

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of industry news, plus full pages from:

- APT
- Nexus DMC

QR back to ADL

QATAR Airways has announced its return to Adelaide today, linking South Australians to more than 160 destinations worldwide via Doha, with the route also continuing onwards to Auckland (*TD* 22 Apr 2026).

The carrier suspended the daily service in late Feb due to the Middle East conflict and resulting airspace disruptions. *JM*

A big signup bonus

AGENTS who register a new account with Nexus DMC before 30 Jun will receive \$15,000 in travel credits.

See more details on **page 10**.

Peace deal to have a "major" impact

EXCLUSIVE

THE positive impact on the travel sector stemming from a formal peace deal brokered between the United States and Iran cannot be underestimated, Flight Centre Travel Group CEO Graham Turner has declared.

Speaking with *TD* this morning, Turner said assuming the peace agreement holds, it will represent a "major positive change" for Australian travellers heading to the UK and Europe in particular.

While Turner suggested that some Aussies will remain apprehensive about travelling through the Middle East initially, he predicted that confidence would bounce back strongly in only a short space of time.

"The average seasoned traveller is reasonably comfortable already with flying through the Middle East, but obviously there are still people who will be nervous.

"So, assuming this [peace deal]



does hold, I think it will make a major difference over the next few weeks."

Turner said that from mid-Jul, travellers would start to become "pretty comfortable" with using Middle Eastern carriers again and that confidence levels would shift back to normal historic levels.

"The Middle Eastern carriers are really important to Australia... pre-war they accounted for about 35% of traffic to Europe and the UK - which is a huge number.

"They are quality carriers and safe carriers, so obviously, we want them to be providing competition to the other parts of the world as well."

When asked about the impact that the prospect of the Strait of Hormuz reopening would have on airfares, Turner said prices would probably remain higher for at least the next few months.

"Fares will not come down overnight, it will take a bit of time for the capacity to really come back and for the confidence of people flying via the Middle East."

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the Australian Travel Industry Association hailed the peace deal as "positive news", adding it would continue to work with the Govt to ensure Australia's travel advice reflects conditions on the ground as they develop. *AB*

Show love for APT

APT Luxury Travel is calling on the industry to vote for it in the National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA) this year.

See more info on **page nine**.



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Monday 15th Jun 2026

NTIA votes open

VOTING is now open for the National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA) across selected categories until 11.45pm AEST 17 Jul.

Voters will be asked to rate each nominee based on their trade support and product offering.

While voting was previously measured by the number of votes received, the new rating system "avoids any potential slant towards larger businesses from a purely popularity-based vote".

Votes can be cast **HERE**. JM



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HLO combines conferences

HELLOWORLD Travel has unveiled the new Helloworld Travel Summit 2027, a major network conference with Las Vegas confirmed as the destination that will bring together members from across the company.

Revealed to much excitement on Sat at the end of the 2026 Owner Managers Conference in Cairns (**CW** 12 Jun), the announcement positions the event as an expanded experience for the entire network for the first time ever.

The event will include Helloworld Travel's branded and associate networks, Helloworld Business Travel, Magellan, My Travel Group, Alatus, Express Travel Group, and MTA.

New Zealand networks will also be invited, including Helloworld-branded First Travel Group, You Travel, The Travel Brokers, and My Travel Group.

Working with Brand USA, Travel Nevada, and the Las Vegas Visitor & Convention Bureau, the summit will take place from 16 to 20 May.

Chief executive officer & managing director Andrew

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MWTOURS



Burnes said the 2027 Helloworld summit will mark a significant evolution of the company's conference program, expanding its scale, reach, and ambition.

"We are thrilled to be redefining our conference offering for 2027," Burnes said.

"For the first time, this will be a unified event that brings together all of our retail networks, creating a larger, more dynamic platform for connection, collaboration and business growth."

Further summit details, including program highlights and registration information, will be released in the coming months.

Burnes said although the plan is to go back to a multi-conference format in 2028, the single, mega-summit may return if the format proves popular. MS

Royal's new Oasis

ROYAL Caribbean has celebrated its soon-to-be-named seventh Oasis-class vessel (**TD** 24 Oct 2025) with a keel-laying ceremony at the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard in Saint-Nazaire, France.

The event marks the official start of assembly on the cruise line's brand-new vessel, set for a 2028 debut.

She will be Royal Caribbean's first Oasis-class ship since 2024, (**TD** 17 Jun 2024). JB

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Members speak on merger

THE Council of Australian Tour Operators' (CATO) merger with the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has been met with general applause from CATO members who have also noted that the work starts now.

When asked for her perspective on the situation, Renee Cornelissen, group manager - international sales at Journey Beyond, said: "[We] believe the merger of CATO and ATIA has the ability to significantly strengthen the collective voice of the Australian tourism industry."

"To ensure the merger is successful, it is crucial for both members and leaders to be open to the new pathway and partnership together as one voice," she added.

Cornelissen urged both CATO and ATIA to continue to have clear member communication and embrace the wider collective. The opportunity to improve

government lobbying was also noted by a number of members.

Globus' local boss Chris Hall said, "It was clear...through the COVID crisis that the industry needed a united voice to speak to governments, regulatory bodies, media, and others".

He suggested that since then, the industry bodies have needed to ensure that clear messages are delivered to the appropriate people and the outcomes include all areas of the industry and not just certain parts of it.

He added that, "This merger allows this to happen".

Entire Travel Group's sales & marketing director Greg McCallum was also positive.

"The merger creates the ability to deliver stronger outcomes for the industry, particularly in achieving greater influence with government," he said.

For more commentary on the merger, click [HERE](#). *DF*



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B737-10 joins in 2027

VIRGIN Australia will take delivery of its first Boeing 737-10 aircraft in late 2027, marking the next phase of its fleet renewal program with what will be the largest aircraft in its fleet.

The Aussie carrier has 10 firm orders for the B737-10, which it said would provide additional capacity and flexibility across its domestic and short-haul international network, supporting the airline's strategy to operate a more streamlined fleet.

In addition to offering more seats, the larger B737-10 aircraft will also improve environmental performance and fuel efficiency on both domestic and international routes. *AB*



Ritz sales head exits

THE Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection's SVP global sales Patrick Mitchell has exited the luxury cruise business.

Mitchell was with the company for close to a year (*TD* 24 Jun 2025), where he led the global sales strategy and execution.

He departs The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection without a replacement, with the global sales team reporting directly to Chief executive officer Ernesto Fara on an interim basis.

"We look forward to welcoming a new leader who will support the ongoing strength and growth of our global sales organisation, while reinforcing our commitment to delivering exceptional guest experiences at sea," the cruise brand said.

The development follows The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection tapping extra capital from lenders and shareholders to keep its ambitious growth plans on track (*TD* 04 Jun). *AB*



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EY loyal to Condor

ETIHAD Airways inked a frequent flyer agreement with Condor at the IATA AGM in Rio de Janeiro last week, expanding on its existing partnership with the German airline, which it already shares an extensive codeshare arrangement with.

The loyalty tie-up will enable Etihad Guest members to redeem miles across Condor-operated flights, providing access to destinations across Europe, North America, the Caribbean and beyond. *JM*

Billabong bought

QUEENSLAND-BASED tourism operator the CaPTA Group has expanded its wildlife experience portfolio with the acquisition of Billabong Sanctuary in Townsville.

Set on 11 hectares of eucalypt forest, rainforest and wetlands, the sanctuary is home to more than 70 species of Australian mammals, birds and reptiles. *JM*

EK working on insurance

EMIRATES is set to introduce its own insurance product for international travellers in a bid to bolster confidence in Dubai.

While there has been no formal announcement, the carrier's president Tim Clark told *The Financial Times* the airline was working with insurance companies on a "reasonably priced" model that would encourage more travellers to either transit through Dubai or book a stopover holiday.

Key to the proposal is assuring visitors that they would be flown home in the event of any disruption, regardless of being with Emirates or another airline.

"One of the big concerns is that if [travellers] get caught overseas they can't get back... so the group is working with insurance companies to do the right thing," Clark explained.

Around 40,000 people a day are transferring through Dubai's



airport, down from the 100,000 before the conflict began but "growing at pace", Clark added.

More than three months after the war in the Middle East erupted, several countries - including Australia - still have 'do not travel' recommendations in place, meaning travellers cannot get adequate insurance cover for trips to or through the Gulf.

The Australian Travel Industry Association has been especially vocal in trying to lower the Smartraveller advisory level through hubs like Dubai, launching a campaign this month to push the issue (*TD* 02 Jun). *AB*

Book rail and win

AUSTRALIAN travel agents who book their clients with International Rail this month will have the chance to win one of four \$500 gift vouchers.

Every online booking made through International Rail website for Eurostar, Trenitalia and TGV Lyria between 08 Jun and 08 Jul equals one entry into the draw, with no cap on entries.

There are four class levels available for adults and seniors on routes across Europe, with agents now able to book high-speed Trenitalia and TGV Lyria services through to 12 Dec 2026, while Eurostar can be booked in advance until 22 May 2027.

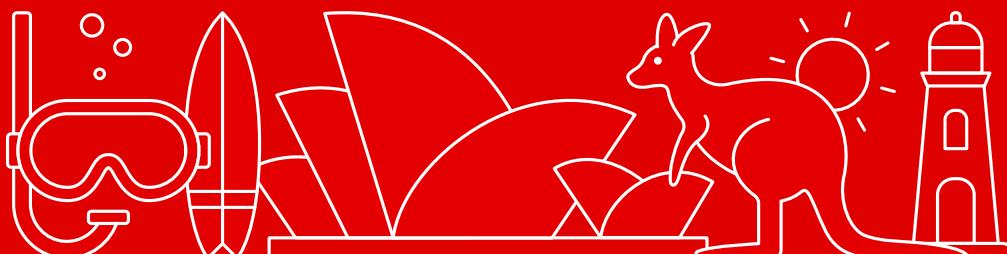
The winning agents will be randomly drawn after the competition closes on 08 Jul and will be notified directly.

Bookings can be made via International Rail's premium online agent platform [HERE](#), while full incentive conditions can be found [HERE](#). *JM*

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Indo claims top position

INDONESIA has reclaimed its title as number one outbound travel market, outperforming New Zealand in Apr to record 161,700 Aussie visits, according to new ABS figures.

The Asian nation added around 40,000 extra trips on the previous month of Mar, and was also well ahead of Apr 2025, which saw Aussie travellers make just shy of 140,000 trips.

While New Zealand was knocked out of top spot, it held on to second position with 135,190 trips, performing marginally ahead of Apr last year.

Meanwhile, China was a big mover in the list, moving up the rankings to fourth spot with 90,930 trips for Apr.

The growing visitation number was well ahead of the 67,970 posted in Apr last year, and also a significant lift on the 56,790 trips made to China in Mar.

China moved ahead of Vietnam



on the list, another Asian market that continues to gain pace among Aussie travellers.

There were 68,000 trips made in Apr to Vietnam, a solid rise on the 58,110 in Mar and close to 15,000 more than Apr 2025.

Of the top 10 outbound markets, only the US saw a reduction in Aussie numbers - a trend that has continued throughout much of the year.

There were 47,900 trips made by Aussies to the US for the month, a drop on the 56,770 recorded in Apr last year, and a dramatic decrease on the 81,130 seen pre-pandemic.

Overall, Aussies made 1,092,380 overseas trips in Apr, an increase of 4.6% on the corresponding month the previous year. *AB*

Travelport AI API

TRAVELPORT has launched its latest API platform, bringing AI capability directly into the workflows of travel agencies for the first time.

The tech company's TripServices product curates content from multiple sources across air, hotel and ancillary services, delivering a more intuitive selling experience from a single connection.

"For our partners, this means better content, smarter recommendations and a level of retailing capability and scale that simply was not possible before," Travelport said.

A key feature of the new API is the ability for travel sellers to access a broader set of tools to manage changes, disruptions and cancellations - cutting the time spent on manual processes.

"TripServices was designed to work with AI and not around it, as AI agents need clean, structured data and deterministic APIs to operate effectively." *AB*

The urban bungy

NZ BUNGY jumping operator AJ Hackett has announced the launch of its SkyRide and SkyJump experiences at Auckland's Sky Tower.

SkyRide is a vertical drop ride, stretching 192 metres from the top of Sky Tower, down to the corner of Victoria and Federal Street, and is to be the world's highest lift-and-descent ride when it launches 26 Jun.

In addition to SkyRide is SkyJump, now available, where riders are suspended in a seated position from the edge of Sky Tower, then dropped at speeds of 100km/h down to ground level. *JB*



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CANBERRA	Monday 24 August
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Decades of dedication



THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) celebrated a significant milestone last week, marking 30 years of service by compliance and membership supervisor, Gina Dounis.

Over the past three decades, Dounis has helped members navigate compliance requirements, accreditation processes, industry change and the day-to-day challenges of running a travel business.

She first joined ATIA in 1990 when it was known as the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA), and has been a fixture at the association since her return in Jun 1996.

Dounis' career has spanned the transition from fax machines to digital communications, the evolution of accreditation programs and the disruption caused by COVID-19.

ATIA chief executive officer Dean Long described Dounis' contribution to the Australian travel sector as "remarkable", highlighting her dedication to the businesses and professionals that make up the community.

"Gina is one of the most respected and recognisable people in Australian travel," Long enthused.

"There would be very few members who haven't picked up the phone and spoken to her at some point during their careers.

"Gina has supported generations of travel professionals and has become part of the fabric of our industry," he added.

"Her contribution to Australian travel cannot be overstated." JM

Pictured: Elaine Trinh, Jessica Best, Jenny Le, Daria Donjerkovic, Dounis, LJ Loch, Christian Hunter, and Long.



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Qld number one in events

QUEENSLAND Premier David Crisafulli has declared his state's goal of becoming the 'events capital of the country', as the destination continues to prepare for Brisbane's 2032 Olympics.

Speaking at the opening of last week's Helloworld Owner Managers Conference (OMC) in Cairns, Crisafulli spoke about some of the events Queensland has recently scheduled.

"We have locked in [the NRL] Magic Round for a decade, and we have also locked in Jose Carreras with Robbie Williams," he enthused.

"We did a deal to bring the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo here a couple of months ago, and we got the figures through yesterday, [it is worth] \$47.2 million for the state's economy, and that only happens because of you," Crisafulli told attendees.

Adding to the Premier's comments was Tourism & Events

Queensland chief executive officer Craig Davidson, who told *Travel Daily* that the destination's events strategy is far broader than bringing headline international acts to the state capital of Brisbane.

"Important is making sure that the mega strategic events that the Premier is driving are spreading across the state," Davidson explained.

"It's also about building events, saying we need to have events that we own ourselves, and not just have to buy and can be transported and moved elsewhere in Australia or internationally," he added.

Davidson said key to this would be providing facilities around Queensland that are capable of hosting large-scale events.

These include Townsville Entertainment & Convention Centre and Cairns Convention Centre, which hosted OMC. MS

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TEG recruits MD, tix

TICKETEK Entertainment Group (TEG) has appointed Amy Mackie as its managing director, ticketing.

The role will see her lead ticketing strategy and operations across Australia, NZ, Asia and UK, working closely with the managers of each region.

Mackie has been with Ticketek Australia since 2009, most recently serving as managing director, ticketing solutions. *JB*

Azamara boosts land

AZAMARA Cruises has announced its 2027 Overland Experiences collection, with 18 itineraries across seven countries.

Each trip allows guests to leave their cruise for a multi-day trip with accommodation, transportation, guided touring, and select meals included.

The collection includes Tahiti, Southeast Asia and China. *JB*

AA making the cut

AMERICAN Airlines will suspend six domestic routes for two months from 05 Aug, as a result of rising jet fuel prices.

Suspensions will include four routes from Los Angeles International Airport: CLE (Cleveland), CMH (Columbus), PIT (Pittsburgh) and IAD (Washington, DC).

AA will also drop two flights from Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT) to smaller California hubs, which include ONT (Ontario), as well as SAC (Sacramento). *JB*

You gotta go Nagano



JAPAN'S Nagano region has launched a new campaign designed to attract travellers all-year round.

Tourism officials from the prefecture are placing a spotlight on its alps, rugged cliffs and forests to entice more travellers to partake in hiking, cycling, scenic drives and sightseeing, as opposed to the traditional skiing, popular among tourists.

Another highlight of the region is its great vantage points for stargazing with Japan's Northern Alps featuring little light pollution.

"There are several hotspots for guests to look into the night's sky with a telescope, Star Village Achi and the famous Senjojiki Cirque are among the best," said Helen Wong, the Australian representative of the Nagano Tourism Organisation.

"Nagano is known for its breathtakingly beautiful nature trails, fresh air and clear skies and is open to anyone wanting to lace up the boots for an adventure.

"Australians will soon realise

there's much more to holidaying in Nagano than challenging the slopes on skis or snowboards."

For Nagano, Australia remains its top long-haul market, with a 90% YoY growth rate, jumping ahead of Asian neighbours such as Taiwan and Hong Kong (**TD** 05 May 2025). *JB*

Launny goes large

LAUNCESTON Airport has recorded its strongest May ever, with over 100,000 passengers coming through its terminal.

The numbers were bolstered by the recent launch of Link Airways' Canberra service (**TD** 08 May), with strong demand coming via the new route.

It is the ninth time in 12 months that the airport has notched up a record month, with 108,230 people travelling through last month, up 3.2% YoY.

Airport officials said the growth numbers are a result of months of hard work to invest more heavily in local tourism. *JB*



Window Seat

TWO Aussie tourists recently learned an unusual but no doubt important lesson during a trip in Paris: never assume that your hotel window is frosted - especially if it appears transparent.

Elle Parker revealed that she and her friend had been under the blissful assumption that their large hotel window was frosted to protect their privacy, and so thought nothing of getting changed in broad daylight in front of an active construction site.

It was not until some of the tradies waved at the girls and made heart gestures that they realised their error.

"Oh my god, we have been stark a** naked standing in front of the window, thinking, 'do you think people can see through this? Nah,'" one of the girls told her followers.

"[We've been] bending over, getting changed, doing our makeup and then we see these men waving on the top of the building," she said.

"They've been there for days, we are f**king idiots, I assumed they would be frosted windows."

The girls were able to laugh about the situation, and many users praised the construction crew for letting them know that they could be seen.



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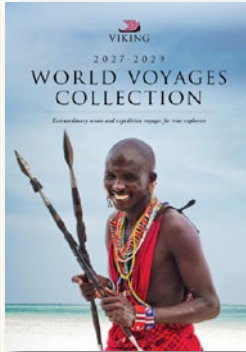
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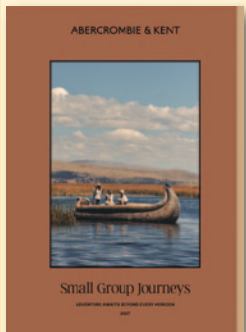
Monday 15th Jun 2026

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Viking - 2027-29 World Voyages Collection
Viking has released its latest brochure, showcasing its World Cruise and Longitudinal World Voyage deployments, including newly unveiled 2028-29 departures. Within the guide, readers can find a map summarising all four World Cruise voyages, including direct links through to detailed itinerary pages. The brochure boasts a refreshed design with larger maps, simplified daily overviews, overnight stays in key ports, as well as highlighted shore excursions and extensions. Additionally, Viking has introduced a new World Cruise calendar as a planning tool for both agents and clients, featuring an overview of ports, countries visited, overnight stays, and more. Read the brochure [HERE](#).



A&K - Small Group Journeys 2027
Abercrombie & Kent's new brochure offers travellers an insight into its expanded collection of journeys across six continents. The publication features dozens of returning favourites along with nine new itineraries, including the 11-day 'Ultimate South Africa Collection' and the 12-day 'Singapore to Bali: Malaysia by Luxury Rail' and 'The Alps to the Adriatic'. Each small group journey is led by a resident tour director, along with local guides who provide unparalleled destination expertise.

Every departure has a maximum group size of 14 guests, and a minimum of two guests. The brochure can be accessed [HERE](#).



Wendy Wu Tours (WWT) - China & Central Asia
WWT has released a brochure featuring its collection of 2026, 2027 and 2028 departures across China and Central Asia, providing insights on the new lineup of itineraries, experiences and cruise & tour combinations. Featured in the brochure is the new 22-day 'Discover China by Rail' trip, with savings of up to \$600pp, alongside the 'Best of Mongolia & Naadam Festival' tour, with savings of up to \$800pp. To coincide with the brochure's launch, WWT is offering savings of up to

\$1,500pp or 50% off single supplement, plus an initial \$99 deposit for a limited time. The brochure can be found [HERE](#).

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An Unforgettable challenge



UNFORGETTABLE Travel
Company recently wrapped up its annual Healthy Office Challenge, which saw a record-breaking 91% of staff participate over a six-week period.

Between 20 Apr-31 May, 78 employees across 19 teams collectively recorded 37,114,601 steps - equivalent to 29,864km or 708 full-length marathons.

The challenge also saw employees take part in 1,654 workouts, 865 yoga sessions and 1,229 meditation sessions, spending 1,648 hours exercising and burning 2.1 million calories.

Throughout the wellness initiative, there were 1,392 messages exchanged in the company's dedicated WhatsApp group, and 376 photos and videos shared.

All staff who participated received an extra two days of annual leave, as well as subsidies for healthy food purchases or gym memberships.

"I'm incredibly proud of how

our team has embraced this year's Healthy Office Challenge, getting involved and supporting one another throughout - as well as witnessing some healthy competition along the way," said Graham Carter, co-founder at Unforgettable Travel Company.

"It has been inspiring to see colleagues prioritise wellbeing in such a positive and motivating way," he added. *JB*

More lens on Coral

CORAL Expeditions and Australian Geographic have added two new departures for the 'Lens on Nature: The Kimberley' tour, now embarking 30 Jul 2027 and 27 Aug 2027.

Sailing on *Coral Discoverer*, the eight-day roundtrip from Broome focuses on photography, wildlife spotting, and exploration of remote landscapes.

Prices start from \$9,400 per person, with guest numbers strictly limited to 60. *JB*

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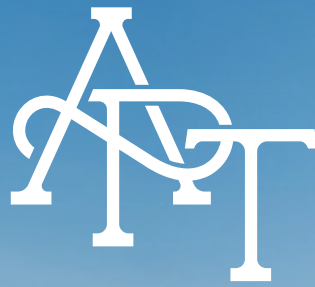
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