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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily has 10 pages, plus a cover wrap from **Emirates**, with a photo page from **Qantas**, a **Sustainability** page, and full pages from:

- CLIA
- EVA Air
- Abercrombie & Kent

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Web Travel bounces back

AFTER some gusty headwinds last year, Web Travel Group has bounced back to form, posting a record revenue, TTV and EBITDA for the six months to Sep 2025 (*TD* breaking news).

Bookings for WebBeds were close to 20% higher for the H1 period, fuelled by growth across all regions, but especially gains made in the Americas.

An impressive 22% rise in TTV to \$3.17 billion was also recorded, alongside a 20% increase in revenue to \$204.8 million and a 21% spike in EBITDA to \$94m.

However, while there was plenty to cheer about for shareholders, the key metric of statutory net profit after tax showed a decline from \$37.5 million to \$26.9

CLIA offers rewards

CLIA members have the chance to earn bonus commission or rewards worth over \$2,000.

Find out more on **page 11**.

WebBeds

million compared to H1 last year.

Eating away at the bottom line were several costs that rose moderately, including the expenses column growing by around \$18 million to \$110.6 million, as well as corporate overheads drifting upwards by close to \$5 million.

Reflecting on the latest results, Managing Director John Guscic said the business continued to build out its global marketplace to deliver profitable growth.

"WebBeds is a highly scalable business, and we are maintaining market leading TTV growth rates without any margin decline and the investment we have made in contracting staff is expected to have meaningful impact to results in FY27," Guscic said.

The start of H2 has showed a favourable TTV trend, up 23% on the same period last year. *AB*

Win with Emirates

EMIRATES is giving agents a chance to win a \$30 Prezzy gift card just by booking their clients on an exciting Dubai stopover.

To enter, they simply add their details in the Emirates Partner Portal for every booking made - find out more on the **cover page**.



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Hurry, competition closes 11.59pm (AEST) 28 November 2025.

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London eyes tourist tax

LONDON is being tipped to introduce a tourism tax after the city's Mayor and proponent of such a scheme, Sadiq Khan, yesterday welcomed reports that one may be announced soon.

Khan has long championed a levy on tourists staying in the Greater London boundary of the English capital, and now a bill that is currently progressing through British parliament will give him the authority to implement one.

Government estimates suggest a tax on travellers lodging within London's 32 boroughs and the City of London would generate around £240m a year (A\$487m).

However, the model of tourist tax likely to be used is less clear, with a recent feasibility report citing two viable alternatives.

The system gaining the most momentum in local press is a percentage model that would slug visitors 5% of the overnight accommodation charge for every



day of their stay.

Under that option, an Aussie staying in a hotel for £200 (A\$405) a night over the course of a week would have to fork out an extra £70 (A\$142).

While a percentage model would raise more money than a flat fee approach, critics have pointed out that it could possibly damage the booming luxury travel economy, and also make it more expensive than a host of rival European cities.

Scotland and Wales have both recently introduced taxes on overnight visitors. **AB**

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Win with AAT Kings

AAT Kings and the South Australian Tourism Commission have teamed up on a new agent rewards initiative, 'Learn, Sell & Win', giving sellers who bone up on all things SA the chance to win a seven-night SA tour.

All AAT Kings A-Lister travel agents who complete the South Australian Tourism Commission's SA EXPERTS online training and promote AAT Kings' SA Guided Holidays by Mar 2026 are eligible. Start your expert journey **HERE**.

Eva Air training hub

BECOME an expert on Taiwan with Eva Air's Travel Academy, jam-packed with many important topics - read more on **page 12**.

AKTG goes small

FROM Egypt and China to Spain, India and beyond, AKTG's epic small journeys are now on sale for 2026 and 2027 - find out more details on **page 13**.

Travel Daily
ON LOCATION



SYDNEY

Today's issue of **TD** is coming to you courtesy of **FACTS**.

DELEGATES have arrived at the ICC Sydney for the Festival of Aviation Corporate Travel Summits (FACTS).

The conference kicks off with a welcome chat led by FACTS CEO Derek Sadubin, followed by a full day of sessions focusing on key topics such as the big picture outlook for travel, what's next for business events, the latest in travel tech, and updates from major carriers like Qantas and Virgin Australia.

Attendees will hear from an impressive speaker line-up, including representatives from Webjet Group, American Express Global Business Travel, WSI, Cvent, and more.

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 **AMAWATERWAYS**



CT honours Wolf

CT PARTNERS' respected founding member Alan Wolf has been honoured with the travel network's first-ever CT Partners Spirit Award, recognising two decades of leadership, mentorship and unwavering commitment to the group's culture.

The award was presented at its 2025 annual conference in Singapore, with Chair Joe Araullo paying tribute to the "completely surprised" recipient.

A new dawn in 2026

REGISTRATIONS for International Anzac Day Dawn Services at Gallipoli and Villers-Bretonneux in France are now open, with bookings still available for Mat McLachlan Battlefield Tours' 2026 Anzac Day expert-led trips to Gallipoli, the Western Front, Ypres in Belgium, and Hellfire Pass in Thailand.

Click [HERE](#) for more on available tours, including new river cruises.

Biz travel future is bright

BUSINESS travel is on a positive trajectory despite slow growth since the pandemic, according to Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) CEO Suzanne Neufang.

Global spend for the segment is currently worth US\$1.57 trillion - a figure expected to hit US\$1.69 trillion in 2026, and further climb to US\$2 trillion in 2029, Neufang (**pictured**) revealed at FACTS in Sydney this morning.

In Australia, estimated business travel spend is A\$42.7 billion in 2025, making it the 12th-largest business travel market in the world and the 5th largest in APAC.

In fact, Australia's business travel spend has performed better than the global average since COVID, and by the end of this year, is expected to reach 117% of its pre-COVID levels.

Neufang also shared that optimism among travel professionals is highest in the Asia Pacific region, at 55%, compared



to the 43% global average, and significantly higher than the 27% recorded in the region in Jun 2025.

Additionally, 35% of non-US industry professionals said their company is exploring new trade or vendor relationships outside the US - with APAC as the second-most mentioned region.

The GBTA leader also highlighted potential upsides that could impact the business travel forecast, including trade policy stabilisation, key markets regaining momentum, and AI-driven productivity gains, while potential dampeners included rising tariffs and tensions, economic uncertainty, and geopolitical conflicts. *JM*

WA on the front line

HELLOWORLD Travel's Frontliners Forum will head west in 2026, with Perth named by CEO Andrew Burnes to host the conference from 19-22 to 22 Nov.

Partnering with Tourism Western Australia as the major sponsor, next year's gathering will showcase a range of WA travel experiences for delegates.

"Our strong and long-standing partnership with Tourism WA will ensure an outstanding program, and we know our agents will thoroughly enjoy everything Perth and Western Australia have to offer," Burnes said.

The Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre will play host to the major Helloworld event.



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AI hotel solution arrives

AI-POWERED hotel booking solution Pathfndr.io has appointed ITbyUs CEO Dave Upton as its representative in Australia and the APAC region.

The ambition of Pathfndr.io is to rapidly expand its footprint in Australia by targeting travel advisors, offering sellers an easy way to integrate an accommodation booking engine into their own websites.

Pathfndr.io's platform offers agents access to over 500,000 properties in more than 80,000 destinations worldwide, pledging an advanced AI-powered booking engine that ranks hotels by price, reviews, amenities and location.

When adopted, users gain highly personalised recommendations that can be used for both leisure and corporate clients.

Other features include flexible sorting and filtering, such as by cancellation policy and meal plan, as well as real-time price



comparisons, multi-currency support, and a bulk booking option for up to 10 rooms in a single transaction.

Further benefits include a 'book now, pay later' option, refundable bookings, and savings of between 10% and 40% compared to traditional travel agency rates.

However hotels are only the first tranche of what is to come, with Upton (pictured) confirming Pathfndr.io will also expand offerings to include flights in Australia, as well as activities, ferries, transfers, and European rail bookings. AB



Travel Daily
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TRAINING ACADEMY

Strike may impact 15k

AIR NZ cabin crew are heading towards a strike, planned for 08 Dec, after unions failed to reach a deal on pay with the airline in the latest round of discussions.

Talks have been ongoing for six months with three unions involved - a further meeting will take place on Wed.

Air New Zealand CEO Nikhil Ravishankar told the *NZ Herald* that the strike could affect somewhere between 10-15,000 customers if it goes ahead.

"This next round of conversations are going to be critical, and as we get the finer details locked down, and if we do end up going down that path [a strike], the first people we'll notify are the customers."

President of the Flight Attendants Association of NZ, Craig Featherby, assured travellers that whatever happened, there would be no strike action in the seven days leading up to Christmas.

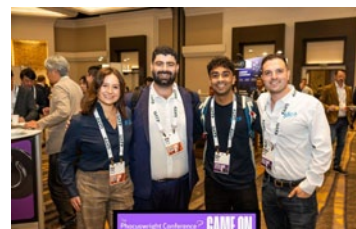
A big slice of the US

SLICE Pay stepped onto the global stage recently at this year's Phocuswright Conference in San Diego, which was attended by industry leaders, investors and travel brands.

During the event, the Slice Pay team shared the story of its accelerating growth and ambitions to become a major lay-by and flexible payments platform for the US travel market.

According to Head of Commercial, Michael Krywyn, Slice Pay has attracted interest from booking platforms, airlines, OTAs and travel agents.

Krywyn added that Slice Pay's expansion into the US has "exceeded expectations".



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Collaboration a key plank for Link

ONE of the secret weapons in Link Group's arsenal is a major emphasis on collaboration between its growing member base, it was revealed at its recent Link Live event in Brisbane.

The culture of knowledge sharing has been carefully fostered by the group's upper management, with co-founder Anthony Goldman (pictured) telling *Travel Daily* there are plenty of business opportunities on offer for all agencies to enjoy.

"I've always been a believer in the idea that there's enough business for everyone, and [at Link] we don't compete against each other," Goldman explained.

"There is still a large proportion of Australians who don't use a travel agency, so there's plenty of business to be had for everyone."

"Occasionally we compete in a pitch if it's a corporate scenario, but certainly for leisure, there's plenty of business for everyone".



While there are coordinated collaboration strategies at play, Link Chair Danielle Galloway said it was the organic co-operation made possible by the group's culture that is "really special".

"In terms of what we call uncoordinated collaboration, [our members] are also like-minded in terms of the success, growth and prosperity that they all want to have together and that is naturally happening at Link."

One of the four major pillars of future success unveiled by co-founder Penny Spender over the weekend included building on that strong culture of collaboration as well (*TD* 24 Nov).

Another important plank of that collaboration is the role that Flight Centre Travel Group plays in terms of member resources.

"With an agency group like Goldman, we now view each of the FCTG departments as an extension of our company because of our partnership in Link," Goldman explained.

"If I've got an issue with technology for example, I can call the Flight Centre technology people and have a conversation - I could never afford that resource as an independent agency."

"If I've got an issue with GDS, I can get advice from the best experts in the country, so [being in Link] is really an investment in expertise," he added. *AB*

QF between the flags

QANTAS and Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) have enlisted Australian swimmer Cody Simpson to encourage Australians to complete their Beach Passport ahead of the summer season.

The Beach Passport is a complimentary online training resource that provides essential water safety education.

In its first season, more than 37,000 Aussies completed the program, equipping themselves with critical knowledge to assess beach conditions and navigate Australian waters safely.

"The Beach Passport is such a simple but effective tool that can make a real difference, so whether completing it for the first time, or renewing for your second year, it only takes 15 minutes to complete," Simpson said.



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- Adult, Senior, Youth, Child
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Status keeps it in the family

CELEBRITY Cruises President Laura Hodges Bethge believes the Royal Caribbean Group's (RCG) status match program will allow the company to keep its guests within its family of brands at different junctures and stages of life (*CW* 21 May 2024).

The cruise line's head, speaking to *Travel Daily* on board last week's christening voyages of the new *Celebrity Xcel* (pictured) said Celebrity cruisers - as well as those from its sister brands Royal Caribbean and Silversea Cruises - now have a wider variety of choices to make depending on their reason for travel.

"We think about it less as demographic and more as occasion," Hodges Bethge said.

"We work really hard at the Royal Caribbean Group to make sure that each of our brands are very distinct.

"So what we see is [when] I want to go to Antarctica, I want



to do that with Silversea, or if we have a couple that's travelling with Celebrity, but now they're going out on a vacation with their grandkids, they're going to naturally select Royal Caribbean.

"I think it's great for the Royal Caribbean Group, and I think the important thing for us is that making sure every single brand is very distinct."

The status match strategy will help the company avoid leakage to other cruise companies, particularly as multigenerational travel grows in popularity, Hodges Bethge added. *MS*

ATIA UPDATE

from Nina Hedges, Compliance Manager



"WE SEE what you're doing differently - keep going."

This is a phrase the team

at ATIA has heard often in recent years, reflecting the remarkable transformation across the association.

That recognition isn't driven by stunts, but by something far more meaningful: the growing chorus of member voices shaping the future of our industry.

For many years, ATIA's direction was shaped through traditional structures that served the organisation well.

But as our industry has evolved - particularly since COVID - we've recognised the need to broaden how members can contribute, collaborate and influence the future of their association.

We are focused on creating more opportunities for meaningful involvement, ensuring members feel heard and actively included in shaping ATIA's priorities and initiatives.

Our goal is to build an environment where every member, regardless of size, location or specialty, feels that ATIA is their team and is somewhere they can engage, share insight, and play a role in strengthening industry.

That is why we have invested so strongly in our committees, working

groups and pulse meetings.

These forums have become some of ATIA's most effective tools for gathering genuine insights.

Members come together to share lived experience, identify challenges, test ideas and influence solutions.

Each time more members step forward, discussions deepen, decisions are better informed, and our collective sense of ownership grows.

This year's nomination period is more than a procedural milestone it is an invitation for two of our most important committees.

The Council of Independent Travel Agents and Advisors (CTA) will champion independent travel agents and advisors, ensuring their unique needs and perspectives are clearly represented. Along side the Accreditation Advisory Committee which plays a critical role in shaping accreditation standards, strengthening governance, and driving continuous improvement across the industry.

Whether you're a long-standing member or newly joined, a large organisation or a small independent operator, your voice matters. At ATIA, we are listening. In an industry defined by constant change, listening, really listening, is one of the most important things an association can do.

If you've ever wanted to shape the conversation, step forward before 30 Nov and become a leader of our Industry - details [HERE](#).

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[AGENT TOOLKIT](#)

VA dines out on deal

VIRGIN Australia's Velocity program has launched a new partnership with hospitality ordering platform me&u, allowing members to earn points while dining out.

Members who link accounts will earn 100 bonus points and also earn one point for every \$5 spent on eligible orders at more than 3,000 participating venues.

"We've seen a 40% increase in members earning points through non-air partners," Velocity Frequent Flyer Chief Executive Officer Nick Rohrlach said.

From shopping at Myer to dining out with me&u, we're opening up more ways for our members to earn and use points, on the ground and in the air".

Agents lend epic support

IN AN admirable display of collaboration and support, several Travellers Choice agents recently made the journey to Canberra to volunteer at the second annual Epic Travel Expo to support their fellow advisors.

The event - aimed at helping travellers connect with travel brands, agents, and the best deals - was hosted by four Travellers Choice members - Jamison Travel, Travel Makers, Weston Cruise & Travel and Queanbeyan City Travel & Cruise - and attracted more than 4,000 members, as well as 70 suppliers.

One of the Travellers Choice volunteers was Kathy Granger from Burnie Travelcentre in



Tasmania, who flew up to Canberra via Melbourne where she was joined by Boomerang Travel Centre's Debi Kitt, who had driven 200km to the city from Kyabram in the Goulburn Valley.

Zoe Eagleton from Riverland Travel in Maclean in regional NSW and Michelle Barker from EMBARK travel in Newcastle also linked arms with fellow members.

"You just can't replicate the kind of culture that makes something like that possible," Barker said.

"Everyone helps without expectation and because it's just great seeing your friends succeed... I would help them out again in a heartbeat."

Jamison Travel Director Michelle Everson expressed her gratitude for her fellow Travellers Choice members' support.

"We were overwhelmed by the level of demand last year, and we knew this year would be even bigger, so receiving support from experienced colleagues meant we were able to deliver a much better experience for everyone involved," Everson said.

"We didn't put out anything asking other members to come along, they just volunteered.

It really distilled the whole culture of Travellers Choice into a single day," she added. JHM

Transnusa adds more

INDONESIAN carrier Transnusa will introduce three new weekly flights from Perth to Denpasar from 03 Dec, adding to several increases in recent months.

This expansion of frequency for the new Bali player takes its number of flights from Perth to Bali to 17 flights a week.

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ATAC MEMBER ACQUISITION MANAGER

The **Australian Travel Agents Co-operative (ATAC)** is expanding and seeking a dynamic Acquisition Manager to champion the growth of its community of independent travel agents and entrepreneurs.

This newly created role will focus on identifying and onboarding new member agencies, strengthening relationships across the travel industry, and supporting ATAC's mission to empower independent businesses through shared strength, collaboration, and purpose.

The ideal candidate will have proven business development experience within the travel sector, exceptional relationship-building skills, and a genuine passion for helping independent travel entrepreneurs grow and succeed.

Location: Flexible (hybrid/remote options available)

Applications close: 28 November 2025

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Agents rock out on Qantas famil

FIFTEEN lucky travel agents won the Qantas Supernova Seat competition, scoring themselves a ticket to see Oasis live in Sydney, including flights and accommodation.

As part of the campaign and in partnership with VisitBritain, five of the winners scored the grand prize, which included Premium Economy flights on the Qantas A380 with a five night tour of London and Manchester, the hometown of the legendary band.

During the famil, agents visited iconic landmarks and world-class hotels, such as The Londoner, and even explored London in classic Mini Coopers with smallcarBIGCITY before exploring the English countryside on a Luxury Vacations UK day tour.

In Manchester, the group were joined by Marketing Manchester to walk in the footsteps of musical legends, toured one of the world's most famous football clubs and stayed at The Edwardian Manchester.

"I'm sad to say I am sure I'll never participate in a famil as amazing as this one, from the super comfortable seats in Premium on QF1, to the always impressive sights and squirrels of London," gushed Chris Kunz.

"But the real treasure was discovering the spirit of Manchester - the community pride, the rich history, and of course the music, food and culture.

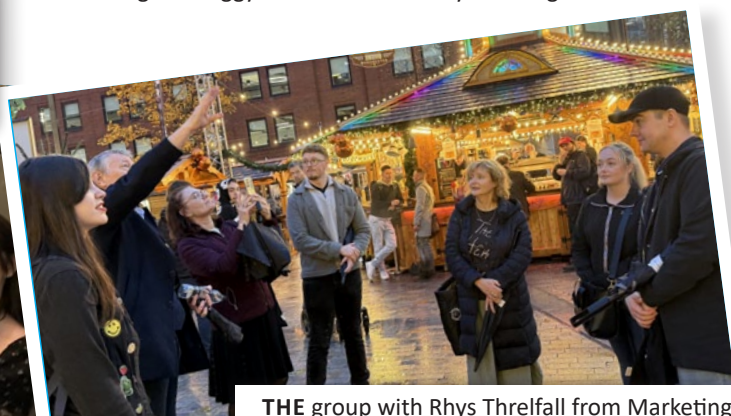
I'll be selling the baggy trousers off this city when I get home."



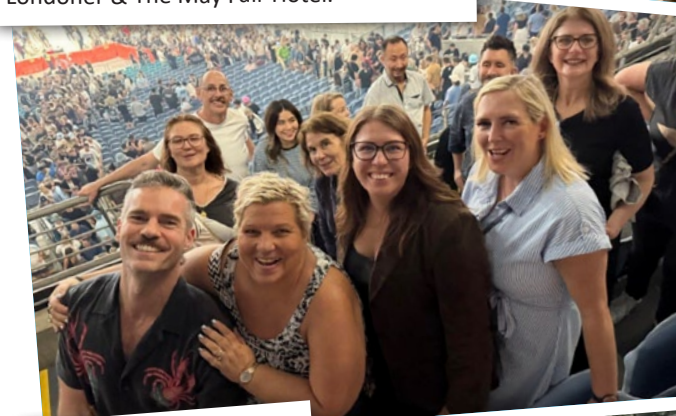
REECE Fagan, Windsong Travel; **Lauren Zakrzewski**, Flight Centre; **Ella Fulton**, Sanford Travel; **Chris Kunz**, Flight Centre; **Peta Evans**, VisitBritain; and **Roberta Follador**, Spencer Travel; at Manchester City Football Club.



WHITCOMB'S Restaurant at The Londoner with **Joao Teixeira**, Director of Sales for The Londoner & The May Fair Hotel.



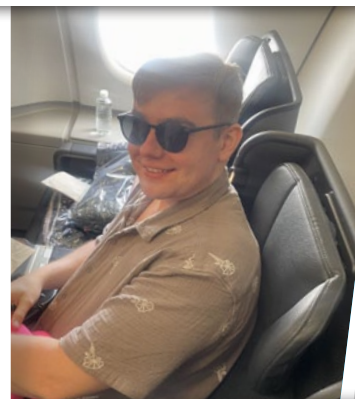
THE group with **Rhys Threlfall** from Marketing Manchester and **Jonathan Schofield**, Discover Manchester Music Walking Tour.



ROCKING out at Oasis.



CHATSWORTH House, on a **Rabbie's** day tour.



REECE Fagan enjoying QF1.



VISITING Beckford Arms on a Luxury Vacations UK day tour.



EXPLORING London in a Mini.



ELLA Fulton at Manchester City Football Club.



EK/ENOC MoU

EMIRATES has announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ENOC Group to explore and develop joint initiatives for the supply of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) to the carrier at its Dubai hub.

The MoU creates a framework for feasibility studies to assess SAF supply opportunities in Dubai, including supply chain infrastructure, production capabilities, commercial viability and more.

"Establishing reliable SAF supply in our Dubai hub is a key priority, and this collaboration allows us to assess the most viable pathways for integration," said Emirates' Adel Al Redha, Deputy President and Chief Operating Officer.

SYD backs NSW to be major SAF hub

SYDNEY Airport has heavily backed the NSW Renewable Fuel Strategy, lauding it as an "important step towards establishing a domestic sustainable aviation fuel industry" while calling for a SAF refinery to be co-located in the nearby suburb of Kurnell.

Scott Charlton, Sydney Airport CEO said, "NSW has joined the race to become Australia's leader on renewable fuels - we are both one of the largest producers of sustainable feedstocks like canola and the largest users of conventional aviation fuel.

"Around 40% of Australia's aviation fuel uplift occurs at Sydney Airport which makes us the natural home for SAF.

"A SAF refinery co-located with the existing aviation fuel import facilities at Kurnell is a project that would cement



NSW as a regional leader in SAF production," he added.

Charlton also took the opportunity to applaud the NSW Premier, Chris Minns.

Last week NSW committed up to \$170 million in funding to renewable fuel and biomethane production, while up to \$130 million in funding will be provided through the Net Zero Manufacturing Initiative to aid emerging technologies and the

growth of local manufacturing.

Bioenergy Australia Chief Executive Officer Shahana McKenzie said, "Heavy transport, mining fleets, manufacturing, maritime and aviation all need viable low carbon alternatives right now.

"Renewable fuels and biomethane offer immediate, scalable solutions for these sectors, and NSW is positioning itself to meet that demand." *DF*

Aurora's impact

AURORA has released its *2025 Impact Report*, showcasing major strides in environmental stewardship, scientific collaboration, and community engagement around the world.

The report details Aurora's measurable progress, reaffirming its commitment to protect the environment. Read the full report [HERE](#).

Ponant powers towards less pollution in latest green report

PONANT has announced it has lowered CO2 emissions per cruise day by 14% compared to its reference year of 2018, reaching almost half of its 2030 target of a 30% reduction.

The statistic was released in its recent *Sustainability Report 2024*, which also announced that the group had embarked on a program of naval design and propulsion innovation.

Called Swap2Zero, it is a

research and development project co-funded by the European Union's Innovation Fund (Emissions Trading System) which aims to aid in Ponant's goal of Net Zero by 2050.

Ponant also revealed that the elimination of single-use plastics was now 100% operational, with 20 tonnes of plastic waste avoided in one year, while the Group added that it has committed to reducing and



treating all waste, 100% of which is now sorted on board. *DF*



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MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.647

AFTER a tough weekend which saw the dollar dip to lows not seen since August against the Greenback, the rebound has begun slowly.

All eyes are on the RBA which will make another interest rate decision on 09 Dec, with pundits expecting it will hold while the property market in Australia continues its upwards trajectory, putting more pressure on those looking to get into the market.

It could potentially give them the incentive to spend their hard earned elsewhere, like travel, regardless of how the AUD is performing - which is still weak overall.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.647
UK	£0.493
NZ	\$1.152
Euro	€0.561
Japan	¥101.49
Thailand	฿20.955
China	¥54.589
South Africa	11.194
Canada	\$0.913
Bitcoin	0.00000730

Accor's 'silly' launch



ACCOR has launched a National Silly Sock Day, a new annual initiative to raise awareness and funds to support women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

More than 5,000 pairs of limited edition socks are available for purchase at participating Accor hotels nationwide, with proceeds going towards additional beds in domestic violence shelters.

Each pair also helps to expand DV Collective's growing network of shelters, services and counselling organisations.

"Domestic violence affects far too many families in Australia, and the lack of safe accommodation is one of the most critical barriers for women and children seeking help,"

explained Accor's Chief Operating Officer in the Pacific region, Adrian Williams.

"National Silly Sock Day is a simple but powerful way for our teams, guests and communities to come together and drive real impact," he added.

To further raise awareness across its network, for the past three weeks, Accor has engaged its people in various fundraising events, storytelling and team activations, while hotels also host displays and morning teas.

Accor's new initiative coincides with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the beginning of the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. *JHM*



Window Seat

THE National Museum in Wroclaw in Poland recently invited Robert De Niro to pay it a visit, as museum officials realised that one of its portraits features a 17th century man who is a dead ringer for the famous actor.

The painting is called 'Portrait of Johann Vogt and was painted by Bartholomeus Strobel the Younger in 1628.

"The canvas shows a mature man with a moustache and a distinctive pointed beard...the face of the sitter resembles that of contemporary American film actor Robert De Niro - the similarity is striking," the museum said on its site.

Unfortunately, De Niro declined the invitation, possibly because his visit had stirred some controversy, as a luxury hotel project that he co-owns had sparked criticism from residents who are fighting against a historic post-war building being turned into a Nobu Hotel.



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