



Neil Kirby
Travel Masters

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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news.

Back on track sesh

THE Travel Community Hub (TCH) is hosting two webinars this week, including a session tomorrow featuring *Travel Daily* Publisher Bruce Piper.

The group, which will include Evolution Travel Collection's Pete Rawley, Abercrombie & Kent's Michelle Mickan, and Collette's James Hewlett, will discuss the challenges facing travel industry suppliers as they look to re-engage with travel advisors over the coming months.

The second webinar, on Wed, will focus on restarting social media, with The Thrive Network's Fiona Mayor, and Destination Webinars' Charlie Trevena.

All details and registration links can be found **HERE**.

JAL ups Aussie hubs

JAPAN Airlines will boost flight frequencies to Sydney between 31 Oct to 31 Jan, as well as services to Melbourne from 31 Oct to 30 Nov.

Austrade grant update

EXCLUSIVE

AUSTRADE has confirmed there are 189 claims still to be finalised under Round 2 of the Consumer Travel Support Program which opened almost five months ago (*TD* 03 May), but has not detailed the actual amount of money so far distributed from the \$258m offered under the scheme.

In response to a request from *Travel Daily*, an Austrade spokesperson said under Round 1 of the program, 3,223 applications for funding were approved, while 2,050 Round 2 applications have been greenlit at this stage.

"The Government is considering options for further support for the tourism and travel sector," the spokesperson told *TD*, without providing further information on whether further funds remain.

AFTA Chairman Tom Manwaring said the Federation remained frustrated by the ongoing delays in finalising the second round of the grants program, "given the dire situation in our industry at large and in particular within our membership businesses".

"Urgent finalisation is required along with advancing the Grant 3 submission approvals," he said.

"The projected start of international travel by Dec... does not diminish the need for continued support for the travel sector," Manwaring said.

The AFTA Chair said "scale of supply - for both air and cruising" was needed for travel businesses to become self-sufficient again.

"This can only be accomplished with full confidence by consumers in travel processes, elimination of quarantine for all vaccinated travellers and permanent border openings," he added.

The Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) echoed AFTA's concerns, noting that while there is plenty of anticipation around border openings, "most members of CATO will not genuinely be in a position to recognise revenue until well into next year".

"Without ongoing government support, our industry will not have the capacity to invest, re-employ and prepare for the expected rush of enquiries for new bookings due to pent-up travel demand and consumers wanting to confirm use of future travel credits that are on file," a CATO spokesperson told *TD*.

"Those that believe travel businesses will quickly return to pre-COVID levels just because borders are open are simply not listening to our case and appeals for ongoing support."

Qld gets \$70m boost

QUEENSLAND'S tourism industry is set to receive a major funding boost, with a joint state and federal government initiative to allocate \$70 million to support struggling businesses.

Under the terms of the package, \$30 million will be targeted at supporting Queensland's iconic tourism attractions, while \$40 million will be used to provide a second round of grants to small, medium and large tourism companies that previously received an initial grant from the Tourism and Hospitality Sector Hardship Program.

To be eligible, businesses will need to be "nationally significant tourism operators and attractions", and show a 50% reduction in turnover and visitation over the three-month period from 01 Jul to 30 Sep 2021, compared to pre-COVID.

NSW regional delay

A NEW three-step plan out of lockdown has been unveiled by the NSW Government today, with the details confirming the state's residents will not be allowed to travel to regional areas until 80% of double vaccinations have been administered.

Previously, the govt suggested this could be one of the benefits of the state reaching 70% fully jabbed, however, Premier Berejiklian said the revised 80% was needed to ensure all areas of the state are being protected.

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SUDDENLY



QF brings date forward

IN AN encouraging sign for domestic travel on the east coast, Qantas will bring forward the relaunch date for travel between Victoria and NSW from 01 Dec to 05 Nov following the speedy progress of the vaccination program in the two states.

"It's great to see plans firming up for some domestic borders opening given the success of the national vaccine rollout," Qantas CEO Alan Joyce enthused.

"We're now planning to ramp up flying between Melbourne and Sydney, which is usually the second busiest air route in the world, almost a month earlier than expected.

"There are also a lot of regional destinations that will open up for the first time since Jun, which is great news for tourism as well as family & friends who can't wait to see each other again," he added.

The airline also revealed plans to significantly increase regional

flying within NSW from 25 Oct in line with the state government's roadmap, resulting in a return to around 40% of pre-COVID levels.

However, the news is not as cheery for travel to Western Australia, with Premier Mark McGowan's tough border stance convincing Qantas to delay the resumption of domestic routes between NSW/Victoria and WA by two months to 01 Feb 2022.

While the airline has restated its commitment to a 18 Dec international restart, its flagship Perth-London service will be temporarily re-routed until at least Apr 2022, with Qantas confirming they are in discussions with the NT Government and Darwin Airport to assess operating the direct London flight from Darwin during this time.

If successful the route would be a daily Melbourne-Darwin-London service, with Melbourne-Singapore-London as the plan b.

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Virgin lights the path to charity



VIRGIN Australia has marked its renewed commitment to the Starlight Children's Foundation by organising a trip to the AFL Grand Final for 18-year-old cancer survivor Kyron Dhu in Perth.

In 2019, Dhu was diagnosed with a rare blood cancer known as Burkitt's lymphoma, but thankfully after six months of treatment, Dhu is in remission.

As part of his Starlight Wish, Virgin Australia flew Dhu and his family from Port Hedland to Perth for a special Premiership Cup visit, as well as giving tickets to see the big match between the Bulldogs and the Demons.

For the past decade, the carrier has helped Starlight grant more than 2,000 wishes like Dhu's, with VA CEO Jayne Hrdlicka stating she was proud to work with such a reputable charity to help grant many more travel wishes.

"Together, we share a common commitment to helping young people and their families to

experience the excitement of air travel, and by granting more than 200 unforgettable wishes each year, we're able to ensure that VA remains a force for good in the community," she said.

Pictured: Dhu (third from the left) with his family and VA and Starlight Foundation representatives.

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QR 3K partnership

JETSTAR Asia and Qatar Airways have today reconnected at Changi Airport, re-establishing their interline partnership.

The coalition enables customers aboard both airlines to seamlessly connect through Changi with a single ticket itinerary, through-checked baggage, and meals and refreshments on board.

Jetstar Asia Head of Commercial & Alliances Clive Ashmore Butler said Changi's world-class facilities make Singapore a leading choice for connecting.

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Brush up on Canada

DESTINATION Canada has organised another education webinar for agents later this month, this time linking with partners to provide an update on British Columbia, Greater Victoria and the Malhat Skywalk.

The session will provide an important update on the regions as Qantas and Air Canada both prepare to relaunch flight services from Dec, including border updates, changes in flight schedules and what cruises are on offer in the areas.

Attendees will also have the chance to score one of two \$100 gift vouchers thanks to Destination British Columbia, with Australian sessions taking place on Wed 29 Sep at either 8.30am or 11.30am AEST.

Register to attend **HERE**.

Rex suspends to 31 Oct

REX Airlines has this morning announced a further extension of its domestic services from 10 Oct to 31 Oct, with the carrier citing the current rate of infection coupled with state border restrictions and lockdowns for motivating the decision.

Rex said it was left with "no other option" than to push its domestic resumption date to the end of next month, as it needs an appropriate lead-in time for advanced ticket sales.

The decision will also prolong the time its staff are furloughed until 31 Oct, however, the airline did note the relaunch date would coincide with the day that all of its customer-facing staff will be fully vaccinated, a health policy Rex announced only last week (**TD** 20 Sep).

Although the resumption date will see major domestic routes suspended, a limited number of regional flights will remain in place, Rex also confirmed.

"[The new resumption date] will ensure a safer environment for all travel on Rex's network, getting vaccinated is the greatest defence against COVID-19 and key to the lifting of restrictions, lockdowns and border closures," the airline said in a statement.

Rex will have its staff fully jabbed before Qantas and VA, who have set a deadline of 15 Nov for mandatory vaccination.

FreeGuides app expands globally

AUSTRALIAN startup FreeGuides has launched its services internationally earlier than expected, with the company flagging its intentions in Jul to expand globally in 2022.

"When I started FreeGuides in Sydney, we always had plans to take the app global as soon as possible," founder Daniel Wasilewski said.

"With the impact of COVID it made sense to start locally initially, but now, with the rest of the world continuing to travel and move around, it's the right time to engage new audiences."

The travel guide app successfully raised \$360k in seed funding earlier this year (**TD** 19 Jul), with backers including noted American tech investor Malik Irfan.

The free app is available on iOS and Android, providing travellers with access to hundreds of self-guided tours curated to meet a range of niche interests.



Window Seat

THOSE planning that next big trip to Rome are probably already salivating over the prospect of chowing down on fresh pasta & gelato before checking out major tourist draw cards like The Colosseum, but be warned that you may not be the only one in pig heaven.

The city has recently been invaded by a pack of wild boars (**pictured**) which have been spotted wandering the Italian city's streets and rummaging through garbage bins.

Although Rome is no stranger to the odd wild boar sighting, the larger numbers have infuriated residents who have made it a major election topic in the current race for Mayor.

The brazen band of hogs last week took to mingling among parents as they waited to collect their children from a school in the Monte Mario district, and in May several pigs robbed a woman of her shopping in a supermarket car park, ferociously consuming its contents minutes later.

While the boars have become an inconvenience for locals, Twitter users have joked that wild boar lanes should be created instead of cycle lanes.

What a pigheaded idea.



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Sydney revels in the #jola

THE Sydney Visitor Collective is encouraging consumers to book ahead to experience #jola - the "joy of looking ahead".

Marking World Tourism Day today, Sydney Visitor Collective is working with City of Sydney and Destination NSW to spread the #jola message as the city prepares to open its doors.

Research from Tourism Australia has indicated that more than half (56%) of those surveyed in New South Wales are starting to dream of or are actively researching their next trip, with Sydney Visitor Collective encouraging that trip to be a staycation or a day out in the capital city.

New South Wales Minister for Tourism Stuart Ayres said the community had much to look forward to in the months ahead as NSW reopens.

"There is nothing like a visit to Sydney to admire the spectacular natural beauty of the harbour,

soak up the atmosphere of our restaurant & bar scene, relax into the hotel life and up the ante by enjoying the unique experiences our tourism operators have to offer," he said.

"If it's your first time or your 50th, visitors always find something to love about life in the Harbour City, so why not start planning that next adventure right now?"

City of Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore is also encouraging New South Wales residents to get behind Sydney's tourism businesses and start planning.

"As vaccine rates rise and we cautiously look beyond the pandemic, I encourage everyone to experience the joy of looking ahead," she said.

"Sydney hosts an array of some of the world's very best tourism attractions and experiences and now's a great time to revisit or discover them for the first time."

HNA execs arrested

HNA Group Chairman Chen Feng and Chief Executive Officer Adam Tan have both been detained by police in Hainan.

The parent company of Hainan Airlines said its operations are not affected and its restructuring work is continuing, having been under a court-led bankruptcy and reorganisation process since Jan.

The two men have been arrested on "suspected crimes", with no further details revealed at this stage, however the news follows a broader crackdown by the Chinese Govt on the financial dealings of the private sector.

HNA aggressively scooped up assets around the world from 2015 to 2017, buying stakes in Hilton Hotels & Resorts, Deutsche Bank and more, resulting in more than US\$40b worth of deals.

The shopping spree saddled the company with debt, resulting in HNA reversing course and selling many of its overseas assets, with COVID also battering its profits.

QF routes take off

THE first of two new Qantas routes from Adelaide to Hobart and Cairns, flagged earlier this year (**TD** 26 May), have taken flight this morning.

QantasLink's first flight from Adelaide to Hobart landed earlier today, with the first Cairns service scheduled for tomorrow afternoon.

The airline will operate seven weekly return flights to Hobart and four to Cairns.

Vic joins in on trial

SIX regional Victorian local government areas will host vaccine passport trials from 11 Oct as the state edges closer to its 70% double dose target.

Buloke, Pyrenees, Bass Coast, Greater Bendigo, East Gippsland and Warrnambool will test the passport, while Victoria will hit the vaccine milestone on 26 Oct, with 47% of the eligible population now fully vaccinated.



*The Great Travel Daily
Bake Off continues!*

In September, we're encouraging our readers to bake along with us, with different recipes each week.

Send us a picture of your baked goods, along with any extra tips or secret ingredients or variations, and the best one will win a \$50 gift voucher. Email bakeoff@traveldaily.com.au

This week's recipe:

**YOUR FAMILY'S
FAVOURITE
CAKE, BISCUIT
OR SLICE**



WoodSpring's 300

THE Choice Hotels-owned WoodSpring Suites brand has opened its 300th hotel, with the extended stay subsidiary bringing in the milestone with the WoodSpring Suites Gurnee-Chicago North.

The new location is located near Six Flags Great America and the Great Wolf Lodge Water Park, and offers guests three suite layouts, a 24/7 fitness centre, laundry facilities, free wi-fi, and an in-room kitchen featuring a full-size refrigerator, microwave and stovetop.

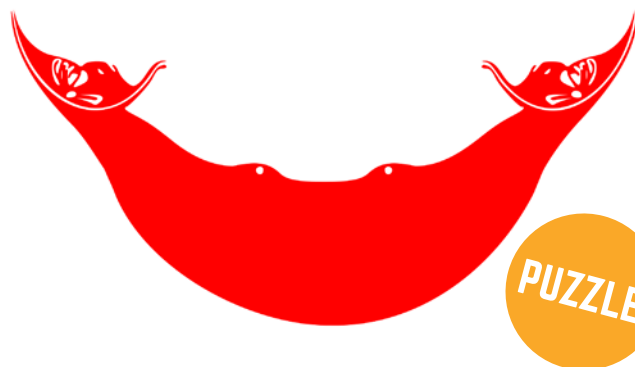
Enough is enough

DELTA Air Lines (DL) has called on other carriers to share their "no fly" list to protect air workers from violent passengers.

In a memo sent internally by DL Senior Vice President In-flight Service Kristen Manion Taylor, the airline said it wanted to further protect employees by cooperating with competitors to form a list of banned customers.

The call for cooperation follows a sharp increase in unruly passenger behaviour in the US, with 3,100 reports of plane violence between Jan and Jun.

Whose flag is this?



THIS island state was annexed by Chile in 1888, but the flag was created in 1880 by the local population when it was planning to have a dialogue with the country about being a modern state.

The red object in the centre is

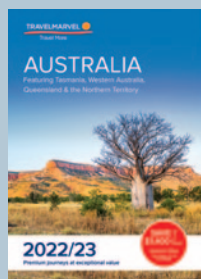
known as a reimiro, which is a wooden pectoral ornament once worn by the local people, and at the edges of the reimiro are two anthropomorphic figures which represent chiefs, or nobles.

Do you know which island's flag this is?

Answer: Easter Island

BROCHURES

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



Travelmarvel - Australia 2022/23

Travelmarvel has gone to press with its 2022/23 Australia brochure. The program features 20 unique touring itineraries, ranging from six to 18 days covering Western Australia, the NT, Queensland and Tasmania. Two new trips are on offer in the NT; the seven-day Top End Escape and the 13-day NT Escape. A discount of up to \$1,400 per couple is also available, which includes an earlybird saving when booked by 28 Feb 2022, combined with

Travelmarvel's Early Payment Discount of up to \$400 per couple (valid when payment is made 10 months prior to departure).



Norwegian Cruise Line - Alaska: 2022-2023

Norwegian Cruise Line's new Alaska 2022-2023 brochure is packed with vibrant visuals and handy maps, detailing the cruise line's Alaska voyages from San Diego, Seattle, Seward, Vancouver and even Hawaii. With six different ships sailing the region in 2022 and 2023, NCL will offer more choice than ever before to explore the last frontier. Featured shore excursions include a Whale & Marine Mammals cruise, which journeys to Point

Adolphus, one of Alaska's premier whale-watching destinations, and Mendenhall Glacier & Whale Quest.

\$14k a night suite

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises' \$14,000-a-night, 413m² Regent suite aboard *Seven Seas Grandeur* can host up to six guests, featuring a master bedroom with an extravagant four-poster bed, two-and-a-half marble & stone-detailed bathrooms, and an expansive living room with a personalised bar set-up and large dining room.

The reimagined master bathroom, which uses nine different types of marble, provides a complete in-suite spa experience, featuring a personal sauna, steam room, and a treatment area - more details in today's *Cruise Weekly*.

Royal Italy build

ROYAL Caribbean Group has been awarded the tender to construct and operate a new cruise terminal in Northern Italy.

Ravenna Port Authority's major revitalisation of its cruise facilities include a transformation of Porto Corsini with a new terminal, seamlessly integrated into the natural environment.

Upon its completion in the northern spring of 2024, Ravenna will be positioned as an attractive world-class homeport and port of call.

When the terminal is fully operational, the total number of guests is expected to increase to more than 300,000 per year.