

Celebrity Edge is coming to Australia

CELEBRITY Cruises this morning unveiled the 2023/24 deployment of its signature *Celebrity Edge*, with the 2,908-passenger vessel to offer voyages departing from both Sydney and Auckland.

The Down Under season, kicking off in early Dec 2023, will also take in the South Pacific and an array of ports around the Australian and New Zealand coasts, including Hobart, Cairns, Kangaroo Island and more.

Bookings will open mid-Oct, with Tim Jones, Celebrity Cruises VP Australia/APAC, saying the local arrival of an Edge-class ship had long been anticipated, adding "this is a moment of real celebration for Australian travellers and Celebrity Cruises".

More in today's *Cruise Weekly*.

Vale Mark Miller

THE travel industry is mourning the death today of Mark Miller, formerly Manager for Airline Sales with Discover The World, following a battle with cancer.

Miller's career included roles with Ansett, Canadian Airlines, Air Canada and Virgin Atlantic, with industry peers remembering his "enthusiasm, high energy and sense of humour".

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news including *Business Events News*.

Vaccine passport detailed

EXCLUSIVE

AN INDUSTRY briefing yesterday has unveiled key information about Federal Government plans to roll out new vaccination certificates which will be mandatory for international travel out of Australia.

As previously reported, the system will involve QR codes based on Visible Digital Seal technology, (**TD** 04 Aug), which will be electronically readable at airport e-passport gates.

Officials described Australia as a "first mover" with the technology, but more than 125 nations across the globe have also committed to using the system and Australia is currently assisting other countries with implementation.

Personal QR codes will be

accessed via a traveller's MyGov account, where their vaccination status will be authenticated in real time and linked to their passport before the encrypted code is provided to the user.

The code can be printed as a paper back-up and also saved to smartphones for use in transit.

The update noted individuals who hold dual citizenship would be able to apply for a QR code for multiple passports, while other issues under active discussion internationally include the global acceptance of specific vaccines.

The Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO), which is a member of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Consular Consultative Group, was part of the briefing and detailed the update to its members, with officials also noting that travel to specific destinations will also require close attention to DFAT travel advisories.

"We understand travel insurers are actively preparing for a surge in demand," CATO MD Brett Jardine said in the update.

Club Med on couch

CLUB Med has announced a new season of its 'On The Couch' series, with new dates kicking off on 12 Oct with a 30-minute session dubbed "Lock and Load".

With tips on generating new bookings, details of risk-free deposit schemes and COVID insurance coverage, Club Med said it would help agents prepare their business for the return of international travel.

Red Balloon vouchers are up for grabs for participants to win, with just 100 spots available per session - register to take part at clubmedta.com.au.

Cruise trial flagged

QLD Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk has flagged her intentions to propose a trial of small Queensland-based cruises in National Cabinet tomorrow.

The pilot would be for fully jabbed passengers only and sail up and down the state's coast.

Noble calling

KARENA Noble will next month join Event Hospitality and Entertainment as Corporate Communications Manager.

She will work across the group in her new role, with a focus on leading PR strategies for the hotel and entertainment divisions including the QT, Atura and Rydges hotel brands as well as Event Cinemas and Thredbo Alpine Resort.

Noble was long-time PR Director for Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia, and has more recently been working with Pro-Invest Group on its acquisition of Sydney's Primus Hotel.

More appointments on **page 5**.

New Spencer site

SPENCER Travel has launched a new website consolidating its leisure operations, previously trading under the Spencer Travel Southside, Shire Travel and Spencer Travel Eastside brands.

With the offices relocating to Spencer Travel's corporate head office last year, they have now been combined under the spencertravelleisure.com.au site, which MD Penny Spencer said was an "excellent representation of what Spencer Travel is all about: travel specialists who go above and beyond".

"The platform also offers our preferred partners and suppliers the opportunity to get their brand in feature to a captive audience," Spencer added.

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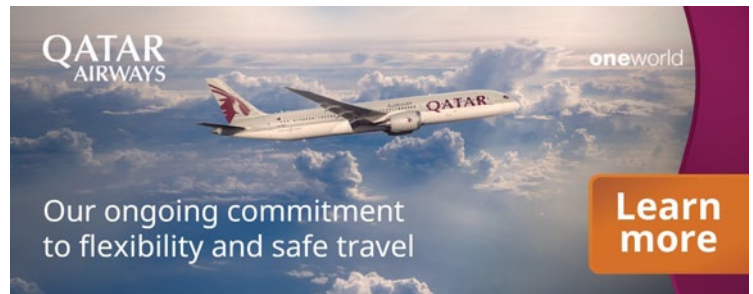
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A Xmas pressie for travel

AUSTRALIANS should expect to be able to travel overseas by “Christmas at the latest”, Federal Tourism Minister Dan Tehan confirmed during a speech at the National Press Club yesterday. “What we’ve seen so far and all the reports back is that the QR code system, which has obviously been modelled on the International Civil Aviation Organization’s model of what they think is needed in a QR code, seems to be interoperable with most of the countries that we’ve been dealing with,” Tehan said. “We continue to do all the preparatory work so that when those international borders open...that Australians will be able to travel with a QR code link to their passport which will be able to show a proof of

vaccination,” he added. When the Minister was asked about issues around inbound tourism, in particular whether or not Chinese tourists who have been jabbed with the Sinopharm vaccine will be allowed into the country when borders open, Tehan said that decision was still subject to Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approval. “They are the authority that have registered the current vaccines...and they will be the responsible authority looking at all other vaccines, and ultimately whether they will be recognised here in Australia or not.” Tehan added that the govt was making sure source markets overseas are aware that once borders are open, Australia’s tourism sector is “ready to go”.

Northern Pacific gears up



SOON-TO-LAUNCH carrier Northern Pacific Airways has announced the purchase of its first six Boeing 757-200s. The Anchorage-based Northern Pacific completed the transaction to meet part of its initial fleet requirements, and intends to continue enlarging its capacity as it prepares for passenger flights. The first aircraft within this purchase will be delivered to the

airline immediately. “Northern Pacific is proud to introduce these powerful aircraft as the foundation of our fleet,” CEO Rob McKinney said. “The Boeing 757-200 will help us achieve operational savings and efficiencies while offering our customers a rewarding travel experience,” he added. Northern Pacific intends to offer service between destinations in the United States and Asia via Anchorage.

Pictured: a rendering of a Northern Pacific aircraft.

Inflight tech launch

BRITISH satellite telecommunications company Inmarsat has launched OneFi, a new customer experience platform enabling airlines to monetise in-flight connectivity. OneFi will bring a host of onboard services together within a single portal interface, which passengers can easily access using their own personal devices. It will allow travellers to order food and beverages, purchase seat upgrades, receive the latest flight and destination information, and more.

ETG mints pay deal

EXPRESS Travel Group (ETG) has signed on to use Mint Payments’ MintEFT product, giving its network of independent travel agencies access to new pay options and replacing the discontinued eNett system. The new deal will also see agents able to integrate existing mid-office platforms with the MintEFT product, and make transactions easier to process.

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Window Seat

IN A move reminiscent of the famous Jamaican bobsled team immortalised in the John Candy 90s classic *Cool Runnings*, Saudi Arabia is preparing to train up skiers and snowboarders to compete at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

The emerging tourism destination, known for its arid desert areas and soaring temperatures, has hired the best snow sports coaches in Europe to get its athletes up to speed to compete, with its winter team to be based at the indoor ski centre inside the bustling Riyadh Mall.

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Celebrity X Cruises®

Time to jab global action

EXCLUSIVE

THE next big challenge facing the travel sector is ensuring poorer nations have access to vaccines as soon as possible, Intrepid Group's commercial chief Brett Mitchell believes.

Speaking with *TD* yesterday, Mitchell said it was incumbent on richer countries to get the entire global population vaccinated to both save lives and mitigate the risk of new variants that could potentially derail travel.

"A lot of people don't want to consider talking about a deadlier variant popping up which is why we think it's critically important we're all doing as much as we can to get everyone vaccinated globally," Mitchell said.

"I don't think any of us are safe until the majority of the world has been vaccinated, so we've partnered with UNICEF Australia to raise over \$100,000 to get two billion doses into the arms of those less fortunate globally."

Intrepid has also linked arms with the World Health Organization to work with different communities around the world on the ground to educate them on the safety and efficacy of vaccines in the hope of speeding up the rollout of jobs.

BA status updates

BRITISH Airways is further protecting its Executive Club tier status members by launching a range of new benefits.

Any tiered Executive Club member with a point collection end date between Jan and Mar 2022 will receive another year of their current status, which means no member renewing over this period will lose them.

The benefit comes in addition to a 25% threshold reduction in tier status, applicable to Jun 2022.

All Silver and Gold Members, regardless of their cabin of travel, will also be able to enjoy pre-flight dining at select lounges.

Mitchell also believes the travel sector can play an important role in this global project.

"There are tour companies that have people on the ground in some of these low income countries and there are ways they can try and help to accelerate what we know, which is the need for global vaccine equality, because this virus does not recognise borders," he said.

Find out more about how to donate to the cause **HERE**.

Closer to home, Mitchell has also called on the Federal Government to abolish the hotel quarantine model in exchange for a simpler, home-based isolation approach.

"It's really good to see what South Australia and NSW are trialling and I'm confident those will be successful and that should show us that home quarantining is safe," he said.

"Whether it's seven days or whether it's home quarantine until you get a negative test before you are released back into the community, other countries have proven that type of model is an appropriate response."

Qld funding support

MORE than 20 events across Queensland will receive \$581,500 in funding to support local tourism and the state's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan.

Qld Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe said the latest round of the Queensland Destination Events Program would support 23 events running from Jan to May.

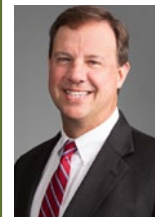
He said five of the destination events for the first half of next year, including Moreton Bay Multisport Festival, Rockynats, Surf City Cup, Cooly Classic Ocean Swim and the Junior State Cup North, were receiving funding for the first time, adding they are important for attracting visitors to Queensland's tourist destinations, and supporting job creation.



SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS

Today's Sustainability Matters is brought to you by Abercrombie & Kent

AKP supporting its communities during COVID



DESPITE the challenges brought about by COVID-19, Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy (AKP) has been able to pivot to

deliver practical emergency relief on an international scale.

When COVID hit, AKP was already uniquely positioned to deliver the type of resources its worldwide community partners needed. These isolated communities are in places where A&K operates, and beyond, and AKP has worked with local officials in each to identify the top priorities (food, PPE, medical supplies, potable water).

Together with A&K staff and supporters, AKP has been able to reach 100,000+ community members since the pandemic hit: 12,200 more students in Kenya and Tanzania have access to clean water through AKP's Safe Water for Schools Initiative.

60 jobs worldwide generated through enterprise development initiatives. Four containers of medical supplies and equipment sent to Cambodia, Uganda and Tanzania. 1,845 healthy babies born at AKP-supported medical facilities in Africa. Five schools constructed. 127 wells built in Cambodia and emergency relief provided to partner communities in seven countries. 1,876 bikes shipped to AKP's bike programmes in Africa and food and hygiene packages delivered to 4,360 families in resource-limited communities worldwide.

A&K guests are invited to visit AKP's worldwide projects when travel resumes.

Keith Sproule, Executive Director, Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy

Abercrombie & Kent PHILANTHROPY



MEA NAMES WINNERS

MEETINGS & Events Australia (MEA) last night honoured the “innovation and exceptional work done by organisations and individuals in the events sector throughout 2020,” in the MEA Awards Night broadcast virtually for the second year running.

MEA CEO Peter McDonald hailed all of the finalists who were up for an award.

“I’d like to acknowledge the effort made by anyone who contributed a submission for consideration, to congratulate those who became worthy finalists, and to celebrate those deemed to ultimately be category winners,” he said.

The awards were delivered in partnership with Destination NSW, EventsAIR, ICC Sydney, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Touchpoint and Ungerboeck, while MEA also thanked Scene Change Studios in Sydney for stepping in to help when the event was forced to go online due to lockdowns.

Winners included immediate past chair of MEA, Kate Smith from Waldronsmith Management, who took out the

2020 Outstanding Contribution Award, recognising her commitment to the organisation while also dealing with COVID challenges in her own business.

National Excellence in Industry awards went to Destination North Coast and Harry the hirer, while Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre took out the Banqueting and Catering national category.

Other national winners included Novatech Creative Event Technology for AV services, Milestone Creative for Event Marketing, EventsAIR in the Event Technology category, and Harry the hirer for Exhibition Services.

Alison Jack from Admire Events was named Event Manager of the Year - Agency, while Victoria Dillon of La Trobe University took out the In-House Event Manager of the Year award.

The national Professional Conference Organisation category went to Arinex, while Hyatt Regency Sydney was named Event Hotel of the Year.

MEA also named its state and territory winners in all categories.

For more details of the event see meetingsevents.com.au.

“Please help us Mr Tehan,” begs BECA

THE Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) last week pleaded with Federal Tourism Minister Dan Tehan for an “urgent bundle of targeted measures as a lifeline towards recovery,” with lockdowns across Australia continuing to directly impact lives and livelihoods in the sector.

BECA Deputy Chair, Geoff Donaghy, told the Minister support was vital to ensure the visitor and events supply chain survives, along with maintaining its skilled workforce.

“If we are to be match fit for domestic recovery and deliver global best practice to our international clients for which

we are recognised when the border reopens, retaining our people is essential,” Donaghy said.

Key measures urged include the return of a national wage subsidy scheme, the introduction of a federally-led event insurance scheme in partnership with state and territory Governments to cover for cancellations and postponements due to the imposition of COVID-19 restrictions, and the introduction of an improved Business Events Grant Program aiming to stimulate demand for in-person events in 2022, via corporate and association event owners.

Melbourne’s new CENTREPIECE debuts



CENTREPIECE at Melbourne Park has officially opened, with the new venue boasting the capability of hosting everything from large-scale conferences and major awards nights through to weddings and gala experiences.

The sophisticated property (**pictured**) features a 2,000sqm pillarless Grand Hall with operable walls making it able to be flexibly configured for a range of activities.

Windows reach from the floor to the 8.5m high ceilings, allowing plenty of natural light, while the Grand Hall opens onto an 800sqm pre-function space and outdoor terrace.

There are also 15 breakout spaces, a 250-seat auditorium and even purpose-built broadcast studios.

Lara Burnes, GM of Premier Events & Experiences at

Melbourne & Olympic Parks, said the venue’s state-of-the-art design and versatility gave it great appeal.

“Inspired by Melbourne’s melting pot of arts, cultures and cuisines, CENTREPIECE is completely customisable,” she said, with the experienced team on site well versed in delivering events that create impactful experiences.

The food menu at CENTREPIECE has been curated by Asif Mamun, Executive Chef of Delaware North, while the venue will also collaborate with Victorian wineries, breweries and distilleries to elevate the catering experience.

“Melbourne’s newest venue of choice will lie at the heart of the local and national events calendar,” Burnes enthused.

See images of CENTREPIECE at [facebook.com/traveldaily](https://www.facebook.com/traveldaily)

EEAA new blood

NEXT week’s AGM of the Exhibition and Event Association of Australia (EEAA) will see President Spiro Anemogiannis step down after six years.

Other directors will also finish their terms, meaning EEAA will have a “new and fresh board to lead us out of the pandemic,” Anemogiannis said.

Doltone growth

DOLTONE House has announced it plans to open a new Western Sydney venue later in the year, bringing to life a partnership with Club Marconi in Bossley Park.

Spaces on offer include the 1200-guest Colosseo, La Boheme with capacity for 800, and Elettra, with room for 600.

The Doltone-Marconi deal was announced in 2019, but then was delayed by COVID-19.



Marriott net zero

MARRIOTT International has announced its ambition to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by no later than 2050.

The company yesterday submitted a letter to the Science Based Targets initiative, also committing to set emissions reduction objectives across all scopes, in line with a reduction of 1.5°C emissions scenarios.

As part of its commitment, Marriott signed on to the Race to Zero via Business Ambition for 1.5, in which participants are committed to the same overarching goal of reducing emissions across all areas.

IPW live in Vegas

THE US Travel Association's 52nd annual IPW conference has wrapped up in Las Vegas, welcoming more than 2,600 attendees from 52 countries.

The event was hosted at the Las Vegas Convention Centre, and is the first international large-scale travel gathering to convene in the USA since the pandemic's onset.

IPW's opening session coincided with the announcement by US President Joe Biden that the country would reopen to international air travel (**TD** 21 Sep), with USTA CEO Roger Dow saying this was a "critical point in the industry's recovery".

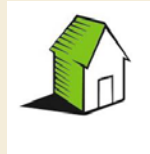
Know your brands

LOGOS are the main way that companies distinguish themselves, and some logos are so famous that you don't even need to see the company's name to know who it is.

See if you can identify these four logos.



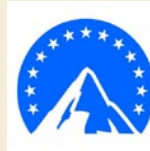
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APPOINTMENTS



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.

Industry veteran Zainuddin Abdul Wahab has been appointed as the new Director-General of **Tourism Malaysia**. He replaces Zulkifly Md Said, and was previously the Senior Director of Management.

Outrigger Hospitality Group has appointed **Avery Aoki** as its new Chief Financial Officer. He is promoted to the role from Vice President of Finance, and succeeds David Nadeau, who will help to ensure a smooth transition for Outrigger's financial team before retiring at the end of this year. He will assist Outrigger in furthering itself as a best-in-class revenue operator and partner.

Colleen Kanzora has taken on a new Marketing Manager role with **Blue Mountains Tourism**, as the destination plans to lure visitors back.

Hilton has announced new leadership in Australia and Southeast Asia, with **Paul Hutton** appointed to the position of Head of Australasia, and **Alexandra Murray** to head Southeast Asia. Both leadership changes will be effective from next year, with Hutton to succeed Heidi Kunkel, who has led the Australasia region over the past three and a half years. Hutton spent the past four years as Hilton's Regional Head of Southeast Asia, where he built a robust leadership team and oversaw significant portfolio growth. He has been replaced in that market by Murray, who will transfer from Hilton's operations in Europe, Middle East & Africa.

ANSWERS: 1 Stayz, 2 Holland America Line, 3 Paramount+, 4 Choices Flooring

Random kindness

VISIT Sunshine Coast is encouraging those working in the travel industry to nominate a colleague or friend for a random act of kindness.

Of the pool of people put forward, the tourism body will randomly hand out 50 "boxes of sunshine", which include a host of yummy locally produced goodies including chocolate, fudge, macadamias, beer and ginger.

To nominate a person you believe is worthy, share their story in 25 words or less on the **Visit Sunshine Coast** site **HERE**.

"We hope by sharing these uplifting stories...we can bring a touch of sunshine to those who need it," Visit Sunshine Coast CEO Matt Stoekel said.

Ronaldo scammed

A PORTUGUESE travel agent has reportedly confessed to swindling soccer royalty Cristiano Ronaldo out of more than US\$340,000.

Maria Silva, employed by the Geostar travel agency, appeared in Portuguese court this week accused of using Ronaldo's credit card and pin code details to book 200 trips across Europe, Africa and the US for her clients.

The alleged crimes took place more than a decade ago and saw her clients, who were booked at Ronaldo's expense, pay fees into her personal savings instead of her employer's account.

Thankfully for the soccer megastar, the US\$340,000 he lost is the equivalent to less than a week's worth of wages.

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