

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news plus a full page from **Celebrity Cruises**.

Cruise ban to lift?

FEDERAL Tourism Minister Dan Tehan this morning told the cruise sector to "start planning" for the lifting of the biosecurity ban on foreign shipping on 17 Apr.

Tehan cited positive comments from NSW Premier Dominic Perrottet and Qld Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe, saying "they are doing all the work that's needed to get the health protocols in place at a state level".

"So at this stage, I can see no reason why that ban won't be lifted on 17 Apr...I think we can all start planning for that resumption, which is wonderful news," he said.

Tehan said he expected to make a formal announcement in the "next couple of days" - more in today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

AFTA members ramp it up

EXCLUSIVE

A **WHOPPING** 27 meetings between AFTA members and their Federal parliamentary representatives are taking place this month, as the Federation continues its push for support for the Australian travel sector.

The last week alone has seen MPs Pat Conaghan, Anne Stanley, Gladys Lui, Emma McBride, Kate Thwaites and Angie Bell meet with members, while another 22 meetings are locked in with more to come, continuing AFTA's push to unlock the \$74 million already approved due to the shortfall in the COVID-19 Consumer Travel Support Program (**TD** 02 Mar).

"AFTA is continuing our two-year campaign, with the support of our members, to make sure that local MPs understand the reality Australia's travel sector is dealing with," said AFTA CEO Dean Long.

"We are simply not going to see international travel normalise

until later this year, which means Australia's travel sector won't see anything close to significant revenue flow until then."

AFTA is also joining the call for the lifting of the cruise ban, saying Fri's National Cabinet statement (**CW** breaking news) was "lacking the detail the sector needs to start planning".

Long said feedback from Canberra was positive, but the fact remains that the funding as requested under the AFTA budget submission was vital.

"Given travelling Australians need travel professionals now more than ever, given our members are important contributors within local communities, and given the significant contribution travel makes to the Australian economy including in supporting Australia's inbound tourism sector, we think Government support is a no-brainer," he said.

Jetstar Asia returns

JETSTAR Asia has resumed its Singapore to Perth services after more than a four-year absence from the route.

Jetstar Asia will operate four weekly services to the WA capital in a bid to match pent-up demand, with the carrier extending credit vouchers for use until at least 31 Dec for flights up to the end of 2023.

Victorian vouchers

A **NEW** round of travel vouchers are up for grabs for Victorians as part of the state govt's \$200m business stimulus package.

An initial 10,000 vouchers are available to seniors from today, while a further 140,000 will open to everyone from 23 Mar.

Successful applicants must spend \$400 and stay for at least two nights in paid accommodation to obtain a \$200 reimbursement, valid for travel between 08 Apr and 27 May.

ENTIRE TRAVEL GROUP

FIJI

DISCOVER MORE

A Paradise for Couples

BOOK NOW

PEACE OF MIND BOOKING PLAN

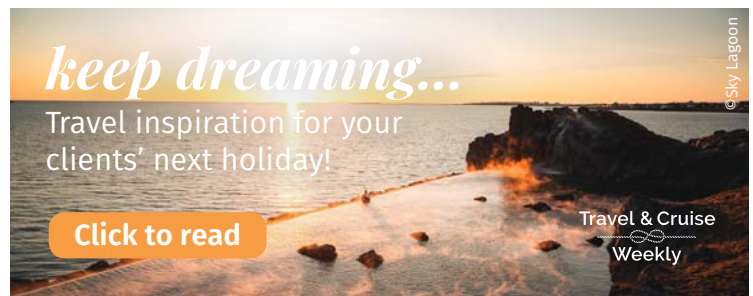
EXCLUSIVE PACKAGES

fiji

FIJI AIRWAYS

In partnership with

© Royal Davui Island Resort & Spa



keep dreaming...

Travel inspiration for your clients' next holiday!

Click to read

Travel & Cruise Weekly



Window Seat

THIS is why it always pays to have a travel advisor!

A woman on a business trip from Melbourne to Sydney earlier this month accidentally booked a seat on Virgin Australia's Pride Flight.

The annual service takes travellers from around Australia to Sydney to attend the city's Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras, and is generally not intended for the common traveller.

The flyer told the *Daily Mail* she arrived at the airport to rainbows, glitter, and glam, and as she approached her gate, realised the "happy accident" that had befallen her.

VA ticket sale

VIRGIN Australia has dropped 750,000 sale fares to Melbourne from \$55.

The Get Set for Melbourne sale fares are available now until midnight 18 Mar, or until sold out.

Virgin is also continuing to offer booking flexibility to change or cancel travel credits with no fees, available for travel up to the end of next month.

One-way Economy fare highlights include Melbourne to both Hobart and Launceston from \$55, Melbourne to Newcastle from \$59, and Melbourne to Sydney from \$69 - 1800 142 467.

FC increases software stake

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group has strengthened its connection to the new world of travel distribution via increasing its investment in TPConnects.

Flight Centre has agreed to increase its equity interest from 22.5% to 70% in the Dubai-based "software-as-a-service" business, after it initially invested in Feb 2020 (*TD* 03 Mar 2020).

TPConnects aggregates content from multiple sources, offering travel advisors a range of solutions to access air content via the TPC universal API, which can be directly integrated into any user interface, or via agency business-to-business platforms, such as NDCmarketplace.

For airline customers, TPC offers advanced NDC solutions via its middleware offer & order management services.

"The traditional airline distribution model is being disrupted, with growth in direct connections between buyers and sellers, the proliferation of

new commercial models, the rise of new entrant technology providers, and continued enhancements in connectivity," explained Flight Centre's Leisure & Supply Chief Executive Officer Melanie Waters-Ryan.

"With this ever-changing distribution landscape, we have taken proactive steps to complement our very strong GDS partnerships, and ensure we can source and deliver the best content from multiple sources to our leisure and corporate customers globally by investing in TPC."

The Cooks are back

FLIGHTS between Auckland and Rarotonga have been reinstated for vaccinated travellers today, Smarttraveller has advised.

The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade is still advising travellers to exercise a high degree of caution in the Cook Islands due to the impacts of COVID-19.

Join us for a Long conversation

THIS Wed AFTA CEO Dean Long will take the opportunity to update the industry on the latest developments within the Federation, including the push for industry support, reform of the AFTA constitution, plans for the 2022 National Travel Industry Awards and more.

The free **Travel Daily** Event will see Long chat with Richard Taylor from the Travel Community Hub and **TD** publisher Bruce Piper in an exclusive webinar taking place at 1.30pm AEDT on 16 Mar.

Spaces are limited, so **CLICK HERE** to register today.

QATAR AIRWAYS oneworld

Your clients can now fly daily from Perth

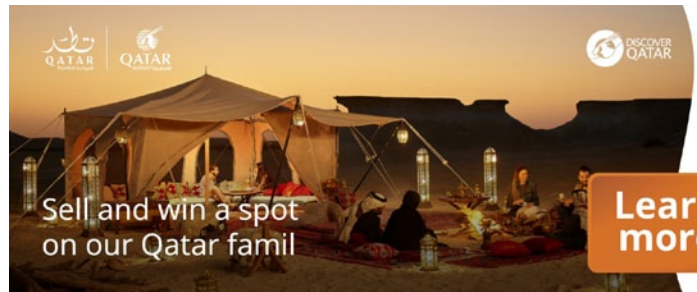
Learn more

HURTIGRUTEN EXPEDITIONS

ANTARCTICA ALL-INCLUSIVE WITH FLIGHTS FROM \$11,990*

*Subject to dates and availability. Terms and conditions apply.

Find out more



Sell and win a spot on our Qatar fam!

Learn more

Italian resorts in Oz

ANTHONY Knox & Associates has been appointed as the representative for Italian resort company VRetreats in the Australian and New Zealand markets.

The company owns four hotels in Rome, Venice and Taormina, and will join Anthony Knox & Associates' property portfolio represented locally, which includes SBM Monte-Carlo, The Oetker Collection of Masterpiece Hotels, and Queen of Clubs and Secret Retreats.

Underwater exhibit

THE Museum of Underwater Art and the Museum of Tropical Queensland have launched the next stage of their special on-land sculptures exhibit.

The sculptures will first go on public display in Townsville before making their way to be installed permanently for divers on The Greta Barrier Reef.

Dreaming of NZ sooner?

NEW Zealand is set to hasten its border reopening, with the country's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern telling local network TVNZ an announcement would be made this week on a new reopening schedule.

The new plan will end most COVID-19 border restrictions, with Ardern believing New Zealand can safely reopen to international travellers sooner than Jul (**TD** 03 Feb).

New Zealand has maintained a hard border for almost two years, as the key line in its COVID-19 defence, but the arrival of the Omicron variant has spiked cases, and brought acceptance that a strict border regime is doing more harm than good.

"We've been gradually reopening in the safest way possible," Ardern said.

"The point we've coming off the peak of Omicron is when the experts have said it will be

possible to reopening the borders more broadly."

Ardern says she's using total hospitalisations as her key metric for deciding the peak of the outbreak - a number currently at an all-time New Zealand high of almost 900.

Ardern's Labour Party has also recently slipped to second in polling for first time since pandemic began.

MEANWHILE, following the news of a potential earlier border reopening, Tourism New Zealand has launched a campaign to encourage Australians to dream of a journey to the country.

The 'Within Your Wildest Dreams' campaign launched today, as the next iteration of last year's 'Stop Dreaming & Go' push (**TD** 13 May).

Tourism New Zealand will also be providing key travel partners with the tools to be prepared ahead of travel resuming - **HERE**.

AA Council addition

TWO new member representatives have joined the Accommodation Association of Australia's council - Accor Pacific Chief Executive Officer Sarah Derry, and Hilton Group Head of Australasia Paul Hutton.

Accommodation Association President Leanne Harwood said the body was pleased to welcome the pair ahead of an important period of recovery and rebuilding for the sector.

The appointments will see Heidi Kunkel and Simon McGrath both leave the council.

MEANWHILE, the Accommodation Association has re-centred its principles of "equity, diversity, and respect", and is now asking all members to do the same.

The Association has created a new "Planel Pledge", which among other positions, requires female leaders in the sector to become "more visible" as role models.

GET INSPIRED, STAY CONNECTED

Be the first to get the latest travel news, join training events and get product updates with our trade newsletter.

Keep up to date with the latest New Zealand tourism industry news, training events and travel experiences to inspire your clients.

[SIGN UP NOW](#)

**100% PURE
NEW ZEALAND**
traveltrade.newzealand.com

THE LONG, WINDING ROAD TO **RECOVERY**

Read the cover story from March's issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read

travelBulletin

South Korea to open up

THE South Korean Government has announced it will be reopening quarantine-free borders to fully vaccinated travellers from 01 Apr.

Previously, travellers entering South Korea were forced to undergo a seven-day self-quarantine period, but from the first of next month all of those regulations will be abolished, except for the administering of rapid antigen tests on day six and seven after entering the country.

Inside Travel Group's Marketing Manager for Australia, Harry Sargent, welcomed the news as a key step in the recovery of Australia's outbound market.

"This is excellent news indeed and hugely exciting for travel," he said, adding "South Korea is one of InsideAsia's key destinations and we cannot wait to begin helping our trade partners and their customers to discover this

incredible culture and country soon."

While not as large as outbound markets such as Japan, South Korea has represented a strong growth destination for Australian travellers in recent years, with nearly 175,000 travellers visiting South Korea in 2019, while more than 300,000 Koreans visited our shores during the same period.

Popular tourists attractions in South Korea include cycling adventures which are accessible via 12 cross-country bike paths, nature getaways on Jeju Island located off the country's south, food tours in Korean markets, and a range of luxury wellness resorts.

The news follows the launch of KTO Sydney's South Korea Travel Specialist ANZ earlier in the month (**TD** 04 Mar), which runs to Jul and offers the chance to visit South Korea as a reward for participation - register **HERE**.

Celeb's new digits

CELEBRITY Cruises has launched a dedicated phone number to field enquiries from travel partners and guests.

The 1800 003 002 line coincides with the creation of a reference directory for travel advisors, accessible **HERE**.

APT digs deep

APT Travel Group's not-for-profit charity, the OneTomorrow Charitable Fund, has donated \$40,000 to support Australian flood victims and Ukrainian citizens over the last week.

\$10,000 was allocated to the Salvation Army flood relief appeal, \$10,000 was given to the Rural Aid Flood relief appeal, while \$20,000 has gone towards the World Food Bank Ukrainian Crisis appeal.

OneTomorrow represents all the ATG brands: including APT, Travelmarvel, Captains Choice, Travelglo, & Antarctic Flights.

Runway giveaway

A COMPANY which assists independent travel agents improve their digital presence is running a social media competition that will see one winner walk away with education and tuition prizes.

Kicking off today, Travel Agent Runway will award the winner of the seven-day comp with a free subscription to its flagship online course, access to more than 30 social media templates, three one-hour coaching sessions with Mindset Coach Sue Barton, as well as a one-year subscription to the Find My Travel Guru website.

All up the package is valued at more than \$2,000, with the prize awarded to the agent with the highest number of points accrued via sharing with travel agent colleagues and following the company's social media channels.

The comp starts today and will run until 21 Mar - for more information, see **HERE**.

Travel Daily
Events

PRESENTS

AN EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW

with publisher Bruce Piper and
AFTA CEO Dean Long

Join us as we discuss AFTA's current priorities, including the budget submission, potential changes to the Federation's constitution, supplier commission changes, relationships with State and Federal regulators, NTIA 2022 and much more.



WEDNESDAY MARCH 16TH, 1.30PM AEDT

REGISTER

UPCOMING EVENTS



Quark Expeditions - Update
29th March 2022 - 11am and 4pm AEDT

MISSED LAST WEEK'S ENTIRE TRAVEL GROUP INTERVIEW?

CLICK HERE TO VIEW

Targeting travellers

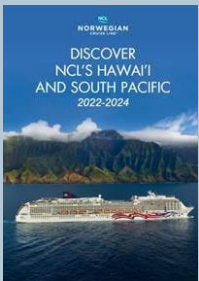
OUTDOOR media company JCDecaux has launched a new audience measurement system at Sydney Airport, allowing brands the ability to enhance their engagement with airport travellers by delivering more relevant and timely campaigns. The Australia-first programmatic outdoor ad technology will give marketers a better channel through which to tailor their products and services to the increasing volume and diversity of travellers passing through Australia's busiest airport.

Uber adds surcharge

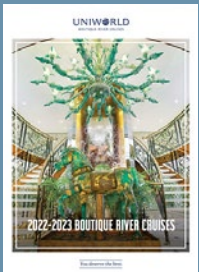
UBER is rolling out a temporary fuel surcharge on all trips in Australia as it battles to retain its profit margins in the face of rising fuel prices. The new levy will be calculated on a per-kilometre basis and will be in place for at least 60 days, with travellers expected to be slugged an extra 50c on an average trip. The conflict in Ukraine has sent fuel costs rocketing around the world, with prices at the bowser in Australia reaching as much as \$2.40 a litre in some places.

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.



NCL Hawaii and South Pacific 2022-2024
Norwegian Cruise Line has launched a new digital Hawaii Cruising Guide jam-packed with itineraries, destination descriptions and shore excursion highlights. The brochure also includes info about the cruise line's seven-day Inter-Island roundtrip itinerary on *Pride of America*, the only cruise to visit five ports of call on four islands with no sea days. The sailing also includes two overnight stays in Maui and Kaua'i and departs Honolulu year-round every Sat. There are more than over 70 shore excursions to choose from in the latest brochure.



Uniworld 2022/2023 River Cruises
Uniworld Boutique River Cruises has released its 2022/2023 world brochure featuring the latest details on the line's ships and river journeys. Highlights include Uniworld's first river voyages sailing entirely in the waters of the Netherlands, as well as three new cruise and rail travel options. The private train journeys can be added as pre- or post-cruise options with Golden Eagle. Uniworld has its early bookings Picture Perfect Savings promotion in place, offering travellers discounts on 2023 sailings. Access the latest digital version of the brochure [HERE](#).



Malaysia opens arms to Aussies



FOLLOWING news that Malaysia will reopen its borders to travellers from 01 Apr (**TD** 09 Mar), the country's tourism board has revealed it will be restructuring its strategic planning over the next four years.

Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia, Nancy Shukri, said the time was right to re-evaluate its approach as the world continues to open up after a two-year disruption.

"It is timely for our marketing agency, Tourism Malaysia to implement its strategic plan 2022-2026 in undertaking strategic transformation, forging smart partnerships, enhancing tourism promotion and optimising its strategic communication as well as media engagement," she said.

Fully vaccinated travellers will be able to enjoy quarantine-free travel from the first of next month and will only be required to take the COVID-19 RT-PCR test two days before departure and undergo an RTK-Ag within 24

hours upon arrival in Malaysia. Travellers with valid documents will be able to enter Malaysia by downloading the MySejahtera contact tracing app (from Apple App Store, Google Play Store or Huawei AppGallery) and completing the pre-departure form under the 'Traveller' icon, while the need to apply for the MyTravelPass will be abolished.

Marriott China push

MARRIOTT International has flagged plans to add more than 50 hotels in over 30 destinations in China this year.

The focus of the expansion plans will be on creating more luxury properties in major leisure travel hubs, with hotels such as the Ritz-Carlton Reserve in China's Jiuzhaigou Valley and W Macau – Studio City, which are scheduled to open this year.

Close to 15 premium brands will also be created in getaway cities such as Chengdu and Xi'an.

IT'S TIME TO TREAT YOURSELF

INTRODUCING CELEBRITY REWARDS

LEARN

BECOME A CELEBRITY
LEARNING GRADUATE



EARN

REGISTER YOUR BOOKINGS
WITH CELEBRITY REWARDS



SPEND

TURN YOUR POINTS
INTO CASH REWARDS!



THE CELEBRITY
COMMITMENT

Celebrity **X** Cruises®

Celebrity
Rewards

LEARN MORE AT [THECELEBRITYCOMMITMENT.COM.AU](https://thecelebritycommitment.com.au)

Terms and conditions apply. See thecelebritycommitment.com.au
or thecelebritycommitment.co.nz for full terms and conditions.