

## QR dials back ADL

**QATAR** Airways will drop two weekly services between Doha and Adelaide later this year and in early 2026.

The carrier will only fly five times a week from 26 Oct to 14 Dec, 27 Jan to 08 Feb, and 16 Feb to 28 Mar, instead of daily.

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## Fowler extends with TA

**PENNY** Fowler has been reappointed as the Chair of the Tourism Australia Board for another two-year term.

The appointment is timely for the country's peak tourism body, which will see its long-term Managing Director Phillipa Harrison exit on Fri, after she revealed her impending departure for a new "overseas role" in Jun (**TD** 04 Jun).

In extending Fowler, Tourism Australia said her extensive experience on multiple public and private sector boards would hold the organisation in good stead and ensure continuity while a new leader is recruited.

## DL to return to BNE

**DELTA** Air Lines will return its seasonal nonstop flights between Brisbane and Los Angeles from 02 Nov, said the carrier's Commercial Manager, ANZ Nicole Bennett.

DL touched down on the Qld route for the first time in Dec last year (**TD** 06 Dec 2024), marking its second destination in Australia after Sydney.

Earlier this year, DL also flagged seasonal nonstop services between LA and Melbourne, operating three times a week using Airbus A350-900s from Dec 2025 through to Mar 2026.

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of news including our Business Events News page.

Fowler is also the Chair of the Good Friday Appeal, Royal Botanic Garden Victoria, and the National Portrait Gallery.

"I look forward to continuing to work with Mrs Fowler...as TA continues to drive demand and attract more international travellers to our shores," Federal Minister Don Farrell said. **AB**

## NCL President exits

**IN A** major development at the top of Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL), President David Herrera has exited the business.

For the interim, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings CEO Harry Sommer has assumed the role while a replacement is sought.

"I am excited to work closer with the team at NCL to capitalise on the many opportunities ahead as we embark on our search for the next leader who will guide the brand into the future," Sommer said in a statement.

There is no confirmation yet as to why Herrera departed the business, with NCL only stating that the former President had been a dedicated member of the leadership team, and that the brand is now entering a "transformative chapter" in its nearly 60-year history.



## Turbulence in Perth

**DUBAI** National Air Travel Agency (dnata) ground workers at Perth International Airport will strike from 5.30pm today to 10am tomorrow, in the pursuit of better pay conditions.

Flights to Singapore, the UAE, Vietnam, & NZ will be impacted.

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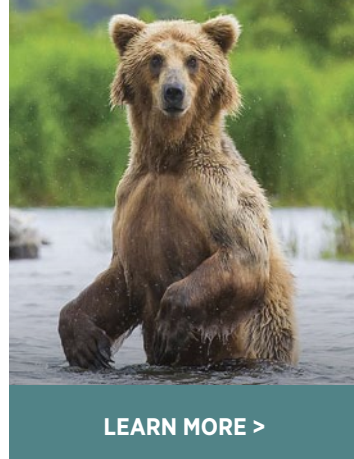
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## Slavery has no place

**THE** Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) is calling on travel businesses to join its Modern Slavery Collaboration, as the body addresses what it describes as one of “the most complex and pressing ethical issues” in travel supply chains.

The program offers businesses tailored pathways to submit Modern Slavery Statements, both for larger brands that are required to do so, as well as smaller companies that are not at this stage obligated but want to proactively engage with the issue.

Tackling modern slavery was one of the key pillars outlined by ATIA last year as part of its Project A30 objectives, stating at the time it would lead the charge on streamlining compliance with modern slavery regulations.

Intrepid Travel MD and ATIA Director, Brett Mitchell, (**pictured**) said modern slavery simply has no place in our industry.



“The reality is that tourism supply chains are complex and often opaque, and that’s why we launched the consortium because we know real change happens when the industry works together,” he said.

Under Australia’s *Modern Slavery Act 2018*, entities with annual consolidated revenue of over \$100 million are required to submit an annual Modern Slavery Statement to the Attorney-General’s Department addressing seven mandatory criteria.

ATIA’s first meeting examining ways to tackle modern slavery will be held on 29 Sep, with parties wanting to be involved or observe to register **HERE**. **AB**

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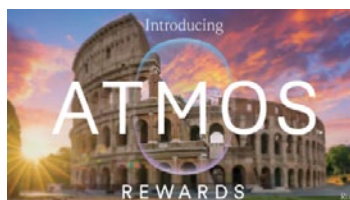
## Combined loyalty

**ALASKA** Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines have confirmed plans to combine their frequent flyer programs into a new global program called Atmos Rewards.

Launching later this year, the program pledges to offer enhanced benefits, including the option for travellers to choose the model that best suits them.

Members will be able to elect to earn points based on distance travelled, price paid, or air segments flown.

The price model will enable travellers to earn five points for every \$1 spent when purchasing a flight, one point for every mile flown under the distance option, or a flat 500 points awarded for each flight segment.



## Axe falls on Cairns

**ONLY** a year after Cairns Airport hailed direct AirAsia services to Bali as “bolstering visitation and business opportunities” in the Qld city (**TD** 16 Aug 2025), the route will be scrapped from next month.

Indonesia AirAsia alerted affected passengers yesterday about the abrupt news, citing network optimisation as the reason for the route’s axing.

Some customers will be able to fly to Bali from Cairns with the Asian carrier, but will have to source alternative flights for the return leg from 19 Sep.

AirAsia first flagged the route in Jun last year (**TD** 07 Jun 2024), which has since operated three times a week to tap into the growing demand for Bali holidays from Queenslanders.

The service added 28,000 seats into Cairns during its first year of operations, and was also seen as an affordable connector to other Asian hub such as Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, and parts of Indonesia.

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## South African tourism goes south

**SOUTH** Africa's Tourism Minister Patricia de Lille has dissolved the SA Tourism Board with immediate effect, following a controversial call to suspend its CEO Nombulelo Guliwe.

In a letter obtained by local media, Minister de Lille said the tourism board's decision to remove its CEO was "unlawful" and that the board had acted well beyond its jurisdiction.

Only a duly appointed Chairperson is empowered to convene a special board meeting, and according to de Lille's letter, this was not adhered to.

Guliwe was given her marching orders after allegations of misconduct, with further investigations flagged to prove the veracity of the claims.

## Inside has S(e)oul

**INSIDEASIA** has announced 2026 dates for its South Korea Soul of Korea Small Group Tour.

The number of departures have doubled after 2025 proved to be a sellout success.

Run over 10 days, the tour encapsulates the country's ancient past, modern popular culture and foodie scene.

Tours are on sale now, with more information on offer [HERE](#).

## Bringing more experience

**ADVENTURE** tourism company Experience Co has announced a trio of appointments that it predicts will be "instrumental" in growing its Australian operations.

The changes will see the business place a greater focus on on-the-ground management, with Cairns-based Jason Moore taking on the role of General Manager of Reef Unlimited.

Moore previously looked after much of the operational issues for the brand, with his promotion shoring up his management of Reef Unlimited's tours across Cairns and Port Douglas.

He was integral in supporting the delivery of the multi-million-dollar Reef Magic, heralded as the most tech-advanced pontoon on the Great Barrier Reef.

Meanwhile, Tassie-based Ben Brown has been appointed the GM of Wild Bush Luxury, which offers eco lodges and walks across Arkaba (SA), Bamurru Plains (NT) and The Maria Island Walk (**pictured**) (Tasmania).

He was previously General Manager of the company's The Maria Island Walk.

The third appointment revealed is Nicole van Niekerk, who joins as Head of Marketing from a senior marketing position with Expedia Group.



The appointments follow pleasing unaudited FY25 results released in Jul (**TD** 31 Jul), which showed the company has enjoyed its strongest sales revenue growth since 2019.

Both its Skydiving and Adventure Experiences segments saw improved average revenue per customer, which Experience Co attributed at the time to a growing appetite for adventure travel and the ongoing recovery of international tourism. **AB**

## Envoyage sales chief

**MARK** Robertson has been appointed National Sales Leader of Envoyage in Australia.

The Flight Centre Travel Group division previously employed Robertson as Business Development Partner for close to two years, with the development following Fiona Batten's exit from the senior sales team at Envoyage to take on a leading position growing the Scott Dunn brand in North America (**TD** 20 Aug).

"I look forward to collaborating with Nick Queale, Astrid Richardson, and the rest of the Envoyage Group to further establish our business as the true home and heart of the travel industry for the independent world," Robertson said.



## Window seat

**AN ENGLISH** restaurant recently grabbed headlines for offering the first "water menu" in the UK, providing guests with an option of three different bottled still waters and four different sparkling waters on top of the complimentary tap water.

But in this writer's humble opinion, those media sources have missed the headline.

The idea was suggested by a 'water sommelier' that is actually certified by the Fine Water Academy.

You read correct, water sommeliers exist and they are actually certified.

Now all we need are oxygen bars...wait, what?

## QF wet lease pays off

**REVENUE** generated by Alliance Airlines' first full year of Qantas wet lease operations is anticipated to increase and improve crew efficiency in 2026.

The 12-month outlook in Alliance's latest financial report also showed new business opportunities from existing clients in WA and Qld will drive the business forward, while the settlement of 10 E190s by 30 Jun 2026 will also significantly improve cash flow.

Overall, Alliance saw earnings rise by 20% to \$769.7m, and EBITA spike by 16% to \$207.3m.



## Join the Virtuoso AUNZ team

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## A hidden gem of hidden gems



**WHILE** Japan has proved to be incredibly popular with Australian travellers over the last couple of years, there is a chance many are still unaware of the quaint prefecture of Ehime, located on Shikoku Island and only a short flight away from Hiroshima.

Stakeholders from the destination have been touring Australia this week, last night hosting an information night at Sake in The Rocks, Sydney.

The message delivered was for the Australian trade to embrace what it called “one of the most hidden, hidden gems” in Japan, offering a variety of leisure activities popular with Aussies.

These include cycling tracks through townships and forest areas, mountain climbing, as well as Dogo Onsen, billed as the oldest hot spring in Japan.

Koei Ervin from Shikoku Tours also took to the stage to present the wide variety of tours on offer across the entire island.

“Shikoku is definitely the least developed of all the Japanese islands from both an industrial perspective and tourist perspective, but that being said, access to Shikoku and Ehime Prefecture is really good,” he said.

“From Tokyo to Matsuyama, it is just an extra 90-minute flight to a very well developed airport, and then it is just 15 minutes to the city which serves as a great base for striking out into some of the amazing wilderness areas that

Ehime has to offer,” Ervin added.

Another major drawcard for Ehime is Mount Ishizuchi, the tallest mountain in western Japan and considered a sacred peak in Japanese religion.

Shikoku Tours and other operators offer a range of hiking and spiritual experiences for tourists throughout the year.

Ehime is also being pushed as a viable alternative to towns and cities located on busier Japanese islands as part of a broader sustainability strategy.

Several additional tourism taxes are being explored by Japan in places like Osaka and Izu to help preserve the destinations. **AB**

### Tweet to Virtuoso

**TWEET** World Travel will attend Virtuoso On Tour for the first time when it hits Melbourne on 09-10 Sep this year.

The business will preview 2025-26 small-group tours with a maximum of 16 guests, CroisiEurope Australia river and safari-cruise options, iconic rail extensions, and its hand-picked Maldives portfolio.

To celebrate its debut, Tweet World Travel will award a prize pool valued at over \$40,000 to advisors who connect with the team during the event, including a luxury nine day Southern Africa Safari Cruise package with CroisiEurope and more.

Visit the stand to enter.

## 80TH SANDAKAN DAY WITH SABAH TOURISM



**ON FRI** 15 Aug 2025, the 80th Sandakan Day Memorial Service was held at Sandakan Memorial Park, honouring over 2,400 Australian and British prisoners of war who perished during the Sandakan-Ranau Death Marches. Only six Australians survived, aided by the courage of local Sabahans.

This milestone anniversary was attended by dignitaries from Australia, Britain, New Zealand, and Sabah. In his message, Sabah’s Chief Minister, Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Hajiji bin Haji Noor, described the memorial as a living bridge of friendship, while Australia’s High Commissioner, Danielle Heinecke, reaffirmed that “lest we forget” is a solemn promise.

A deeply moving moment came when Japanese students and families presented a thousand origami cranes, a symbol of peace and healing.

Their presence offered a quiet reminder that Sandakan is not only a place of mourning, but also of healing and shared humanity. Each crane, folded by hand, carried heartfelt wishes for a world without war.

The Sabah Tourism Board reiterated its commitment to preserving this legacy, ensuring future generations can reflect on this history while discovering Sandakan’s natural and cultural treasures. **Lest we forget.**

**TOP:** Poem recital by Lynette Silver AM, MBE, historian and author, during the 80th Sandakan Day Memorial Service on day one.

**MIDDLE:** The memorial service held at Sandakan Memorial Park on day two.

**BOTTOM:** Floral tributes and attendees paying respect to honour the memory of those who perished during the Sandakan Death Marches on day three.

***Famil IN FOCUS** is our feature showcasing some of the photos from recent industry famils or events. If you want your famil to be featured, email: [advertising@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:advertising@traveldaily.com.au)*







## Sector recovered

**THE** business events sector has fully recovered to pre-COVID levels across many measures, according to a new report from the Australian Business Events Association (TD 14 Aug).

In 2024, 19.8 million business event visitors generated \$19.6 billion for the economy, with international delegates spending 59% more per night than leisure visitors.

International business event arrivals outnumbered outbound Australian delegates, and convention centres hosted 3,700 events with 4.35 million delegates - a slight drop from the 2023 post-pandemic peak.

As of Jan 2025, the pipeline of confirmed international events was up 16% year-on-year, though domestic events dropped by 5%.

## ROCK YOUR EVENTS

**AYERS** Rock Resort has launched a new offer for business event planners, with a discount of up to 50% during the low season.

Set against the backdrop of Uluru and Kata Tjuta, the offer is ideal for corporate retreats, team or client recognition events, and team motivation experiences.

Organisers can choose from five-star luxury at Sails in the Desert, with accommodation from \$287 and a full buffet breakfast from \$41pp, or four-star comfort at the Desert Gardens Hotel, starting from \$242 a room and a full buffet breakfast from \$38.50pp.

The special rates include free wi-fi, return Ayers Rock Airport transfers and complimentary guest activities, such as bush yarns, guided garden walks and a didgeridoo workshop (pictured).

Planners will also receive a beverage package upgrade for poolside events.



"Uluru is stunning in every season, and this offer presents a unique opportunity for business event planners to experience its magic during a quieter, more contemplative time of year," said Matt Cameron-Smith, CEO of the resort's parent company, Indigenous Tourism Australia.

"It's a chance to bring teams together in a setting that fosters connection, creativity and a deep appreciation for the cultural and natural significance of this extraordinary place."

The offer applies to bookings made by 19 Dec 2025, for travel between 01 Nov 2025 and 31 Mar 2026 - more details [HERE](#). JM

## Tae Pae on a roll

**NEW** Zealand conference centre Te Pae Christchurch is gearing up for a bumper off-season, with an estimated economic impact of more than NZ\$43.8 million.

Around 32,000 visitors are expected to visit the venue over the four months to Nov 2025, for over 80 events.

GM Ross Steele said, "One of the major advantages of having a centre like ours, is the ability to spread demand over quieter periods for the local visitor industry".

"The colder months... are extremely popular for conference organisers - providing a major opportunity to build visitation across the whole year."

The event program over the next four months features 36 multi-day conferences, including six int'l conventions.

## Greener gatherings

**SALTER** Brothers Hospitality has launched a new eco-conscious program for meetings and events, in partnership with Reforest.

The 'Greener Gatherings' initiative will see two trees planted for every new delegate, while event planners can save 20% on accommodation and 10% off day delegate packages at Salter properties across Australia.

The offer is available to book until 31 Oct 2025, for new bookings taking place before 30 Jun 2026 - more info [HERE](#).

## Syd Showground sails into eco collab

**SYDNEY** Showground has announced a new 12-month sustainability partnership, which will see it team up with ocean conservation organisation Ocean Crusaders.

As part of the deal, the venue will sponsor Ocean Crusaders and its 100% electric, zero-carbon emission, TP52 racing yacht, *Ocean Crusaders J-Bird*, supporting its entry into the Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, along with a clean-up



project on the Parramatta River.

"As a venue, we are putting our money where our mouth is and taking our investment in sustainability beyond our own industry," said Sydney Showground Director of Sales & Marketing, Andrew Roberts.

## BCEC appointment

**BRISBANE** Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) has appointed Cliff Jones as its new Facilities Director.

Bringing hospitality experience from across Australia and Asia, Jones will oversee the centre's building services, facilities management, security and safety, as well as sustainability and community engagement.

Jones replaces Ian Chalmers, who has transitioned into a new role ahead of his retirement, following a 27-year career at BCEC.

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## APPOINTMENTS

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**Melissa Roberts** has started a new position as Business Development Manager at **Linkd Tourism**. She will look after the Japan National Tourism Organization, Aqua-Aston Hotels, and Alamo Car Rental. Roberts previously served as Airline Rep Services' Key Account Manager for Air India.

**Louise Scott** has been appointed Chief Executive Officer at **Tourism East**, the destination management organisation for Victoria's Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges regions. She will be tasked with driving visitation to the region, and brings with her years of destination experience at City of Melbourne, where she most recently served as Director of Experience.

**Carnival Corporation** has appointed **Sandy Olsen** to the role of Vice President Corporate & External Affairs. Olsen first joined Carnival in 2007, and returns to Australia after three years in the United States, where she oversaw government and stakeholder relations in California, Washington State, and Canada. She replaces the recently departed Teresa Lloyd in the role.

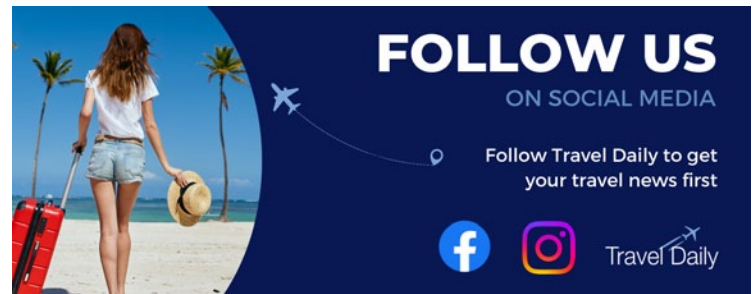
**Christian Wildhaber** has been appointed General Manager of **Mandarin Oriental Jakarta**, bringing his two decades of luxury hospitality to the role. He is relocating to Indonesia for the job from Mandarin Oriental Palace, Luzern, where he led the hotel's successful transformation and positioning as a leading luxury destination in Switzerland.

**Atlantis Dubai** has appointed **Dean Walsh** as Executive Director of Sales to drive global leisure growth for the hotel company. Walsh will oversee both Atlantis, The Palm, and Atlantis, The Royal. He has been instrumental in expanding Atlantis' presence across Europe and Australia since he joined the company two years ago.

**Four Seasons Yachts** has appointed **Captain Duncan Holroyd** to its leadership team aboard its flagship Four Seasons I. He will serve alongside the ship's Captain, Kate McCue, supporting the final phases of outfitting and marine operations leading to the yacht's delivery in Mar.

**Abid Nasir** has been appointed Chief Engineer at **Grand Millennium Hotel Dubai**, where he will be responsible for managing all engineering functions at the property. Nasir has close to 20 years of experience in engineering operations and facilities management across some of the nited Arab Emirates' most recognised hospitality brands.

**The Ritz-Carlton, Dubai** has appointed **Crisdean Porciani** as Director of Quality, charging him with overseeing the resort's quality and guest experience programs. Porciani has more than a decade of experience across luxury hotels, spanning pre-opening strategy, cross-department readiness, and more. His experience includes a stint at Sydney-based hospitality company The Grounds.



## South Seas off to a Flyer



**SOUTH** Seas Cruises' new vessel *Yasawa Flyer III* has arrived, with the launch celebrated at Fiji's Port Denarau yesterday.

*Yasawa Flyer III* (pictured) will operate from Port Denarau daily to her namesake archipelago, on a route South Seas first sailed on at the turn of the millennium.

She will be the largest newbuild fast ferry to have ever operated in Fiji, featuring expansive outdoor viewing decks, custom-designed seating, spacious air-conditioned lounges, and upgraded amenities, including a bar and kiosk, free wi-fi, and charging stations.

The vessel introduces Fiji's first and only full ride-control system, reducing vessel motion and enhancing stability, even in challenging sea conditions.

*Yasawa Flyer III's* capacity of up to 320 passengers will increase daily capacity to the destination by 30%.

"This vessel represents a major investment in the future of tourism in the Yasawa Islands and Fiji as a whole," Chief Executive Officer Brad Rutherford said.

"It has been purpose-built to

carry more passengers while delivering an enhanced travel experience to one of the most beautiful and remote parts of our country," he added.

*Yasawa Flyer III* is also expected to deliver 10% improved fuel efficiency when compared to similar-sized vessels, and an expected 20% fuel savings per passenger on a full load basis.

Fiji's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism Viliame Gavoka attended the launch, alongside South Sea staff, and select members of the destination's tourism industry. *MS*

## TraveLeague tickets

**TICKETS** go on sale next Mon for the ever-popular TraveLeague Christmas event, which will be held on 10 Dec at Palladium at Crown in Melbourne.

The industry is invited to reserve their place from 8am on 25 Aug from \$209pp.

Tickets will include pre-lunch cocktails, lunch, beer, wine and access to the after-party - **CLICK HERE** for full details.