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## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features eight pages of news including our **Business Events News** page plus full pages from:

- **Tourism NT Training**
- **Viva Holidays**
- **Royal Caribbean**

## A better NT expert

**TOURISM** NT is hosting a live webinar to showcase some of the Territory's sustainable tourism experiences on 20 and 21 May. Three sessions are available per day - see **page nine** to register.

## Define luxury travel

**VIVA** Holidays' new luxury brand Viva Gold is on a mission to curate high-end exclusive travel experiences that go beyond the ordinary and elevate every aspect of the journey - more on **page 10**.

## Signature puts agents first

**EXCLUSIVE**

**ONE** of the many reasons the Signature Travel Network cooperative believes it has strong growth prospects in Australia is its mantra of always putting the advisor at the forefront.

Speaking to *Travel Daily*, the network's Managing Director for Australia and New Zealand, Lisa Harrison, said Signature Travel is clear in its stance of not promoting its own brand to its members' customers.

"All of our programs are white labelled for our members to promote as value from them and I think that's a really big point-of-difference for us," Harrison said.

Another advantage Signature enjoys over its competitors, according to Harrison, is the "family feel" it offers agencies,

and while it only has 220 members, they are large groups fuelling a healthy turnover of more than US\$11 billion.

Testament to the perceived viability of its presence locally, Australia is the first market of expansion outside of the United States for Signature, with a successful tie-up with TravelManagers inked in 2022 (*TD* 03 Feb 2022) compelling the group to make further inroads by putting boots on the ground.

Executive GM for TravelManagers Michael Gazal said its "synergy" with Signature had fuelled strong sales growth. "Clearly there was a gap in our business...and the access to product [via Signature] we would not ordinarily have in the Australian marketplace has translated into our PTMs having a much stronger value proposition," Gazal said.

Harrison also stressed its growth path Down Under is not really about the numbers, but rather finding the members that are a good fit and have a strong existing luxury client base.

While Signature has an enviable range of products in the United States and Europe - especially in luxury hotels - one of the big challenges ahead for Harrison will be adding to its burgeoning range of luxury products in the Australasian region across hotels, cruise and DMCs. **AB**

## Introducing Lelepa

**ROYAL** Caribbean is introducing Lelepa in Vanuatu - its maiden 'Ultimate Destination' in the South Pacific - details on **page 11**.

## Club Med shake-up

**ALL-INCLUSIVE** brand Club Med has unveiled a new structure for its Asia-Pacific operations which sees it consolidate three business units into two integrated entities.

Under the flags of East & South Asia/Pacific (ESAP) and China, the change sees Rachael Harding take the role of CEO of the ESAP entity, reporting directly to Club Med Deputy CEO, Gregory Lanter.

For more travel industry appointments, see **page eight**.



### Island dreams for your clients, BIG PRIZES for you!

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## Legal expert leads ATAS charter review

**THE** Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has formally kicked off the process for the latest review of its ATAS Charter.

Former Australian Competition & Consumer Commission senior executive Michael Terceiro (**pictured**) will lead the independent assessment of the Charter in 2025, which will evaluate a range of key areas like code of conduct, solvency definitions, and the terms of reference for the ATIA Complaints Appeals Committee.

The review will assess whether all aspects of the charter remain effective and fit-for-purpose moving forward, and whether any amendments are needed to keep pace with the changing travel landscape and further strengthen the ATIA Accredited framework.

“The ATAS Charter and Code form the cornerstone of our accreditation framework, and this review is essential to ensuring



that the standards we uphold remain contemporary, credible and trusted by consumers, regulators and the industry itself,” ATIA CEO Dean Long said.

Terceiro brings over three decades of legal, regulatory, and compliance expertise to the latest review process, having previously held several independent

review roles across high-profile consumer-facing sectors.

His specific expertise is in regulatory compliance, competition and consumer law, as well as governance for both corporate and industry bodies.

“Terceiro’s...deep expertise in consumer law and regulatory frameworks makes him an ideal choice to lead an independent and rigorous review,” Long added.

ATIA will open the formal consultation period for written submissions from all stakeholders on 02 Jun, a window that will remain open until 01 Jul.

It should be noted that submissions will be made public and considered by Terceiro, who will then provide a final report to the ATIA board by 29 Jul 2025.

ATIA has advised the board will subsequently publish its response and any approved amendments on 25 Oct, following a structured and transparent process. AB

## Shattered dreams

**VICTORIAN-BASED** online travel site Traveldream has gone into administration (**TD** breaking news yesterday), appointing Mcleods Accounting to handle the process.

The company has advised impacted customers to contact their travel service providers - listing Emirates as at least one such brand - to determine if their bookings remain valid.

Traveldream, trading as Traveldream.com.au, had its ATIA accreditation cancelled in Mar 2020 and has not been part of the program since.

Commenting on the collapse, ATIA CEO Dean Long said it is critical travellers only book through an ATIA-accredited travel businesses to ensure they are dealing with a trusted supplier.



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## E-gift cards on offer

**INFINITY** Holidays and LA Tourism have a new incentive running between now and 11 Jul. Agents can earn e-gift card rewards for booking participating LA County Hotels through Infinity Holidays, and bookings must be paid in full by 11 Jul - more [HERE](#).

## Expedia unveils API push

**EXPEDIA** Group has revealed it is scaling its B2B platform by piloting a new swathe of APIs aimed at unlocking more value from travel packages for partners.

Part of the bolstering of B2B is the testing of a travel insurance API on Expedia TAAP, giving agents the ability to offer trip protection in the booking path.

Expedia also confirmed it will soon test an API for air, enabling seamless integration of plane travel with accommodation and car rentals, as well as an API for car rentals providing access to inventory from 110 brands across 190 countries.

Activities also form part of the new foray, offering 170,000 bookable experiences globally.

"We've built the largest B2B travel network in the world,

and it is the strength of those connections that drive real results," said Alfonso Paredes, President of Private Label Solutions at Expedia Group.

"Our new...APIs take that even further, making it easier for partners to access more supply and leverage our intelligence."

Further updates harnessing AI include the Expedia Group Advertising division launching a suite of media upgrades focused on helping partners reach travellers during the critical inspiration phase before they land on a booking page, as well as the ability for travel brands to better target consumers using Expedia's first-party data.

DMOs can now also sponsor bonus rewards to incentivise visits to their destinations. **AB**

## O'Hare's big switch

**LAUNCESTON** Airport CEO Shane O'Hare will step down after almost four years in the role, in order to take up the position of CEO at Queenstown Airport in NZ.

O'Hare will continue to lead the Tasmanian Airport while it searches for his replacement.

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## APT's new train of thought



APT'S Australia program for next year is on now on sale, with brand-new tours from the Kimberley to the Margaret River.

There are five new itineraries in total, including cruise and luxury rail touring, with savings currently available of up to \$8,600.

Guests can discover Western Australia's coastline on the new 13-day 'Coral Coast Adventure' cruise, a journey showcasing Ningaloo Reef, Shark Bay, and

the Muiron Islands, starting from \$11,595 per person twin share.

The new 11-day 'South Western Discovery' explores some of WA's most beautiful destinations, including Esperance and the Margaret River, by four-wheel drive, from \$7,695pp twin share.

APT has also introduced the 10-day 'Margaret River & Karri Valley Explorer with Indian Pacific Rail', which offers a luxury exploration of the South Western town in a four-wheel drive, before guests board the Indian Pacific, priced from \$11,295pp twin share.

APT is celebrating the launch with savings of up to \$8,600 per couple off select departures - call 1300 278 278. *MS*

## Sno'n'Ski new GM

SNO'N'SKI Holidays has appointed a new General Manager, Luke Pritchard.

The former Sales & Operations Manager has been promoted to the role, after almost a decade with Sno'n'Ski.

The reshuffle will not affect the role of Managing Director Daniel Walker, who welcomed Pritchard to his new post.

## QR's massive order

BOEING and Qatar Airways have announced a historic order for up to 210 widebody aircraft, with the ceremonial signing witnessed by President of the United States Donald Trump and Emir of Qatar Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

The agreement - signed during a Trump visit to beef up trade - for 130 787 Dreamliners and 30 777X sets a record as the largest widebody order for Boeing, the largest order of Dreamliners, and Qatar's largest-ever order.

There are also options for 50 more 787 and 777X aircraft.

"We are happy to announce our agreement with Boeing and our partnership in the largest aircraft order in our history," Qatar Airways Chief Executive Officer Badr Mohammed Al-Meer said.

"[It is] a critical next step for Qatar Airways on our path as we invest in the cleanest, youngest and most efficient fleet in global aviation," he added.

## Agent spirit needed

ARMSTONG Collective has just launched its new Canyon Spirit Tracks training program for travel professionals, designed to enhance agents' knowledge of the new Canyon Spirit brand for the 'Rockies to the Red Rocks' route, formerly operating under the Rocky Mountaineer brand (TD 20 Mar).

The new route offers an elevated rail experience through the Southwestern United States, with the program built to deepen agents' expertise.

Armstrong is encouraging travel advisors to register for the training with a giveaway, with those who complete it by 04 Jun to be entered into a draw to win an exclusive Canyon Spirit merchandise kit and a \$100 gift card, while two additional winners will each receive a \$150 gift card in their local currency.

Advisor rates are also available to experience the Rockies to the Red Rocks route - **CLICK HERE**.

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## Survival of the Globus



**GLOBUS** family of brands (GFOB) last night hosted its *Survivor*-themed All-Stars Finale in Sydney, with a glittering celebration of what has been one of the most talked-about sales incentives of the year.

The night was emceed by *Survivor* alumnus 'King' George Mladenov, and National Account Manager Melinda Wouda, who was key in pulling together the

sales incentive.

The special tribal council-themed event saw 12 standout finalists, who had completed a dozen rounds of *Survivor*-themed sales tasks, compete for the ultimate reward: an Avalon Waterways cruise for two.

The evening was opened with words from Mladenov, as well as new GFOB Managing Director Chris Hall, marking one of his first appearances since taking the role two months ago (*TD* 06 Mar).

The 12 finalists then competed in tasks, including mini-golf, a memory challenge, a balancing challenge, and a puzzle, before three finalists attempted to draw a golden rock from a bag to win the ultimate prize.

A delightful twist saw all three advisors win, with Rachel Howard, Flight Centre Mandurah; Thomas McDonald, Helloworld Lilydale; and Jay Irvine, House of Travel Barrington securing their spot on the cruise. *MS*

**Pictured** is King George with Hall, and Wouda.

## Riyadh connects

**SABRE** Corporation has signed a global distribution agreement with new Saudi Arabian national carrier, Riyadh Air.

The deal will allow the airline to benefit from Sabre's advanced technology solutions, enabling it to deliver dynamic, personalised travel offers to a global network of travel agents, corporate buyers, and customers.

The partnership with Sabre marks a key step towards Riyadh Air's goal of becoming the first native digital airline in the world.

## Overseas travel record

**AUSTRALIANS'** desire for international travel is at an all-time high, with a record 1.85 million taking an overseas holiday between Jan and Mar 2025, according to new data released by the Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO).

The number marks a 15% increase over the same period last year, and a 54% rise from 2023.

Southeast Asia remains the most popular region among Aussies, with Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam attracting nearly four in 10 outbound leisure travellers, while Northeast Asia also saw an uptick, with plenty travelling to Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

"Australians are increasingly confident, adventurous and diverse in their destination choices," said CATO Managing Director Brett Jardine.

"We're seeing growth across every age group and every corner of the globe - from family trips in South East Asia to extended stays



across Europe and the Americas."

Young Aussies in the 18-35 age bracket made up the largest portion (29%) of international holidaymakers, while older travellers also saw a resurgence, with the 71+ segment growing by 18%.

Additionally, CATO's data reflected a trend towards extended trips of one month or longer, particularly among travellers heading to Europe and Northeast Asia.

"This data reflects the hard work of the travel industry and tour operators in delivering compelling, well-supported itineraries Australians trust," Jardine added. *JM*

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## Challenging period strikes for DMOs

**DESTINATION** management organisations (DMO) need to target shoulder season campaigns and value-based messaging as the market enters a challenging period - that is the main takeaway from KeyData out of its latest *Australia DMO Report*.

Paid occupancy rates for Apr, May and Jun are currently seeing year-on-year decreases of 2%, 8%, and 5%, respectively.

All regions are experiencing significant year-on-year declines in Q1 paid occupancy, with Tasmania seeing the largest decrease (-21%), followed by SA (-17%), Qld (-15%), Vic (-10%), NSW (-8%), and WA (-5%).

The report stated, "While average daily rates (ADRs) show resilience with growth in most regions, particularly for Apr and May, paid occupancy is tracking significantly behind year-over-year, with concerning declines for the entire upcoming quarter."

While a soft Mar was expected with the Easter date shift, the report stated Apr was also tracking behind, with Tropical Cyclone Alfred a significant contributor as travellers tend to be wary after a natural disaster.

The report also highlighted that increased supply may give the illusion of a destination feeling busier even though occupancy has fallen, but also that ADRs are generally climbing, with particularly strong positive pacing for Apr (+\$48), May (+\$21), and Jun (+\$44). *DF*

## BNE lands new EGM

**BRISBANE** Airport has welcomed a new Executive General Manager Commercial in Scott Norris, who will start his position on 30 Jun.

"Scott will lead Brisbane Airport through a dynamic phase of retail, commercial and industrial transformation," Brisbane Airport CEO Gert-Jan de Graaff said.

Norris is currently the General Manager of Aviation and Commercial at Sunshine Coast Airport and has previously held leadership positions at Vancouver, Auckland and Perth airports.

Norris began his career in Heathrow, then spent several years at Auckland Airport and Perth Airport, and after that, he became Vice-President of Commercial Development at the Vancouver Airport Authority, before joining the Sunshine Coast Airport in 2022.

As part of his new remit, Norris will oversee the expansion of retail within the international terminal, in addition to ensuring ground transport options and parking options meet the demands of the growing precinct.

"I'm excited to blend my Australian and international airport background to create a uniquely Brisbane experience for Queensland's most important gateway," Norris said.

"I'm a Kiwi with Canadian citizenship, Australian residency, and a British wife.

"I'm looking forward to making Brisbane my home as the city is



transformed ahead of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and can't wait to join the BNE team," he added.

Brisbane Airport is one of the country's largest by land size, covering 2,700 hectares with 450 hectares available for development.

Construction is currently underway on a state-of-the-art \$50 million parcel facility for Australia Post.

**MEANWHILE** the airport has today released new stats on the increased travel between Queensland and Japan, soaring beyond 2019 levels.

In fact, Japan is now the state's fastest-growing international market, with a 124% rise in tourists, and is also its fifth biggest inbound market.

Queensland tourists to the country have increased by 255% from 2019.

In addition, it seems that the growing awareness ahead of the Brisbane 2032 Olympics and Paralympic Games have helped the US become Queensland's third-largest inbound market, revealed Ryan Both, Aviation Executive General Manager at Brisbane Airport. *JHM*



**BAD** luck for all of the nudists out there who planned to stroll the red carpet completely starkers at this year's Cannes Film Festival - organisers have explicitly banned naked attendance.

We are almost certain the assumption of clothes at festivals is widespread among our readers, but we nevertheless felt it pertinent to bring you this important update in case you are among the tens of thousands of visitors to Cannes in France in 2025 to see the latest trendsetting films.

The formal change in attendance rules from festival management follows a string of virtually naked appearances from questionable celebrities in recent months.

A spokesperson for the Cannes Film Festival said the goal was "not to regulate attire per se but to prohibit full nudity on the carpet".

One of the more eye-opening examples of near-nude appearances was from Kanye West's partner Bianca Censori, who appeared at the Grammy Awards posing for photographers in a transparent sheath dress that effectively left her looking like she was only wearing her birthday suit.

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## Parrtjima a winner

THE Northern Territory Major Events Company (NTMEC) took home a string of accolades at the recent international Eventex Awards.

The company's annual Alice Springs event, Parrtjima - A Festival in Light, secured two gold awards in the Cultural Event and Australian/Oceanian Event categories, along with a silver for Cross-channel Storytelling.

NTMEC also received gold in the Event Team category, recognising professionalism, innovation, and excellence in event delivery.

One of the judges said: "What I saw here was a dedication to bringing awareness to a unique part of the globe while also maintaining a culture of excellence in events."

## GLOBAL CONFLICTS SLOW EVENTS

GLOBAL conflicts impact two out of three international meetings, according to new research led by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers (IAPCO).

The results of the *Global Socio-Political Impact Survey of 2025* report show that almost two-thirds of respondents (59.53%) say global conflicts have impacted their ability to plan or host meetings events overseas - either moderately (45.24%), or significantly (14.29%).

Further, 25% said they have been forced to cancel, postpone or relocate events due to safety concerns and instability.

"The report revealed that 57.14% of respondents had between one to 10 of their client's venues impacted by global unrest, with 5.95% reporting this number was



between 11 and 20," said Martin Boyle, CEO of IAPCO (pictured).

"To put this into context, in 2024 alone, IAPCO members delivered 19,469 events globally - we are talking about vast numbers of conferences that have been disrupted."

Boyle also pointed out the rising financial costs, with more than one-quarter of respondents reporting losses of up to around A\$103,000, while 14.64% lost more than A\$309,000.

Additionally, 48.81% of respondents noted a shift in preferred event locations, while

22.62% are seeing a decreased willingness to travel overseas.

Pressure on the global events industry is not expected to ease anytime soon, with the IAPCO leader pointing out challenges like the Trump administration's freeze on research and academics attending conferences.

Almost half of the respondents said the changes have affected them, with 22.37% bracing for impact - see the full report [HERE](#).

"The results paint a clear picture of an industry navigating multifaceted pressures, from operational logistics to stakeholder confidence and financial viability," Boyle added.

"The findings reinforce the need for continued adaptability, contingency planning, and enhanced collaboration across the global meetings and events community." JM

## WA's medtech win

FOR the first time, Perth has been selected to host Australia's leading medical technology conference, with AusMedtech heading to WA in 2026.

Organised by the national industry body AusBiotech, the two-and-a-half-day conference is expected to attract hundreds of medtech leaders from around Australia and overseas.

The event will showcase WA's growing biomedical sector, with delegates to partake in site tours of strategic infrastructure, innovation hubs, and more.

## Vietnam resort's shiny new event space

WAFAlFO Resort Hoi An, which opened its doors in Dec 2024, has unveiled a new meetings and events space.

The 270m<sup>2</sup> venue can accommodate gatherings of up to 200 guests and can be configured in various formats, suiting meetings, executive retreats, incentive programs, creative workshops and more.

The interiors offer a contemporary marine feel, with natural wood accents, sky-inspired ceiling decor, and



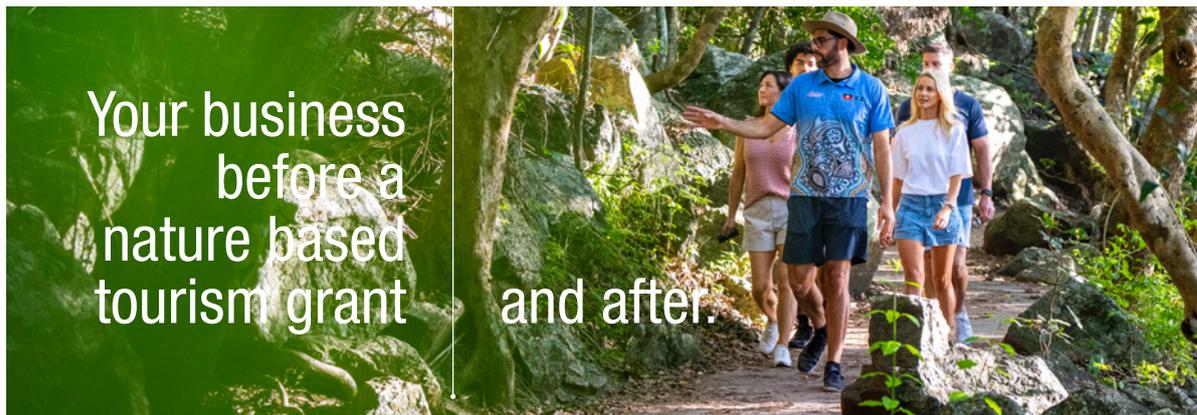
wave-patterned flooring.

Planners will appreciate the facility's high-speed wi-fi and advanced AV capabilities, customised event menus, a dedicated event concierge, and flexible booking options.

## AV appointment

AVPARTNERS has announced the appointment of Tom Gilmore to Associate of Sales at The Whitsundays, bringing his passion and expertise for high-impact event delivery to the team on Hamilton Island.

Gilmore has worked in the AV industry for more than six years, most recently as Technical Event Manager at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, where he led large-scale events.



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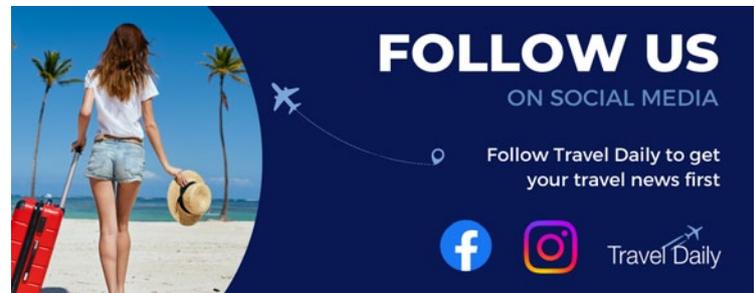
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## APPOINTMENTS

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A range of new appointments have been made by **Club Med** to support its new consolidated East & South Asia and Pacific' (ESAP) business unit and operating structure (see page one). Under newly minted ESAP CEO **Rachael Harding**, the company has appointed **Cindy Beleau** as VP Revenue Management APAC; **Sandrine Rossi** as VP Operations and Product; **Anastasiya Kulish** as VP of Japan Resort Operations; **Jerome Ferrie** as Chief Financial Officer and **Arezki Haddad** as Chief HR Officer. Additionally, **Michelle Davies** will add ESAP New Markets to her existing remit as General Manager Pacific; while **Oliver Monceau** will add Meetings and Events to his Singapore and Malaysia portfolio.

Travel aggregation giant **Skyscanner** has promoted **Bryan Batista** to the role of Chief Executive Officer. Taking over from John Mangelaars next month, Batista steps up from his current role as Chief Operating Officer.

**Adam Toohey** has been promoted at **Viator** to the role of Associate Director, Supplier Connectivity. In nearly a decade with the TripAdvisor brand, Toohey has established himself as an API integration authority.

After nearly 20 years at Qantas, **Rebecca Franklin** has taken on a new challenge with **Ethihad Airways** as its Head of Projects and Operation Enablement. Franklin has relocated to Abu Dhabi for her new role.

**The Port Authority of NSW** will install **John McKenna** as Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately. McKenna steps up to the top job having previously served as Chief Customer and Commercial Officer. In his time with the organisation so far, McKenna has played an instrumental role in developing the strategic and customer wings of the government body.

**Adventure World** has welcomed **Sasha McAlister** as its new Marketing Manager. McAlister's latest move within TTC sees her add another brand to her marketing pedigree, having previously led or assisted with marketing activities for several TTC brands over the last four years.

As it accelerates its global expansion into the Asia Pacific, **Elegant Hotel Collection** has appointed **Anita Chan** as its Chief Executive Officer. Chan joins the hotel collective after a decade as CEO for Compass Edge.

Travel technology giant **Sabre Corporation** has recruited **Jennifer Catto** as its new Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, tasked with shaping the company's global marketing strategy and brand.

**Pullman Brisbane King George Square** has named **Dominic O'Donnell** as its new General Manager. O'Donnell brings more than 20 years in hospitality to his new role at hotels in Cairns and the Sunshine Coast.

Luxury small ship operator **Unforgettable Croatia** has named **Christina Anderson** as its new Head of Human Resources. Anderson will be based in the UK and will lead all HR matters for the company's operations in the UK, Croatia, Greece, USA, Australia and South Africa.

## Time to party at FTE



**ON TUE**, the Fiji Tourism Exchange (FTE) hosted a glamorous closing event at the Urban Sugar Beach Club at the Crowne Plaza in Nadi Bay.

In an interview with **Travel Daily**, Tourism Fiji CEO Brent Hill said this year's FTE was "our best one yet", off the back of reaching a record-breaking one million visitors at the end of 2024.

"Now the next step is about building more hotels to accommodate and match the capacity that's coming in with our airline," Hill said of Fiji Airways' new routes to Dallas and Cairns.

"The main thing we really want to do from now is to keep that momentum going.

"If we can keep track to last year's numbers this year, that would be fantastic, but we also want that sustainable growth."

One of the insights Hill heard from operators at this year's FTE is how Fiji is well-placed to offer the stress-free holiday that plenty of modern-day tourists now crave, particularly in the current anxious climate.

"There is so much political drama and lots of geopolitical issues flaring up around the world," Hill observed.

"So Fiji [needs] to dial up the happiness [and] dial up the fact that it is almost like an oasis.

"It's what everyone needs and what they're looking for.

"They want to be able to relax and forget that stuff," he added.

During his keynote, Andre Viljoen, Chair of the Tourism Fiji Board and MD & CEO of Fiji Airways, revealed the country's ambition to grow the sector by FJ\$1 billion by 2027.

FTE welcomed more than 550 attendees from 19 countries, including 130 international buyers and 84 seller companies.

Hill hinted that next year's FTE may take place in Mar to allow smaller operators to attend.

**Pictured** at the closing party: Suzanne Blitzstein, Alg Vacations; Anand Achari, Go Dirty Tours; Lot Wefers Bettink, Adventures in Fiji; and Liz Scott, Go Dirty Tours.

Read about Fiji's tourism future by clicking **HERE**. *JHM*

### EDITORIAL

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