

## Upgrade for Warr

**LOUISA** Warr has been promoted to become Head of Sales Operations at Qantas.

Her career has included various roles with QF, most recently as the airline's Commercial Manager of Global Distribution Partners - more appointments on [page nine](#).

## NTIA Custodians sought

**FUTURE** rounds of the National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA) will be guided by newly appointed NTIA Custodians (**TD** breaking news), with AFTA announcing the plan this morning "in recognition of the travel sector-wide support" for the annual gala event.

Five representatives will comprise the Custodians - one each representing retail agencies, the corporate travel sector, online travel, tour operators/wholesalers and cruise/air suppliers.

The NTIA Custodians will have an advisory role in the award categories, questions and overall judging process, with AFTA CEO Dean Long saying "as we continue bringing our industry together and strengthening our shared voice, AFTA will be calling for nominations for the inaugural NTIA Custodian Council".

Expressions of interest will be sought shortly, with the selected

Custodians to be "committed to the ongoing success and relevance of the annual event," lending their skills and expertise to guide the celebration's development each year.

"NTIA has always been about celebrating and recognising the best in our industry," Long said.

"We are committed to ensuring NTIA continues to be the pre-eminent awards program...in offering the highest recognition for businesses and individuals in our sector, it is always a night worth celebrating and this year was no exception," he added.

The decision to seek NTIA Custodians is a key evolution of the industry's night of nights, Long said, with the process getting underway already as part of the planning for the 2023 NTIAs.

## Norwegian to pay comm on NCFs

**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line has announced it will pay travel agent partners commission on Non-Commissionable Fares (NCFs).

The "industry-leading commitment to the travel agent community worldwide" applies to reservations booked outside the 120-day window, and will go into effect from 01 Jan 2023.

To qualify for the NCF commission travel advisors will need to submit a marketing plan to their NCL Sales Support Team by 31 Dec - more details in today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

## Azamara world trip

**AZAMARA** Cruises has released details of its 2025 World Cruise, with the new *Azamara Onward* to undertake a 155 day sojourn ex San Diego, with bookings currently open to trade partners, loyalty guests and past world-cruisers only - [DETAILS HERE](#).

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## EK PER A380 return

**EMIRATES** has reintroduced its Airbus A380 superjumbo services to WA, with the first Dubai-Perth service landing on Tue with 480 passengers on board.

The carrier's flagship aircraft is now operating Perth flights daily, as well as double daily to SYD & MEL and daily to BNE.

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features nine pages of news including *Business Events News*.

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## Air NZ A321 arrives

AIR New Zealand's first Airbus A321 has arrived in Auckland after making a journey of almost 20,000km from the Airbus factory in Hamburg via Muscat, Kuala Lumpur and Cairns.

The new aircraft is configured for domestic flying, with almost 50 additional seats compared to the carrier's A320 fleet.

"We're focused on growing our domestic network," said NZ Chief Customer and Sales Officer, Leanne Geraghty, with the larger aircraft seeing boarding commence five minutes earlier and guests encouraged to be at the gate ready to board at least 15 minutes ahead of departure to ensure on-time operations.

The new plane is the first of seven A321s on order, with another aircraft arriving later this year, three in 2023 and the final two scheduled for 2026.

The first commercial flight of the new plane is scheduled for AKL-WLG on 08 Nov.

## Entire boosts booking ease

ENTIRE Travel Group has further enhanced its travel agent website, responding to feedback from advisors by introducing advanced search functionality to make it even faster and easier to book pre-designed independent holiday packages from the company's ever-expanding range of destinations.

Sales & Marketing Director, Greg McCallum, said the revamp had also pushed the booking engine to the forefront of the site, which is performing significantly ahead of initial projections in terms of reservation numbers.

"Agents told us that they love the look and feel and the fact that they can, without the need for a login, easily book fully commissionable, end-to-end independent holiday packages in a matter of minutes," he said.

The expanded search capacity helps them now locate desired packages more quickly, and

continues to give the freedom to control prices via the Change Agent Sell Price (CASP) feature.

CASP allows agents to determine the final price for any package, enabling them to add a service fee, reward a valued client with a discount or simply drop the price to close a sale.

All quotes are delivered as pdf documents which incorporate agency branding, McCallum noted, while all packages are also supported by Entire Travel Group's Peace of Mind Booking Plan which provides customers with a 100% refund for any COVID-related pre-departure trip cancellation.

Having made the time-consuming effort to create independent packages which now feature on the website, "our latest enhancements ensure it now offers even more benefits to our retail partners," he said.

See [entiretravel.com.au](https://entiretravel.com.au).

## Lizard flat out to support the reef

LIZARD Island Resort has partnered with conservation organisation Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef, supporting a first-time survey of some of Queensland's most remote reefs by "citizen scientists" aboard a fleet of volunteer vessels.

The Great Reef Census 3 expeditions at the luxury resort completed reconnaissance surveys of 11 remote reefs, with participating boats including Lizard Island's resident fleet of luxury launches and dive boats.

The Great Reef Census is "open to any competent snorkeller with a GoPro" who visits the reef between Oct and Jan each year, and requires a series of 20 underwater images to be taken.

From early 2023 citizen scientists from across the world will be able to log onto [greatreefcensus.org](https://greatreefcensus.org) to help analyse the images.



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## Magellan builds back better

**MAGELLAN** Travel Group is working hard to assist members in reducing the impact of BSP airline commission reductions, with newly appointed Helloworld Group General Manager for Magellan and Helloworld Business Travel, Andre Moten, saying the success of last weekend's Magellan conference in Cairns (**TD** yesterday) means the network is "building back better than ever".

In his first official presentation since taking on his new role, Moten highlighted improved commercial arrangements being offered by the HLO offshoot, such as 20 airline preferred partner agreements, including five more added compared to pre-COVID.

Magellan also now offers 52 non-air preferred partner agreements, with more coming, with the group having added nine new land and cruise suppliers to offer more choice for clients.

Revamped deals have also been negotiated with 22 suppliers under improved terms compared to FY19, Moten said.

There were 124 registered delegates at the event, representing Magellan Travel agency owners and managers, keynote speakers, HLO staff and preferred partner representatives.

Highlights of the gathering also included an address from Helloworld CEO Andrew Burnes, while other popular sessions included presentations from Deloitte Access Economics' Adele Labine-Romain on the current global state of the tourism and travel sector, and a talk from Applied Sense Director Jorge Fernandes on Customer Experience & Increasing Margins, asking attendees how they can shift their mindset and operations to better position themselves in a post-COVID world.

More from Magellan on **page 7**.

## Fiji tourism success

**INTERNATIONAL** visitors to Fiji contributed FJ\$805 million to the country's economy over a five-month period between Apr and Aug this year, according to new figures released today.

Key findings of the latest International Visitor Survey - which exclude the air component of travel - confirmed 303,371 people visited the country, with an overall 93% satisfaction rating.

Australian visitors increased spending by about 20% compared to pre-COVID levels, with total spend up 18.15% to FJ\$381 million and an average of FJ\$280 per person per night.

The average length of stay was 9.7 nights, with 48% of arrivals being first-time visitors to Fiji and 50% booking package holidays.

US visitors to Fiji spent FJ\$386 per person per night, with the figures released following the resumption of collection of visitor statistics at Nadi International Airport in the second quarter.



## Window Seat

**WE'VE** all heard of forward bookings, but this is taking things to the next level.

US home-based travel agency group Cruise Planners has reserved two full capsules, scheduled to head into orbit in 2025 and 2027 respectively, on a new venture called Spaceship Neptune.

The brainchild of Space Perspective, the new space tourism operation is a six-hour journey which takes eight Explorers and a pilot to the edge of space, in a "luxurious pressurised capsule propelled by a SpaceBalloon".

The unique experience will be offered via the 2,500-strong Cruise Planners network - and don't worry, the capsules will be equipped with high-speed wi-fi to share space selfies.

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## QF picks up Shonky

**CONSUMER** group CHOICE today released its annual Shonky Awards, with Qantas receiving a major 'gong' for "disappointment on almost every front: unusable flight credits, delayed flights, disappearing baggage and endless call wait times".

The organisation has called for stronger consumer protections for travellers, noting that "the laws that left travellers in cancellation chaos throughout 2020 remain the same today".

CHOICE CEO Alan Kirkland fumed that "businesses are allowed to write the rules, so anyone who has paid for travel that is then cancelled needs to wade through unclear terms and conditions, as thousands of Qantas customers have been left to do".

CHOICE has launched a new Travel Rights survey which will feed into letters to Australia's consumer affairs ministers urging reforms to make it easier for consumers to receive refunds.

## New Vibe Singapore

**TFE** Hotels has today officially opened the new Vibe Hotel Singapore Orchard - the first Vibe property to open outside of Australia.

Managed by TFE's joint venture partner Far East Hospitality, the new lifestyle hotel offers 256 rooms alongside two bars and an all-day restaurant, located in the Orchard Rd residential enclave.

The hotel features Aussie touches throughout, including friendly Australian-style hospitality, a Penfolds wine range and Australian-inspired dishes.

## QR Adelaide daily

**QATAR** Airways has confirmed it will increase the frequency of its Adelaide-Doha services from five per week to daily effective from 22 Jan 2023.

The move will see the airline fully restore its pre-pandemic frequencies, and the flights will also continue on to Auckland and return.

## MK makes it back to Australia



**AIR** Mauritius has resumed services to Australia, with its first post-pandemic flight touching down at Perth Airport yesterday.

The A330-900neo landed just after 9am following its seven-hour journey from Port Louis, and then departed later in the day back to its Mauritius home.

MK has been flying to Australia

since 1991, and announced the resumption of its twice weekly Perth services in Apr this year after a two year disruption due to COVID-19.

The flight was welcomed by PER CEO Kevin Brown, who is pictured on the airport tarmac with Air Mauritius Chief Commercial Officer, Laurent Recoura.



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## Liney joins APH

**AUSTRALIAN** Pacific Holdings (APH) has welcomed Peter Liney as a Non-Executive Director.

Based in the United Kingdom, Liney has held senior leadership positions across various travel companies, including heading up APH's Great Rail Journeys as CEO for almost 10 years.

See [page 9](#) for more industry appointments.

## EK increases UK

**EMIRATES** has increased its services to the United Kingdom, launching additional flights to Newcastle on the back of a "steady growth in bookings".

From next month, Emirates will boost flights on the Dubai-Newcastle route from five times weekly to daily.

Last month Emirates moved Newcastle departures to Dubai to 1pm, making it easier for passengers to connect to more destinations on the EK network.

## See India differently



**KERALA** Tourism wrapped up a successful Sydney and Melbourne roadshow last week.

The destination management organisation welcomed wholesalers, tour operators, and travel advisors over two evenings showcasing the state on India's tropical Malabar Coast.

Returning to Australia for the first time since 2018, Kerala treated guests to an evening of cocktails and canapes at Ovolo Woolloomooloo in Sydney and the Pan Pacific Melbourne,

where they learned about why the destination is a must-see for those looking for an off-the-beaten-path trip in India.

Attendees in each city competed in a game of heads or tails, to determine the winner of the "Go Kerala" contest, who walked away with a seven-night all-inclusive holiday to the destination.

**Pictured** is Melbourne's winner, Intrepid's Ashley McGough, with Pioneer Personalised Holidays' Ranju Joseph and CGH Earth's Jason David.

## Islands in the scheme

**SRI** Lanka has flagged plans to develop a number of its smaller islands into major tourism resorts, setting up a new authority this week to manage the prospective development.

Modelled on the success of tourism in the neighbouring Maldives, the move comes amid Sri Lanka's struggle to regain its tourism potential after a series of setbacks, precipitated by the 2019 Easter bombings, the COVID-19 pandemic, an acute shortage of foreign currency, and an economic crisis triggering protests across the country.

The US\$417.5 million project will be implemented under the Kalpitiya Tourism Development Master Plan of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, and will examine how to create appealing tourism infrastructure across more than 60 islands.

Delft island was named as a potential target, located off Sri Lanka's northern coast.

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## AirAsia X hails big return



**THE** first flight since the pandemic for AirAsia X from Kuala Lumpur to Melbourne touched down this week to much fanfare from travellers and stakeholders.

In 2019, the carrier contributed close to half of the market share for flights between Australia and Malaysia, offering passengers up to 92 flights weekly to four destinations.

Following the recent return to Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, AirAsia X is reconnecting 24 weekly flights, with plans in place to recover more than 50% against its pre-pandemic flight frequency to Australia by the third quarter of 2023.

"Australia was our very first destination to fly to, back in Nov 2007 when we commenced operations and it has always been one of our core destinations with strong demand for two way travel which is historically proven," CEO Benyamin Ismail said.

"Australians will have access to 130 destinations on the AirAsia

X route map, with many low-fare connecting services through to popular destinations on our short haul and long haul network group of airlines such as Thailand, Vietnam, India, Indonesia, Korea, Japan," he added.

**Pictured** flanked at Melbourne Airport by jubilant AirAsia X staff are Ismail, CEO of Melbourne Airport Lorie Argus, Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements, Consulate General of Malaysia in Melbourne Mazita Marzuki, and AirAsia X Chairman Tunku Dato' Mahmood Fawzy.

## St Regis Mexico

**MARRIOTT** International has announced the upcoming debut of the St. Regis Costa Mujeres Resort in Mexico, offering guests 158 rooms, three eateries, several swimming pools, a beach club, butler services and large meeting space areas.

The property is slated to open its doors in early 2025.

## Disrupting travel insurance

**A NEW** app has launched in Australia with the pledge of disrupting the travel insurance space by making coverage more flexible and accessible.

Freely, backed by insurance group Zurich, offers Aussie travellers an end-to-end travel insurance app where users can manage needs in one interface.

Prices lead in from \$4 a day, with coverage including medical and dental care, passport documents, lost luggage, accidental death & disability, as well as cancellation cover.

"We looked at the typical travel insurance model and said 'how can we make this approachable, accessible, easy, and use business as a force for good'," Freely Head of Marketing Doug Skoog said.

"So Freely was built, an app that

people would actually need and use for their adventures."

Snow sports coverage can be taken for \$10 a day, or excess car rental cover for \$8 a day.

The app also provides assistance services for many pre-existing conditions as a standard such as those suffering from depression and anxiety, as well as those with neurodivergent conditions such as autism, in addition to live chat access 24/7 with a team of health qualified professionals.

COVID policies are also offered, covering illness & hospitalisation, pre-departure cancellation and non-mandatory quarantine, however border closures and multi-night cruises are not currently covered by the app.

For further details on the Freely app, **CLICK HERE**.



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# Travel Daily

Thursday 3rd Nov 2022

## Karma on the Nile

**KARMA** Group has launched a new river cruise vessel called *Karma Karnak*, featuring 56 air-conditioned cabins with en suite bathrooms and large windows.

Other amenities on board the ship include multiple dining and bar areas, as well as an elevated pool deck and lounge.

The debut four-night voyage departs Luxor for Aswan this month exploring the sites of both contemporary and Ancient Egypt, offering a range of land excursions such as exploring ancient temples, hot air ballooning and shopping ventures - more details [HERE](#).

## Murray feedback

**MURRAY** Regional Tourism is currently surveying local businesses to determine the extent of the impact that flooding has had on the tourism sector in recent months.

The *Rapid Impact Assessment* has been sent out via 13 local government tourism partners to their affected businesses, after which the survey will be distributed to stakeholders via Murray Regional Tourism Destination Riverina Murray.

Prior to COVID-19 and border closures, the Murray Region welcomed around 6.5 million visitors to the region annually.

## Recovery in focus for Magellan



**LAST** weekend's Magellan Travel Group conference in Cairns (see [page 3](#)) received strongly positive feedback from delegates, with presenters (**pictured**) including Helloworld Group GM Andre Moten, Adele Labine-Romain from Deloitte Access Economics and Helloworld CEO Andrew Burnes.

A panel session featuring Helloworld Travel Limited's Kelley Matson, Cathie Rice Travel's Crandon Keddie, Stephanie Savage from Impulse Travel Group and Hampton Travel's Gary Seignior was also particularly well received due to its genuine and practical nature, while there were also opportunities to interact with suppliers in a relaxed Preferred Partner Exchange.

Quicksilver Cruises took attendees to the Great Barrier



Reef where they were able to enjoy a semi-submersible experience and get up close and personal with some of the locals (**inset top**), while the event wrapped up with a Scenic-sponsored gala dinner (**above**) emceed by Anthony Laye, described as "Australia's premier mentalist".

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## ICC DRIVES \$100M SPEND

**EVENTS** held at Sydney's International Convention Centre (ICC) over just the last two months have contributed more than \$100 million in delegate expenditure to the NSW economy, according to the venue's CEO Geoff Donaghy.

Donaghy, who is also ASM Global APAC Group Director of Convention Centres, said Sep and Oct had seen an average of more than 2,200 daily visitors through the door, with the "full gamut" of ICC services now activated.

"Our team has been able to re-engage and purchase from local farmers and producers once more from NSW regions including the Orange, Riverina, Hunter and Hawkesbury areas," he said.

"Importantly, we have been able to create employment opportunities for almost 200 new team members, both permanent and casuals, to support the delivery of client events".

Key activity included the International Desalination Association World Congress 2022

which welcomed delegates from across the globe, while Xerocon Sydney drew 3,000 accounting and bookkeeping professionals to the centre.

The AFTA National Travel Industry Awards welcomed about 1,200 guests to ICC Sydney's Grand Ballroom, along with Ronald McDonald House Charities which also packed the venue for a gala fundraiser.

The action continues over the coming months, with ICC Sydney set to deliver an array of consumer and trade events through to the end of the year, including several international entertainment events, as well as exhibitions and the Tourism and Transport Forum's Federal Leadership Summit.

**MEANWHILE** ICC Sydney has also appointed Jess Zickar as its new Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Manager, to support the venue's operations, its team and clientele in continuing to achieve best practice CSR outcomes.

## Christchurch win

**TE PAE** Christchurch Convention Centre will host the International Association of Geomorphologists 2026 Conference, with the prestigious academic event expected to attract up to 1,000 global delegates.

## Sheraton special

**SHERATON** Grand Sydney Hyde Park has launched a special festive season offering, with the property also featuring a Koko Black pop-up cart serving hot chocolate, iced chocolate and a petite selection chocolate box.

Party night buffet menus start at \$149 per person - 02 9286 6872.

## Sunshine Coast business bouncing back



**THE** business events team from Visit Sunshine Coast recently hosted this group of professional conference organisers on a three-day famil undertaking site inspections across the region.

The group, mostly based in southeast Queensland, were treated to first-hand updates and highlights including the new Crocodile Hunter Lodge at Australia Zoo, Novotel Sunshine Coast Resort, University of the Sunshine Coast, Aussie World, Holiday Inn and Saltwater Eco

Tours indigenous cruise.

Participants also met Robert Irwin during their visit to Australia Zoo, and are **pictured** at Novotel Sunshine Coast Resort, from left: Kristyn Smith, Slipstream Connect; Garth Taylor, 1e; Renee Masters, Health Workforce Qld; Leigh Dunn, Novotel; Aimee Najdovski, Health Workforce Qld; Rebecca Cheney, MCI Australia; Eliza Moore, Suncorp; Caitlin O'Keefe, Iceberg Events; and Kelli Vettoretto from HelmsBriscoe.

## ITB Asia cements STB pact to 2025

**THE** Singapore Tourism Board has extended its strategic partnership with the organisers of ITB Asia, MICE Show Asia and Travel Tech Asia, ensuring that the three-in-one show will continue to take place in Singapore through until 2025.

Singapore Tourism Board CEO Keith Tan said the renewed

deal with Messe Berlin was "testament to Singapore's ability to deliver quality MICE events", with the next in-person edition of the shows to take place 25-27 Oct 2023 at Marina Bay Sands.

This year's show wrapped up last month after over 27,000 appointments and meetings.

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NOVEMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
DECEMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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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.

Small Luxury Hotels of the World has welcomed Martin Rinck to its executive board. The seasoned, globally recognised executive has more than 35 years of hospitality experience in strategy, operations, business development, P&L, and brand management.

Mick Boylan is returning to work at Helloworld as Regional Manager – VIC, TAS, SA, WA, & NT, representing products and services including Retail, Wholesale & Air Tickets. It is Boylan's second stint with Helloworld, having worked for the company for more than 10 years, before spending time with Quest Apartment Hotels.

Chatrium Hospitality has appointed industry aficionado Daniel Kerr as General Manager of Chatrium Grand Bangkok. The experienced hotelier brings 24 years of leadership acumen to the luxury, twin-tower hotel.

CWT has appointed Victoria Berwick as Global Marketing Director. The United Kingdom-based position carries a remit to spearhead all brand-, customer-, digital-, event- and product-marketing initiatives, and further develop innovative channels to market. Chief Growth Officer Belinda Hindmarsh said Berwick's experience across a diverse set of leading brands in travel and other industry verticals will provide a unique perspective on shaping CWT's marketing activities going forward.

## Reflections social

REFLECTIONS Holiday Parks has become the first company of its kind in Australia to secure social enterprise status under a new NSW Government certification.

In the 2022 fiscal year, the "profit for purpose" firm reinvested \$9.1 million into its 36 holiday parks and more than 40 community Crown reserves.

As well as preserving vital flora and fauna, Reflections' properties attract two million visitors to rural NSW each year, and injecting \$83.2 million in visitor spend into regional economies.

"Securing social enterprise... introduces a network of social enterprise businesses that we can engage as suppliers," Reflections Holidays Chief Executive Officer Nick Baker said.

## CX returns to flights over Russia

CATHAY Pacific has commenced flying once again through Russian air space, with the carrier confirming it is now back using the polar route between Hong Kong and New York.

The route flies over Siberia, a significant distance from the Ukrainian conflict zone, and shaves more than two hours off the prior 17-hour journey.

"The Polar Route provides a safe, direct and the fastest flight experience to our customers travelling from the East Coast of North America to Hong Kong," the carrier said in a statement.

Western airlines continue to avoid Russian air space as part of wider sanctions on the country.

## Kings & queens of the castle



AUSSIE agents didn't need the luck of the Irish to enjoy a recent trip to the Emerald Isle, having already landed the coveted spot on Tourism Ireland's special family of the country last month.

The group enjoyed some of the most popular sites in Ireland and Northern Ireland, including trips to Kilkenny, Limerick, Clare, Galway, Fermanagh, Tyrone, Londonderry and Belfast.

The aim of the visit was to allow agents to experience the key tourism offerings available so that they can let all of their clients know about all the craic they should be enjoying.

"There really is no substitute for being able to come here and experience what Ireland has to offer at first-hand," Tourism Ireland's Manager Australia and New Zealand Sofia Hansson said.

"Our aim is that when they return home, the travel agents will be even more enthusiastic about the destination, helping to secure a greater share of their business for Ireland in 2023 and beyond, our key message is that the island of Ireland is open for business again and we cannot

wait to welcome their clients back to our shores for a fantastic holiday experience," she added.

Pictured taking in the sights at Kilkenny Castle are: Courteney Pfennig, Arivo; Tina Hindman, Flight Centre NZ; David McMahon, Tourism Ireland; Kate Walsh, Wauchope Travel; Peta-Marie McLeod, Orbit World Travel; Cathy McHenry, Emerald Travel; Tina Johnson, MTA Travel; Maria Summers, Travel Partners, and in the front row Kat Armati, Flight Centre Ballarat and Gina Biggins, Faillte Ireland.

## Marriott ups Africa

MARRIOTT International has flagged plans to open more than 30 hotels in Africa over the next two years.

The expansion on the continent equates to around 5,000 additional rooms in the company's global network, with the focus being on select service brands such as Protea Hotels by Marriott and Four Points by Sheraton, which will represent more than half of the properties in the African pipeline.