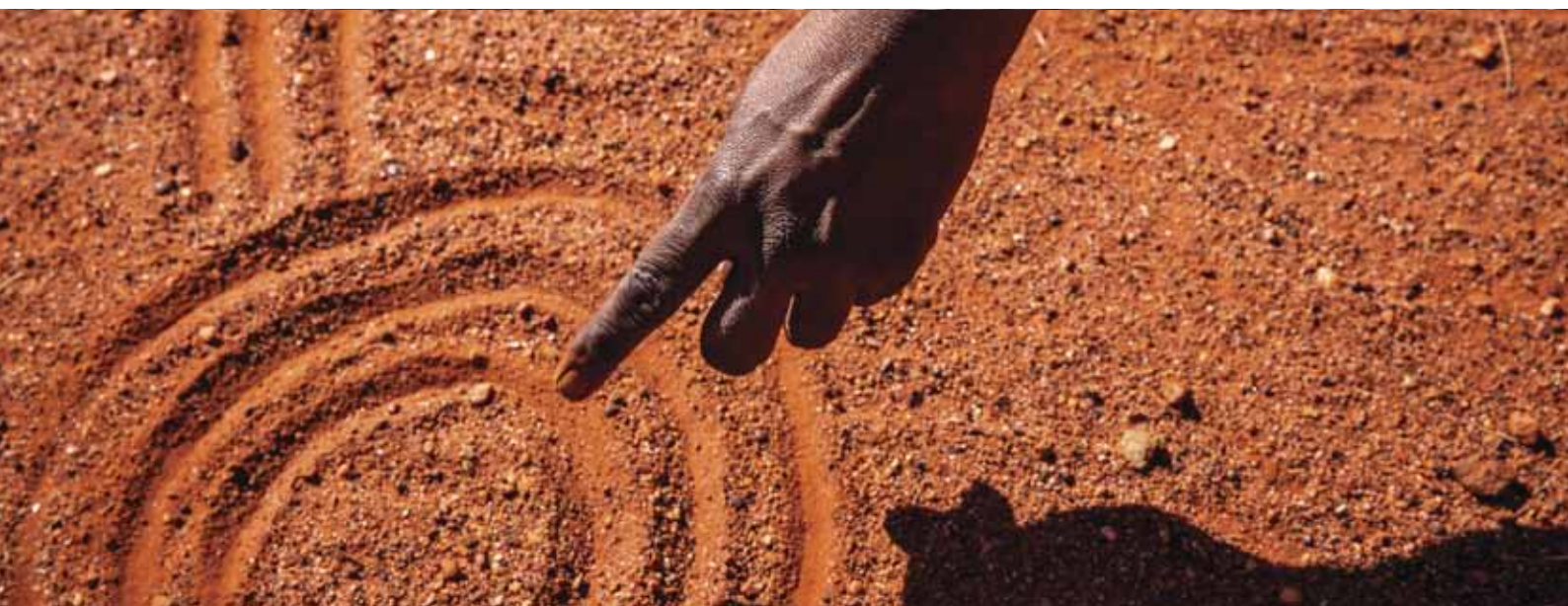


# AFTA TRAVEL PAGES

2020

The official guide of the Australian Federation of Travel Agents





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# WELCOME

*from Jayson Westbury, Chief Executive, AFTA*



## **2019 WAS A BUSY YEAR FOR AFTA AND AFTA MEMBERS ALIKE AS AUSTRALIANS CONTINUE TO HAVE AN APPETITE FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.**

Last year was a record year with more than 11.2 million Australian outbound departures, an increase of 20% from five years earlier. It is pleasing to report that Australians have the financial means to choose to holiday overseas (62.4% of outbound departures) or visit friends and relatives (23.1%). When consumers are travelling, members are strong, the industry is strong and this allows the federation to be strong, deliver

outcomes, advocate and represent for all within the travel industry.

In fact, the 2019 Annual AFTA Owner and Manager survey confirmed that AFTA's submissions and advocacy to government on industry issues is a highly important part of AFTA's membership offering. My commitment to members in 2020 is that AFTA will continue to maintain a sharp focus on ensuring that the travel agency channel is at the heart of travel distribution and that consumers know the true value of the travel agent in the consumer purchase journey.

The Annual Member survey also highlighted that the AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS) continues

to be valued by travel agencies with more than 81% believing it to be fundamental to their business. These figures match what consumers are saying; 82% of Australians will actively seek out and look to book with an ATAS-accredited travel agent (over a non-accredited agent) next time they book a trip. I'd like to thank all AFTA members, for your continued support and commitment to the ATAS scheme in 2019.

As you work hard to grow your business and offer travellers outstanding customer service, AFTA is also working hard to ensure that our marketing activities and messaging is on point. To this end, in September 2019, AFTA undertook consumer research to understand

<sup>1</sup> Smartraveller Report, November 2019

<sup>2</sup> AFTA Travel Trends Report, September 2019

<sup>3</sup> Consumer Research, Compelling reasons to use a travel agent, FiftyFive5 March 2018

“  
In 2020 AFTA will continue to invest every available dollar into savvy marketing strategies that resonate with the consumer, ensure best ROI for member funds, and achieve the goal of reminding consumers that they can rely on travel agents to advise, book and manage their travel

”

the effectiveness of the ATAS TV commercials. The quantitative research was conducted by the independent and global research agency FiftyFive5. I am proud to say that the commercials were successful in shifting perceptions, driving higher levels of trust and increasing future intention to purchase travel through a travel agent. Additionally, the commercials performed well above norms for relevance, enjoyment, understanding and ‘talk-ability’ metrics.

In 2020, AFTA will continue to invest every available dollar into savvy marketing strategies that resonate with the consumer, ensure best ROI for member funds, and achieve the goal of reminding consumers that they can rely on travel agents to advise, book and manage their travel. My hope is that you will proactively join AFTA in our efforts, because, as an industry we are a workforce some 32,000 strong. That’s a lot of mouths to spread the message!

There is no denying that 2019 was somewhat turbulent as agencies and consumers felt the full force of the impact of several sizable insolvencies. These situations, while never pleasant, do highlight the importance of businesses taking every effort to protect themselves. AFTA introduced the AFTA Chargeback Scheme (ACS) in 2017 for these very reasons, providing innovative, RBA compliant protection from consumer chargebacks, as a result of end supplier failures globally. The Scheme was certainly put to the test last year, and I am pleased to say travel agencies participating in ACS during 2019 road the wave safely to shore, reaping the benefits of ACS’s protection and ensuring the survival of their businesses.

This year, 2020, will be an exciting one for AFTA in the education and training space. In November last year, AFTA welcomed Melinda Larkin to the team to help lead and drive education and training outcomes for the travel industry on a national basis.

Melinda joins AFTA with an impeccable background in the skills, workforce, education and careers development environment having had a distinguished career herself in a range of roles, including Family Business Australia, Service Skills Australian (now SkillsIQ), Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) and the Australian

Retailers Association (ARA). Her career has been dedicated to this area of the economy and AFTA will look to this experience, as we advance the education and training needs of the travel industry in Australia.

Melinda will represent AFTA on the Travel Industry Sector and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which at present, is discussing exciting advancements in the Cert III and Cert IV in Travel qualifications.

Finally, I’d like to thank all those who were involved in the biggest event in the travel industry’s calendar, the National Travel Industry Awards. AFTA is proud to be the host and producer of the industry’s awards which are now firmly entrenched as an industry run, professional awards program, designed to celebrate and recognise the many organisations that make up the Australian travel industry value chain. Our gratitude to our major sponsor Qantas and the many others who demonstrate their commitment to the Australian travel community through sponsorship, participation, the judging panel and our event suppliers.

AFTA looks forward to working with you in 2020.

“  
The Scheme was certainly put to the test last year, and I am pleased to say travel agencies participating in ACS during 2019, road the wave safely to shore, reaping the benefits of ACS’ protection and ensuring the survival of their businesses

”

# AFTA BOARD MEMBERS



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Chief Executive Officer,  
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Australian Federation of  
Travel Agents



# AFTA STAFF

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Sue Robinson, Executive Assistant  
Melinda Larkin, Head of Education and Training  
Courtney Duddleston, Head of Strategy and Finance  
Joanne Arancibia, Head of Marketing & Communications  
Belinda Herbert, Marketing and Communications Executive  
Naomi Menon, Head of Operations & Compliance  
Elke Schade, Consumer Liaison Manager  
Amanda Rixon, Membership Manager  
Gina Dounis, Compliance & Membership Supervisor  
Daria Donjerkovic, Finance and Admin Co-ordinator

# AFTA LIFE MEMBERS

Mrs Marie Allom  
Mr Ian Carew-Reid  
Mr Jim Clements  
Mr John Cooper \*  
Mr John Dart OBE RFD ED  
Mr Tom Goldman OAM  
Mr Mike Hatton OAM  
Mr Phil Hoffmann OAM  
Mr Jim Jenkins \*  
Mr Frank Johnson AM\*  
Mr Roy King\*  
Mr Max Krumbeck \*  
Mr Peter Lowry MBE LNZITT  
Mr John Masselos  
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Sir Frank Moore AO  
Mr Mario Perrone  
Mr Osmond Pitts AM RD  
Mr Jim Russell \*  
Mr Bob Steel  
Mrs Beverley Wills \*  
Mr Ian McMahon  
Mr Spiros Alysandratos  
Mr Mike Thompson

*\* denotes deceased*

# AFTA ALLIED MEMBERS

- Aeromedical Solutions
- Air France
- Air New Zealand
- Air Pacific Ltd
- Amadeus IT Pacific
- American Express
- Aussietravelcover
- Aviation Online Pty. Ltd.
- Avis Australia
- British Airways Sydney
- C&M Recruitment
- Captain Cook Cruises Pty. Ltd.
- Carnival Australia PLC
- CoverMore Travel Insurance
- Dubai Tourism (Destination Partner)
- Emirates
- ETB News
- Garuda Indonesia
- Gow-Gates Insurance Brokers Pty Ltd
- Great Canadian Railtour Company Ltd (Rocky Mountaineer)
- Hertz Australia
- KLM Royal Dutch Airlines
- Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board and Los Angeles World Airport
- Marriott International Inc.
- Nightcap Hotels
- Qantas Airways (Platinum Partner)
- Resource Hub
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# NTIA 2019

THANK YOU TO ALL NTIA SPONSORS

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## GOLD SPONSORS



## SILVER SPONSORS



THE AGE The Sydney Morning Herald TRAVELLER

## THE CATO AWARDS SPONSORS



## MEDIA SPONSORS



## MEDIA SUPPORTERS

FOR MORE INFORMATION

W WWW.AFTA.COM.AU E NTIA@AFTA.COM.AU T 02 9287 9900

# 2019 AFTA NATIONAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY AWARDS

**THE 2019 AFTA NATIONAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY AWARDS WERE CELEBRATED ON SATURDAY 20 JULY IN THE GRAND BALLROOM OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE, SYDNEY.**

The world class venue played host to some 1,300 travel industry guests from across the industry – airlines, hotels & car hire providers, tour operators, wholesalers, river and ocean cruise operators and of course leisure, corporate and online travel agencies.

Formalities were led by international award winning personality and TV journalist, Anjali Rao, who ensured a smooth procession through the 44 award categories which celebrated excellence across the travel industry.

Guests were welcomed by Dubai Tourism before AFTA Chief Executive, Jayson Westbury, recognised the 2019 NTIA sponsors, the panel of exceedingly qualified judges and AFTA Life Member Mike Thompson. Guests were also welcomed by major sponsor Qantas through an address from Qantas CFO and incoming CEO of Qantas International, Tino La Spina.

This year, the Gala Dinner included a new segment, the inaugural CATO Awards, which recognised front-line travel consultants across four categories – Group Touring, Adventure, Ski and Free Independent Travel (FIT).

Airline sponsors continued to show their commitment to the travel industry by providing more than \$120,000 worth of lucky door prizes. Major sponsor Qantas made dreams come true by giving away \$10,000 and \$20,000 Qantas travel vouchers. Star Alliance partnered with CATO tour operators once again to give away an extraordinary array of flights and land packages, and Beverage Sponsor, Air New Zealand, had guests hitting the New Zealand slopes (without getting off their chair) with the Kiwi Peak Pros Challenge for a chance to win a trip to one of four stunning New Zealand ski regions.

Guests were entertained by international singing sensation Paulini thanks to Express Travel Group and in true travel industry style, revellers continued their celebrations into the early hours of the morning at the After Party thanks to Singapore Airlines, which was held at The Watershed Darling Harbour.

AFTA wishes to congratulate all winners and finalists and thank the 2019 sponsors, without whom the event would not be possible.

“

The NTIA is the industry's only true awards, it has industry wide representation and a strong history of recognising and celebrating businesses and personnel who demonstrate outstanding service, marketing excellence and business acumen within the travel industry. The event may be put on by AFTA but it is the industry who makes it a celebration to remember each and every year

”

Jayson Westbury,  
Chief Executive, AFTA



Above: Over 1,300 guests attended the 2019 NTIA Gala Dinner.



Centre left: The night didn't end with the awards, many guests kicked on at the Singapore Airlines After Party.



Centre right: Paulini got guests on their feet, providing the entertainment for the evening.

Bottom left: Mike Thompson (centre) is recognised as an AFTA Life Member.

Bottom right: Major sponsor Qantas gave away a \$10,000 and \$20,000 travel vouchers.





# NTIA 2019

## WINNERS

### CATEGORY 1 > BEST TRAVEL AGENCY GROUP // 50 OUTLETS OR MORE

TRAVELLERS CHOICE

### CATEGORY 2 > BEST NON BRANDED TRAVEL AGENCY GROUP

MAGELLAN TRAVEL

### CATEGORY 3 > BEST TRAVEL AGENCY LEISURE // SINGLE LOCATION

MAIN BEACH TRAVEL

### CATEGORY 4 > BEST TRAVEL AGENCY LEISURE // MULTI LOCATION

HELLOWORLD TRAVEL MACKAY & MT PLEASANT

### CATEGORY 5 > BEST TRAVEL AGENCY CORPORATE // SINGLE LOCATION

COMPLETE BUSINESS TRAVEL

### CATEGORY 6 > BEST TRAVEL AGENCY CORPORATE // MULTI LOCATION

THE TRAVEL AUTHORITY

### CATEGORY 7 > BEST NATIONAL TRAVEL MANAGEMENT COMPANY

CORPORATE TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

### CATEGORY 8 > BEST MOBILE TRAVEL ADVISOR NETWORK

TRAVELMANAGERS AUSTRALIA

### CATEGORY 9 > BEST ONLINE TRAVEL AGENCY // OTA

FLYBUYS TRAVEL      WWW.FLYBUYSTRAVEL.COM.AU

### CATEGORY 10 > BEST BUSINESS EVENTS TRAVEL AGENCY

THE EVENTS AUTHORITY

### CATEGORY 11 > BEST TRAVEL CONSULTANT // LEISURE

REBECCA KNOWLES      FLIGHT CENTRE DEVONPORT      TAS

### CATEGORY 12 > BEST TRAVEL CONSULTANT // CORPORATE

VERONIKA PANZIC      SHOW GROUP ENTERPRISE      WA

### CATEGORY 13 > BEST TRAVEL AGENCY MANAGER // LEISURE SINGLE LOCATION

DEBBI ASHES      HELLOWORLD TRAVEL LANE COVE      NSW

### CATEGORY 14 > BEST TRAVEL AGENCY MANAGER // LEISURE MULTI LOCATION

BRIDIE CLARKE      ITALKTRAVEL & CRUISE EAST DONCASTER,  
FOUNTAIN GATE & MT WAVERLEY      VIC

### CATEGORY 15 > BEST TRAVEL AGENCY MANAGER // CORPORATE SINGLE LOCATION

CHRISTOPHER GODDARD      MAXIM'S TRAVEL      NSW

### CATEGORY 16 > BEST MOBILE TRAVEL ADVISOR

KATHY MILLETT      TRAVELMANAGERS      WA

### CATEGORY 17 > YOUNG AGENT OF THE YEAR

ANNABEL EDGECOMBE      FLIGHT CENTRE INDOOROOPIILY      QLD

### CATEGORY 18 > BEST DOMESTIC AIRLINE

VIRGIN AUSTRALIA

### CATEGORY 19 > BEST INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE // ON-LINE

AIR NEW ZEALAND

### CATEGORY 20 > BEST INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE // OFF-LINE

LUFTHANSA GERMAN AIRLINES

### CATEGORY 21 > BEST CRUISE OPERATOR // DOMESTIC DEPLOYMENT

ROYAL CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL

### CATEGORY 22 > BEST CRUISE OPERATOR // INTERNATIONAL DEPLOYMENT

PRINCESS CRUISES



# AFTA'S 2019: 'A YEAR IN REVIEW'

JANUARY

- AFTA continues to arm members with useful resources to help them promote their business as an accredited agency as well as highlight to the consumer the tagline "Travel agents, experience you can trust" and travel agent value proposition, Travel agents:
  1. Protect me from the unexpected
  2. Makes it easy for me
  3. Inspire me with knowledge
- The 2019 AFTA National Travel Industry Awards officially commences with Nominations opening on 21 January.
- AFTA continues its strategic partnerships with Accor LUXE Hotels and Virgin Australia.

FEBRUARY

- AFTA's annual webinar program for 2019 commences. The annual calendar of webinars boasts a high calibre of guest presenters who cover a range of important and relevant topics – marketing, accounting, HR & legal matters, workplace health & safety and business best practice – to help members build lasting business success.
- On Budget Night, Tuesday 2 April, ATAS is the exclusive sponsor of a special three hour broadcast of *Money News with Ross Greenwood*:
  - The coverage is broadcast live from Canberra across the country through the Macquarie Media Network tapping into an educated, affluent and engaged audience with the message: Travel agents, experience you can trust.
  - The activation is a tremendous success reaching 1.457 million Australians and generating a 150% increase in website traffic to ATAS.com.au.

**BUDGET NIGHT NETWORK 50 MARKETS**

**NEW SOUTH WALES / ACT**  
**Sydney 2GB 873AM**  
 Canberra ZCC 1206AM  
 Albury 2AV 4404AM  
 Bathurst 2BS 1103AM  
 Batemans Bay2BC 105.3FM  
 Narooma ZFC 1304AM  
 Eden 2IC 100.5FM  
 Bega 2IC 710AM  
 Nowra 2ST 995AM  
 St Georges Basin 2ST 91.3FM  
 Ulladulla 2ST 106.7FM  
 Southern Highlands 2ST 102.5FM  
 Lithgow 3IT 1006AM  
 Hunter 2HM 961AM  
 Shellharbour 2SN 1022AM  
**SYDNEY**  
**Melbourne 3AW 693AM**  
 Warragatta 3NE 1306AM  
 Colac 3CS 1134AM  
 Hamilton 3HA 961AM  
 Swan Hill 3SH 1332AM  
 Herburn 3TB 1095AM

**QUEENSLAND**  
**Brisbane 4BC 1116AM**  
 Kingaroy 4KB 1073AM  
 Taringa Mine 4KB 92.5FM  
 Roma 4KB 1476AM  
 Mitchell 4DR 104.5FM  
 Emerald 4HE 1103AM  
 SHF Mackay 4HE 102.7FM  
 Minerva Mine 4HE 104.8FM  
 Rolleston 4HE 100.1FM  
 Clarendon 4HE 102.5FM  
 Blair Athol Mine 4HE 88.1FM  
 Duncraig 4HE 965 AM  
 Peak Downs Mine 4HE 106.0FM  
 Moree 4HE 1213AM  
 Goonella Mine 4HE 93.7FM  
 NH Goonella Mine 4HE 92.5FM  
 Charleville 4VL 918 AM  
 Quilpie 4VL 104.5FM  
 Wyandra 4VL 93.8FM  
 Cunnamulla 4VL 96.9FM  
 Angaithe 4VL 106.1FM  
 St George 4KB 105.3FM

**QUEENSLAND cont.**  
 Rockhampton 4RO 995AM  
 Charters Towers 4GC 828AM  
 Cloncurry 4CM 693AM  
 St Isa 4LM 666AM  
**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**  
**Perth 6PR 882AM**

Above: Sponsorship of the Budget Night broadcast reached 50 markets



# HERE'S WHY YOU SHOULD BE ATAS ACCREDITED

## BOOST YOUR CREDIBILITY AND TRUST WITH ATAS

In Australia, AFTA administers the only accreditation scheme for travel businesses called ATAS (AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme). The symbol represents that the business has met strict criteria in order to become accredited and that the business is credible, experienced and professional.

## CONNECT WITH MORE TRAVELLERS

AFTA is committed to educating consumers about ATAS. In fact, in 2019 more than 9 million consumers were reached through savvy marketing initiatives across television, radio, print and online.

## ARM YOURSELF WITH RESOURCES

Research indicates that consumers are 85% more likely to book with an ATAS accredited travel agency next time they travel, so it is important that you use ATAS in your selling narrative to the consumer. AFTA can help arm you with useful resources to help promote yourself as a credible accredited business. Contact us to find out how at [afta@afta.com.au](mailto:afta@afta.com.au)

## FUTURE PROOF: BE A COMPLIANT AND ETHICAL BUSINESS

ATAS accreditation means you've met the highest of standards across a range of criteria including assessment of finances, minimum levels of training and operate in accordance with Australian Consumer Law. Additionally, ATAS ensures your business has the appropriate policies and procedures in place to respond to consumer questions and grievances, elevating you above the competition.

## GROW YOUR BUSINESS

AFTA is committed to elevating industry standards and supporting your business growth. AFTA provides a business planning and advisory service available to AFTA members.

Additionally we conduct free monthly webinars carefully crafted to help you build a lasting business. If you're new to the travel industry, then accreditation is vital to operations as some suppliers won't do business with you unless you're ATAS accredited.

## PROTECT YOUR LIVELIHOOD AND YOUR FUTURE

AFTA is the voice of the travel industry and deals with all major issues relating to the operation of travel agencies in Australia, at both State and Federal levels.

AFTA prides itself on being the industry watchdog where it ensures that the viewpoint of the agent is transmitted through media outlets and advocating through lobbying activities.

## AFTA CHARGEBACK SCHEME (ACS)

AFTA Chargeback Scheme (ACS) is available to ATAS accredited travel agencies and provides protection against consumer debit and credit card chargebacks. ACS is a Mutual Beneficiary Fund owned by ATAS entities and at no cost to members.

To find out more visit [www.afta.com.au/ACS](http://www.afta.com.au/ACS)



**TRUST TRAVEL AGENTS MORE**

AFTER SEEING THE ATAS TVC



WILL BOOK WITH AN **ATAS ACCREDITED TRAVEL AGENCY** OVER A NON-ACCREDITED ONE

IN 2019 ATAS REACHED  
9 MILLION CONSUMERS

6,000 ATAS DIRECTORY  
SEARCHES EVERY MONTH



155,000  
VISITORS  
TO THE ATAS WEBSITE

4.4 MILLION  
REACHED NATIONALLY  
ON TELEVISION



4.8 MILLION  
REACHED THROUGH RADIO



5.2 MILLION  
CONSUMERS  
REACHED ONLINE



afta

**NATIONAL TRAVEL  
INDUSTRY AWARDS**

MARCH

- The AFTA Team venture aboard Royal Caribbean's *Ovation of the Seas* and *Azamara Quest* to familiarise themselves with the Allied Member's product offering.
- The 2019 NTIA nominees are announced.

MAY

- AFTA turbocharges the 2019 People's Choice Campaign by expanding the media partnership to include not only Australian Traveller Media but also *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The AGE Traveller*.
- AFTA also commits significant funds to bring the campaign into the consumer sphere with a dedicated media buy across Nine Digital and Unruly reaching 625,000 consumers.

APRIL

- AFTA delivers a series of information workshops across the country to assist members remain up-to-date on all things AFTA, ATAS & ACS.
- The 2019 NTIA finalists are revealed – congratulations!



Above: One of the AFTA workshops held around the country.



## JULY

- AFTA and major sponsor Qantas hosts the industry's night of nights', the 2019 AFTA National Travel Industry Awards Gala Dinner on 20 July at the International Convention Centre Sydney. Some 1,300 travel industry guests celebrate and reward excellence across 44 award categories.
- As part of AFTA's increased involvement in the education and training space, the Head of Strategy and Finance attends the Travel Industry Sector, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting in Sydney to discuss the proposed changes to the Certificate III Travel qualification.

## JUNE

- The 2019 June/July cinema campaign is live in market. The activity reaches 195,000 consumers across 13 cinema locations. Participating agencies are from Helloworld Travel, italktravel & Travellers Choice stores.
- AFTA and NTIA major sponsor Qantas hosts the 2019 National Travel Industry Awards Finalist Judging at the airline's Mascot campus.
- The fourth annual People's Choice Travel Agency of the Year Campaign concludes and some 13,000 consumers voted for 2,145 different ATAS travel agency locations. The campaign has seen a 23% growth YOY since its inception in 2016. 90% of voting consumers said that they intend to use an ATAS-accredited travel agent next time they book a trip.

## AUGUST

- It's the start of conference season and AFTA Chief Executive Jayson Westbury attends the Express Travel Group and Magellan Conferences.
- The Tourism 2030 consultation period begins, and AFTA plays a key role in working with Austrade and industry in helping to develop the next long-term strategy for the tourism industry in Australia.

## SEPTEMBER

- AFTA launches a significant six-week ATAS consumer marketing campaign reaching eight million consumers. The ATAS commercial is shown across the Nine Network (Nine, Go! Gem, 9Life), as well as major metro and regional radio stations targeting travellers.
- AFTA hosts a Travel Skills Roundtable in Brisbane with key industry players to discuss the appropriate settings for Certificate III and yet-to-be-confirmed Certificate IV in Travel. As part of AFTA's commitment to education and training in the travel industry, the Head of Strategy & Finance is appointed to the Industry Reference Committee with Skills IQ.
- The NSW Department of Customer Service and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment publish a discussion paper seeking public feedback on the Draft Code of Conduct for the Short-term Rental Accommodation (STRA) industry. AFTA is involved in the development of the STRA Code of Conduct as part of a new regulatory framework.
- The Federal Treasury releases a discussion paper which calls for reform in the way add-on insurance may be sold in Australia following recommendations made in the Banking Royal Commission. AFTA prepares a detailed submission supporting the travel agent community for the continued sale of travel insurance under an exemption from the reform being suggested.



Above: Behind the scenes of the ATAS television commercial.

## OCTOBER

- Jayson Westbury speaks to members at the ATAC conference in Brisbane.
- AFTA ACS Membership exceeds 550.
- AFTA releases the results of consumer research conducted in September to understand the effectiveness of the TV commercials. The independent research conducted by FiftyFive5 confirmed that the commercials were successful in shifting perceptions, driving higher levels of trust and increasing future intention to purchase travel through a travel agent. Additionally, they performed well above norms for relevance, enjoyment, understanding and talk-ability metrics.

# NOVEMBER

- AFTA releases the results of its fourth annual membership survey for owners and managers. ATAS continues to be valued by travel agencies, with more than 81% believing ATAS to be fundamental to their business. A further 86% believe the submissions and advocacy to government on industry issues are a highly important part of AFTA's member offering.
- Travellers Choice hold its conference in Adelaide and AFTA attends to launch their new 'Travel Advice Worth Packing' consumer brochure. The brochure details important things consumers should consider when booking travel including look for the ATAS symbol, pay for travel bookings with a credit card and always read the booking terms and conditions.
- AFTA welcomes Melinda Larkin as new Head of Education and Training.
- AFTA attends the World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) in Seville, Spain, to discuss issues that impact the global travel agency industry, and uniting together to promote and grow the travel agency distribution channel globally. AFTA is elected Secretary of the organisation for a two-year term.



Above: Melinda Larkin joins the AFTA team.

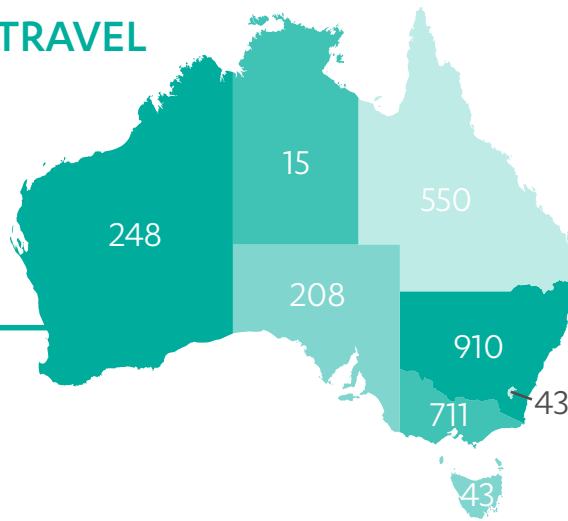
# DECEMBER

- Results are in! AFTA reaches 5.3 million consumers' eyeballs through its digital strategy.
- The 2019 Dec/Jan cinema campaign is live in market.
- The AFTA *Travel Pages* receives the tick of approval and is sent off to the printer ready for distribution in February 2020. A big thank you to Business Publishing Group (*Travel Daily*) for the production of the 'year book' and all contributing ministers, associations, AFTA members and allied members.

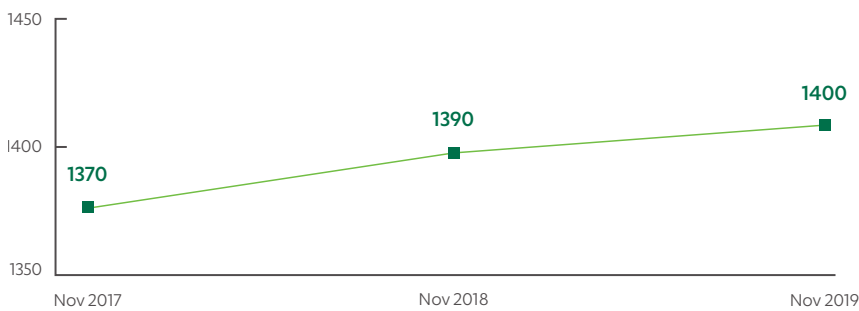
# OVERVIEW OF ATAS CHARTER ACTIVITY IN 2019

## ATAS ACCREDITED TRAVEL AGENTS BY STATE

**2728**  
ATAS Accredited Travel Locations by State



## 1400 ACCREDITED ENTITIES



## 5 ACCREDITATIONS CANCELLED

For breaches of ATAS Charter.

## 19 ACCREDITATIONS CANCELLED

For failing to complete renewal.

## 13 CEASED TRADING

## 14 SOLD OR MERGED

## 18 VOLUNTARILY WITHDREW

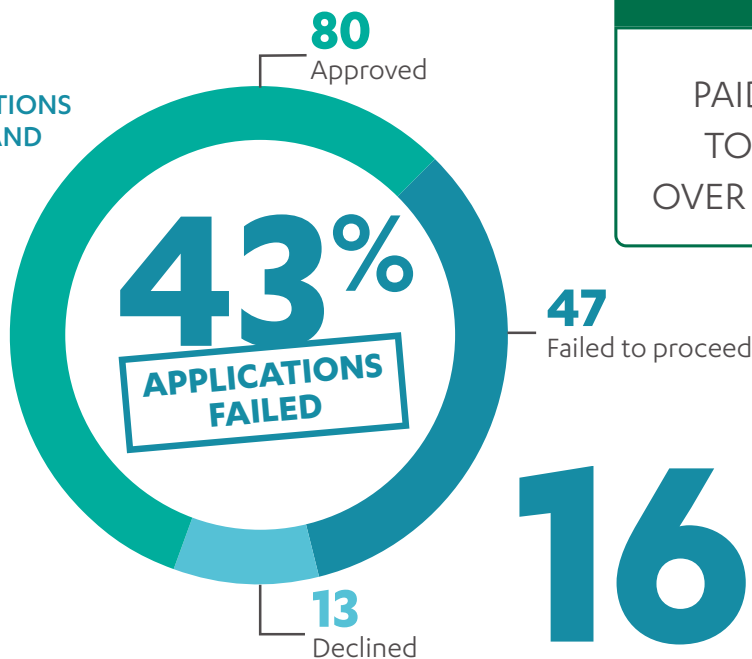
## AFTA CHARGEBACK SCHEME

PAID **\$106,519**  
TO MEMBERS IN  
OVER **34** ACS CLAIMS

## 114 NEW APPLICATIONS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED

43% of applicants in 2019 were either declined or failed to complete the application.

10% Declined accreditation  
33% Failed to proceed



## 16 CLOSED

TRAVEL BUSINESSES WENT INTO LIQUIDATION  
0 were ATAS.

# OVERVIEW OF ATAS CODE OF CONDUCT ACTIVITY IN 2019

## YoY VOLUME OF COMPLAINTS



As ATAS awareness grows, more consumers are using the ATAS Complaint process.



**THREE**  
Dismissed

**ONE**  
Improvement  
Notice Issued

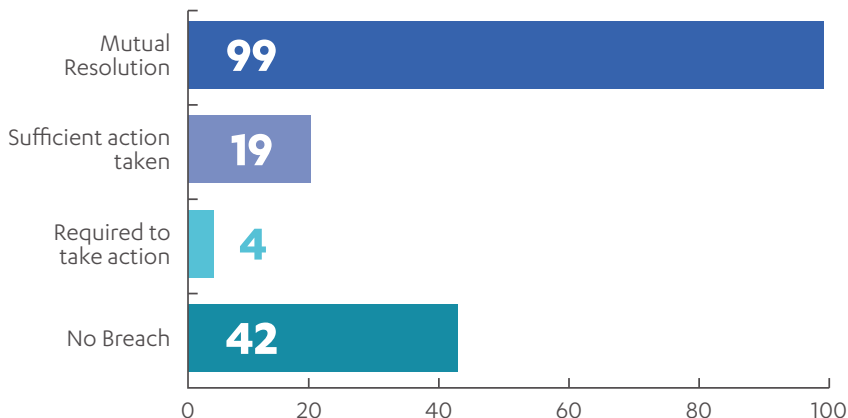


**ONE**  
Rectification  
Orders Issued

**164\***

INVESTIGATIONS COMPLETED BY THE ATAS COMPLIANCE MANAGER

The following outcomes were determined by the ATAS Compliance manager



\*Up from 129 in 2018

**242**

242 consumers with complaints were advised to first engage with their Agent's Internal Dispute Resolution process.

Referred to as Stage 1 in the Code, this step gives ATAS members the opportunity to first resolve the complaint.



## THE MAIN AREAS OF COMPLAINTS

- 1 DEPOSITS & CANCELLATIONS
- 2 VISA ADVICE
- 3 PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

# AN UPDATE ON ATAS AND ACS

*The AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS), administered by AFTA, accredits Australian travel intermediaries who meet a set of strict criteria and professional standards. ATAS, via its Charter and Code of Conduct, upholds these industry standards through continual monitoring and enforcement.*

## **THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VALUED MEMBERS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO THE SCHEME IN 2019.**

Applications for new ATAS accreditations have remained strong in 2019, with a large proportion representing existing businesses as opposed to start-ups. This demonstrates the growth in desirability of ATAS accreditation, driven both by consumer, and third-party demand for travel businesses to demonstrate their credibility.

## **CANCELLATIONS**

AFTA publishes member cancellations on the AFTA website, pursuant to the Charter, as AFTA is responsible for informing both industry and consumers when a member is no longer accredited. AFTA has not shied away from enforcing compliance, requesting further documentation and financials of related entities.

Of note, the suspension of Tempo Holidays on 3 July, with the subsequent cancellation on 22 August,

showed that failure to demonstrate compliance will result in cancellation. At the time of writing, the latest liquidators report had indicated that the business may have been trading insolvent from June. It was unfortunate that the business found it necessary to tell the market it was “business as usual”, and that its operations were “independent” from its financially-troubled parent company, and even the gall to blame AFTA for its troubles. The message in all of this is that, when AFTA cancels a company’s accreditation, it is with solid reason, and based on factual evidence that has undergone a due diligence process ensuring procedural fairness.

Cancellations have a right of appeal within 14 days of notice. Not one appeal was received in 2019, and I am confident that this is because the Statement of Reasons issued represent a thorough and detailed explanation of this due diligence process.

## **COMPLAINTS**

The ATAS Complaint escalation

process has continued to achieve successful outcomes for both members and consumers, with the majority of investigations closing through a mutual resolution. A number of areas were highlighted throughout the year, including visa advice, disclosure of terms and conditions, and misleading advertising. AFTA will issue a more detailed report to members in early 2020 providing areas of focus and recommendations.

## **ATAS COMPLAINT APPEAL COMMITTEE (ACAC)**

In 2019, Revision 5a of the ACAC Terms of Reference was approved by the Board. This change saw the appointment of a new travel industry representative to sit on the ACAC, ex-AFTA Chairman, Mike Thompson.

AFTA also undertook an Expressions of Interest process to fill the position of Chairman of the ACAC. Hank Spier, at time of writing, is interim Chairman. Spier replaces Graham McDonald, who





Whether we like it or not, as agency owners when a supplier collapses, it reflects on us. When Si Travel Group closed in March 2018 we had clients due to go on their honeymoon within a few days. We were thankful to be part of the of AFTA Chargeback Scheme – we were able to rebook our clients and applied for a refund through ACS. We got money back and the client’s holiday was fully covered. I can only say that if you’re an agent holding back, don’t, I recommend you join ASAP to ensure that you are covered.

Jill Carmody, Manager, Leongatha Travel and Cruise

Since joining the AFTA Chargeback Scheme, we are delighted with the ease and simplicity of the whole operation. It makes our job of processing so much more efficient, and would happily suggest and recommend this to all agents who may be considering it.

John Schibli, Managing Director, Premium Sport Tours

We were one of the first to join ACS and we’re very pleased that we did. I wanted to make sure that all of our clients had the protection of their using their credit card but the risk of a credit chargeback was too great without ACS. The collapse of Si Travel in March 2018 caused a disruption to one of our clients and thanks to ACS, we were able to give them advice on how they could recover their money and give them the peace of mind they needed to enjoy their holiday.

Julie Imad, Manager, Jewells Travel and Tourism

we extend our deepest appreciation and gratitude to for his contribution to AFTA and the ACAC.

The AFTA website summarises the outcomes of appeals to the ACAC, and we share these stories in the AFTA@work newsletter.

**AFTA CHARGEBACK SCHEME (ACS)**

2019 was certainly a tumultuous time for the travel industry, with multiple airline collapses and the very distressing collapse of Tempo Holidays/Bentours. Naturally, AFTA were inundated with calls at this time to better understand the scheme, the process and the ins and outs. The good news out of all of this, is that ACS is successfully protecting those members transacting through their ACS payment partner. ACS now has over 500 members – if you’re not one of them, should you be? Can your business afford not to be?

AFTA conducted numerous webinars on ACS in 2019 and if you’ve missed out and would like more information, please reach out to us. The team are here to help and assist with any of your queries, at any time, on any topic.

ATAS is poised for further growth and success in 2020, and we look forward


to working with all our members and industry to strengthen ATAS and future-proof the industry.

Naomi Menon  
*Head of Compliance and Operations, AFTA*



# DOMESTIC TOURISM OVERVIEW

*Many Australians are discovering the gems that are in our own backyard. Read how tourism is growing around the country.*



# FROM THE FEDERAL MINISTER

*Simon Birmingham, Minister for Trade,  
Tourism and Investment*

**AUSTRALIA'S TOURISM  
INDUSTRY CONTINUES TO PLAY  
AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT  
ROLE IN OUR NATION'S  
ECONOMY AND IN PROVIDING  
A MAJOR BOOST TO OUR  
REGIONS.**

Tourism is an important driver of many regional communities across Australia with 43 cents of every tourism dollar being spent in our regions and one in 13 Australians being employed in the tourism sector. With international and domestic overnight visitor spend reaching a record \$122 billion our tourism industry now accounts for 10% of our nation's exports.

This growth is underpinned by our national Tourism 2020 strategy which set a target to achieve overnight visitor spending of between \$115 billion and \$140 billion. A year early we have reached this goal but it is vital that we keep this momentum going by seizing on new market opportunities and ensuring Australia remains a must-visit destination in an increasingly competitive global market.

As the Federal Tourism Minister I'm actively working with state and territory governments as well as all aspects of industry to develop our next long-term strategy – currently under the working name Tourism 2030 – that will attract both international and domestic markets and continue to strengthen our economic growth.

Our new tourism marketing strategy aims to do this by not only encouraging people to visit Australia and our incredible destinations, but to go a step further and actually immerse themselves in the best of the Australian way of life. At its core, it is about giving travellers from around the world a taste of what makes



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**At its core [our tourism  
marketing strategy]  
is about giving  
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the world a taste of  
what makes Australia  
such an enjoyable  
destination...**  
”

Australia such an enjoyable destination by shining a light on the people, lifestyle and personality that make Australian experiences so memorable. This strategy will be executed in targeted ways across 15 different markets.

The Morrison Government is also

delivering key investment into the tourism industry through a range of schemes including our \$50 million National Tourism Icons package. This funding will provide the necessary infrastructure and upgrades at five iconic destinations across Australia including Rottnest Island in Western Australia, Freycinet in Tasmania, the Wangetti Trail in tropical north Queensland, the Northern Rivers Rail Trail in NSW and Sovereign Hill in Victoria and is in addition to the hundreds of millions of other regional tourism projects we are supporting such as the Kakadu rejuvenation in the Northern Territory and the new Monarto Safari Park in South Australia.

The Morrison Government is committed to the success of Australia's \$143 billion tourism industry and I look forward to continue working with you as we develop and deliver our plan for the next decade of industry growth and prosperity.

# FROM THE SHADOW MINISTER

*Don Farrell, Shadow Tourism Minister*

## **TOURISM DEMONSTRATED YET AGAIN IN 2019 WHY IT IS AT THE CORE OF AUSTRALIA'S ECONOMIC NARRATIVE.**

Last year, 11.2 million Australians packed their bags and headed overseas. Of these, some 7.8 million people contacted a travel agent to seek their advice, guidance and support, travelling with the peace of mind that comes from booking through a certified travel agent.

And this number continues to grow as more Australians venture overseas and travel domestically, experiencing all our great country has to offer.

While it's easy to get bogged down in numbers – in the year-on-year growth across states and territories, solid occupancy rates and returns on investment – I wanted to take this opportunity to discuss the people who are behind this ongoing growth.

People such as yourself – passionate, hardworking and dedicated individuals who are the heart of this sector.

The work you do is integral to the ongoing success of the tourism industry and is the reason it employs almost a million people and is worth \$100 billion to Australia.

Every single interaction you have matters. Every time you go that extra mile, or solve a problem for a client; every time you recommend something to someone which improves their experience.

There are challenges, of course, and opportunities to better support domestic tourism growth, but overall it is an exciting time to be involved in tourism.

In July I was honoured to be appointed as the Shadow Minister for Tourism, taking over from the now Leader of the Opposition, Anthony Albanese, following the federal election.

I have worked in this area before, having held the position of Minister



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**There are challenges, of course, and opportunities to better support domestic tourism growth, but overall it is an exciting time to be involved in tourism**  
”

Assisting on Tourism during 2013. I've always had a keen interest in the sector and am thrilled to be back working in this space.

In addition to my parliamentary responsibilities, I have a small winery in the Clare Valley in South Australia.

It's a hobby for me, but speaking with friends and neighbours gives me a unique and important perspective on the challenges faced by operators in our regions and the importance of encouraging regional dispersal.

Federal Labor took a number of policies of relevance to the sector to the recent election, including addressing issues around skills shortages, price parity clauses and investing in domestic marketing.

While we were unsuccessful at the election, I look forward to continuing our discussions about how we can best support the industry as a whole and people like yourself to continue to remain a part of this dynamic industry.

Thank you again for the work you have and continue to do. Thank you for dedicating your time to this important industry which sustains and grows thousands of jobs. I look forward to meeting you.

# FROM AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER – TOURISM

*John Hart, Executive Chair, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Tourism*

**LOOKING BACK ON 2019, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY, WE ALL DREW A COLLECTIVE SIGH OF RELIEF WHEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS RETURNED IN MAY.**

Not from a partisan position, of course, but because of what the policies that the ALP took to the election could have potentially done to travel and tourism spend.

The first third of this year was all but a write-off with the pre-election hiatus in spending and the political argy bargy meaning that little was achieved by much of our industry. The recovery afterwards was soft but forgiving with spend at least returning to the conservative levels of 2018 by mid-year, thanks to the tax cuts promised by the Government.

Travellers have kept spending throughout 2019. Australians particularly have continued their love affair with getting away both within Australia and outbound. International arrivals, on the other hand, have been a little softer with continued growth but slower than we have seen in the recent past. This is likely going to be the story of travel and tourism for a few years to come.

The growth continues to put a strain on many parts of our infrastructure locally and these have been our greatest challenges for 2019 and for the foreseeable future. Chief among these is the soft infrastructure of our workforce. The continual demand for skilled labour in our very labour-intensive industry really struggles with the depth of talent in the Australian workforce.

We can't skill staff up quickly enough to meet the demands of growth and



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**The continual demand for skilled labour in our very labour-intensive industry really struggles with the depth of talent in the Australian workforce**  
”

the slowing of skilled migration means we have insufficient capacity to draw on from off-shore. Traditional schemes, such as traineeships and apprenticeships have started to wane in their attraction to our young people, even whilst strong demand continues to exist from our travel and tourism businesses. With the skills shortage in our sector alone likely to top 70,000 people by years end, we have to

look at alternatives.

A training effort that is more closely targeted to the specific needs of our businesses is a good start. Revision to the industry training packages has been ongoing throughout 2019, but now really needs to accelerate if we are to achieve our labour market goals. These skills also need to be delivered more efficiently and far closer to when they are actually used in our workplaces. The days of gaining all the skills you need (and more) after leaving school, in the hope that you will use them someday, are gone.

The industry must also support technology solutions that allow us to free up human resources to focus on providing real service to our travellers. The move to contactless travel at our borders, expanded Smart Gate technology and seamless connections between the industry and government systems is a must. Investment in these systems is the only way Australia can continue to be competitive.



Western Australia had the greatest increase in visitor nights. Pictured is Perth's Cottesloe Beach  
©Tourism Australia

# BLUE SKIES FOR DOMESTIC TOURISM

*The tourism sector is booming in Australia, and it's set to continue growing.*

**OVERALL, TOURISM DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTED \$57.3 BILLION TO AUSTRALIA'S GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS, AND DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY EMPLOYS 996,000 AUSTRALIANS – THAT'S ONE IN 13 JOBS.**

In this report, we provide a breakdown of what's been happening in the tourism landscape over the past 12 months, taking a look at the travel habits of

Australians travelling within Australia, as well as international visitors coming into the country. We'll also take a glimpse into the future to outline the trends we are likely to see in the tourism industry over the next few years.

## DOMESTIC TOURISM

Tourism Research Australia's (TRA) National Visitor Survey Summary revealed that Australia attracted 11.7% more domestic visitors than last year –

specifically, 113,320 Australians went on overnight domestic trips in the year ending June 2019 in comparison to 101,487 in 2018.

Domestic visitor numbers were up for every state, with Victoria showing the biggest change at an impressive increase of 13.8% in visitors – from 25,517 in June 2018, to 29,047 in June 2019, while the ACT, up 5%, showed the smallest change, but none the less a positive one.

There was a 10.4% increase in domestic visitor nights across Australia, from

362,533 to 400,217. Visitor nights were also up in all states excluding the Northern Territory, which experienced a slight decline of 0.6% – that's 9,700 down to 9,120 nights. Western Australia saw the most dramatic change, up in visitor nights by 13.1% (41,299 to 46,709).

Overall, domestic visitors generated \$77.5 billion (up 15%) in expenditure during domestic overnight trips, which were an average of four nights long, with holidaymakers the biggest spenders splashing out \$757 per trip, followed by delegates (\$692 per trip) and people visiting friends and relatives (\$354 per trip). All types of trips experienced an increase from last year, with business trips showing the most change, up by 14.1%.

Gen X – that is, Australians aged 30-54 years – spent an average of \$809 per person per trip, in comparison to \$666 for older travellers, and \$471 for millennials, who tended to stay with friends and relatives more often to save on travel expenses.

Domestic tourism in regional Australia showed a modest increase in all states, with far-flung regions including Outback Queensland, Ballarat, the Murray, Flinders Ranges and Outback and

the Eyre Peninsula gaining more visitor numbers for the year ending June 2019, compared to the same period last year. However, more growth is needed.

In October this year, Assistant Minister for Regional Tourism Jonathon Duniam said, "Drawing more international visitors to the bush is especially vital as only eight cents of every tourism dollar spent in regional Australia comes from overseas tourists", highlighting the importance of the tourist dollar in "sustain[ing] small regional communities, diversifying their economies and providing more local jobs".

## INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

When it comes to attracting international tourists, Australia is showing no signs of slowing down. In total, 8.6 million visitors from around the globe reached our shores for the year ending June 2019, which is an increase of 2.8% on the previous year.

Overseas visitors stayed an average of 32 nights (up 1.4%), and collectively spent \$44.6 billion – that's a striking rise of 5% on last year's figures.

Holidaying and education were

the two most common reasons for international tourists to visit Australia, with education visitors growing by 5% to 586,000, spending a record \$12.7 billion – 8% more than the previous year, while holiday-makers were up 4% to nearly four million, spending 6% more than last year at a high of \$16.9 billion.

The Japanese market showed strong growth, with visitors up 9% to 445,000 and spend up 16%, to \$2 billion. The US also had a considerable increase, with visitor numbers rising by 3% to 764,000, alongside a spending jump of 9% to a new high of \$4 billion.

The UK market, on the other hand, showed signs of decline, with visitors down 4% to 674,000 and spend down 3% to \$3.4 billion.

## LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

Tourism Research Australia's *Tourism Forecasts 2019* report details the economic factors that may affect tourism over the next few years, including the weakening global economic outlook, dipping world oil prices and the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, which is anticipated to have a "negative impact" on the region's economy, while India is expected to be the "fastest growing economy" out of Australia's top 10 tourism source markets.

Other factors that are likely to affect tourism include the weakening demand for international air travel, with the first three-quarters of 2018-19 showing a 3.2% increase in inbound aviation capacity – the slowest growth rate since 2008; and a "flat growth rate" expected for domestic aviation for 2019-20 and 2020-21, before potentially showing an upper growth trajectory again in 2022-23.

Meanwhile, the accommodation sector within Australia is forecasted to show strong growth over the next three years, with almost 33,000 new rooms set to be added around the nation by 2022 and average room rates likely to increase by approximately 2.4% each year over the next three years.

*Left: Japanese visitors are up 9% and their spend has increased by 16% to \$2 billion. Pictured are Japanese tourists at Mrs Macquarie's Chair, Sydney ©Tourism Australia*

*Right: Victoria claimed the greatest increase in domestic visitor numbers. Pictured is Melbourne ©Visit Victoria*



# DESTINATION NSW

*Sandra Chipchase, outgoing Chief Executive Officer,  
Destination NSW*

**IN 2019 DESTINATION NSW, WITH OUR INDUSTRY PARTNERS, GREW VISITATION AND EXPENDITURE ACROSS THE STATE ENABLING NSW TO MAINTAIN ITS POSITION AS AUSTRALIA'S NUMBER ONE TOURISM STATE.**

NSW continues to grow overnight visitor expenditure, reaching almost \$34 billion in the year ended June 2019. We achieved double-digit growth in overnight domestic visitors and expenditure, with intrastate visitors making a strong contribution. Growing expenditure from our priority international markets remains a key focus and in the year ended June 2019 expenditure reached \$11.3 billion, the highest level ever recorded. The China market delivered a record 17.2 per cent increase to reach \$4 billion in visitor spend, along with impressive growth in visitors from Japan and the United States.

Destination NSW continues to lead in digital marketing through retaining the largest market share of all Australian national and state tourism organisation website traffic, leveraging consumer preference and habit data to improve sales conversion rates for industry partners and use of technologies such as voice search, geo-tagged interactive mapping, artificial intelligence and content personalisation to increase consumer engagement.

Our strategic partnerships with 23 airlines and more than 145 travel wholesalers and other partners totalled \$33.2 million including value-in-kind, and delivered 39 domestic and 220 international joint co-operative marketing campaigns.

In the domestic market, partnerships with the six destination networks resulted in 10 bursts of regional marketing activity promoting the South Coast, Hunter Valley, Dubbo, Hawkesbury, Blue Mountains and Penrith, Lord Howe Island, Orange, The Riverina and the



Snowy Mountains. Our Drives and Road Trips strategy featured a cutting-edge digital interactive map and itinerary planner for NSW road trips and engaged more than 163,000 travellers.

## KEY INITIATIVES

- Since 2011, Destination NSW has secured or retained 786 events for Sydney and regional NSW, that are estimated to deliver more than \$3.5 billion to the NSW visitor economy. Recent acquisitions include the Australian premieres of Broadway smash *Hamilton* and Disney's *Frozen the Musical*.
- The NSW Government's 10 World Cup sporting events in 10 years initiative is expected to deliver \$1 billion for the NSW economy with confirmed upcoming events including the 2020 ICC Women's T20 World Cup and 2021 IAAF World Cross Country Championships.
- Vivid Sydney 2019 attracted a record crowd of 2.4 million attendees who

delivered \$172 million in visitor expenditure. More than 86,000 international visitors purchased Vivid Sydney travel packages.

- The new visitor expenditure target for regional NSW – \$20 billion in regional overnight visitor expenditure by 2025 and \$25 billion by 2030 – underscores the importance of tourism in rural and regional communities.
- Conferencing has increased and extended regional NSW visitation. The NSW Regional Business Event Development Fund supported 40 business events.

Destination NSW continues to build effective partnerships and drive results in every aspect of its work and this is demonstrated by the strong results we continue to achieve year-on-year. We have a pipeline of outstanding events locked in over the next few years which, coupled with ongoing promotion of our state and development of our tourism offering, will help NSW stay number one and grow the lead over our competitors.



# SATC

## Rodney Harrex, Chief Executive, South Australian Tourism Commission

**IT'S BEEN A RECORD-SETTING YEAR FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA, WITH THE STATE'S TOURISM SECTOR REPORTING UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH IN 2019 AND AIMING EVEN HIGHER NEXT YEAR.**

Tourism is a super-growth sector and an economic priority for South Australia, with sights set firmly on an \$8 billion visitor economy by 2020.

We currently sit at a record-breaking visitor economy of \$7.6 billion, with more than 7.8 million visitors flocking to our state and embracing everything we have to offer.

Tourism is the lifeblood of South Australia. All year-round there are great events like the Santos Tour Down Under, the Superloop 500, the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge, the Adelaide Fringe and Tasting Australia.

During 2019, SA hosted World Routes – the world's largest annual aviation route development forum. For a week, we were the global meeting place for international airlines, airports and aviation stakeholders – particularly relevant as Adelaide Airport is the fastest growing international airport with 5.8% increase in international passengers last year.

Adelaide is the gateway to spectacular regional experiences, complemented by stunning landscapes and natural beauty. From our world-renowned wine regions, the historic outback and Flinders Ranges, to the wildlife sanctuary that is Kangaroo Island, we've got it all, and people are coming from all over the world to immerse themselves in it.

To put the statistics in perspective – visitor numbers have increased by 34% over the past five years and expenditure has grown by 40%. These wins are huge and show that our investments and marketing efforts are paying dividends.

Our focus continues to be on key markets like the United Kingdom, United States, New Zealand and Germany, as



“  
It's pleasing  
also that recent  
private investment  
announcements...  
all indicate growing  
confidence in SA  
”

well as emerging markets like India and China. Chinese travellers are the fastest growing inbound market for South Australia, with 66,000 visitors spending a record \$378 million.

The sector makes strong direct and indirect contributions to jobs and economic prosperity in South Australia – right across cafes, restaurants, retail establishments, accommodation providers, transport services, bars,

tour companies, the arts and events. In both metropolitan and regional South Australia, tourism employs around 38,900 people across 18,000 businesses.

It's pleasing also that recent private investment announcements – including several new luxury international hotels, the \$400 million Adelaide Convention Centre redevelopment and the Adelaide Casino SkyCity 6-star expansion – all indicate growing confidence in SA.

Tourism is critical to the state's economy. It is why we – as a state government – delivered the recent South Australian Visitor Economy Sector Plan 2030, which provides a clear, consistent and strategic vision for future growth.

Our bold aim is to grow our state's visitor economy to \$12.8 billion by 2030 – we now have a roadmap to continue this success. South Australia has the best Australian experiences on offer, all in the one state, and it is important we make sure the rest of the world knows it.

# TOURISM & EVENTS QUEENSLAND

*Leanne Coddington, Chief Executive Officer,  
Tourism and Events Queensland*

**QUEENSLAND'S TOURISM INDUSTRY HAS HAD SOME GREAT WINS IN THE PAST YEAR, ENHANCING QUEENSLAND'S REPUTATION AS A DESTINATION OF CHOICE AMONG HIGH VALUE TRAVELLERS.**

Our industry continues to grow and is now worth \$27 billion to the state's economy. Over the past year, we have delivered award-winning campaigns that pushed the boundaries and caught the world's attention.

In May 2019, TEQ launched the world's first rideshare submarine – scUber – in partnership with technology giant Uber, which showcased the Great Barrier Reef like never before and captivated a global audience.

With food and beverage experiences a top consideration for travellers, TEQ this year also put the global spotlight on Queensland's rich and varied food offering through its recently launched Taste the State campaign, fronted by celebrity chef Matt Sinclair. TEQ this year also brought Network Ten's top rated show, *MasterChef Australia*, to Queensland to film a week's worth of episodes, highlighting our world-class destinations and culinary experiences to millions of viewers in more than 120 countries worldwide.

In 2019, Queensland has celebrated the Year of Outback Tourism, highlighting the region's diverse tourism experiences and events, and the vital role tourism plays in the outback economy – from digging up dinosaur bones in Winton, taking in the incredible landscapes to enjoying quintessentially outback events such as the Birdsville Big Red Bash. Off the back of this campaign, the number of people visiting the outback surpassed one million for the

first time ever.

We know events continue to play a major role in driving visitors to destinations across Queensland and I'm proud to say that we have grown the value of the state's It's Live! In Queensland events calendar to be worth \$880 million in 2020. In 2019, Queensland hosted a string of world-class events, including new events such as the Outback Queensland Masters Golf, the inaugural NRL Magic Round and SportAccord, the world's leading sport and business summit, for the first time in Australia.

As we look to the future, we know consumer expectations are higher than ever before and the way we live and travel is changing. Queensland's tourism economy is also growing more than twice as fast as the national economy and is forecast to reach \$50 billion in overnight visitor expenditure and employ 348,000 Queenslanders by 2035. As a state, we

must continue to anticipate consumer needs and ensure Queensland's brand remains relevant and speaks to travellers in an authentic way.

As the only place in the world where both of Australia's Indigenous cultures meet, in 2020 we'll be celebrating Australia's First Nations' culture, stories and experiences through the Year of Indigenous Tourism. Visitors can also expect another blockbuster events calendar in 2020, including the operatic masterpiece, Richard Wagner's epic *The Ring*, as well as the second-ever NRL Magic Round, delighting rugby league fans across the country. Queensland tourism is well-placed to take on the challenges of the future underpinned by a strong growth trajectory, and I look forward to continuing to work closely with industry and government partners as we inspire the world to experience the best address on earth.



# TOURISM NT

*Simonne Shepherd, Chief Executive Officer,  
NT Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture*

**THE NORTHERN TERRITORY IS A PLACE THAT ALLOWS YOU TO FOLLOW YOUR SENSE OF ADVENTURE. A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN SWIM UNDER A TROPICAL WATERFALL AND KAYAK DOWN AN ANCIENT GORGE IN THE TOP END OR SKYDIVE OVER THE HEART OF AUSTRALIA IN THE RED CENTRE AND RELAX INTO THE EVENING WHILE SWAPPING STORIES UNDER A STAR-STUDED SKY.**

The Northern Territory Government's \$103 million investment to turbocharge tourism in the Territory has contributed to increased holiday visitors and encouraged business to invest. The funding over two financial years (2017-18 and 2018-19) aimed to attract more visitors, create local jobs and help grow the economy.

Figures from Tourism Research Australia show that the Turbocharging Tourism initiative is working with total visitor expenditure increasing by 18% in the year ending June 2019, and total visitors reaching double digit growth, up 11% on the previous 12 months to 1.95 million visitors.

Interstate holiday visitors increased by 9.1% to 413,000 visitors with total domestic visitors rising by 13 per cent. International visitors to the Territory increased by 4%, a great result considering tourism is one of the world's most competitive industries with Japan leading the way, up by an impressive 56 per cent to 40,000 visitors.

Further momentum will be gained through Turbo2, an additional \$62.8 million extension of the Turbocharging Tourism initiative over 2019-20 and 2020-21.

In 2019 Tourism NT released three major strategies including the 10 year Business Events Strategy, which aims to deliver \$68 million in delegate expenditure to the Territory economy by 2030; the NT's Tourism Industry



“  
We're delivering a diverse portfolio to grow visitation and the value of tourism to the Northern Territory  
”

Strategy 2030, that provides a clear vision for growing the industry over the next decade with an ambitious target of up to 3.03 million visitors by 2030, spending up to \$3.67 billion; and the NT Aboriginal Tourism Strategy, that seeks to strengthen the Territory's unique Aboriginal cultural offerings and maximise job and development opportunities for Aboriginal Territorians in the sector.

The growth in visitor numbers and

spending is due in no small part to the cumulative efforts of the territory government and business working together. We're delivering a diverse portfolio to grow visitation and the value of tourism to the Northern Territory. We do this through tourism marketing and industry development initiatives, our natural, heritage and cultural assets and collections, developing the Territory's sport and active recreation sectors and supporting the NT's vibrant culture through the creative industries, including the arts and screen sectors.

Alongside the turbocharging tourism investment, Tourism NT has a refreshed brand promoting the Northern Territory as unlike any other place: Different in every sense.

The new strategies provide a clear path forward for Tourism NT, together with our local tourism industry, to deliver innovative marketing initiatives, new events and tourism product offerings towards achieving our Tourism 2030 goals.

# TOURISM TASMANIA

*John Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer,  
Tourism Tasmania*

**IT HAS BEEN ANOTHER BIG YEAR FOR THE TOURISM TASMANIA TEAM WITH THE RECENT LAUNCH OF THE TASMANIA – COME DOWN FOR AIR BRAND PLATFORM.**

You may have seen some of our advertising that invites audiences to break free from the stresses of modern life and come to Tassie to feel more human. With many people's lives spent in traffic and big cities, Tasmania is a holiday destination that offers enriching experiences and the ability to connect to places and activities that are real and familiar for a few days, weeks or over multiple visits.

We have also launched a new program to attract visitors to the state to pursue their interests and passions for outdoor adventure. The Unordinary Adventures program targets visitors who love mountain biking, golf, walking and fly fishing. Our unique hospitality and stunning environment elevates these experiences beyond just ordinary, creating great memories and a lasting impression on our visitors.

Tasmania is renowned for having some of the best food, wine and beverage experiences in the world including a great selection of vineyards, cellar doors, wine and food festivals and distillery tours. Our research shows that Tasmania's produce and hospitality is identified regularly as one of our most enticing offerings. This year we implemented a new campaign in Hong Kong and North America to create more awareness of our quality wine tourism experience in these key markets.

Two iconic Australian brands, David Jones and Orotan, selected our unique scenery as backdrops to their autumn/winter fashion campaigns. We know that fashion and lifestyle brands are a great way to build destination appeal and these partnerships help us to connect their customers with a Tasmanian



“  
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our visitors  
”

winter experience.

Travellers seeking the contemporary cultural experience will be delighted by Mona Foma – a summer festival with music, art and everything that makes Tasmania unique and different. The event

is held in Launceston from 11-20 January 2020.

Another exciting development this year was the announcement of luxury travel company Abercrombie & Kent's philanthropic relationship with Tasmanian not-for-profit organisation Raptor Refuge. The partnership will support Raptor Refuge's work in rehabilitating injured raptors and simultaneously grow the profile of the state with this world-leading luxury travel company.

Tasmania is an island of calm, making it a great place for travellers to escape modern life and reconnect with themselves and their loved ones. There has never been a better time or reason to visit Tasmania than right now.

If you have never visited or it has been a while, make sure you add a trip to Tassie to your 2020 to-do list.

# TOURISM WA

*Brodie Carr, Managing Director,  
Tourism Western Australia*

**FROM ATTRACTING RECORD VISITOR NUMBERS, HOSTING AN UNPRECEDENTED WINTER OF WORLD-CLASS SPORTING EVENTS AND SECURING NEW INTERNATIONAL DIRECT FLIGHTS, THERE IS NO QUESTION 2019 WAS A STELLAR YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR TOURISM WESTERN AUSTRALIA.**

Our state shone on the global stage when we hosted Tourism Australia's Australian Tourism Exchange in April and welcomed hundreds of international and domestic buyers as well as media hailing from over 30 countries. It was one of three Tourism Australia international travel trade events to be held in WA along with Corroboree West in October and Dreamtime in December, delivered by Perth Convention Bureau. These three events provided an ideal opportunity to promote our transformed capital city and remarkable regions and attracted a significant number of visitors to the benefit of businesses and the economy.

Top-quality events are an important drawcard for visitors, giving people a time-specific reason to travel and often the opportunity to extend their trip to explore the destination as well as attracting international attention. This year we were the proud host of a world-class winter calendar of sporting events at our 60,000-seat Optus Stadium. This included WA's first State of Origin game in June, turning the city red for the Manchester United tour in July and our first ever Bledisloe Cup in August.

This was followed by the first Fed Cup final played in Perth since the 1971 edition in November and the inaugural expanded Western Australia Gourmet Escape that same month, held across Perth, the Swan Valley and Margaret River.

Our approach is paying off, with data showing that last financial year we welcomed a record 2.76 million



“  
Top-quality events are an important drawcard for visitors, giving people a time-specific reason to travel and often the opportunity to extend their trip  
”

international and interstate visitors, who, together with intrastate overnight and day trip visitors, spent \$10.5 billion in WA.

Making it easier for people to fly here from around the world will help us build on these results. We made great inroads in aviation access this year when we launched the direct All Nippon Airways flights service between Tokyo and Perth

in September and revealed a direct China Eastern flight trial between Shanghai and Perth would run over the peak Chinese New Year period next year.

We are continuing to market Western Australia to international holiday visitors, with \$12 million allocated to attract people from South East Asian and long haul destinations like the United Kingdom, Germany and the United States of America.

I look forward to what next year will bring, with some thrilling new events already locked in including the first ever elite men's tennis competition ATP Cup, National Rugby League Nines, the ICC T20 World Cup men's and women's competition, Perth Festival and Highway to Hell.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank travel agents around Australia for your support and continued assistance in promoting Western Australia as a must-see travel destination.

# VISIT CANBERRA

*Jonathan Kobus, Director, VisitCanberra*

## WHAT A YEAR IT HAS BEEN FOR THE CAPITAL, AS CANBERRA BECAME THE FASTEST GROWING TOURIST DESTINATION IN AUSTRALIA.

The most recent data shows that 2.9 million Australian overnight visitors, and 266,278 international visitors, came to the capital for the year ending June 2019. Big numbers for our small territory.

With 14 international flights each week, low-cost carriers are continuing to see Canberra's potential, and new hotels, bars, cafes and experiences are continuously cropping up. Our investment in tourism infrastructure and trade engagement is paying off, and in recognition of the rapid growth in international markets, a Business Development Manager based in Singapore joined VisitCanberra's team.

Locally, this Spring saw more than 500,000 people attend Floriade – after 32 years, a record for the event. We've committed to refreshing the event calendar in 2020, and have introduced a new festival in winter. Featuring innovation, new technology and creative thinking, it will have four key event pillars – the future of society and humanity, democracy, technology, and culture. It will showcase the ACT's strengths in design, culture, coding and gaming.

Canberra will also host five ICC Women's T20 World Cup matches in 2020. We'll be seeing seven of the world's best teams in a festival of cricket across three consecutive days at Manuka Oval. The ACT government has also supported a number of major events recently, such as the National Gallery of Australia's Matisse & Picasso exhibition and the DreamWorks exhibition at the National Museum of Australia. Both are expected to be major drawcards over the summer months.

It's also been a big year for our tourism industry with industrious, innovative and creative thinkers from diverse organisations and businesses standing out. A local vigneron from Lake George



“  
The word is spreading about all the perfect moments that await in Canberra, and it's exciting to see so many Australians revisiting...  
”

won the National Women in Wine award, and another was named dux of the Advanced Wine Assessment Course, while three Canberra restaurants were named in the 2019 Wineslinger Top 50 venues list. Our local brewers expanded and baristas yet again boasted national acclaim while the Marriott International debuted its first Canberra hotel.

Various marketing partnerships have complemented VisitCanberra's long-running marketing destination platform, One Good Thing After Another, with a burst of campaign activity planned for summer that focuses on memorable moments that visitors can experience here. A 12-month partnership, In Canberra was launched collaboratively with our national attractions and Schwartz Media. Devised as a celebration of the treasures of Australia, the campaign tells the story of our nation through the unique objects showcased here.

It really has been one good thing after another for the ACT this year. The word is spreading about all the perfect moments that await in Canberra, and it's exciting to see so many Australians revisiting the capital to discover it anew.

Agents can stay connected with what's happening in Canberra through our corporate website [tourism.act.gov.au](http://tourism.act.gov.au).

# VISIT VICTORIA

*Nicki Kenyon, General Manager Marketing,  
Visit Victoria*

**OVER THE PAST YEAR, VISIT VICTORIA CEMENTED ITS PLACE AS A HIGH-PERFORMING, VISITOR CENTRIC, DESTINATION MARKETING AND EVENTS COMPANY, MAKING A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON VICTORIA'S VISITOR ECONOMY AND REPUTATION AS A GLOBAL EVENTS STATE.**

Visitors to Victoria are spending in record numbers with tourism expenditure reaching a record \$31 billion in the year ending June 2019, an increase of \$8.3 billion over three years since Visit Victoria was established by the Victorian Government.

Our major events and business events teams have demonstrated Victoria's leadership in securing the best-of-the-best creative productions, sporting events and conventions to position Victoria as a global events state.

Exclusive events for Melbourne include *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, the 2020 ICC T20 World Cup Finals, *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* and the 2023 Rotary International Convention, the most valuable business event ever secured for the state.

This year, a record-breaking 120,000 people descended upon Geelong and the Surf Coast Shire to watch the world's best cyclists compete in Visit Victoria's own multi-day cycling event, the Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race. The UCI WorldTour Elite Men's Road Race was again the most-watched cycling race in Australia over summer with spectacular images of regional Victoria broadcasted to over 140 global territories to attract international travellers.

In 2018-19 our marketing team delivered our intrastate campaign, Your Happy Space, to entice Melburnians to venture into regional Victoria for a short break to disconnect and enrich themselves in our natural landscapes. Complementing the campaign, we developed the world's first

dog-optimised tourism campaign, Your Dog's Happy Space.

Interstate, we amplified A Twist at Every Turn campaign to showcase the depth and breadth of Melbourne's experiences. Melbourne's sense of discovery came to life through innovative digital content partnerships, featuring diverse local talent and emphasising Melbourne's many personas through different film genres.

In 2018-19, Visit Victoria's international marketing was focused on driving visitation and yield from both western and eastern hemispheres with an emphasis on Greater China, North America, India, Singapore and Malaysia, whilst maintaining activity in United Kingdom, continental Europe, Japan, Korea and New Zealand.

Visit Victoria was successful in securing Australia's largest annual tourism trade event, Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) in May 2020. This event will provide a platform for us to promote our state to over 2,000 influential delegates.

To celebrate the inaugural launch of Qantas' direct service from San Francisco

to Melbourne, Visit Victoria brought to life Victoria's unique experiences through an interactive consumer activation, featuring Brighton's iconic bathing boxes, at a popular San Francisco location.

Visit Victoria collaborated with Singapore Airlines to deliver a campaign in January focused on highlighting the state's nature and wildlife, road trips, and city and culinary experiences, which reached six million people and contributed to a 17 per cent increase in ticket sales to Melbourne.

As part of Victoria's Golf Tourism Strategy 2018-23, Visit Victoria established A Golfing Great marketing platform to position Melbourne and Victoria in the world's top five golf destinations. During and after the Presidents Cup in December 2019, Victoria's golf credentials will be firmly established.

While we continue to face increasing competition for the tourist dollar, Victoria's visitor economy continues to strengthen, which is an achievement we share working together with many industry and government stakeholders.



# Join us for the world's greatest travel incentive in 2020

Experience JoinTrafalgar first-hand on our lifechanging trip to the Emerald Isle.







# TRAFALGAR

**"Acclaim completely exceeded expectations. Do yourself a favour and get yourself on this trip. If there's one industry incentive to aim for... make this it!"**

**Nathan Melton, helloworld  
2019 South Africa Acclaim guest**

**Want to Make your Travel Matter and join the World's Best Travel Agents? Acclaim 2020 – Travel's #1 annual rewards trip awaits you in Ireland... with a new twist.**

This is your chance to join 120 of the world's best Travel Agents from across seven countries to celebrate your success and make a positive impact along the way.

Acclaim 2020 will be a lifechanging experience to the Emerald Isle. In support of our decade-long commitment to making a positive impact in the places we visit; our exclusive JoinTrafalgar Irish adventure has been handcrafted for you to experience how tourism can be a force for good.

You'll be covering off all the bucket list items, but will also journey beyond the iconic centres to support local

communities, visit UNESCO heritage sites and connect to the real Ireland.

This not-to-be-missed, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity only gets better, with the ultimate event on the global travel industry calendar – Trafalgar's signature Gala En Rouge event. With surprise guest speakers, incredible local entertainment and gourmet dining all held at a lush venue bathed in red, you'll enjoy the quintessential warm Irish welcome.

Don't miss this opportunity to be among the world's best.

**Secure your place now.  
[Trafalgar.com/acclaim](https://trafalgar.com/acclaim)**

*Fanad Head Lighthouse, Donegal, Ireland*

THE  
**GOOD  
LIFE**



# INTERNATIONAL TOURISM OVERVIEW

*Aussies love to travel and outbound is booming.  
Discover the highlights for many involved in this sector.*

# FROM CATO

*Brett Jardine, Managing Director,  
Council of Australian Tour Operators*

## BREAKOUT YEAR

CATO has been an intrinsic part of the Australian travel industry landscape since the mid-90s and in 2018, under the guidance of a refreshed CATO Board, the organisation embarked on a new journey aimed at delivering greater recognition and a stronger voice for the land-supply sector.

## RESEARCH REPORT

In October 2019, CATO unveiled a benchmark report into Australia's outbound leisure market, providing new insights into the activities and intentions of holidaymakers when travelling overseas.

Drawing on information compiled from the Australian Bureau of Statistics for 2018 and an independent consumer survey, the inaugural *Australians on Holiday – International Leisure Travel Trends* report examined the size, shape and direction of Australia's outbound leisure market.

Key findings showed that in 2018, Australian holidaymakers:

- took 6.3 million overseas leisure trips (representing a market penetration of 25.1%)
- spent more than \$46 billion in total and an average of \$7,300 per person
- visited an average 3.4 countries per vacation
- enjoyed an average of 22 days on holiday per trip.

A follow up report that will include a greater emphasis on year on year findings is anticipated to be released in April 2020.

## GROUND CONTROL MAGAZINE

In June 2019 CATO launched a new quarterly multi-platform magazine, *Ground Control*, that puts the spotlight on the land supply sector. *Ground Control* is a B2B magazine designed to



connect CATO members, their news, products and information to more than 5,000 frontline retail travel agents.

An extensive mix of industry insights, personal profiles and feature stories relevant to the wider industry ensures the publication has broad reader interest.

Powered by sophisticated technology, *Ground Control* is truly responsive, instantly transforming virtual print content into a full-screen user-friendly format across all devices and enabling members and commercial partners to add rich media enhancements to their promotions for maximum impact.

## YOUR TRAVEL MAGAZINE

Building on the tremendous success of our trade publication *Ground Control*, CATO has now also launched a new consumer-facing digital magazine targeting active travellers. *Your Travel Magazine* is a quarterly digital publication delivered to the inboxes of more than 115,000 Australians who have opted-in to receive travel product information.

This highly qualified audience will see the land supply sector showcased on every page and uses the same responsive technology as *Ground Control*.

## THE CATO AWARDS

At the 2019 National Travel Industry Awards the inaugural CATO Awards were introduced to the trade with the support of AFTA. This new award concept was such a success that we are now very excited to be focused on the delivery of a stand-alone CATO Awards in 2020.

The new event will be an elegant cocktail function and retain the concept of "The CATOs" being "the supply sector recognising the retail sector". Award categories are proposed to be expanded to 14 and recognise a variety of niche areas within the supply sector – by destination and style of travel.

On behalf of the CATO Board we would like to acknowledge the support of all industry partners through 2019 and look forward to an amazing 2020.

# FROM IIPT

## *Gail Parsonage, President, International Institute for Peace through Tourism*

**THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PEACE THROUGH TOURISM (IIPT) IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATION DEDICATED TO FOSTERING TRAVEL AND TOURISM INITIATIVES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING.**

We encourage cooperation among nations, an improved quality of environment, cultural enhancement and the preservation of heritage, poverty reduction, reconciliation and healing wounds of conflicts and through these initiatives, helping to bring about a peaceful and sustainable world.

IIPT is committed to making travel and tourism, the world's first 'Global Peace Industry' and the belief that every traveller is potentially an Ambassador for Peace.

AFTA has been a Coalition Partner and supporter of IIPT since 2002, and our joint values and principles are as important and relevant now, as at any other time.

With the awareness and current conversations on climate change it is worth revisiting the IIPT Lusaka Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development, Climate Change and Peace which was adopted and published on the UNWTO website. The travel industry has a key role to play in addressing the challenges that face all of us, so I encourage all AFTA members to refer to the 10 recommendations, which are directed at the tourism sector to help achieve these stated goals.

The other most practical role that everyone can adopt, is the distribution and application of the IIPT Credo of the Peaceful Traveller, which is our foundation and core value that all AFTA members can access.

The IIPT Credo of the Peaceful Traveller follows.



Grateful for the opportunity to travel and experience the world, and because peace begins with the individual, I affirm my personal responsibility and commitment to:

- Journey with an open mind and gentle heart
- Accept with grace and gratitude the diversity I encounter
- Revere and protect the natural environment which sustains all life
- Appreciate all cultures I discover
- Respect and thank my hosts for their welcome
- Offer my hand in friendship to everyone I meet
- Support travel services that share these views and act upon them and,
- By my spirit, words and actions, encourage others to travel the world in peace.

This year Q Station Manly, Sydney Harbour National Park was inaugurated as Australia's second IIPT Peace Park and joins a list of over 450 IIPT Peace Parks

worldwide.

In addition, the Australian Chapter of IIPT in partnership with UTS University of Technology Sydney, organised the IIPT Student Essay Peace Prize. Students from Tourism and Events Management – Business School UTS, were invited to submit an essay on the topic "To what extent do tourists have a responsibility to build a sustainable and peaceful world through tourism?" Carolyn Saba was selected with a thoughtful and well researched opinion and observations on linking tourist responsibility, sustainability and peace through tourism. Carolyn was inducted as an IIPT Student Peace Ambassador along with receiving other relevant prizes.

At every opportunity we want to remind all members of AFTA the role they have in encouraging all people to be peaceful travellers and to practise positive methods which contribute to a sustainable and peaceful world. Never forget, travel promotes peace.

# FROM ACCOR

*Simon McGrath, Chief Operating Officer,  
Accor Pacific*

## **ACCOR IS ONCE AGAIN DELIGHTED TO SUPPORT AFTA AS LUXURY HOTEL PARTNER.**

Accor's development growth remains in top gear and shows no sign of slowing as we draw to the end of 2019. With over 40 brands globally and 18 brands represented in the Pacific region, Accor presents its largest and most diverse portfolio of brands ever. Accor Pacific's network tally is now sitting at over 400 hotels, resorts and apartments in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, French Polynesia and Hawaii.

In the first half of 2019, Accor launched several luxury hotels in the Pacific, including The Fantauzzo Art Series Brisbane, Shadow Play by Peppers Melbourne, Pullman Nadi Bay Resort & Spa Fiji and an extensive refurbishment of Sofitel Fiji Resort and Spa. In the second half of the year, we have opened The Adnate Art Series Perth, No. 1 FV by Peppers Brisbane (third tower) and The Hotel Chadstone Melbourne MGallery by Sofitel - the first new-build luxury hotel outside of Melbourne's CBD.

In a first for the Hyde brand outside of the USA, Accor in Australia was thrilled to open the first sbe venue in the Asia Pacific region, Hyde Paradiso, which arrived on the Gold Coast this year, followed closely by Hyde Perth Kitchen + Cocktails and Hyde Hacienda Sydney Bar + Lounge, with more in the pipeline. Accor has a dedicated F&B team focused on driving profitability and operations for venues with each outlet backed by its own strategy and team. Innovation in food and beverage delivery will be a major theme for Accor and for the industry globally in 2020 and beyond, with food tourism increasingly playing a part in consumer's hotel booking behaviour.

Further development of bespoke and highly individual hotels created by local designers are on our horizon. Hotel guests are far more experienced and



“  
Hotel guests are far more experienced and discerning than ever before, and Accor is continually responding by adapting our existing brands and introducing new ones  
”

discerning than ever before, and Accor is continually responding by adapting our existing brands and introducing new ones; which is why we are actively pursuing opportunities to launch more SO/, Art Series, Swissôtel, Mövenpick, Tribe and sbe hotel brands across Australia and the wider Pacific region.

Nearly half of the hotels slated for

development over the next five years will be five star or above as the industry looks to capitalise on a luxury travel sector, driven particularly by Chinese tourists. Melbourne, Sydney and the Gold Coast have the strongest hotel development pipeline in the works.

Loyalty continues to be a key priority for Accor, and the group launched its new global loyalty lifestyle program ALL (Accor Live Limitless) at the end of 2019, which brings together the group's booking engine and loyalty program into a single platform to drive brands, services, experiences and guest engagement. One in eight Australians are now part of Accor's loyalty program, with over 4.5 million members right across the Pacific region.

We truly value the immense contribution that our travel agency partners play in our success story. On behalf of the entire team at Accor in the Pacific, we look forward to strengthening our relationship with our travel agent community in 2020.

# AUSSIES' APPETITE FOR OVERSEAS TRAVEL CONTINUES

**THE MOST RECENT FIGURES FROM THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS INDICATED THAT, EVEN IN A TOUGHER FINANCIAL CLIMATE, AUSTRALIANS ARE STILL KEEN TO TRAVEL, WITH 3.4% MORE OF US COMING AND GOING ON HOLIDAYS IN SEPTEMBER 2019 COMPARED WITH SEPTEMBER 2018.**

In addition, the *Australians on Holiday - International Leisure Travel Trends* report, commissioned by the Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO), found 6.3 million overseas trips were taken by Australians last year, spending a total of \$46 billion on their holidays, an average

of \$7,300 per person. Each traveller visits an average of 3.4 countries per trip, with holidays lasting an average of 22 days, earmarking Australia as a premium outbound source market.

For 2018-19, there were 11.2 million short-term resident returns, the highest year on record, eclipsing last year's mark of 10.8 million, also beating out the short-term visitor arrivals number of 9.3 million.

Figures show New Zealand as the most popular country for Australians to travel to, with 1.4 million returnees coming home from across the Tasman.

Bucking that trend however, were travellers from the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia,

with Indonesia being the leading destination for them.

In terms of growth, Japan stood out the most as the only country in the top 10 for short-term resident returns to also boast double-digit growth against the same period the previous year, with 10.4% more Aussies returning from the country than the year prior. Also boasting impressive increases were India and Indonesia, rising by 8.6% and 8.3% respectively year-on-year versus the same period.

As the world changes, Australia's travel aspirations are changing also. Research by Luxury Escapes confirms the top 10 destinations Aussies are hoping to travel to in the next 10 years include Canada





Previous page:  
New Zealand  
led the way  
for Australian  
travellers.

Left: Italy was  
the number  
three destination  
Australians wanted  
to visit in the next  
10 years, according  
to research by  
Luxury Escapes.

Top right: Japan  
again stood out this  
year with double  
digit growth.

Bottom right:  
Indonesia was  
the most popular  
destination for  
Australian travellers  
from the Northern  
Territory, South  
Australia and  
Western Australia.



(#1), Italy (#3), Greece (#5), Maldives (#6), France (#8) and Vietnam (#10), none

“  
In terms of growth, Japan stood out the most, as the only country in the top 10 for short-term resident returns to also boast double-digit growth against the same period the previous year, with 10.4% more Aussies returning from the country than the year prior  
”

of which are in the top 10 of resident returns for this year. In fact, three of the top 10 in the resident returns destinations have shown year-on-year decline, with the United States (#3), Thailand (#6) and Singapore (#9) all indicating slight reductions in visitation from Australia.

When it comes to year-end totals, AFTA's monthly *Travel Trends* publication paints a vivid picture of just how much Australian travel patterns are changing. Croatia, Nepal and Poland all eclipsed their 2018 totals by 20% or greater, and New Caledonia, Turkey, Switzerland, Austria, Chile, Sri Lanka and Samoa by 10% or greater. These figures come despite four of the top six (Croatia, Poland, New Caledonia and Switzerland) all recording drops in visitation the year prior. Of the top 10, only three countries on 2018's list (Turkey, Sri Lanka and Chile) have recorded double-digit growth in both 2018 and 2019.

With no land borders and separated from most neighbours by sizeable distances, Australian outbound air activity was high. Qantas dominated the Australian market for the year ending

June 2019, recording 17.4% of market share. Jetstar and Singapore Airways recorded 8.6% and 8.2% respectively – the next most impressive – with these two followed by Emirates (7.4%), Air New Zealand (6.8%) and Virgin Australia (6.4%). Cathay Pacific (4.5%), China Southern (3.3%), Qatar (2.9%) and AirAsia X (2.8%) rounded out the top 10.

While numbers show growth, there is also cause for some concern, according to some of Australia's foremost travel thought leaders. Flight Centre Managing Director Graham Turner worried in November that growth in the Australian outbound market had ground to a screaming halt, off the back of his company's profit tailspin for the first half of the current financial year. Speaking at the company's annual general meeting, Turner said after 10 years of 7% compound annual growth for short-term resident departures through to June 2018, the overall industry slowed to 3.5% in the 2019 financial year and grew less than 1% in July and August this year.

Only time will tell whether Australians' love of overseas travel has waned or not.

# CHOOSE THE RIGHT ADVENTURE WITH THE GLOBUS FAMILY OF BRANDS

## GLOBUS®



Globus goes beyond the ordinary to take travellers beneath the surface of a destination, showing them the hidden legends that tell the true stories of each place. Along with VIP access to must-see attractions, our exclusive Local Favourites take travellers behind the scenes, as we spotlight unique experiences they wouldn't find on their own. And for those after a new perspective on some of the world's most loved places, our Undiscovered tours travel to off-the-beaten path locations showcasing authentic traditions, charm and cultural gems that only a local would know.



### HIDDEN TREASURES OF SOUTHERN ITALY

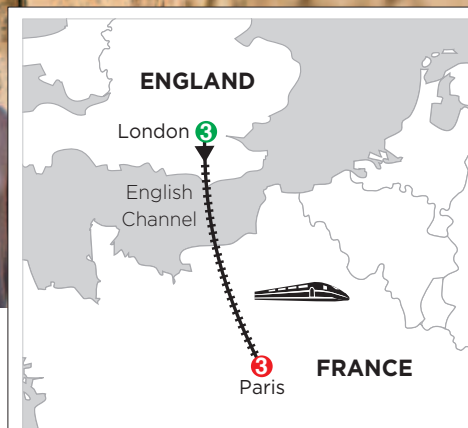
14 days | Rome to Palermo

From \$4,469 per person, twin share

## MONOGRAMS®



For travellers who prefer their independence but with a helping hand along the way, Monograms is the perfect solution. Single city and multi city packages include superior accommodation, breakfast daily, orientation tours, inter-city transfers and the service of a personal Local Host who ensure they get the most of their holiday with recommendations on things to see and do, the city's best kept secrets and how to best navigate the area. In select European cities, guests can also customise the amount of nights they spend with Monograms YourWay.



### LONDON & PARIS

7 days | London to Paris

From \$1,734 per person, twin share

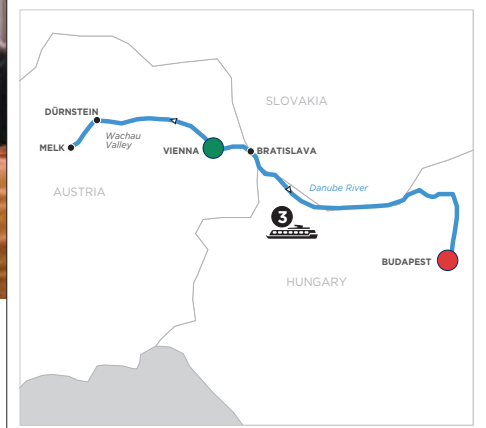
Call 1300 130 134





Travelling with Cosmos is not only an easy, value-focused option for traversing the globe, it's also a great way for travellers to combine must-see sights with plenty of time to explore interests and passions on their own. Cosmos' tours offer travellers included sightseeing and a choice of optional excursions; some included meals plus the freedom to indulge in local fare on a whim; a dynamic blend of transportation and comfortable pre-selected hotels. Need more flexibility? Cosmos Lite offers à la carte touring so guests can pick and choose what they want, when they want.

**THE CANADIAN ROCKIES**  
 13 days | Vancouver return  
**From \$2,809** per person, twin share



A truly luxurious way to see the world is on an Avalon Waterways river cruise. With a big focus on relaxed luxury, choice and flexibility, guests have the freedom to cruise their way. Daily Active, Discovery and Classic excursions offer a diverse way to connect with each destination and allows guests the chance to craft the holiday they want. Onboard, they enjoy sumptuous regionally inspired cuisine paired with free flowing wines and beer. And when it's time to unwind, there is no better way to do it then in our award-winning Panorama Suites with beds that face the Open-Air Balcony for unrivalled views of the passing scenery.

**A TASTE OF THE DANUBE**  
 4 days | Vienna to Budapest  
**From \$1,790** per person, twin share



# EDUCATION AND TRAINING OVERVIEW

*Lifelong learning is vital for those who want to succeed in the industry. Hear how education and training has been in 2019.*

# AFTA EMIRATES TRAVEL CONSULTANT SCHOLARSHIP

**EMIRATES CONTINUES TO BE A STRONG INDUSTRY SUPPORTER, DEMONSTRATING ITS COMMITMENT THROUGH THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE 2019 NATIONAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY AWARDS AND THE EMIRATES TRAVEL CONSULTANT SCHOLARSHIP.**

The scholarship provides travel consultants with less than three years' industry experience the opportunity to pursue personal excellence and

further their career by undertaking recognised studies.

In 2019 the Emirates Scholarship was awarded to Laura Jago who received up to \$10,000 towards a related education course and a Business class trip for two to Dubai to meet key leaders at Emirates, including a five-night itinerary to experience the destination of Dubai.

"Emirates remains committed to our trade partners and we are thrilled to once again be given this opportunity to support our industry via the AFTA Emirates Travel Consultant Scholarship.

The scholarship enables us to help shape and support the careers of our future leaders through further education and real-life experiences. Now in our seventh year of sponsorship, it is an honour for us to continue to be a part of this incredible scholarship program that nurtures young talent and supports the growth of the travel industry in Australia. Congratulations to Laura on this great achievement and we wish her all the best in her career," said Leonie Brennan, Head of Leisure Sales Australia for Emirates.

## *Emirates Scholarship Winner 2019 – Laura Jago*

I am still absolutely overwhelmed to be the recipient of the 2019 Emirates Travel Consultant Scholarship. I display my award proudly on my desk, visible to each client that sits with me for a consultation.

This award has very generously provided me with the opportunity to fly with Emirates in Business class to Dubai, accompanied by a travel companion of my choice. I am also provided with accommodation and a city tour allowing me to experience Dubai as the incredible destination that it is. In addition to this, I will have the invaluable opportunity to meet and network with some key figures in the Emirates head office in Dubai.

Furthermore, the Emirates scholarship has offered a significant grant to further my skills and education in a field of my choice within the travel industry. I am currently researching my options for



a Masters degree within Tourism, to further develop my Bachelor degree.

All of this aside, the accolade of being an NTIA winner is such an honour, that has benefited my career growth already with my recent promotion to a Team Leader role within Helloworld and Hunter Travel Group, after only being in

the industry for two years.

I can only begin to imagine the future growth and benefits that this award will bring to my career.

“  
The accolade of being an NTIA winner is such an honour, that has benefited my career growth already with my recent promotion to a Team Leader role with Helloworld and Hunter Travel Group...

”



# AFTA EDUCATION AND TRAINING UPDATE

**IT HAS BEEN A VERY BUSY YEAR IN THE EDUCATION SPACE AT AFTA. OVER THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS, AFTA WILL TAKE A SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT APPROACH TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING THAN IT HAS IN THE PAST.**

2019 was another busy year in the education space at AFTA. Whilst travel and tourism has achieved impressive growth, its diverse and complex ecosystem has endured significant change impacting the skills needs of our workforce. In response, AFTA has been instrumental in organising industry

round tables with key travel distribution representatives to discuss key priorities for education and training – including national qualifications in travel (including skill sets).

A key priority as we enter the new decade is to ensure that the Certificate III in Travel is fit for purpose and revised to meet current industry needs. It is critical that we develop leaders of the future to continue to develop the travel industry in Australia. AFTA's industry consultation shows that a higher level qualification is needed to address supervision and leadership skills demands, with consensus for the development of a new Certificate IV in Travel. This higher level qualification

will also support vital succession planning for an expanding ageing workforce.

Employers, particularly of small and medium sized enterprises, are also seeking assurance that their businesses will survive staff churn. Succession planning through this proposed new national qualification will help businesses thrive and retain staff through improved career planning and higher levels of skills.

The review of travel skills sets is also on the agenda, which combine both technical and 'soft' skills. Upskilling mature age workers, those changing careers and existing workers in digitisation and new technologies will be vital. Social media skills and e-business

have also been identified as key skills demanded by travel and tourism.

In response, AFTA has created an industry working group to collaborate and drive these recommendations. Continued industry consultation and feedback to support this work will be gathered and provided to the Travel Industry Technical Advisory Committee supported by SkillsIQ, which is the skills service organisation engaged by government to scope this work in 2020 and a detailed project plan outlining key dates will be developed. AFTA has also joined the Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Industry Reference Committee (IRC) with SkillsIQ. This is one of several IRCs advising training product development across the service industries.

To help drive these education and training outcomes for our industry AFTA appointed Melinda Larkin to the newly created role of Head of Education and Training. Melinda joins AFTA with extensive experience in workforce, skills and careers development, with a distinguished career in leadership roles – including Family Business Australia, Service Skills Australia (now SkillsIQ),

Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET), the Australian Retailers Association and the Federal Airports Corporation Australia. Starting her tenure in November 2019, Melinda

“  
**AFTA remains committed to education and training as a central pillar for our association, our members, future workers, and other stakeholders**  
”

is tasked with assisting industry on a national basis, to influence government policy in workforce development needs for travel, and address our sector's skill shortages and business concerns.

Melinda's appointment allows AFTA to

deliver on policy and outcomes desired by the Board and our members. These include AFTA's significant contribution to the skilling of our industry, career pathways and related workforce development initiatives.

To further complement AFTA's commitment, AFTA CEO, Jayson Westbury has joined the Board of Tourism Training Australia (TTA). TTA has been at the forefront of Travel, Tourism and Hospitality skills advice to government for decades, and was established to develop a flexible and effective training system for the tourism and hospitality industry. AFTA joins a large number of training partners, including industry, government, unions, private and public training providers, industry associations, universities and students/trainees through this appointment.

AFTA remains committed to education and training as a central pillar for our association, our members, future workers, and other stakeholders. We remain faithful to our industry's interests to ensure we are always looking ahead to build a prosperous and capable travel workforce of the future.

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# AVIATION OVERVIEW

*With more and more passengers taking to the skies, find out what went down in 2019 in aviation.*



# FROM QANTAS

*Igor Kwiatkowski, Executive Manager  
Sales and Distribution, Qantas*

**AS WE BEGIN OUR 100TH YEAR OF FLYING, WE DO SO WITH THE SAME SENSE OF OPTIMISM THAT OUR FOUNDERS HAD WHEN THEY STARTED THIS GREAT COMPANY IN 1920.**

Even though we started small in outback Queensland, our dreams have always been big.

Over the past century, we have grown to be Australia's largest domestic and international airline, and we've done so with our invaluable trade partnerships, in which of course, AFTA has played a significant role. Our goal has always been to become market leaders in delivering the very best to our most important stakeholder – our customers here and around the world.

In the past 12 months alone, we've seen much change, innovation and opportunity, within our own company, and in the aviation industry as a whole.

We've recently received another three Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners, with another three due to arrive in the next few months, providing our customers with far greater comfort than the 747s they replace.

Some of our upgraded Airbus A380 aircraft have also now taken to the skies. All 12 of our A380 will be refurbished by the end of the year as part of a multimillion-dollar upgrade that's set to deliver a new inflight experience for our customers.

Last year we grew our international network, with seasonal flights between Sydney and Sapporo and Melbourne to Queenstown.

And later this year, Australians will be able to fly direct from Brisbane to Chicago and San Francisco for the first time. Operated by our Dreamliners with jet-lag reducing features, the new routes will see a total of 14 weekly services year-round between Brisbane and the US, including the daily 787 Brisbane to Los Angeles service that continues to



“  
We've recently received another three Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners, with another three due to arrive in the next few months, providing our customers with far greater comfort  
”

New York.

This has been made possible with the US Department of Transportation's (DOT) final approval of our joint business with American Airlines. In addition to

Qantas customers benefitting from new codeshares across North America, frequent flyers will see higher earn rates for points and status credits.

On the ground, there's been no shortage of action, with several lounge upgrades at home and across the globe, including our new First Lounge in Singapore which opened late last year.

We've also continued to invest in our domestic customer experience and product, from rolling out free wi-fi across our Boeing 737 and Airbus A330 fleet to continuing the refresh of our turboprop aircraft for regional customers.

2019 was a big year for us, with milestones we were proud to share with you. Now as we look ahead to our next century, join us as we take the Spirit of Australia further. Thank you to all for your continued support in keeping our mutual customers at the heart of everything we do.

# FROM VIRGIN AUSTRALIA

*Paul Scurrah, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Virgin Australia Group*

**MY FIRST YEAR AS CEO AT VIRGIN AUSTRALIA GROUP HAS BEEN AN EXCITING AND ENJOYABLE RIDE AS WE FOCUS THE BUSINESS ON OFFERING THE BEST VALUE AND UNIQUELY VIRGIN WORLD-CLASS EXPERIENCE TO ALL OUR GUESTS.**

In the past 12 months, we've dialled up our Virgin flair with several initiatives that set us apart. From launching our international lounge network across Australia and New Zealand, enhancing our New Zealand offering, to improving our onboard retail menu and self-service kiosks at airports across our network, it shows how we're making it simple and easy for guests to travel.

Last year, Virgin Australia also became the first Australian airline to launch a new program to assist nervous flyers, allowing them to self-identify with us prior to travelling. The program allows us to connect with guests throughout their journey with us. Whether it's sharing breathing techniques from one of our expert partners or a video to help put passengers at ease during turbulence, we want our guests to know we're here to support them.

We also know that travelling with an infant can be stressful and we're pleased to be the first Australian airline to make that journey easier by introducing an infant baggage allowance on all domestic and international flights.

This means that parents travelling with a child under 23 months old on Virgin Australia-operated flights can check-in one additional 23kg bag free of charge, as well as two special infant items.

We're also excited to start operating the first flights connecting Brisbane to Tokyo Haneda from 29 March.



“  
We fly more than 24 million people around Australia and the world every year and we want them to feel good when they're flying with us  
”

With our reciprocal codeshare and frequent flyer partnership with Japan's largest airline, All Nippon Airways, Virgin Australia guests will also be able to fly to a range of destinations within Japan and across our domestic locations, just like they can across our other partners, such as Delta Air Lines, Etihad Airways and

Singapore Airlines.

We fly more than 24 million people around Australia and the world every year and we want them to feel good when they're flying with us. Initiatives like these, delivered with our famous Virgin personality and great value fares is why people choose to fly with Virgin Australia. It means a lot for us to also be recognised by our peers within the industry and we were thrilled to win Best Domestic Airline at the 2019 Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) National Travel Industry Awards.

Virgin Australia works collaboratively with its partners to navigate the complexity of the business and leisure world to deliver positive outcomes for guests.

Thank you to AFTA for your continued support of the Virgin Australia Group and we look forward to continuing to work with you to make travel simple, easy, and joyful for our guests.



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# AVIATION UP IN THE AIR

*Despite the dawn of “flight shaming” Australia’s commercial aviation sector has continued to experience growth, with passenger numbers rising on domestic and international routes in 2019.*

**FIGURES FROM THE BUREAU OF INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT AND REGIONAL ECONOMICS (BITRE) REVEALED MORE THAN 105 MILLION PASSENGERS PASSED THROUGH AUSTRALIAN AIRPORTS IN THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE.**

International passenger numbers topped 42 million – up 3.7% - while domestic numbers climbed by 0.5% to 63.52 million.

## **737 MAX 8**

The indefinite grounding of the Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft following the Ethiopian Airlines flight 302 crash on 10 March 2019, has impacted flight schedules around the globe.

The tragedy came five months after a similar disaster befell Lion Air flight 610. Aviation authorities around the world

ordered the 737 MAX 8 be taken out of service over concerns about the aircraft’s Manoeuvring Characteristics Augmentation System, which at the time of writing have yet to be resolved.

## **ERA OF CHANGE**

With Boeing’s 747 marking its 50th year in the skies, and Qantas phasing the big bird out of its fleet, combined with Airbus announcing the end of production of the A380, the long-haul sector has seen a year of change.

Approaching its centenary year, Qantas has embarked on Project Sunrise, pushing the boundaries of aeronautics with trials of direct flights from New York and London to Sydney, using Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft.

While the Project Sunrise routes are unlikely to be rolled out as regular services in the short to medium term at least, they have serviced to highlight

the industry’s shift from hub and spoke routes using large capacity giants of the sky to smaller, more economically viable planes on international routes.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

Australian carriers held just under a third of the international traffic through Australian airports in 2018/19, up from 29.8% in 2013/14, the BITRE International Airline Activity 2018/19 report (released in October) revealed.

Qantas retained its status as the leading airline flying into and out of Australia, with a 17.4% market share, ahead of its subsidiary Jetstar (8.6%), Singapore Airlines (8.2%), Emirates (7.3%) and Air New Zealand (6.8%).

However, while it remained the dominant carrier, Qantas’ market share slipped by 5.7 percentage points, with Singapore and Emirates also losing ground, while Jetstar’s increased by 1.9

percentage points.

Despite Jetstar's growth, low-cost carriers lost ground, accounting for 14.5% of total passenger traffic through Australia's international airports, down from 15.9% in 2017/18.

Across the international carriers, capacity grew by 1.8% in the 12 months to 30 June, with overall seat utilisation at 80.4%, up from 79.6% in the previous year.

In recent months there has been increased activity in the international aviation sector, with Qantas getting the green light for an expanded codeshare partnership with America Airlines, and a number of carriers announcing plans for new routes to Australian destinations for 2020.

Among the services set to debut in 2020 is Israeli carrier, El Al's first antipodean route, between Tel Aviv and Melbourne, with Vietnam's Bamboo Airways announcing a Hanoi-Melbourne service is in the pipeline for next year.

Of the Australian designate airlines, both Virgin Australia and Qantas have secured slots at Tokyo's Haneda Airport to commence next year, with Virgin set to make its debut in Japan, flying from Brisbane on 29 March.

All Nippon Airways has announced that its 2020 schedule will see a second daily Sydney-Tokyo Haneda service.

While new routes are set to come on stream throughout the year, Virgin Australia has announced it will drop its Melbourne-Hong Kong service this month, and Qantas is set to pull out of Beijing for the third time in 30 years, pulling the pin on its Sydney-Beijing service in March.

## DOMESTIC

Across Australia's domestic aviation sector, passenger numbers climbed modestly, with 63.5 million passenger movements in the year to 30 June, with Sydney retaining its status as the country's business airport.

Sydney-Melbourne was the busiest route with 9.2 million passengers commuting between the two cities, down by 0.5% on the 2017/18 figures.

2018/19 saw a reduction in the number of on-time arrivals (79.4%) and departures (80.6%) compared with the previous year (81.2% and 82%), while there was an increase in cancellations.

Monthly figures show the average on-time arrival performance of domestic

carriers dipped below 75% in July, improving moderately to 76.9% in October – significantly below the long-term average of 82.3%.

On-time departures have also lagged in recent months falling to around 76% in July, before rising to 78% in October.

With on-time departures and arrivals dipping in recent months, the cancellation rate for domestic flights has also fallen from a high of 2.5% in July to 1.7% in October.

“  
In recent months there has been increased activity in the international aviation sector, with...a number of carriers announcing plans for new routes to Australian destinations for 2020  
”

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# CRUISING OVERVIEW

*Discover what 2019 has been like for  
the cruise industry in Australia*

# FROM CLIA

## Joel Katz, Managing Director, Cruise Lines International Association Australasia

### GLOBAL GROWTH IN CRUISING IS BRINGING ENORMOUS BENEFITS TO COMMUNITIES WORLDWIDE, HELPING TO DRIVE JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES.

This is particularly true in Australia, where high rates of cruising mean economic benefits are increasingly making their way to regional communities around the country.

Figures released recently show the cruise industry has increased its total value to the Australian economy by 11.2% year-on-year, contributing \$5.2 billion in direct and indirect output during 2018-19. This is mainly driven by a big increase in passenger spending, up 17.4% on the previous year to total almost \$1.4 billion.

The figures also show the cruise industry supported the equivalent of 18,135 full-time jobs in Australia during 2018-19, a 6.6% increase on the previous year.

What this demonstrates is that cruising has a very positive effect on the Australian economy and helps to support the livelihoods of thousands of people. Most importantly, it dispels the myth that cruise ships come and go without leaving local benefits.

The figures were contained in the latest annual Economic Impact Assessment for 2018-19, commissioned by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) and the Australian Cruise Association (ACA). Compiled by AEC Group, it says 1,240 cruise ship visits led to 3.8 million passenger and crew visit days, resulting in direct expenditure by passengers, crew and cruise lines totaling \$2.5 billion.

Cruise passengers now spend an average of \$387 each for every day they're on shore in Australia, which provides enormous benefits to businesses like hotels, restaurants, tour operators and retailers.



“  
Cruising has a very positive effect on the Australian economy and helps to support the livelihoods of thousands of people  
”

Meanwhile, the cruise industry is working hard to reduce its impact on the environment and has made unprecedented progress in the past year.

Globally, CLIA cruise lines are investing more than \$22 billion in ships with new, energy-efficient technologies and cleaner fuels, putting them on track to achieve the industry's target of a 30% reduction in carbon emissions across the world fleet by 2020.

CLIA's third annual *Global Cruise Industry Environmental Technologies*

*and Practices Report* was released in September and outlines major advances in the deployment of sustainability measures since the previous year.

It says 44% of new-build cruise capacity will utilise liquified natural gas (LNG) for primary propulsion, achieving significantly lower emissions than ships running on conventional marine fuels.

It also says more than 68% of global capacity utilises exhaust gas cleaning systems (EGCS) to meet or exceed air emission requirements and outlines other advances like the deployment of shore-side power and advanced wastewater treatment systems.

Cruising makes up less than 1% of the global maritime industry but is at the forefront in developing responsible environmental practices and innovative technologies. Cruise lines are working hard to increase their social and economic contribution, while at the same time reducing their impact on the locations they visit and the oceans we sail upon.

# RIDING THE WAVE



Despite rising challenges in berthing capacity and flatlining sales over the last 12 months, the Australian cruise industry has its sights set firmly on the open ocean ahead.

## GROWTH SLOWS

The release of the annual Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) cruise figures showed the industry grew a meagre 0.1% in 2018, with a 0.9% year-on-year increase when adding international cruising into the mix. But despite the drop in numbers, passengers were still keen to get out on the water, with 1.35 million Australians, or one in 17, taking an ocean cruise during the year. Similarly, figures gleaned from the 2019 *Cruise Weekly* Cruise Survey showed that only 51% of agents had seen an increase in ocean cruise sales over the last 12 months, while river cruise revealed similar findings, with 38% of agents experiencing a sales increase. CLIA Australasia MD Joel Katz noting growth of 3.4% in the number of Australians taking fly-cruise options in other regions, "indicating demand remains strong in the Australian market".

## SPENDING UP

According to CLIA's market spend report released in October, the economic

contribution of the cruise sector cracked a record \$5.2 billion thanks to increased expenditure on accommodation, food and beverage, shore excursions and shopping by passengers on cruise ships calling at Australian ports. Australian Cruise Association CEO Jill Abel said cruise ships had visited 47 ports across Australia during 2018/19, bringing tourism benefits to some of the country's most remote coastal communities – including locations that in some cases are otherwise difficult for visitors to access. In addition, at the start or end of a cruise, international visitors spent an average of \$569 per day, versus domestic travellers who spent \$436 per day.

## NO ROOM AT THE INN?

The infrastructure crisis in Sydney Harbour continued to make waves throughout the year, with the release of the NSW Government's much-anticipated Cruise Development Plan in July, revealing it would be withdrawing the option to create a terminal on Garden Island, instead proposing a third \$500 million terminal be built at either Yarra Bay or Molineaux Point. The decision led to a raft of protests, including a controversial rally held at the Yarra Bay Yacht Club in November that saw more than 1,000 residents making a stand against the proposed terminal. In

addition, the industry was left scratching its collective head after a proposed \$12.7 million terminal due to be constructed in Newcastle was abruptly terminated in April despite the city's "record season" of 15 cruise ships in 2019/20. But despite capacity issues, the cruise industry is looking ahead to a positive year, with cruise lines plotting new itineraries Down Under, a number of terminal refreshes across Fremantle, Broome and Geraldton revealed, as well as the construction of a brand new "mega-terminal" in Brisbane that will be pivotal in enabling the next stage of cruise growth in Australia.

## FORGING AHEAD

Despite the drop in figures and capacity crises, Chairman of the Australian Cruising Association (ACA) Grant Gilfillan says things are looking bright for the industry. "With the cruise ship order books showing 122 new builds through to 2027, with 24 of them rolling out in 2019 and a target of 38 million passengers travelling on 434 ships globally by 2027, infrastructure and destination management will be high on everyone's agendas," he said in the ACA's annual report, adding that, "infrastructure continues to be the critical topic in creating the opportunity for further growth of the cruise sector in our region". All eyes will indeed be on the government for the coming year.

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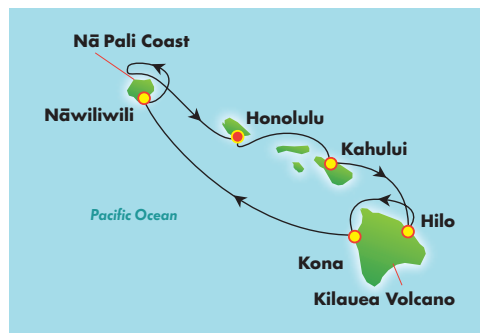
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# CLOCK TICKS FASTER FOR TRAVEL

*The pressure on travel brands to increase the size of their commitment to more sustainable business practices is stronger than ever before.*

**THE THRUST OF THIS MESSAGE IS BEING DELIVERED MORE VIGOROUSLY FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES, INCLUDING GOVERNMENTS, INDUSTRY BODIES, PROGRESSIVE TRAVEL BRANDS AND, INCREASINGLY THE CASE, CONSUMERS.**

Over the last 12 months in particular, travel companies have felt compelled to ramp up their time and investment into cultivating more detailed environmental agendas, especially as the issue of climate change becomes ever more omnipresent in mainstream public discourse.

## THE MESSAGE FROM THE TOP

One need only look at some of the prominent overarching bodies in travel to notice the winds of change gaining momentum on the issue of sustainability.

In early December, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) announced an ambitious target for the travel sector, throwing down the gauntlet and setting the target of being climate-neutral by 2050.

The WTTC said the objective could be achieved through a series of science-based criteria, such as becoming more energy efficient and reducing harmful waste like single-use plastics.

Further initiatives planned to help fuel momentum will include the launch of a Sustainability Knowledge hub, where the industry will be exposed to world's best practice, as well as a

higher involvement in spearheading events such as its first global Climate & Environment Action Forum.

"We have the power to drive real change and are committed to the issue," said WTTC CEO Gloria Guevara.

"WTTC has the opportunity to convene the industry so that we can move faster, contribute and address the significant environmental challenges facing the world," she added.

“  
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the world  
”

Gloria Guevara, CEO, World  
Travel & Tourism Council

Likewise, the World Tourism Organization recently released a landmark report which pulled few punches in its assessment of the travel industry, citing an urgent need for the

transport and tourism sectors to work more closely together to combat what it described as a "climate emergency" amid a predicted climb in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions over the next 11 years.

The report suggested that transport-related emissions from the tourism sector would account for 5.3% of all man-made CO<sub>2</sub> output by 2030, driven by an expected 25% increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the industry between 2016 and 2030.

"It is now for the tourism sector, especially tourism policy-makers to use data effectively and ensure the sector plays a leading role," said UNWTO Executive Director Manuel Butler upon the release of the report.

## AVIATION

It's not just the major tourism bodies prepared to be vocal about ambitious emissions targets, with Australia's national carrier Qantas recently drawing a line in the sand on the issue by declaring it would slash its carbon footprint to zero by 2050. In making the target public, the carrier became only the second airline in the world to make such a pledge, only a month behind British Airways' parent company International Airlines Group.

Qantas plans to achieve the goal by investing \$50 million over 10 years to develop a more sustainable aviation fuel, which it claims has the potential to cut emissions by more than 80%, as well as doubling its carbon offset program.

The airline is now matching every

dollar spent by passengers who tick “yes” to flying on carbon neutral flights, with Qantas CEO Alan Joyce characterising its newly released environmental agenda as “the most ambitious...by any airline globally”.

“We’re doing this because it is the right thing to do, but hopefully, it will also encourage more people to choose Qantas and Jetstar because of the action we are taking,” Joyce said.

Also grabbing headlines recently was neighbouring airline Air New Zealand, who have taken the push to eliminate plastic waste one step further by trialling the use of edible biscotti coffee cups on select trans-Tasman flights and in its lounges in Auckland.

The consumable cups are made from a combination of wheat flour, sugar, egg and vanilla, with passengers able to nosh down on their cups after finishing off their hot beverages.

Regardless of the net sustainability gain achieved, initiatives such as these are certainly welcome public relations wins for airlines, who have had to weather a rising storm of scrutiny thrust upon them by the ‘flight shaming’ movement.

Swiss bank UBS recently reported that one in five people they surveyed said they had cut the number of flights they took over the last year because of the negative impact they believe air travel is having on climate change.

The bank said that high-profile campaigns and the influence of climate activists such as Greta Thunberg could see the growth trend in air travel halve if the sentiment was to continue.

Responding directly to the threat that ‘flight shaming’ might have on the bottom line, Qantas chief Alan Joyce was quick to frame the issue in a positive light.

“Concerns about emissions and climate change are real, but we can’t lose sight of the contribution that air travel makes to society...the solution from here isn’t to simply fly less but to make it more sustainable,” he said.

“  
Concerns about  
emissions and  
climate change  
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can’t lose sight of  
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air travel makes  
to society  
”

Alan Joyce, CEO, Qantas

## CRUISING

The cruise sector is another sector of travel that has been subject to a high level of environmental scrutiny, with charges of overtourism in major tourist hubs like Venice, as well as an historical reputation for cruise ships being major diesel fuel guzzlers. However, much like the aviation industry, most cruise lines have made solid gains in the quest to reduce their carbon footprint.

The signs of this change were contained within the Cruise Lines International Association’s (CLIA) third annual *Global Cruise Industry Environmental Technologies and Practices* report, which showed that 44% of new-build vessels would use LNG fuel for their primary form of propulsion – a 60% increase on the previous year.

The report also noted the cruise sector had achieved “unprecedented year-on-year progress” across a range of key sustainable technology criteria in the last 12 months, including a strong uptake by its members in improving exhaust gas cleaning implementation, wastewater treatment methods, shore-side power capability, and the proactive phasing out of older vessels which did not meet the same standards.

According to CLIA the industry is on track to reach a 30% reduction in carbon emissions across the world fleet by 2020.



Below: Air New Zealand’s edible biscotti coffee cups.

Right: Cruise lines have copped a high level of scrutiny for contributing to overtourism in destinations such as Venice.



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# NDC IS COMING - READY OR NOT...

*Qantas has been the first airline to implement NDC, but as we progress into the future, they certainly won't be the last.*

**THE BIGGEST NEWS FOR 2019 ON THE TECHNOLOGY FRONT WOULD HAVE TO HAVE BEEN THE ROLLOUT OF THE NEW QANTAS CHANNEL, WHICH HAS FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGED THE WAY THE AUSTRALIAN TRAVEL INDUSTRY WORKS.**

Rather than Qantas having agreements with GDS providers such as Sabre, Travelport and Amadeus – who then in turn provide content to travel agents – the Qantas Channel turns this notion on its

head, necessitating a direct agreement between the airline and each individual travel agent. Agents are free not to sign up – but if they don't, they incur a new \$17.50 per segment charge which effectively makes them non-competitive.

Ushered in with a fanfare, agents were promised a host of benefits under the Qantas Channel, which is built on the new Qantas Distribution Platform (QDP), itself a manifestation of the brave new world of IATA's New Distribution Capability (NDC). The sting in the tail for agencies has been that having signed

a new agreement with Qantas, they were also required to renegotiate with their GDS company and in many cases this saw the end of segment rebates, which have helped underpin revenues, particularly for corporate agents with high transaction volumes.

There's no doubt that the benefits of the QDP are compelling. A recent demonstration of the system by one of the earliest adopters, Corporate Travel Management, showed how it has unlocked a range of features which simplify the booking workflow. In

particular the QDP enables booking tools to display frequent flyer information – and in turn special offers and value-adds, which can be targeted to particular routes and clients.

Qantas is working closely with GDS companies to enable them to leverage the benefits of the platform for every agent customer, and this will provide significant opportunities to improve the booking experience, boost yields and offer better customer service.

IATA and other industry bodies are using the Qantas experience as an example of the new world presaged by the introduction of NDC.

However that's all well and good for point-to-point bookings with a single carrier in its home market. The elephant in the room for NDC is that for more complex bookings – interline, multi-stop, multi-country – the new technology has massive limitations. That's because under NDC the airline, rather than the GDS, holds the details of its own itineraries and bookings. A flight distributor wanting to offer clients a mixture of carriers under a full NDC platform can only do so if all of the participating airlines are part of the same ecosystem – they have to communicate their “orders” with each other. And that might work fine when it comes to making a booking – but then servicing that booking, changing flights or managing disruptions becomes a technological nightmare.

Naysayers continue to highlight the complexity of NDC and its effective inability to manage such issues without a quantum leap in technology. Recently

a senior GDS executive noted that his company had successfully processed several hundred NDC bookings – in contrast to the billions of searches it undertakes each year under its existing platform. Nobody in the industry has thus far provided a solid guarantee that NDC is going to work at scale, and despite the rhetoric of the scheme's proponents, it is clear that the transition to this brave new world has some way to go.

Having said that, many developments on this front are expected in 2020. A number of carriers have been closely watching the Qantas experience with its NDC rollout, and it's expected that

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others are set to follow shortly. Singapore Airlines hasn't detailed its plans for the Australian market, but has already told agents in Thailand that it will roll out its new KrisConnect platform in July. Air New Zealand has been working assiduously on its own platform, while IATA has also touted a “20:20 Leaderboard” of carriers which have committed to having 20% of their sales powered by NDC next year – including Lufthansa, British Airways, Air France/KLM, American Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Finnair and Air Canada.

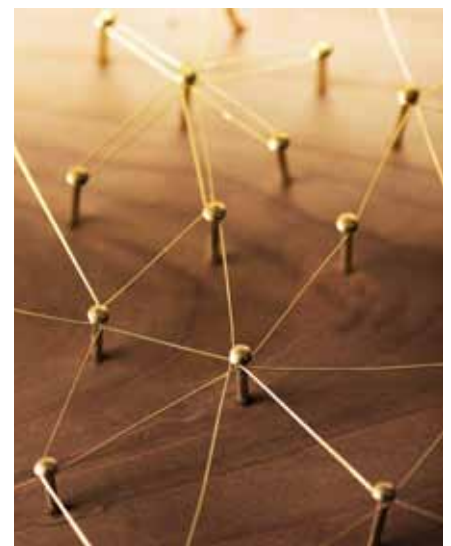
Technology is also expected to continue to power the increasing ability for travel agents to work from anywhere. The proliferation of ever-faster NBN and 5G wireless connections have facilitated a revolution in the way consultants work.

Major developments continue on the payments front, while an intriguing recent announcement heralded the return of former Air Tickets/QBT CEO Russell Carstensen in a new Peter Lacaze-backed venture called Aeronology which promises to provide “content and payment connections to any customer, anywhere in the world, 24/7”.

Webjet's B2B hotel division is rolling out new blockchain-based systems to ensure integrity in the accommodation booking chain, and we haven't even mentioned the revolution brought in by industry disruptors like Airbnb and Uber, which continue to rock the traditional travel distribution model. The only thing certain for 2020 is that technological change is inevitable – so let's anticipate the advantages it can bring and harness them for the future's sake.

*Left: The new Qantas Channel has necessitated renegotiations between GDS suppliers and travel agencies along with the new agreement with Qantas.*

*Right: NDC still needs to work towards addressing the limitations of the system when it comes to complex bookings involving interline, multi-stop or multi-line itineraries.*



# BUSINESS TRAVEL EVOLVES

*By all accounts the corporate travel sector had a fairly soft 2019, with global economic activity dampened by key issues such as Brexit, the unrest in Hong Kong and the trade war between the USA and China.*

**UNCERTAINTY IS OFTEN CONTAGIOUS, AND WITH BUSINESS CONFIDENCE BEING A KEY DRIVER OF TRAVEL THERE'S NO WONDER SOME SECTORS STRUGGLED DURING THE YEAR.**

However it wasn't just macro political issues impacting corporate travel. At a recent business travel conference attendees were shocked to hear a presenter from one of the major

consulting/accounting firms detailing a new policy which required staff to ensure they had a three month "non-travel period" each year, as part of measures to reduce that particular company's carbon footprint. Clearly a number of factors are behind apparent headwinds for corporate travel.

Despite that – or perhaps because of that – 2019 was a year of significant consolidation in the Australasian corporate travel sector. Helloworld Travel Limited was particularly active, boosting

its New Zealand network with a number of "mid- to large-sized corporate agencies" in New Zealand including Gilpin Travel, Barlow Travel and Atlas Corporate.

Helloworld also grew its corporate footprint by acquisition, purchasing Auckland-based Williment Travel in June, followed by a \$28 million deal in September to purchase former leading CT Partners member TravelEdge Group.

A recent analysis of the managed travel market found that the deals had boosted Helloworld Travel's total share to 17.5%,



making it the second largest TMC in the business after Flight Centre, which had an estimated 29% market share.

John O'Shea, a Senior Analyst with stockbroking firm Ord Minett, said he believed the total market in Australia was worth about \$8 billion in TTV, along with about \$1.2 billion for New Zealand. O'Shea put Corporate Travel Management just behind HLO with a 16.5% market share, followed by American Express Global Business Travel/HRG with 15% and then CT Partners with a 14% share.

And speaking of CT Partners, the group downplayed the impact of TravelEdge's departure, saying its annual revenue was "now at \$1.5 billion and climbing," with interim Chairman Barry Mayo describing the organisation as "the largest and most influential independent travel buying network in Australia...our unique, transparent and truly collaborative model makes us well positioned to adapt and thrive as the industry continues to evolve".

A major corporate travel success story during 2019 was the relentless rise of listed business travel booking and expense tech firm Serko, which was a share market darling as its share price almost doubled over the last 12 months. The company has heavily marketed its Zeno app, which has been adopted by significant players including Flight Centre across the globe, while a capital raising during the year was supported by Booking Holdings which plans to promote Zeno to its business traveller customers.

Serko's success came despite actually making a loss over the last six months

of the year, with the investment sector banking on the global rollout of the technology and the company's ability to maximise its profits as transaction volumes surge.

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Flight Centre, which has had a tough year in its leisure operations particularly in Australia, highlighted the ongoing growth of its corporate division over the last 12 months. In fact during the quarter to 30 September 2019 the company's corporate TTV increased by a "very healthy 18%" according to MD Graham Turner, who enthused that Flight Centre's corporate brands were on track to become a \$10 billion business in 2019/20.

"We are rapidly gaining share in the world's largest corporate markets," he said, noting that the FCM business alone had won accounts with TTV in the order of \$500 million globally so far this year.

2019 was also notable for an apparent bust-up of the previous close relationship between the Association of Corporate Travel Executives (ACTE) and CAPA Centre for Aviation. CAPA, which had in recent years expanded its heavy focus on aviation into the corporate travel sector and worked closely with ACTE to run joint events which by all accounts provided an ideal forum for industry suppliers to meet with key corporate travel buyer customers. However that came to a halt over the last 12 months, with ACTE launching its own separate events, while CAPA debuted its own Corporate Travel Community (CTC). It will be fascinating to watch how this plays out in 2020, because surely the last thing the corporate sector needs is yet more organisations seeking the attention and attendance of already busy travel procurement professionals.

Finally, the introduction of the Qantas Channel which is covered previously in *AFTA Travel Pages*, should not go without a mention in relation to the corporate travel sector, which for many years has been underpinned by GDS segment rebates. Mid-tier TMCs have been hit exceptionally hard by the new arrangements which required them to sign a new contract with Qantas and also with their technology providers, in many cases eliminating these per-sector payments. The industry is becoming more and more commoditised, relying on high volume low-margin transactions and many players are forecasting significant consolidation in this area because only the biggest, strongest TMCs are expected to survive.



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# TRAVEL AGENTS

*Hear what's new for some of the biggest travel agency groups in the industry.*





# ATAC

**DURING 2019 ATAC ACHIEVED SEVERAL KEY MILESTONES, INCLUDING SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP, (UP 17%), AS WELL AS INCREASED SUPPORT FROM OVER 75 PREFERRED SUPPLIERS.**

Members continued to enjoy money back into their pockets with increased revenue and record overrides, receiving eight payments over the 12-month period. This was made up of four air payments, EOFY and calendar year overrides, an annual share divided and a super override on air target.

Our forward-thinking tagline, "Partners in Your Prosperity", was reinforced further through the implementation of our integrated business portal, ATAC 360. This fully customised technology offers instant benefits and connectivity to

members, travel partners and the industry at large, in one seamless solution.

Ongoing support is provided to members to assist them with growing their businesses, minimising risk and planning for the future. This is achieved through regular communication via newsletters, ATAC 360, workshops and through incentives in partnership with preferred suppliers.

Another 2019 highlight was the Future Focus 2019 Conference held in Brisbane. With a record number of preferred partners attending, members benefited from insights from top presenters, workshops, inspiring panel discussions, networking and recognition of top achievers.

For the fifth consecutive year the group was a finalist in the NTIA Awards, in the Best Travel Agency Group – Non Branded category.



Based on the success of initiatives implemented in 2019, these will continue and be developed further during 2020. Included will be strategies to create increased prosperity for members, further ATAC 360 technology enhancements, regular hands-on workshops for product training, skills training and risk management. Future Focus Conference 2020 has been confirmed for 15-18 October in Darwin.

# CT PARTNERS

**CT PARTNERS, AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL MEMBER-OWNED TRAVEL BUYING NETWORK, CONTINUES TO ENJOY STRONG GROWTH AND SUCCESS WITH A TTV OF \$1.5 BILLION AND 14% SHARE OF THE CORPORATE TRAVEL MARKET.**

The network continues to enjoy very high levels of member engagement and collaboration thanks to its size and completely transparent model which returns 100% of supplier payments back to members. We've come away from our latest successful annual meeting with supplier partners in Bangkok with a strategic blueprint to reposition the group

in the coming year and take advantage of opportunities in the industry.

Membership growth will be a focus for 2020 along with growing non-air

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**Membership growth will be a focus for 2020 along with growing non-air revenue streams and further leveraging shared services**  
”



revenue streams and further leveraging shared services, including technology, to deliver even stronger financial returns to members.

While in Bangkok CT Partners, along with our supplier partners, again contributed to the rebuilding of houses in the Khlong Toei slum, working alongside local charity Hands Across the Water. Corporate social responsibility initiatives, along with a sustainability focus, will continue to form an important part of our ongoing business ethos.

# EXPRESS TRAVEL GROUP

## 2019 HAS BEEN A STRONG YEAR FOR MEMBER GROWTH AND TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS.

The expansion of the Express Travel Group (ETG) network has seen more than 85 new members join the group this year. The majority shareholding acquisition of First Travel Group (FTG) New Zealand and new members in Australia across italktravel & cruise, Independent Travel Group and Select Travel Group brings the group's membership base to more than 770 members across the Australasia region.

Chief Executive Officer Tom Manwaring said, "The coming together of ETG and FTG allows the benefits of scale to be realised by both categories of our membership base; leisure and corporate. YOU Travel retail group has many commonalities with ETG's italktravel & cruise, while the independent FTG corporate members will realise synergies from their counterparts within corporate ETG. Benefits will be realised in areas such as corporate travel technologies, cruising, global events and online leisure solutions."

The launch of two new business models italktravel & cruise at home and Express Corporate shows ETGs adaptability to the continually changing travel industry landscape.

The italktravel & cruise at home model facilitates the growing demand for agents who want to work outside normal business hours, in an environment that suits them and also service their customers at a time that suits their clients.

"This is a very exciting time for the italktravel & cruise brand, we now provide a flexible franchise option where agents can join us as a fully branded franchised bricks and mortar store, or join us as a Mobile Travel Advisor," Manwaring said.

While Express Corporate offers a solution for members with a high volume of SME clientele, giving agencies access to tailored airfare offers, CBT



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2020 will no  
doubt bring new  
challenges and with  
it, opportunities,  
as our industry  
continues to evolve

”

Tom Manwaring,  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Express Travel Group

technology and more.

Creating value for its members with the development of new tools and technology is at the heart of what drives Express Travel Group. The relaunch of Elevate, the network's member loyalty program and the addition of five new preferred airline and land partners not only increases member value with rewards and recognition but provides them with a higher earning potential across an extended range of products

and services.

Technology developments have seen the launch of a live cruise booking engine through wholly owned wholesaler Creative Cruising, a new hotel booking platform, a new B2B online payment facility and the development of a new mini program app to service the growing demands of the Chinese social media community through WeChat.

2019 also saw the inaugural Express Travel Group Exchange (ETGX), held in Bangkok. The new format owner-managers conference brought together of all Express Travel Group brands into one annual conference with a united message: we are individual, diverse, unique and stronger together.

"2020 will no doubt bring new challenges and with it, opportunities, as our industry continues to evolve. As a member driven network, we are as committed as ever in these times, to work closely with their members on new tools and initiatives to help their businesses grow and succeed," said Manwaring.

For more information or to join our network visit [etg.travel/joinus](http://etg.travel/joinus).

# INDEPENDENT DOESN'T MEAN ALONE.

At Express Travel Group we know how hard independent travel agents work. That's why we provide tools and support for over 700 agents across Australia. We make sure you have everything you need to improve backend efficiency and boost profitability. Join us today to improve your customer satisfaction and grow your business, all while remaining fiercely independent.

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**Express  
Travel Group**



ACCREDITATION PARTNERS

# HELLOWORLD TRAVEL

## 2019 WAS A VERY STRONG YEAR FOR HELLOWORLD.

The Helloworld Travel Branded network grew its footprint across Australia with a total of 26 new agencies joining the network in the last financial year.

The highlights of the year would have to be the successful retail events: the OMC in Vietnam and the Frontliners onboard *Ovation of the Seas* in which Helloworld was able to invite along some amazing guest speakers and entertainers for these two events.

We have also remained focused on the investment in building our brand awareness with the launch of our first ever Helloworld TV show. The program was well-received and drove strong enquiries

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For 2020, we look forward to continuing to expand our Branded and Associate networks and dedicating extra resources to train our agents

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to our network members.

At Helloworld, our goal is to create efficiencies for our network members so it was very exciting to introduce Elite Sales



training and launch our in-house mid-office system, ResWorld, which aims to increase the productivity of our members. Onboarding is underway with 50 agents already using ResWorld.

For 2020, we look forward to continuing to expand our Branded and Associate networks and dedicating extra resources to train our agents. Season 2 of our TV show continues on Channel Seven and showcases the abundance of activities that each destination has to offer, along with deals available via our retail members.

# HELLOWORLD BUSINESS TRAVEL

## THE HELLOWORLD BUSINESS TRAVEL (HWBT) NETWORK ALSO HAD A STRONG 12 MONTHS, WITH OUR FOCUS FOR THE YEAR BEING ON BUILDING ON THE STRENGTHS OF THE NETWORK AND OUR HWBT MEMBERS.

On the technology front, highlights included signing a new deal with Serko to provide our members with access to Zeno by Serko, expanding our suite of Business Insight dashboard reports, providing members with even greater insight into their businesses, and beginning to

rollout Smart Tickets Robotics, utilising Air Tickets robotic ticketing, to corporate agents, saving them time and money.

We provided members with learning and development opportunities with the launch of our Leadership Training workshop program, we held state member forums to discuss industry trends, challenges and opportunities. Our Annual Business Summit, held in conjunction with the OMC in Vietnam, featured high profile presenters and brought together the network, supplier partners and Helloworld staff to share in the latest developments within the



network and the industry as a whole.

Going into 2020 we continue to focus on member growth and development; further building on technology, training and marketing. We will be expanding the Helloworld Business Travel team to provide even greater opportunities to support and expand the network. And, in line with our commitment to supporting the ongoing development of the industry, we will be launching the inaugural Helloworld Business Travel Aspiring Leaders Scholarship early in the year.

# MAGELLAN

## 2019 HAS BEEN A GOOD YEAR FOR MAGELLAN TRAVEL AND OUR MEMBER AGENTS DESPITE CHALLENGING MARKET CONDITIONS.

Members continue to enjoy the best of both worlds being part of a high-end niche group and leveraging the aggregated buying power and capacity to invest with Helloworld Travel Limited.

In February, six lucky award winners from our 2018 National Conference were hosted on a seven-day all-inclusive journey to San Francisco, the Napa Valley and Monterey. In March, we farewelled Michelle Kerr who now heads up the APAC region for the humanitarian organisation, Eden and we promoted Paula Phillips to become our new Marketing Manager. This role is now full

time and is dedicated to helping our members generate demand and grow. In July, we won the National Travel Industry Award for Best Non-Branded Travel Agency Group and cheered on as Magellan members Chris Goddard of Maxims Travel and Bunnik Tours also won awards on the evening.

In August we held possibly our best conference ever in Uluru, themed around growth and engagement, and we announced a new Magellan Foundation Board with Eden as our new partner charity. Most recently, we have welcomed Lisa Goston as our new Marketing & Events Co-ordinator to further enhance our member services.

2020 is set to be even bigger and better and we will work with the newly elected Magellan Member Council to take the group forward. Our focus



will remain on helping our members to profitably grow their businesses with marketing that drives demand, technology that increases yield and productivity and supplier partnerships that differentiate our member agents and exceed customer expectations.

Finally, we will look to grow the membership and welcome expressions of interest from suitable agents.

# MTA – MOBILE TRAVEL AGENTS

## 2019 HAS BEEN A STELLAR YEAR FOR MTA, BUT 2020 IS LOOKING EVEN BRIGHTER.

Just weeks away from celebrating the most auspicious milestone on its success-laden journey, its 20th anniversary 'People-Purpose-Passion' conference on 28 February, luxury home-agency based pioneer MTA – Mobile Travel Agents can comfortably look back on the close of the decade with more than a measure of pride and a generous helping of hindsight.

Despite MTA having always been an organisation that has focused on selecting quality expert travel advisors, it has seen

substantial growth during the year with MTA advisor numbers now closing in on the 430 mark having eclipsed the 400 barrier earlier in the year.

From the perspective of professional development, the numbers of MTA advisors now enrolled in the benchmark and standard-setting MTA Professional Plus inhouse accreditation program, launched late last year, now sees 179 of all MTA advisors well on track to becoming fully accredited MTA Certified Travel Professionals.

Providing consultants considering the move to a home-based model with a further compelling reason to choose MTA, the company again broke industry ground



in 2019 to once again forge ahead of the pack with the launch of its innovative MTA mentoring for Success program designed to support the professional development of newly-joined MTA advisors.

And of course, there is never anything quite like peer recognition and 2019 saw MTA receive industry accolades in spades in the form of NTIA and CLIA award nominations plus an acknowledgement from the world's leading luxury organisation, Virtuoso, as one of the biggest producers of luxury product and cruise sales in the Asia-Pacific region.

# TRAVELLERS CHOICE MEMBERS FIND THE ONE

**A REVOLUTIONARY NEW BOOKING PLATFORM – OFFERING BOTH A SINGLE INTERFACE FROM WHICH TO BOOK MULTIPLE PREFERRED SUPPLIERS AND A POWERFUL WEBSITE BOOKING TOOL FOR CUSTOMERS – IS SET TO TRANSFORM THE WAY TRAVELLERS CHOICE MEMBERS OPERATE IN 2020.**

Available now to all Travellers Choice members at no cost, TC One is an unprecedented development for independent travel agents, who can now enjoy unrivalled efficiency and compete with online competitors.

With a single log-in to the new platform, Travellers Choice members can automatically search and book a wide range of preferred products.

“That means no more jumping from system to system and no more remembering of multiple log-ins,” said Managing Director Christian Hunter.

The platform is now live for activities and accommodation bookings, with more than 1.5 million properties offering an extensive range of room types and rate combinations.

“The rates offered through TC One are directly comparable to those available through online travel aggregators such as Expedia and Booking.com, and in most instances our members will find that the pricing is cheaper, sometimes significantly cheaper,” said Hunter.

“There is also a specific channel for luxury accommodation, again with significant pricing advantages, providing Travellers Choice members with attractive margin opportunities.”

With all of the group’s other preferred partners – including airlines, cruise lines, wholesalers and tour operators – due to come online with TC One in 2020, Hunter said the platform will help re-capture business that is currently leaking outside of preferred channels.

“Ultimately it will allow Travellers Choice to optimise our preferred arrangements

and drive financial benefits that flow directly back to our members, who remain our group’s sole shareholders.”

TC One also offers a B2C capability, enabling any Travellers Choice member to install an online booking tool on their agency website.

“In fact the system allows our members to have an online/offline presence – a platform where customers can start a booking online and finish it off in-store, or vice versa,” said Hunter.

“Customers can access their own bookings and add elements at their own leisure, again with all elements tracking back to the agency’s business and of course, fully commissionable.

“This is game-changing technology for Travellers Choice members and no other independent group has anything like it. The scope is simply immense.”

The launch of TC One in late November capped an exciting 2019 for Travellers Choice, during which it rolled out a number of new support services to members. Among them was TC Pay, an exclusive package of cost-effective payment solutions, and Wetu Itinerary Builder, which allows members to create content-rich, interactive travel itineraries

that drive sales conversions.

The group’s innovative relationship with online travel agent TripADeal (TAD) also went from strength to strength, with members integrating TAD product into their sales mix. And Travellers Choice agents benefited from new networking and training opportunities, with the launch of mentoring and professional development programs.

Its efforts did not go unnoticed, with Travellers Choice once again being crowned Best Agency Group at the National Travel Industry Awards.

While Travellers Choice was delighted to be recognised by its peers, Hunter said that what ultimately matters most to any group is the opinion of its members.

“That’s why for me the most satisfying development of all this year was revealed by our annual network survey,” he said. “It showed that 100% of respondents reported being ‘satisfied’ or ‘more than satisfied’ with their membership. That’s why we remain the leading network for independent agents.”

For more information on Travellers Choice, visit the company’s dedicated trade website – [www.travelagentschoice.com.au](http://www.travelagentschoice.com.au).



# TRAVELLERS CHOICE

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# STA TRAVEL

**FOR STA TRAVEL, 2019 HAS BEEN A YEAR OF MANY SUCCESSES INCLUDING CEMENTING OUR STANCE ON ISSUES THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO OUR CUSTOMERS AND ALIGN WITH OUR COMPANY BELIEFS.**

This year, STA Travel won Best Youth Travel Agent in the Global Youth Travel Awards and was nominated for Travel Agency of the Year at The Travel Awards. Being recognised for our hard work and achievements with this enormous honour was a company highlight that we look forward to carrying into 2020 as we build on our services and offering. STA Travel also pushed the boundaries with a world first initiative, partnering with Subaru and Superdry to offer unique and exciting experiences for Australian consumers.

2019 was also an important year

for STA Travel as we reaffirmed our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of our customers, which included moving

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2019 was also an important year for STA Travel as we reaffirmed our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of our customers, which included moving away from selling products not aligned with our values  
”



away from selling products not aligned with our values.

STA Travel has also continued our support for CanTeen and have strengthened our commitment to animal welfare and the environment. Shortly, STA Travel customers will be able to purchase carbon credits to reduce carbon footprints when flying, and the year ahead will bring a strong focus on sustainability. There are big adventures to come for STA Travel in 2020 so keep your eyes peeled!

# TRAVEL COUNSELLORS

**2019 MARKED TRAVEL COUNSELLORS' 25TH ANNIVERSARY. FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS IN THE UK, TODAY TRAVEL COUNSELLORS HAS MORE THAN 1,900 TRAVEL FRANCHISEES IN 7 COUNTRIES.**

Travel Counsellors Australia celebrated TCX – the Travel Counsellor Experience. TCX and the key value drivers for the TC was a significant focus for 2019, driving the further development of training, systems and processes to enhance the TC journey. There have been many enhancements to the myTC app and inhouse booking platform Phenix, while the roll out of Ninjio cyber security training and the

Marketing Bootcamp highlight the ongoing commitment to training and development.

Five new team members bring more personalised, local support including: IT Support Jack Fielding; TC Buddy Erin Van Housen; Accounts support team Laura Lund and Billie Srijemec; and Megan Larsen-Smith in the new role of Supplier Relations Manager, strengthening our industry partnerships.

The Melbourne team travelled nationwide to deliver TC on Tour training and the TC Picnic, held in conjunction with the global Silver Anniversary celebrations. Travel Counsellors Australia also generated more than \$6,000 for charitable causes.

Six exclusive trips to Thailand,



Fiji, Canada, Bali, Manchester and Hawaii rewarded success while Travel Counsellors Australia was proud to be named as finalist at the 2019 CLIA and NTIA awards.

2020 is set to be even better. With solid foundations and a strong support team, 2020 will see continuous development of the TC Experience and a commitment to attracting travel entrepreneurs to become successful business owners through the deeper focus on productivity, protection and people.



# TRAVEL PARTNERS

## **DRIVEN BY A STRONG INCREASE IN MOBILE AGENTS AND MEMBER AGENCIES, 2019 WAS A YEAR OF CONTINUED FINANCIAL GROWTH FOR TRAVEL PARTNERS.**

Agents are attracted by the robust client value proposition and the superior buying power of Travel Partners.

By the close of 2019, Travel Partners had doubled its network and expanded head office resources to support this growth. Building a strong community of agents is of utmost importance for Travel Partners, where they find they have assistance, advice and support, no matter the size of their business.

As part of the Travel Partners network, agents have access to regular supplier networking opportunities, product education days, numerous fam trips and sponsored events.

In addition, the company has expanded its range of training tools including webinars and face-to-face skills enhancement. This includes intensive social media and content training, in addition to regular digital marketing webinars. This is set to expand even further.

In 2020, the business will further differentiate with the launch of its first specialisations – Travel Partners Luxury and Travel Partners Business. It will also take a more prominent place at FCTG's



Travel Expos, to drive new business and client leads to the independent sector of mobile and member agents ensuring they are successful.

Travel Partners continues to offer an unparalleled competitive advantage with access to the full product suite of the Flight Centre Travel Group. The company's vision – to be the number one independent travel network in Australia – guides the business strategy for 2020.

# TRAVEL MANAGERS

## **RECORD-BREAKING FIRST HALF SALES SET UP TRAVELMANAGERS FOR A SUCCESSFUL 2019, WITH SEVERAL OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS AMONG OUR 590-PLUS PERSONAL TRAVEL MANAGERS (PTMS).**

Western Australia-based Kathy Millett was the winner of Best Mobile Travel Advisor at the NTIA Awards. Tasmania-based Melanie Whyte received the AVIS Travel Agent Scholarship – the third consecutive win for our PTMs. Victoria-based Nicole Edgar was Home-Based/ Mobile Agent of the Year Australia at CLIA's Cruise Industry Awards, while NSW-based Angharad O'Malley

collected Cruiseco's award for Top Seller of the Year – Home Based for the second consecutive year.

The TravelManagers network was named Best Mobile Travel Advisor Network at the NTIA Awards, and Home Based Agency Group of the Year at The Travel Awards in November. Strong supplier relationships resulted in accolades including Scenic Luxury Cruises' Top Home-Based Agency and Cruiseco's Top Five for sales – our fifth consecutive year for both awards.

Our annual charity golf tournament raised more than \$24,000 for the "Love Your Sister" organisation.

Our 2019 conference saw PTMs and representatives from National Partnership Office preparing and serving dinner for families at Perth's Ronald



McDonald House – an activity which has been repeated at Westmead's Ronald McDonald House in Sydney, with similar events being planned at locations around Australia for 2020.

Our people's professionalism and commitment to excellence has us in a strong position and 2020 will see ongoing training and support complemented by technology refinements, recognising that individual PTM success is integral to the overall wellbeing of the company.



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