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## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of industry news, including our **Sustainability** page plus a full page from **Imagine Holidays**.

## Remembrance tour

**IMAGINE** Holidays is offering an unforgettable remembrance tour to Gallipoli next year.

Guests will take part in a dawn service on Anzac Day followed by an Eastern Med cruise - see **p7**.

## Etihad adds flights

**ETIHAD** Airways continues to expand its network on the back of new aircraft being delivered and ongoing strong demand.

The Abu Dhabi-based carrier will increase its Paris service from 14 to 18 flights weekly, with the extra service taking off on Mon, Wed, Fri and Sun from 01 Feb.

Africa will also see an increase in capacity, with EY's service to Nairobi doubling in capacity less than a year after debuting.

Services to Addis Ababa and Mahe will also increase on the back of new codeshare deals with Ethiopian Airlines and Air Seychelles from 15 Dec.

Further network growth detailed in its revised Northern Winter 2025/26 season includes an extra weekly Manchester flight and revised schedule for daytime departures.

The adjusted schedule also sees some flights to Milan, Moscow and Paris retimed to day services.

# CT off to a flyer in '25

## EXCLUSIVE

**INDEPENDENT** travel buying network CT Partners has posted a strong start to 2025, including a 10-15% growth in ticketed volumes for Q1.

Detailed in its latest *Member Quarterly Report*, forecasts showed a 10% growth prediction in total transaction value (TTV), while CT Partners is also on track to achieve its ambitious \$3 billion TTV target by 2027.

CT Partners' encouraging Q1 figures follow a record-breaking 2024 that saw the network surpass \$2 billion in TTV (**TD** 31 Oct 2024) and deliver \$26 million in member overrides - marking a 48% year-on-year increase.

The report also hailed the success of recent events, including its Owners Meeting at Crown Melbourne, which



welcomed 64 member delegates and 42 preferred partners.

Further highlights included CT Partners securing a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 96 reported in its latest member survey.

"The results speak for themselves, our NPS score is a clear sign that our members feel supported, connected, and confident in our direction," CEO Matt Masson said.

"With strong growth already this year and a healthy pipeline of new members, we're excited for what's ahead," he added.

**Pictured:** Matt & Deborah Rains, Gallivanter Travel; Judy Tanner, Aurora Travel; and Tiffany Mestrinho, Uniworld. **AB**

## QF c'share update

**QANTAS** has expanded its codeshare partnership with IndiGo, adding new services between India and Singapore.

The recently implemented codeshare routes include Singapore-Chennai and Singapore-Hyderabad, and follows the two carriers adding to their codeshare partnership in May last year (**TD** 22 May 2024).

In Feb, Qantas also revealed it will suspend flights between Melbourne and Delhi from Jun-Oct this year (**TD** 21 Feb).

## New Brazil platform

**THE** Brazilian Tourist Board has launched a new tourism experiences platform, 'Feel Brasil', which will showcase the destination's top attractions.

The platform was unveiled during a press conference at WTM Latin America in Sao Paulo, and will curate a selection of more than 100 Brazilian experiences in every one of the country's 27 states.

## Borland jumps ship

**FORMER** Qatar Airways Country Manager Wayne Borland has taken up a new role as Head of Commercial Sales Western Region for Malaysia Airlines (**TD** breaking news Fri).

The development followed his quiet departure from QR earlier this month, an update exclusively revealed by **Travel Daily**.

Borland joins the Asian carrier as it looks to reinvest in the Australian market after a period of financial challenges, and he brings many years of aviation experience to the position.

See **page 2** for more MH news.

## CLIA SA partners up

**THE** South Australian Tourism Commission has signed on as the newest Executive Partner of CLIA Australasia as the state works to increase its profile in cruising.

The new alignment with CLIA follows the state's commitment to form a Cruise Attraction Working Group, announced at last year's Australian Cruise Association conference in Adelaide.

The partnership will also provide South Australia with greater access to CLIA's network of cruise lines, travel advisors, ports, destinations and suppliers.

"South Australia has huge potential as a cruise destination and is home to some true gems along its vast unspoiled coasts, the capital but also surrounding regions and other ports," said CLIA Australasia Managing Director, Joel Katz.

 Wendy Wu Tours

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## MH to restart BNE after false start

**MALAYSIA** Airlines will recommence flights between Kuala Lumpur and Brisbane from 29 Nov, confirming plans to operate five times a week.

Using A330-300 aircraft, the upcoming route is expected to generate \$54 million for the Brisbane economy in the first year of operations, and follows a false start by MH to resume the Queensland connection in Mar (**TD** 09 Aug 2024).

The carrier had previously paused flights between KL and Brisbane on 27 Mar 2023, at the time citing global economic challenges as the reason.

However, improving financial fortunes in late 2023 saw the airline flag an increased focus on rebuilding its wider network - including Australia - with Chief Commercial Officer Dersenish Aresandiran flagging with **Travel Daily** exclusively the possibility of reintroducing Brisbane flights.



After lodging plans to restart Brisbane-KL services, the Asian carrier pulled the pin without providing a rationale, before confirming the restart on Fri.

MH said the new Brisbane flights will complement its increased frequencies to Sydney and Melbourne, alongside the introduction of new A330neos on selected ANZ routes.

A third daily service between Sydney and KL will be added in Oct, bringing the airline's total capacity on the route to more than 630,000 seats annually.

"Australia remains one of MH's key international markets, with growing demand from both inbound and outbound segments," the carrier said.

"The enhanced capacity will provide greater connectivity,

flexibility, and more seamless travel options for passengers across the region."

The latest development is also a big win for Brisbane Airport, which has clawed its way back to the same number of international destinations served before the COVID pandemic with the MH route, offering 33 overseas hubs.

"MH boasts a robust Southeast Asian network, strong connections into Europe, and serves 10 Indian hubs," said BNE CEO Gert-Jan de Graffe.

**MEANWHILE**, MH parent company Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG) has reported a solid profit for 2024, recording net earnings of RM54 million (A\$19.26m).

Despite MAG staying in the black for third straight year, MH posted an 87% decline in operating profit when compared to 2023, with the bottom line dented mainly by lower yields and capacity cuts. **AB**

## Telford on the board

**SEALINK** Whitsundays General Manager Asher Telford has been appointed to the board of the Whitsundays Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Telford shares a deep-rooted connection to the Whitsundays community and its regional tourism sector, SeaLink said.

He currently oversees SeaLink Whitsundays, Red Cat Adventures, Whitsunday Jet Ski Tours, Hayman Island Ferries, and Hayman Island Watersports.

## IHG on the bay

**VIETNAM'S** InterContinental Ha Long Bay will open its doors in Jul, located on a private bay with direct views of the region's limestone karsts.

The 275-key resort will offer six dining venues, and experiences such as scenic cruises and visits to local fishing villages, explorations of hidden caves, idyllic seaplane flights, and more.

## SCENIC ECLIPSE

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TRAVEL PARTNER TOOLKIT

Tuesday 22nd Apr 2025



## Window Seat

**REPURPOSED** aircraft can still capture plenty of attention if used in interesting ways.

Take Russian entrepreneur Felix Demin, who has disassembled and rebuilt an abandoned Boeing 737 as accommodation on the edge of a Balinese cliff.

The plane (**pictured**) now has 183,000 social followers, with posts regularly commanding millions of unique hits.

For US\$4,000 a night, guests can enjoy wings converted into sundecks, a jacuzzi in the jet's nose cone, and furniture designed for the curved walls.



## Amun splashes down

**VIKING** has announced the float-out of its newest Egypt ship, *Viking Amun* (**pictured**).

The line's seventh Nile vessel is set to debut in Sep, with the ship touching water for the first time last week at a ceremony at Massara shipyard in Cairo.

*Amun* will offer the 12-day 'Pharaohs & Pyramids' itinerary on her debut sailings.

The ship will now move into her final stage of construction, which will see her moved to a nearby outfitting dock for final construction and buildout.

Able to accommodate 82 guests, *Amun* is an identical sister to the line's other Egypt ships, *Viking Osiris*, *Viking Athon*, *Viking Sobek*, and *Viking Hathor*.



## ATIA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



**IT'S** a short two weeks, but we are focused on ramping up our engagement with the senior members of the opposition and govt.

Today, we are meeting Tourism Minister Don Farrell and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to discuss the importance of travel and tourism.

We will also receive an update on the current trade negotiations with the EU and US tariff situation.

Minister Farrell oversaw the introduction of the Reviving International Tourism Grant - which for the members of ATEC, CATO and ATIA is an important program to reconnect our land supply members with our international trading partners.

On Wed, ATIA will host Tony Burke, the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration in Sydney.

ATIA has engaged with Minister Burke since he took over the portfolio last Jul, resulting in travel consultants, travel agency

managers and tour guides being identified as eligible occupations for skilled migration on the Federal Government's Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL).

Until recently, these roles were excluded from skilled migration pathways, while travel agency managers were restricted to regional roles.

Our engagement with the Minister and detailed submissions directly achieved this outcome and reflects the urgent need for workforce solutions sector-wide.

Last week, we met senior opposition front-benchers Bridget McKenzie, Jacinta Nampijinpa Price and Luke Haworth to ensure they know and understand the importance of our accredited travel agents and tour operators.

We also held our first candidate round table with the current member of Curtin, Kate Chaney, providing our 29 members in this seat an opportunity to speak directly to her.

Our members detailed in their own words the impact of the Ombuds, the shortage of workers and the importance of protecting First Nations sites in the area.

## Meet the Rail Europe team



### Grant Robertson

Regional Manager – AU & NZ  
grobertson@raileurope.com

**Based:** Sydney

**Top tip:** Book Eurostar Plus for comfort & value.

**Favourite train:** FART on the Centovalli Line.

Responsible for NSW.



### Sandy Battle

Key Account Manager – AU & NZ  
sbattle@raileurope.com

**Based:** Perth

**Top tip:** Night trains, travel while you sleep for more daylight exploring at your destination.

**Favourite train:** Eurostar

Responsible for WA, NT, SA and QLD.



### James Hooper

Key Account Manager – AU & NZ  
jhooper@raileurope.com

**Based:** Melbourne

**Top tip:** View **Product Fact Sheets** under Planning resources for heaps of useful carrier info.

**Favourite train:** Any IC train in Switzerland but the route from Chur to Saint Moritz is a winner!

Responsible for VIC, TAS, ACT and NZL.



### Stephanie Hummels

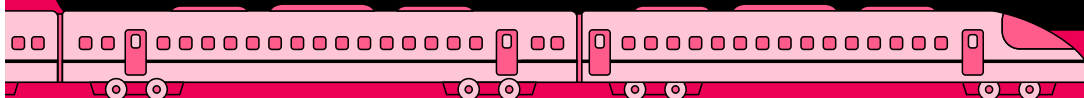
Business Support Exec – APAC  
shummels@raileurope.com

**Based:** Brisbane

**Top tip:** Always check the System Connectivity Status page prior to booking.

**Favourite train:** TGV Lyria France-Switzerland.

Responsible for inside sales & marketing support.



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Tuesday 22nd Apr 2025

## TIME celebrates fresh graduates



**THE** Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME) recently hosted its second graduation and networking function evening for the year, with the support of eRoam, MINT Payments, and Spencer Travel.

Taking place at The Royal Exchange of Sydney last week, the event celebrated the graduates from programs 56 and 58 while also welcoming the next intake of mentees.

A large group of representatives from across the industry celebrated with the graduates, who shared stories of their journey on the program.

"The powerful and inspiring speeches delivered by our 12 graduates truly reinforce the transformative impact of mentoring," said TIME program founder, Penny Spencer.

The guest speaker for the evening was Ingrid Berthelsen (pictured), TIME board member and co-founder of the Evolution

Travel Collective.

Attendees heard about how Berthelsen started in the industry and some anecdotes of her first travel-related job. *JM*

### Earn a-Lotte points

**QANTAS** Frequent Flyer has announced a new partnership with Lotte Duty Free, enabling the carrier's loyalty members to earn points while shopping at the duty-free retailer.

Travellers can now earn one Qantas point for every \$1 spent on eligible products in-store or online at Lotte Duty Free up to 60 days before their trip.

Additionally, non-travellers can purchase eligible items at domestic retail prices and earn Qantas points.

The partnership is now available at Lotte Duty Free locations in Melbourne and Brisbane International Airport, Optique Store at Brisbane Domestic Airport, and Sydney CBD.

## Airlines fail on comms

**EXCLUSIVE**

**AIRLINES** are closing in on offering a complete and seamless travel experience for travellers with accessibility issues but are frequently being let down by poor communication, one leading advocate has said.

Speaking to *Travel Daily*, AccessibleOz Co-Founder Yann Charavel said all the pieces of the puzzle are there but they are still not quite being put together correctly or consistently.

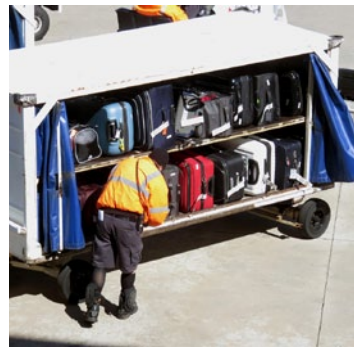
Charavel said in his extensive dealings with Australian airlines in booking clients needing special handling, both reservations teams and front line staff have the processes and capabilities but do not adequately communicate to properly deliver the positive guest experience promised.

"The miscommunication between the reservation team and the front line is terrible," Charavel told *Travel Daily*.

"There is training that hasn't been happening, and then there is also the issue of handling the wheelchairs that is failing.

"People don't understand that it isn't the airline, it's the airport that dismantles the wheelchair to put into the [baggage] hold.

Charavel said in instances where a wheelchair needs to be partially



dismantled to fit into the luggage hold, communication between airlines and ground crew staff is virtually non-existent.

"The airline books that, but then the ground staff don't know what to do with it because it's not their role to actually dismantle it, so there's a bit of a disconnect on who does what," Charavel said.

"So everyone is like 'that's not my job'," he complained.

Despite the challenges that remain with airlines, Charavel said Australia is highly advanced and well equipped in most places to cater to the accessible market in its land offerings.

"People with disabilities used to not travel, but now they travel, they know the risk and the issues that come with travelling, so [now] they do accept it.

"They know it can be a problem, but then the land part is fine, they have amazing experiences." *ML*



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## UN focuses on resilient tourism

**UNITED** Nations tourism members from Asia-Pacific have identified resilience and sustainable tourism as a priority, as the region returns to full strength following the pandemic.

The Commission for Asia and the Pacific, alongside the Commission for South Asia, convened in Jakarta recently to discuss the sector's development beyond COVID-19 recovery.

"Our shared priorities will lay the foundations for a more resilient and sustainable tourism sector for Asia and the Pacific," said UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili.

"Asia and the Pacific is one of the most dynamic regions on Earth - it is a hub of digital transformation, new ideas and innovators."

Between 2018 and 2024, Asia and the Pacific secured over 640 greenfield tourism projects, worth a total US\$66 billion, and equivalent to more than one-third of global capital expenditure in tourism-related investment.



## THE REEF ACHIEVES A WORLD-FIRST

**THE** Great Barrier Reef has been nominated as the first non-human recipient for a Lifetime Achievement Award - the highest environmental honour from the United Nations Environment Programme's Champions of the Earth Awards.

Announced today on World Earth Day, the nomination is led by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Reef Guardian Councils, in partnership with the tourism operators, Traditional Owners, marine scientists, and students who have worked alongside the Reef for many years.

"The Great Barrier Reef is hands-down the best candidate for a Lifetime Achievement Award," said Reef Guardian Council's Chair, Jeff Baines.

"A catalyst for environmental initiatives, the Great Barrier Reef supports First Nations



communities, protects marine life and teaches future generations."

"Only living individuals can win, and an individual is defined as a distinct entity, so using UNESCO's definition of the Great Barrier Reef as a globally outstanding and significant entity, we argue that the Great Barrier Reef meets the entry requirements."

Tourism Tropical North Queensland chief, Mark Olsen,

also shared: "The tourism industry has thrown its weight behind this nomination because we see the impact the Great Barrier Reef has on individuals every day."

"It really is life-changing for many people who visit and finally understand how important this World Heritage area is for biodiversity, Indigenous culture and jobs." JM

## Beyond Green goes beyond Earth Month

**IN HONOUR** of Earth Month, Beyond Green - a global portfolio of sustainable accommodations - is championing the hospitality sector's role in creating a more sustainable future.

At the Beyond Green inaugural Global Leadership Summit last month, member hotels discussed innovative ways to connect travellers with sustainability-driven stays and foster industry-wide change.

"The summit wasn't just about defining a road map - it was about amplifying real-world impact," said Lindsey Ueberroth, Chief Executive Officer of Beyond Green.

"Throughout the event, a diverse group of Beyond Green hoteliers shared more about their on-the-ground sustainability initiatives, showcasing travel experiences that empower both travellers and local communities."

## New eco safari

**GONDWANA** Ecotours has launched a new safari giving travellers a chance to witness the Great Migration in the heart of Tanzania, while actively preservation of local communities and the environment.

The 10-day 'Great Migration Serengeti Safari' is designed to be a "transformative experience that [shows] how travel can be a force for good" - more details [HERE](#).

# DISCOVER

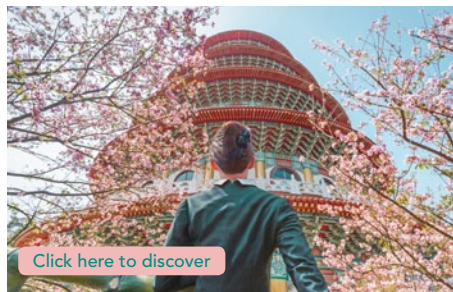
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## MONEY

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

**AU\$1 = US\$0.642**

**THE** Aussie dollar has gained ground against the US currency, recouping its losses from last week despite growing concerns over the economic fallout from US tariffs.

The AUD was further boosted after US President Donald Trump announced tariff exemptions for key technology products - many of which are made in China, Australia's top trading partner.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.642
UK	£0.479
NZ	\$1.069
Euro	€0.632
Japan	¥90.32
Thailand	฿21.22
China	¥4.679
South Africa	12.02
Canada	\$0.888
Crude oil	US\$63.78

## CI tracks luggage

**CHINA** Airlines has now made it possible for travellers to track their suitcases via Apple's new Share Item Location with the use of their AirTag or Find My Network accessory.

Customers simply generate a link in the Find My app on their device, which is shared with CAL via a lost baggage form or with customer service.

Location sharing ends as soon as a traveller is in possession of their bag.

## Agents get down in Dubai



**EMIRATES** recently hosted a group of Adelaide-based corporate travel agents on a famil to Dubai, following the resumption of the carrier's flights to the SA capital in Oct.

The trip gave advisors the chance to experience EK's service in both business and economy classes aboard the B777-200LR on the ADL-DXB route.

The group, which comprised of managers and senior travel consultants, embarked on an itinerary designed to showcase Dubai's diverse attractions.

Highlights included cultural experiences such as exploring the vibrant spice souks, a visit to the Museum of the Future, and a desert safari adventure complete with traditional entertainment and locally inspired cuisine.

The agents were also given the opportunity to tour a wide range of hotels across Dubai, from luxurious beachfront resorts to centrally located city hotels.

**MEANWHILE**, Emirates recently hosted an eight-day course for its Melbourne Trade Support

team, ensuring they possess the expertise to handle any request.

The course covered a wide range of topics, including fares, fare reassessments, and reservations, providing the team with an in-depth understanding of the complexities involved. *JM*

**Pictured:** Adelaide agents on the desert safari. *JM*

## Carnival closes UK

**CARNIVAL** Corporation has announced the shutdown of Carnival Cruise Line's UK office, due to take effect from 12 May, after "careful consideration" of its strategic objectives.

"We have made the difficult decision to propose the closure of the Seavacations team in the UK and sunset this part of the organisation," a spokesperson for the cruise company said.

Carnival Corporation added it is working to support members of the team, with individual discussions taking place about potential future opportunities within the wider business.

## Brissy Marina plan

**PLANS** for a new commercial marina in Brisbane have been unveiled, backed by a \$4 million grant from the Queensland Government, with a view to enhancing the city's water-based tourism offering.

Located in Morningside just 9km from the Brisbane CBD, the facility - to be known as Colmslie Wharves - will provide overnight berthing for commercial tourism vessels, with 51 berths, on-water fuelling, wastewater facilities, car parking and staff amenities.

The marina is predicted to inject more than \$100 million a year into the local economy and attract almost 110,000 additional visitors to Brisbane every year, as well as create 337 ongoing jobs in the tourism industry.

The project is spearheaded by Raptis Investments, which recently submitted a development application with Brisbane City Council.

"While Brisbane is known as the 'River City', we are underperforming in river tourism compared with other Australian capital cities and less than 10% of overnight visitors currently participating in a river, bay or islands experience," said Raptis Investments Chief Executive Officer Tim Beirne.

"Colmslie Wharves will support and grow aquatic tourism by giving current operators the security of long-term berthing while also encouraging new entrants to the industry."



# Gallipoli to the Mediterranean: Anzac Day Remembrance Tour

28 Nights | 19 April 2026 | Prices fr \$11,499pp

Imagine Holidays proudly presents a profoundly moving cruise and tour holiday, thoughtfully created to honour the legacy of Anzac Day.

This unforgettable journey offers a rare opportunity to stand in solemn remembrance at Gallipoli, the site of one of the most poignant battles in Australian and New Zealand military history. Here, you'll unite with fellow comrades in remembrance at a dawn service that pays tribute to the courage, sacrifice, and resilience of those who served. Feel the powerful sense of national pride and shared history as you take part in a commemorative experience that will stay with you for a lifetime.

Beyond Gallipoli, your journey continues with immersive tours, hotel stays, and an 11-night Eastern Mediterranean cruise. This is more than a holiday—it's a chance to unite with history, heritage, and humanity.



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