille Day, Wed 14 Jul at The Little Snail Restaurant & Bar in Pyrmont.

The event will feature a presentation from the club's past president Walter Nand, who will speak on "why we should be planning to travel in 2022/23".

Book at sydney.skal.org.au.

Rosewood newbuild

ROSEWOOD Hotels & Resorts has been appointed to manage the new Rosewood Chongqing, a new property scheduled to open in the Chinese city's CBD in 2030 - the brand's 18th Asian hotel.

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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