



Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of the latest travel news including a photo page from **Spencer Travel, Mosman Travel & Mary Rossi Travel**, our **Sustainability** page, plus a full page from **Silversea**.

Travel enrolments tanking

FEWER than 1,800 people enrolled in travel-related educational courses nationwide in 2022, with the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) now sounding the alarm for enhanced government funding to address a declining workforce.

The statistic was a key point in ATIA's submission to a Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System, which called for urgent changes to support training and retention of skilled workers in travel.

Ahead of the 2024 Federal Budget, to be handed down tonight by Treasurer Jim Chalmers, ATIA Director of Public Policy and Advocacy, Ingrid Fraser, said robust training initiatives to address the acute shortage of skilled workers were imperative.

"Our proposal to maintain and enhance traineeship incentives is a critical step towards ensuring that travel businesses can access

and nurture the talent they need to thrive in a competitive global market," Fraser said.

ATIA's submission called for planned reductions in traineeship incentives to be postponed and pushed for a long-term funding commitment to allow benefits to flow through to the front line.

Currently, employers can claim 10% of wages paid to a trainee for the first and second year, up to \$1,500 per quarter, while they complete their Certificate III in Travel or Certificate III in Tourism, both of which remain on the Apprenticeships Priority List. *ML*

Silversea's suite deal

FOR a limited time, travellers can enjoy a suite upgrade and a \$1,000 shipboard credit per suite when they book one of Silversea's voyages departing between now and 2026 - for more details on the offer, see the **back page**.

BA hits the mark

MARKETING expert and founder of The Core Agency, Christian Finucane, has looked at how the simplicity and confidence of British Airways' newest campaign makes it so impactful.

Read the feature now on *travelBulletin* **HERE**.



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Virtuoso Aeronology deal

EXCLUSIVE

THE new global tech agreement between Aeronology and Virtuoso (**TD** breaking news) will enable Virtuoso travel advisors to access a wide range of air content, according to Aeronology CEO Russell Carstensen (**pictured**).

“Our technology addresses the needs of three types of travel advisor: firstly we serve non-GDS, non-IATA users.

“Secondly, a travel advisor equipped with GDS but not IATA; and thirdly, the large host travel advisors who possess both GDS and IATA but need a full-ticket centre solution for their travel advisors and ICs,” he said.

Aeronology’s AeroFares platform promises a “seamless and modern booking experience,” Carstensen added, while the system’s NDC applications will also provide a “second-to-none direct connect full self-service for premium NDC airfare content with carriers such as AA, EK, BA, SQ, LH, and QF”.

The agreement kicks off from late next month in the North American market, with other



territories across the globe expected to quickly follow suit.

All available ancillaries and special service requests are bookable online, with Aeronology allowing advisors to book, change, rebook, reissue, cancel and refund on a single screen.

“We allow all travel advisors to perform like IATA agents, even if they’re not...and if you are IATA, we allow you to become more productive as well as error- and ADM-free,” Carstensen said.

He said Aeronology’s mission was to assist Virtuoso advisors with air services, “a landscape that has become increasingly fragmented and complex”. *BP*

Townsville gets tick

A **MASTER** plan for Townsville Airport, which includes an expansion of its terminal, has received approval from the Federal Government.

The plan outlines the hub’s strategic vision over the next two decades, including the planning of international services by 2025, as well as the establishment of a new gateway precinct which will include an airport hotel.

The airport predicts its annual passenger numbers will hit 3.7 million by 2043 - more than double today’s figures.

Queensland Airports Limited (QAL) CEO Amelia Evans said investment into the airport is now crucial in order to prepare for the Townsville North Queensland region’s anticipated growth over the next 20 years.

“We’re also on a journey to reach net zero by 2030, including new initiatives aimed at reducing emissions such as the installation of more solar panels,” she said.

Travel Daily ON LOCATION



HAYMAN ISLAND

Today’s issue of **TD** is coming to you courtesy of Flight Centre Travel Group, which is hosting its inaugural **Luxury Travel Collection Business Owners Island Soiree**.

THERE are few better settings to hold a luxury soiree for business owners than the tropical Hayman Island, with FCTG choosing the Qld island as the venue to chat strategy with its LTC members, Travel Associates network, and independent owners based in Australia and New Zealand.

After arriving this morning, attendees will settle in before enjoying a Sunset Soiree welcome event.

The dress code? Beachside Chic of course - more to come.

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Off the beaten track: Aside from the popular Glacier and Bernina Express trains,

some equally spectacular panoramic journeys include the Voralpen Express between Lucerne and St Gallen, the Brienz Rothorn Railway between Lake Brienz and Brienz Rothorn, and the BLS RegioExpress Lötschberger connecting Bern to Brig and Domodossola.

Expert Tip: For a full list of Swiss Travel Pass benefits and inclusions and to compare against the Eurail Pass [click here](#).

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Shanghai scrapped in QF Asia revamp

LOW demand for flights between Sydney and Shanghai has seen Qantas terminate its only route to mainland China as part of an update to its overall Asia and India network.

In an Asian network update announced this morning, Qantas will scrub Shanghai from its route map effective 28 Jul, having only resumed the route in Oct 2023 following a pandemic pause.

Customers flying beyond this date will be contacted to either rebook services via Hong Kong with Qantas' partner airlines or receive a full refund.

Qantas said it will continue to keep a close eye on the China market, with a view to restarting flights once demand recovers.

The move will be a particularly bitter pill for the Flying Kangaroo, having walked away last year from renewing its codeshare deal with China Eastern Airlines (**TD**



25 Oct 2023) on flights between Sydney and Shanghai, due to pressure from the ACCC.

While Shanghai is off the QF map for now, Qantas will instead reconnect Manila with Brisbane for the first time in over a decade, with four direct flights scheduled per week from 28 Oct.

Qantas will fly an Airbus A330 on the BNE-MNL route, with the service operating in addition to the existing daily service between Sydney and the Filipino capital.

In addition, Qantas will ramp up capacity between Sydney and Singapore by around 10%, boosting services from twice daily to 17 weekly from 11 Dec.

Brisbane will also enjoy greater access to the Lion City, with its own weekly QF schedule to Singapore increasing from seven flights to nine from 27 Oct.

These extra services have been timed to offer a better connection for Queenslanders changing onto QF1 to London Heathrow, cutting the overall journey by four hours.

Strong demand on flights between Sydney and Bengaluru will see Qantas add two flights per week on the route, increasing from five weekly to a daily service between Dec 2024 and Mar 2025.

Qantas International CEO, Cam Wallace, said the airline always looks to have the right aircraft on the right routes at the right time.

"Since COVID, the demand for travel between Australia and China has not recovered as strongly as expected," Wallace commented.

"In some months, our flights to and from Shanghai have been operating around half full.

"That's why we've decided to suspend this route and boost flying to other popular destinations with a new route from Brisbane to Manila and additional flights to Singapore and Bengaluru.

"We'll continue to maintain a presence in China through our partners and our existing flights to Hong Kong and look to return to Shanghai in the future." *ML*

Expedia TAAP sale

TRAVEL advisors can enjoy at least 25% off rates at thousands of hotels in a variety of cities in a new Winter Sale launched today by Expedia TAAP.

The sale is in market now and applies to bookings made by 26 May for travel up to 30 Sep 2024.

Aman Tokyo opens

ULTRA-LUXE accommodation brand Aman has opened its first Aman Residences standalone residential project in Tokyo.

Located in a multi-tower project in the Azabudai Hills, Aman Residences Tokyo comprises 91 serviced apartments with a private elevator to a sky lobby.

The latest opening takes Aman's branded residence network to 13 with 10 more on the way.

Riots close NOU airport

ESCALATING riots in Noumea has forced the closure today of La Tontouta International Airport and the cancellation of all flights to and from the South Pacific island nation.

The airport has advised travellers due to arrive to contact their airline for the latest update.

Flight radar sources show the last flight into the airport landed at 4pm yesterday, with Airalin's scheduled SB141 service today from Sydney now showing as cancelled.

The decision followed major social disturbances surrounding proposed reforms to the French territory's constitution, which sparked violence and protestors torching cars and blocking roads.

In response, the French High Commission has imposed a 6am to 6pm curfew tonight, banned public gatherings and mobilised security forces to restore order.

Smartertraveller has increased its alert level for the Noumea

metropolitan area, now advising travellers to 'Exercise a high degree of caution' due to protests and demonstrations.

The overall alert grading for New Caledonia remains at the lowest level 'Exercise normal safety precautions'. *ML*

Wicked with Westin

WESTIN Melbourne has teamed up with Broadway musical *Wicked* to launch a range of guest experiences in line with the show's Melbourne season.

Guests can enjoy a daily Wicked High Tea, priced from \$85pp and available from 11am-5:30pm featuring 'I Feel Wicked' smoked salmon sliders and 'Great Gillikin Forest' mushroom croquettes.

A 'Green with Envy' stay and play package is priced from \$630 per night and includes overnight accommodation, two A-reserve tickets to *Wicked*, guaranteed room upgrade and 2pm checkout.

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INSPIRING VACATIONS



NTIA nominations open

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has opened nominations for its National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA) today, and has unveiled a number of enhancements to the prizes.

The improvements aim to further elevate the credibility of the NTIAs, with additional benchmarks to the eligibility criteria for select categories.

Nominees in certain classes will need to demonstrate a minimum total transaction value in order to qualify, on the advice of NTIA Custodians, while finalists in the judged ATAS Accredited Business categories will have the opportunity to present their achievements directly to a panel of industry judges.

The 2024 awards will also see the return of a number of categories, including 'Most Outstanding Consumer Travel Journalist' and 'Most Outstanding Marketing Campaign'.

"NTIA 2024 is going to be a dazzling celebration of excellence, innovation and dedication to travel," Chief Executive Officer Dean Long said.

"These enhancements to the eligibility criteria are the result of feedback from our wonderful NTIA Custodians and reinforce the rigour of the judging process."

"We encourage the industry to join us in honouring the highest standards of excellence in our industry by nominating the most outstanding professionals and businesses in travel."

Nominations for the Awards close at the end of the month - **CLICK HERE** to submit.

The celebrations will take place on 26 Oct in Sydney, with Singapore Airlines returning as the event's major sponsor.

One day prior to NTIA will be ATIA's 'Beyond Borders' summit, with ATIA membership gifted with all tickets purchased this month.

AFP airport walkout

SIGNIFICANT disruption could be on the cards at major Australian airports, with Federal Police officers threatening to walk off the job due to a dispute over pay and conditions.

Impacted airports would include Adelaide, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra, Darwin, Gold Coast, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney.

Once approved by lawyers, the Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) will submit an application to undertake industrial action, which the union hopes to begin "as soon as possible".

"This is a last resort. It's not something that we want to do and it's not something that we planned to do," AFPA union President Alex Caruana said.

"These men and women that are out there keeping the community safe, they need to be respected by government."

The walkouts could extend to parliament, nuclear plants and military barracks.

Fiji Airways makes record profit

THE Fiji Airways Group has achieved its highest-ever profit before income tax of FJ\$131.81 million (AUD\$88.2m) and operating revenue (earnings) of FJ\$1.8 billion (AUD\$1.2 billion) for the year ending Dec 2023.

The airline also recorded an EBITDA increase of 171% compared to the previous year, and repaid FJ\$100 million of debt.

Last year saw Fiji Airways fly 26,586 international, regional and domestic flights, representing a growth of 40% from 2022, while its available seat capacity increased by 47%.

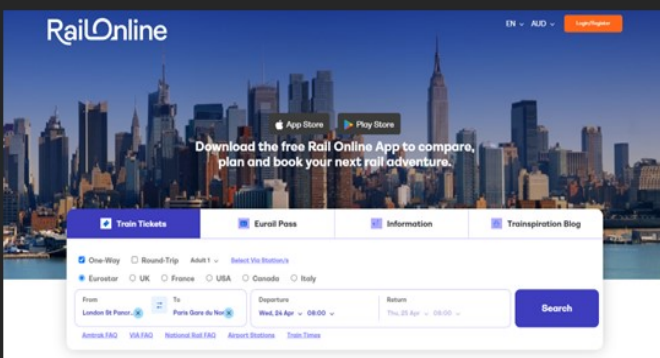
In total, the airline flew 2.2 million passengers across its network, marking a 57% increase on the prior year.

The carrier labelled 2023 as a "transformative year", with the complete reopening of all of its international markets and restoration of its 2019 network.



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SaleAway to the US

AIR New Zealand has released discounted airfares between Australia and the US as part of its new SaleAway campaign.

Prices start from \$1,283 return economy from Melbourne to San Francisco - the sale ends midnight AEST on 22 May, [HERE](#).

\$1,250
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Skal inducts new President



LONG-TERM SKAL International Melbourne President Tara Strickland handed over the reins of the club to industry stalwart and self-proclaimed “recruitment legend” Rich Kellaway at the society’s most recent meeting at the Stamford Plaza.

A large crowd assembled to see the “coronation” and to hear Accommodation Australia General Manager Dougal Hollis interpret the implication of the state budget for the industry.

Pictured are Sharyn Van der Veeken, Tara Strickland, Joanne Keown, Anne-Marie Mitchell, Richard Kellaway, Alex Dugdale, and Craig Hunt.

MEANWHILE, SKAL has opened submissions for its Sustainable Tourism Awards, which celebrate excellence and innovation within the industry.

The club is inviting submissions from companies from the public

and private sectors, educational institutions, NGOs, and government agencies related to tourism, who have demonstrated exceptional prowess and dedication to advancing the boundaries of sustainability in their operations.

CLICK HERE to learn more about the awards. *MS*

MH campaign

EMBARK on a journey of discovery with Malaysia Airlines, which is inviting travellers to discover the wonders of Asia and beyond with their launch of its latest global campaign.

The ‘Time for Amazing Discoveries’ push, which is available in Australia until 22 May, will see travellers enjoy business class with a check-in baggage allowance of 40kg, two cabin baggage allowances of 7kg each, free seat selection, priority check-in, boarding and baggage, as well as access to Malaysia’s exclusive Golden Lounges in Kuala Lumpur.

Travellers who are looking to fly from until 30 Jun can also enjoy an additional 5% off flights purchased on the airline’s official website and mobile application.

“We are dedicated to facilitating our role in providing seamless connectivity to our customers as the gateway to Asia and beyond,” Chief Commercial Officer Dersenish Aresandiran said.

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Travel groups celebrate huge networking success

ON THE weekend, Spencer Travel, Mosman Travel, and Mary Rossi Travel hosted a dynamic event bringing their teams together.

The morning buzzed with energy during Consultant Connect, where staff had the opportunity to engage in four-minute appointments with 33 preferred partners.

The excitement continued through the Nosh & Network lunch, fostering camaraderie and collaboration.

The highlight of the day was a unique charity team-building activity where partners and staff built water filtration systems for refugee villages in Uganda.

The event concluded on a high note with Charisma the Trolley drawing prizes and lively networking drinks during the power hour.

This memorable day underscored the power of teamwork and community, reinforcing the groups' shared commitment to meaningful impact and relationship building with their valued suppliers.



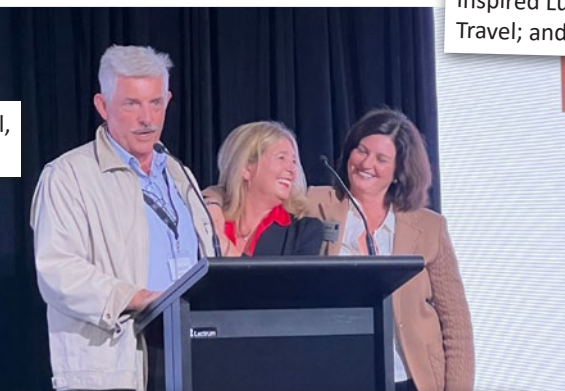
LEE-ANNE Barrett, Mary Rossi Travel; **Karen** Marvell, Vomo Fiji; **Jen** Paggett, Uniworld; and **Penny** Spencer.



ROWENA Mangona, Spencer Travel; **Peter** Hession, Mandarin Oriental Hotels; **Lynne** Ireland, Inspired Luxury; **Madhura** Bhagwat, Mary Rossi Travel; and **Elodie** Artozoul, La Collection.



PINNACLE events Waterworks.



MICHALE Schischka, Mary Rossi Travel; **Penny** Spencer; and **Sharyn** Kitchener, Mosman Travel.



PENNY Spencer and **Charisma**.



ROB Shaw from Windstar Cruises with Spencer Travel consultants.



SHEREE Henmann Atlantis Hotels/ **Cathy** Favaloro Four Seasons/ **Michael** Schischka Marty Rossi Travel/ **Kat** Jobbitt Spencer Travel/ **Kathie** Mary Rossi Travel



ROWENA Mangona, Spencer Travel and **Kirstie** Myers, Hamilton Island.

SIA dials up on SAF

SINGAPORE Airlines (SIA) has committed to purchasing 1,000 tonnes of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) from local refinery Neste.

The agreement means SIA and its subsidiary Scoot will be the first carriers to receive eco-friendly fuel produced at Neste's refinery at Singapore Changi Airport.

Neste will blend the SAF with conventional jet fuel according to the required safety specifications, and deliver the fuel to Changi Airport's fuel hydrant system in two batches later this year.

This milestone will also mark the first direct supply of Neste's SAF to airlines at Changi Airport, following the expansion of its refinery in May 2023.

The expansion made the facility capable of producing a million tonnes of the eco-friendly fuel each year.

"This agreement with Neste is an important milestone in the SIA Group's journey to have a minimum of 5% sustainable aviation fuel in our total fuel uplift by 2030," said Lee Wen Fen, SIA's Chief Sustainability Officer.

"Close collaboration with our partners and stakeholders, both in Singapore and globally, plays a critical role in our long-term decarbonisation goals."

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY FOR GALAPAGOS

THE Galapagos Islands' Charles Darwin Foundation Science Director Maria Jose Barragan Paladines has hit out at the idea there is "good tourism and bad tourism" to the destination, as numbers to the archipelago increase post-pandemic.

While Galapagos visitor figures generally fluctuate, the Charles Darwin Research Station, located in Puerto Ayora, has consistently bettered its tourism numbers since the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than 300,000 visitors paid a call to the Station last year, up 8% on 2022, and well above the 279,000 tourists in 2019.

Paladines recognises that while the islands' isolation and their conservation needs changed when they were unlocked to visitation, the quality of the guests is most important.

"Tourism in Galapagos has always tried to focus in nature,



and healthy nature to maintain that quality of tourism," she said.

"We have plenty of destinations in mainland Ecuador which are tourism-based spaces, mass-destinations where people go to have fun, to go to have drinks.

"However Galapagos tourism has always, since very early 60s or 70s, been dedicated to nature as the focus and as the core of this."

She added any change from

conservation-based tourism to the Galapagos would be when the destination would suffer.

"At the end of the day, what we have here is a very well-managed area that faces threats at global, local and national scale," she said.

"There's no like good tourism or bad tourism, the principle of nature-based tourism needs to recognise that the health of the ecosystem is the basis". MS

Tropical North Queensland doubles down on accessibility and sustainability

THE Cairns and Great Barrier Reef region has announced several enhanced sustainable tourism offerings, including accessibility upgrades at popular attraction, The Crystal Caves.

Located on the Atherton Tablelands, the man-made cave network is encrusted with gems, crystals and fossils, and has introduced several accessibility features including a guidebook for the hearing-impaired.



Also available now is an audio guide for the vision-impaired, a social script for neurodiverse visitors, improved navigation

for wheelchair users, and the introduction of an accessibility page on the website.

MEANWHILE, Quicksilver Cruises in Port Douglas is undertaking a \$2 million engine refit on one of its catamarans to allow it to use synthetic fuels instead of diesel.

It is the second of Quicksilver's vessels to undergo the refit, as it upgrades its fleet to become more eco-friendly. JM

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DISCOVER



MONEY

WELCOME to Money, *TD's* Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

AU\$1 = US\$0.661

AS THE interest rate remains on hold, Aussies hoping for a cut may have to pivot and change their travel plans to compensate for the cost-of-living crisis.

Meanwhile, despite global rate cuts, the Aussie dollar has shown exceptional strength, staying at decade highs against the Japanese yen, but pundits are anticipating tougher climbs against the US dollar.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.661
UK	£0.526
NZ	\$1.098
Euro	€0.613
Japan	¥103.3
Thailand	฿24.32
China	¥4.780
South Africa	12.13
Canada	\$0.903
Crude oil	US\$82.79

Airshow gears up

PACIFIC Airshow Gold Coast is expecting to attract record crowds this Aug, after announcing a new partnership with Gold Coast Airport and Webjet.

The three-day event will take place at Gold Coast Airport for the second year in a row, with performing aircraft to use the hub as a base, while Webjet will offer flight discounts for airshow attendees, coupled with a marketing campaign to attract visitors from across the country.

Outrigger Kona's new era



OUTRIGGER Kona Resort & Spa in Hawaii has reopened following a US\$60 million transformation, resulting in a revitalisation of its 511 guest rooms and suites.

Perched on cliffs overlooking Keauhou Bay, the 22-acre resort has also introduced a new venue, Piko Coffee & Wine Bar, which serves coffee all day, as well as a selection of wines, on-tap brews, and crafted mixed drinks.

Guests can now relax on the upgraded lounge chairs and cabanas by the adults-only and oceanfront pools, while the young and young-at-heart can get their thrills on the 200ft water slide (**pictured**).

Additionally, Club-level room guests will enjoy exclusive access to the new Voyager 47 Club Lounge, which offers a complimentary daily continental breakfast and freshly brewed Kona coffee every morning.

The resort's Kaleiopapa Convention Center has also received a refresh, with corporate guests able to take advantage of more than 100,000ft² of indoor

and outdoor space.

"Through meticulous design and a deep-rooted cultural narrative, Outrigger Kona Resort & Spa invites guests on a transformative journey, embodying the essence of 'koi au' - a flowing current of experiences that resonate with the captivating spirit of Keauhou Bay," said the resort's General Manager, Geoff Pearson.

"We aspire to etch an enduring impression on our guests' hearts and minds, fostering a profound connection with Hawai'i's rich tapestry of history and traditions.

"With enhanced amenities including Piko Coffee & Wine Bar, we look forward to a new era of Keauhou and perpetuating the legacy of this sacred place."

Guests can partake in a range of Signature Experiences at Outrigger Kona Resort & Spa, including a cultural excursion of Keauhou Bay, which retraces the footsteps of King Kamehameha III, manta ray encounters, and Feast & Fire Luau - a dinner show complete with Polynesian dancing, fire and delicious island food. *JM*

Window Seat

THE enigmatic *Mona Lisa* is filled with mysteries that have confounded art-lovers for centuries - but now, we know exactly where she was sitting while being painted by Leonardo da Vinci.

Geologist and Renaissance art scholar Ann Pizzorusso has just revealed that *Mona Lisa* was sitting in the idyllic Italian town Lecco, near the banks of Lake Como at the time (**pictured**).

Pizzorusso was able to determine the location based on the features in the background, including the shape of the lake and the grey-white limestone.

According to Pizzorusso, she had already worked out the location years ago, but didn't realise the significance of the detail until now.

"I saw the topography near Lecco and realised this was the location," she said.

"I would tell people, but I just never did anything."

Mapping technology will soon be able to confirm her thesis, too.

"Everything has conspired to really make my idea much more provable and presentable," she added.

Pizzorusso will formally present her conclusions at a geology event.



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