

Border fare waivers

QANTAS has issued a new commercial policy for travellers whose trips have been disrupted by the snap lockdown of Greater Brisbane this week.

Qantas and Virgin Australia were forced to cancel almost 80 flights yesterday, with QF's new commercial policy for domestic itineraries allowing fee-free rebookings to an alternate Qantas flight or the ability to retain the ticket value in credit.

At this stage the QF policy applies to customers holding a valid 081 domestic ticket issued on/before 29 Mar, for travel through to 01 Apr who are impacted by a change in Australian domestic state border policy or unable to travel due to having been in a COVID-19 hot spot in the previous 14 days.

Tehan talks up cheap fares

TOURISM Minister Dan Tehan and Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack say the release of Government-backed half price airfares at midnight tonight will "power tourism recovery" for Australia.

The cheap flights initiative will be amplified via an \$8 million advertising campaign focusing on the 15 tourism regions targeted by the plan.

McCormack said domestic tourism would be at the "heart of Australia's economic recovery" as the nation comes back from the COVID-19 recession.

"Australia's response to COVID-19 has been world-leading, both on the health and economic fronts, and now it's time for Australians to enjoy a well-earned holiday," he said.

"Planes in the air means jobs on the ground and these half-priced flights will help more Australians have their dream holiday at home whilst also supporting our aviation and tourism industries."

Tehan said the Government was expecting huge demand for the fares, noting that Aussies who book a holiday will be supporting destinations that have been hardest hit by the closure of

international borders.

"We want Australians to do their patriotic duty and book a holiday this year through their travel agent, and while they're away to eat at restaurants, go to the pubs and book tours and experiences to get money flowing into our tourism businesses," Tehan enthused.

The half price flights are on sale from tomorrow until 31 Jul, and valid for travel through until the end of Sep.

Tourism Australia's *Holiday Here This Year - Full on holidays* campaign will run from tomorrow until Jul and be supported by partnerships with a range of airlines, travel retailers and the states & territories to drive demand for accommodation and experiences, the Government said.

Events sector plea

THE poor design of the Government's \$50 million Business Events Grants Program has left the industry with "virtually no targeted Govt Support post JobKeeper," says the Business Events Council of Australia (BECA).

A statement issued yesterday noted that after six months just \$8 million of the total had been earmarked for distribution.

BECA Chair Vanessa Findlay said without additional help over the next six months 23% of businesses in the sector will close.

P&O out until Aug

P&O Cruises Australia has extended its pause in guest operations until the end of Jul, with the current rolling suspension now affecting voyages scheduled from 18 Jun-30 Jul.

P&O is also cancelling voyages to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands for the remainder of the year, given the uncertainty around borders.

That in turn will impact this year's Cairns season, which had been expected to see *Pacific Explorer* based in Far North Queensland from Oct.

The cruise line has also extended its P&O Assurance policy, which now covers all cruises departing before 01 Jul 2022 and all existing and future bookings made before 12 May this year.



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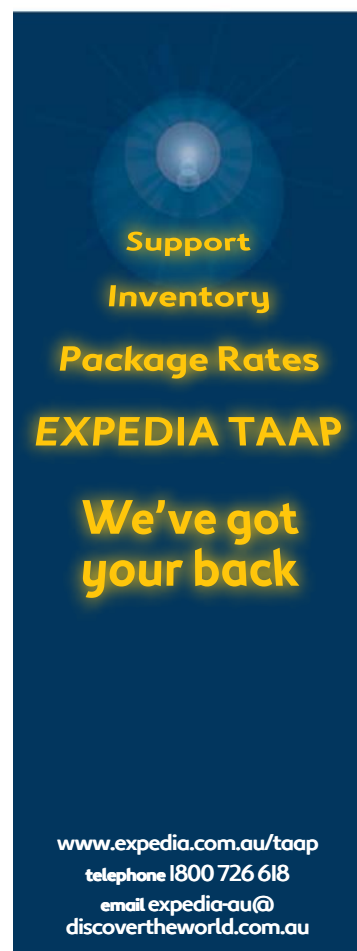
Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news including our PUZZLE page plus a full page from **Swiss Travel System**.



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Hello double tax

HELLOWORLD has this morning advised shareholders of an error in its submission of dividend income reporting to the Australian Taxation Office for the 2019 Financial Year.

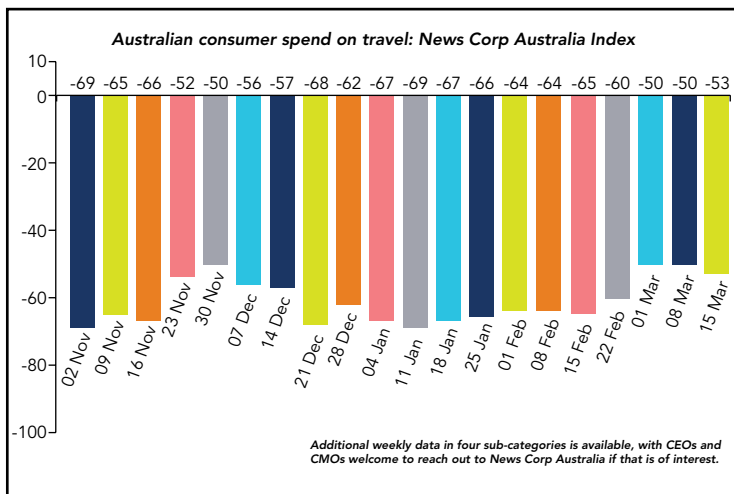
The matter has arisen from a change in the company's share registry during the period, and affects shareholders who own HLO shares in individual names.

For those who submitted their tax returns for 2018/19 before 23 Mar this year and used the Australian Taxation Office "prefill" data to prepare the returns "it is likely that the incorrect information was used to prepare this tax return," HLO said.

"The duplicate information provided to the ATO included incorrect holder reference numbers and HLO dividend for only part of the tax year, and should not have been included in your tax return," with the additional details appearing on the ATO prefill portal with the reported date of 24 Jun 2019.

Impacted shareholders are being advised to correct the information and amend their previous lodgements.

Most spending categories drop



EXCLUSIVE

THE momentary mood lift in the travel industry has unfortunately reversed this week, with the latest News Corp Australia consumer spending figures (pictured) indicating a small backward step.

Reductions were recorded in the airline spend, travel agent and touring categories with the overall result sitting at -53% compared to Mar 2019 levels.

"The fact that we are still in the -50s is a positive thing,"

said News Corp Head of Travel, Dwayne Birtles.

He said a likely driver of the spend reduction may well have been short lead time Easter bookings for families occurring in the prior weeks, when borders were open and a number of flight offers were in the market.

The main contributing categories to the drop in spend this week were Airline, dropping more than four points, and Travel Agents & Touring which was down three points to sit at -68%.

The only category to see improvement was Cruise, lifting by two points to be at -78%.

Birtles said cruise clients were not as deterred about booking as in previous months, while a number of operators have also been actively advertising their offerings in recent weeks.

Accommodation is actually sitting in the positive, and on par with last week at +3% on the benchmark two years ago.

However the three day lockdown of Greater Brisbane this week coming close to the Easter long weekend will deliver a blow to consumer spend, Birtles noted.

Hopeful the closures will not extend beyond the three day period, he said some encouragement could be taken from the fact that consumer confidence has thus far not been as severely impacted by snap lockdowns as in 2020.



Window Seat

THEY say necessity is the mother of invention, but sometimes, it's just pure gluttony.

Tampa International is launching its own food delivery service, TPA to Go, allowing passengers to have food delivered from around the airport to where they are waiting for their flight.

Serving more than 20 restaurants located around the airport, the service is powered by other delivery applications, such as Grab.

Deliveries have a fee of US\$4.99, which begs the question, if you're waiting around for your flight in the first place...why not just walk and pick up your food?

Adina Austria debut

TFE Hotels will tomorrow open the 134-room Adina Hotel Vienna Belvedere, which will be the first of five new Adina Hotels set to open across Europe this year.

The property will comprise 115 studios, 17 one-bedroom apartments and two two-bedroom apartments over a seven-floor complex which also features a fitness room, sauna and swimming pool.

Florida vax ban

AUTHORITIES in Florida, USA have announced plans to make insisting on the use of so-called "vaccine passports" illegal.

Governor Ron DeSantis said the move would apply to theme parks, movie theatres, sporting activities and more.

"It's completely unacceptable for either the Government or the private sector to impose upon you the requirement that you show proof of vaccine to just simply be able to participate in normal society," he said.

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A Queenslander hangs his head in shame

OPINION

Dan Russell is GM and Director of Brisbane-based travel and cruise specialist Clean Cruising.

Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to feedback@traveldaily.com.au.



AS A Queenslander I can only hang my head in shame at the latest lockdown.

The situation was entirely preventable if Qld Health had their act together with both their contact tracing and various policies around frontline vaccinations.

The outbreak has come through a doctor and nurses yet to be vaccinated, who were treating cases from hotel quarantine.

Believe it or not, it isn't mandatory for frontline health care workers to be vaccinated in Qld – this is something Dr Jeanette Young is only now considering!

A bit late don't you think??

This lockdown will prove to be a tipping point.

With JobKeeper gone, every tourism business needed borders to stay open to rebuild confidence from the travelling public. After having Christmas holiday plans dashed, many Aussies were holding out for their Easter break but it's now highly likely that a lot of these trips will be cancelled.

Why would anyone take up a half price flight in this environment?

One year on it's clear that trade and the travelling public are still being let down by a distinct lack of cooperation between Federal and State governments, further compounded by an over-abundance of caution and good old fashioned incompetence.

We have all been at the mercy of governments and bureaucrats at different levels for too long.

Considering this state of affairs

is unlikely to change, there is only one way out.

The speed of the vaccine rollout needs to significantly increase from now on. The country needs to get to the 60-70% mark as soon as possible.

At this point the spread of new cases will be curbed, and only then will State Premiers balance the health advice with the economic imperative.

The current pace of vaccine delivery is woeful, with the volume of paperwork required for a single dose simply absurd.

“Believe it or not, it isn't mandatory for frontline health care workers to be vaccinated in Queensland - this is something Dr Jeanette Young is only now considering!”

How much paperwork gets created when Amazon processes an order? How much quicker could we inoculate the country if we used our best digital resources and reduce the cycles that exist?

Let's look at how the US got to deliver three million doses a day. Like Australia they got off to a slow start but then shifted to using large venues for mass vaccinations, including baseball and NFL stadiums.

Our government's current plans are to distribute through 4,000 GP's and clinics, and are only

considering larger venues later in the year.

Again, how would Amazon do it? Via a smaller number of large scale fulfilment centres across the country.

With CSL finally allowed to ramp up production, we'll have enough doses – we just need a much more efficient supply chain to get them into our arms.

There's no doubt we have the capabilities but also need a shift in mindset from our top health bureaucrats.

In Senate Estimates hearings last week, Dr Brendan Murphy was grilled on the slow vaccine delivery to date. Australia was due to receive 3.8 million Astra Zeneca doses by now, but only received 700,000 before the EU blocked delivery, a risk that neither he nor it seems any of his colleagues factored in.

Murphy is also fully focused on safety and not speed, stating that Australia is not a “burning platform”. Really? He is obviously viewing the world through a different lens. For every poor bugger waiting for international borders to open – everyone in tourism and hospitality, universities relying on foreign students, farmers who need fruit pickers – indeed every Aussie who just needs a bloody holiday – the platform is well and truly alight. JobKeeper was putting out the flames but that's gone too.

The sector support lobbying is vital and must continue while international borders are closed.

But the speed of the vaccine rollout is crucial too. Let's use the current outbreak and lockdown to make this an additional focus of our lobbying efforts through all channels from here.

Safety does not need to be compromised for speed if we are competent and ambitious.

Instead of the end of the year, why don't we shoot for July??

This would save both lives and jobs.

Virgin Galactic's latest revelation



SPACE tourism aspirant Virgin Galactic overnight unveiled VSS *Imagine*, the latest iteration of its fleet showcasing the company's “innovation in design and astronaut experience”.

The spacecraft (pictured) “demonstrates progress toward efficient design and production as Virgin Galactic works to scale the business for the long term,” the operator said.

VSS *Imagine* will initially commence ground testing, followed by glide flights over the upcoming northern summer from Spaceport America in New Mexico while manufacturing begins on sister ship VSS *Inspire*.

Virgin Galactic, which was established in 2004, continues to target the commencement of commercial operations in 2022.

Cyprus UK welcome

THE government of Cyprus will open the doors to UK travellers as soon as the British Government lifts its travel ban.

Cypriot officials said a negative PCR test result will be required in order to avoid quarantine, but from 01 May “all travellers with proof they have the required doses of a recognised vaccine” will not need to be tested.

Other countries being added to the Cyprus “coronavirus safe list” effective from tomorrow include Russia, Israel, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and the USA.

UK residents are unable to exit the country until mid-May at the earliest, but Cyprus said once they are allowed to travel it would be “taking all necessary measures to ensure that visitors enjoy their holidays in a safe and carefree environment”.

Pub quiz

- Which former Las Vegas hotel-casino also operated a golf course?
- Which six routes meet at London's Charing Cross junction?
- Kebnekaise is the highest mountain in which country?
 - Sweden
 - Russia
 - Japan
 - Iceland
- Was Fernsehturm Berlin, the tallest building in Germany, built by East or West Germany?
- Which building overtook the Great Pyramid of Giza in the 14th century to become the tallest structure in the world?
 - Eiffel Tower
 - Lincoln Cathedral
 - Notre Dame Cathedral
 - Tower of Pisa
- The Karnak Temple Complex is located in which country?
- What country is host to the highest population of camels?
- The Cavill Hotel, an entertainment venue, is located in which Australian town?
- What Australian city is known as T-Ba?
- Donald Trump was born and raised in which city?

Sudoku

DIABOLICAL

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

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

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Seen it at the movies



THIS Adam Sandler classic makes great use of the Hawaii's amazing natural beauty, with many scenes taking place on its golden beaches, amazing cliff top lookouts and tropical bars.

Ironically, the unforgettable landscapes are a far cry from the mind of the main character, whose chronic amnesia causes many hilarious romantic hiccups throughout the feature. Can you name the movie?

Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the **TD** Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 10 Jul 2014:

FANCY a snooze?

The upmarket Indigo Pearl resort in Phuket, Thailand, has launched a new 7-day 'Art of Sleep' package which encourages guests to spend most of their stay in bed.

The property says the deal offers "would-be Rip Van Winkles" a chance to iron out modern life's wrinkles with "uninterrupted nights of the deepest sleep, along with languorous lie-ins, brunches in bed, cat naps, power naps and all the lazy afternoon siestas guests desire".

It costs just 49,500 baht (about A\$1,650) for the Art of Sleep deal for two guests in a suite, with daily breakfast, massages and even guaranteed early check-in meaning arrivals can make a 'Beeline for Bed'.

ANSWERS 30 MAR

Celebrity faces: Eyes - Joel Katz, CLIA, Nose - Nicole Kidman, Mouth - Adam Sandler

Unscramble: bend, bide, bier, bind, binder, binned, bird, bode, bond, bone, boned, bonier, bonnier, bore, bored, born, borne, bowed, bower, bred, brew, bride, brine, brow, brown, browned, brownie, inborn, inbred, newborn, orbed, rebid, rebind, robe, robed, robin, WINDBORNE

Pub quiz: 1 Parliament Square, 2 True, and more than once, 3 b) Berlin, 4 Maryland and Virginia, 5 Hobart, Tasmania, 6 Jakarta, 7 c) Wagga Wagga, 8 Sicily, 9 Ionian Sea, 10 Brisbane-Adelaide

Banyan wellbeing

BANYAN Tree has unveiled a post-pandemic wellbeing drive, with the group to launch 16 Wellbeing Sanctuaries this year.

The clubs will be set over a number of floor or resort wings at Banyan Tree properties, and will feature dedicated dining options, spas, and multifunctional spaces.

Beginning this month, they will be launched first in China, and progressively in Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Thailand and Vietnam.

Cross + Hotelbeds

FLIGHT Centre's Cross Hotels & Resorts has signed a strategic partnership with Hotelbeds.

The hotel management business will gain access to Hotelbeds' 60,000 travel trade buyers, including travel advisors, airlines, tour operators and loyalty schemes.

Clients of Hotelbeds will also have access to exclusive rates from Cross' properties in destinations such as Bangkok, Bali, Phuket and Chiang Mai.

ACCOMMODATION

WELCOME to Accommodation Updates, *Travel Daily's* Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.



Following a soft refurbishment of each of the 24 lead-in category rooms, **Wilpena Pound Resort** has revealed its new-look Aroona rooms. The completed works include new furnishings, fresh painting throughout and new flooring, with the resort to be ready for guests from this month onwards. The Aroona rooms refurbishment is part of a broader refreshment for the resort's hotel and glamping tents at Ikara Safari Camp.



The first Quincy to launch outside of Singapore, **Quincy Hotel Melbourne**, has opened on Flinders Lane. The 241-room boutique upper-midscale property aims to "raise the bar on accessible high-end luxe", with a goal to treat every guest like a VVIP, in the delivery of bespoke service prior to demand. These include arrival cocktails before check-in, complimentary pillow menus tailored to individual tastes, minibars stocked with kombucha and more.



Melia Koh Samui has unveiled The Level - "a resort within a resort". Setting apart 56 luxurious rooms and suites, as well as a private lounge and bespoke facilities, The Level overlooks Choeng Mon Beach on the north-eastern tip of Koh Samui in the Gulf of Thailand. The Level also features 24 Pool Access Rooms, with private terraces that segue into a 700-metre-long lagoon pool that meanders through the resort's grounds.

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Regent treats key partners



REGENT Seven Seas Cruises whisked away some of its partners this week to an exclusive retreat at Spicers Sangoma Resort in the NSW Blue Mountains.

The event saw the line's local chief Steve Odell and his erstwhile team of Lisa Pile and Gillian Seller highlight the strong demand for luxury experiences, with the brand's 2022 departures already 50% sold out - more in today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

Odell also paid tribute to CLIA MD Joel Katz, who joined the group, for his ongoing advocacy on behalf of the industry.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises has not yet announced its own plans for a restart, but it's likely an update will be forthcoming soon as vaccine programs roll out.

Pictured from left: Michael Londregan, Virtuoso; Sharyn Kitchener, Mosman Travel; Dani Galloway, Flight Centre; Gillian Seller and Lisa Pile, Regent Seven Seas Cruises; Roland Howlett, Frontier Travel; Steve Odell, Regent Seven Seas Cruises; Brett and Louise Dann, Hunter Travel Group, and CLIA MD Joel Katz.

Air NZ child policy

AIR New Zealand has updated its unaccompanied minor policy, with a new requirement to book a Seat + Bag fare on NZ domestic services, or a "The Works" seat including a meal and inflight entertainment on Tasman and Pacific Islands flights.

In addition, medical clearance will be required from the Air NZ MEDA team in the case of unaccompanied minors with a disability, a medical condition or a requirement for medication.

Air NZ's unaccompanied minor service provides children travelling with a special Airband wristband which is scanned by staff at various stages of the journey, in turn automatically sending text message updates to up to five nominated contacts.

New Greek bases

IRISH low-cost carrier Ryanair has announced the establishment of new bases in Corfu, Rhodes and Chania in Greece, as it looks to a post-COVID-19 surge in short-haul European leisure traffic.



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