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# Travel Daily First with the news

Wednesday 19th February 2020



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# CTM hit by virus, unrest

JAMIE Pherous, Corporate Travel Management CEO, says the one-off impacts of Brexit, Hong Kong demonstrations and COVID-19 have "masked an otherwise solid business performance where we have been winning customers, managing costs and growing market share".

The listed TMC this morning released its results for the six months to 31 Dec (TD breaking news) and is taking action to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 which may hit underlying earnings by up to \$40 million.

CTM has analysed previous experience with pandemics, which history suggests have an average duration of 4-6 months and an eight-week peak, which is

#### Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has eight pages of news and photos, a front cover wrap for ANZCRO, plus full pages from:

- Albatross Tours
- Travel Trade Recruitment
- MW Tours
- TD Sustainability Summit

assumed to be Feb and Mar 2020.

"Once the peak impact period subsides, corporate activity historically rebounds quickly, and we have assumed activity gradually returns to normal levels by Jul 2020," the analysis states.

However CTM has also noted a key difference with COVID-19, with the rapid reaction of governments to close borders and suspend travel to and from China, which may reduce the severity.

Apart from CTM's Asia business, which has halved this month, less than 2% of the firm's transactions relate to China.

Pherous said actions taken in the HK business include reducing staff working hours and bringing forward annual leave.

#### **ANZCRO** holidays

**NEW** Zealand holiday expert ANZCRO Connect is encouraging agents to register on their website and book their clients' next adventure on the island country's West Coast, home to world-famous glaciers, cycleways and rainforests.

See the front page for more.







Win a trip to Europe!

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#### Albatross journeys

ALBATROSS Tours is highlighting its new Europe & UK small group tours for 2020, including the new 10-day Hidden Italy, the Land of Estruscans itinerary.

Travellers will get to visit medieval towns, catacomb labyrinths, water cascades, frescoed tombs and more - see page nine for details.

#### MW commission

MW Tours is offering an additional 2% commission on all its brochure tours for bookings made and deposited from tomorrow until 10 Mar.

Eligible itineraries include the Best of Vietnam from \$3,799 per person - for more information, see page 11.

# Win your place on a Las Vegas famil

Book a group of 10 or more to the USA on Virgin Australia or Delta Air Lines from 1 Feb - 31 July 2020\*

Find out more







\*Terms and conditions apply.

# Webjet takes a hit from TC

**WEBJET'S** profit for 1H20 was hit hard by the Thomas Cook collapse in Sep, with the company writing off a \$44m debt in unpaid receivables from the failed company (*TD* breaking news).

Despite the "key disappointment" of Thomas Cook's collapse, which impacted the statutory result, Managing Director John Guscic said Webjet continued to grow strongly.

Total transaction value for the period was up 25% to \$2.3 billion and revenue rose 24% on 1H19 to \$2.2 billion.

However, statutory net profit after tax plummeted 64% \$9m, and statutory EBITDA slid 14% to \$46.4m for the period.

The WebBeds business was a strong performer for Webjet, reporting a whopping 81% growth in EBITDA to \$57.3 million, with the division contributing over 60% of the total Group EBITDA for

#### Air NZ adjusts

AIR New Zealand's Shanghai services are currently suspended until 29 Mar and will be adjusted from seven return services per week to a return service every second day until 30 Apr.

Hong Kong services, currently operated by Cathay Pacific, will resume on Air New Zealand aircraft from 29 Mar and be reduced from seven return services a week to four, from 21 Apr until 31 May.

the period.

Guscic said WebBeds had become the fastest growing and second largest B2B accom provider in the world, through "a disciplined and targeted approach to international expansion via a combination of organic growth and successful acquisitions".

Total transaction value for WebBeds grew 42% to \$1.5b while revenue jumped 50% to 127.5 million.

The Webjet Online Travel Agent saw a 1% rise in revenue to \$74.8m while Online Republic's revenue slid 4% to \$15.6m.

The company's FY20 EBITDA guidance is expected to be between \$147-165m, a 14-28% rise over FY19.

#### AFTA COVID-19 pg

**THE** Australian Federal of Travel Agents (AFTA) has created a dedicated page on its website to provide important updates to members on COVID-19, which can be viewed **HERE**.

AFTA said it monitors the situation daily, and "remains highly engaged" with the various Federal Government agencies on matters relating to the virus.

"The need to keep Australians safe from COVID-19 is paramount and we continue to work with many govt agencies as plans and responses are considered and implemented," said AFTA Chief Executive Jayson Westbury.

#### **QF** reducing HKG

**QANTAS** has filed a reduction of its Mar services to Hong Kong International, GDS displays show.

From 01 to 28 Mar, Brisbane to Hong Kong will be adjusted from seven to five times weekly, while Melbourne to Hong Kong will also be amended from seven to five times weekly, effective from 02 to 28 Mar.

#### TD Summit speaker

**TD**'s Sustainability Summit features Hurtigruten's Head of Sustainability Naomi Ages in its stellar line-up of speakers, to lead a discussion on the politics of corporate accountability and environmental legal systems.

The summit will take place at Doltone House on 22 Apr.

For more, see the back page.



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**Meet Your Mediterranean Experts** 

#### John

Years in industry: 16

**Favourite destination:** Greece

Destinations Visited: Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt,

Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey

**Expert Tip:** All Greek Islands offer something different, so for first time visitors always recommend the staples of Mykonos and Santorini with an off the beaten track, more traditional island, such as Milos.



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# A Sapphire year for Oz

**PRINCESS** Cruises has announced its 2,670-passenger Sapphire Princess vessel will be redeployed from homeports in Singapore and Shanghai to Australia for an extended year-long season six months early, commencing 01 May (TD breaking news 18 Feb).

The updated program will add 44 new cruises across five major Australian cities, injecting close to \$140m into the local economy.

"With the ongoing uncertainty of travel restrictions and port closures in Asia impacting our cruise operations in the region, we hope that this extended deployment in Australia will benefit local tourism, particularly in regional areas with 102 visits to regional ports around the country during her year-long deployment," said Princess Cruises Senior Vice President Asia Pacific Stuart Allison.

"Never has there been a better time to cruise from your doorstep, with convenient new departures from Sydney, Perth (Fremantle), Adelaide, Melbourne and Brisbane between May and Oct 2020 at unprecedented value. with special launch fares for cruises departing within the next three to six months."

The year-long program will include 171 port calls, including an inaugural Australia circumnavigation sailing roundtrip from Adelaide, with similar options sailing from Fremantle and Sydney.

The ship is scheduled to make a series of 19 maiden calls along WA's coast, including to Geraldton and Exmouth.

Passengers will also be able to enjoy the MedallionNet offering on itineraries sailling from 04 Jun.

Bookings open on Mon 27 Feb, call 13 24 88 for more info.



#### **ATAS** guidelines

THE Australian Federation of Travel Agents' (AFTA) updated its ATAS advertising guidelines earlier this month (TD 03 Feb) to get in front of regulation and protect its members from potential legal action, Chief Executive Jayson Westbury told *Travel Daily*.

"We're attempting to try and get ahead of the game so that members comply with what we believe is our interpretation in advance of a regulator making a determination that could see them before the courts," Westbury said.

"Its purpose is to try and get some clarity, some crispness in messaging, and get ahead of any action that a regulator may take, so our members don't end up in their ire."

He also mentioned the benefit of the new guidelines to the consumer, with AFTA in constant dialogue with the ACCC in order to optimise ATAS' rigidity.



# Window Seat

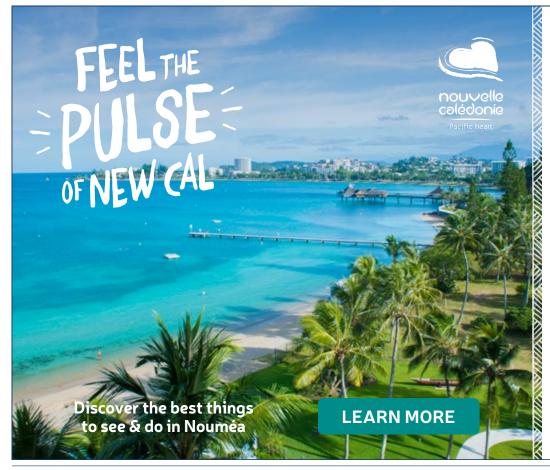
WE KNOW that going on holidays can take you to new heights, but one social media user on vacay in Rio de Janeiro recently took the concept a bit too literally.

The reckless tourist, who posted a video of herself online, shuffled down the face of the region's famous Pedra da Gavea cliff & can be seen waving at the camera as she poses more than 900m above the ground.

"I got anxiety watching this," one Twitter user said.

What we would like to know, is how she got back up?





# **NEW CALEDONIA ON SALE**

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\*Blackout dates and Seasonal surcharges apply.





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# Travel Daily

Wednesday 19th February 2020

#### Oz high before low

THE Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has released its financial half-year results, with Australian tourism experiencing "another record inbound visitor income" for the period to 31 Dec 2019.

The data revealed Australia welcomed 9.4 million short-term visitor arrivals, with New Zealand replacing China as the largest inbound market in visitor volume.

However, Australian Tourism **Industry Council Executive** Director Simon Westaway said that due to the impact of the recent bushfires and coronavirus, the figures will "disappointingly deliver the likely high-point in international tourism for our country into the foreseeable future.

"These strong international tourism visitor figures to the 2020 financial half year represent a calm before the future statistical storm," he said.

#### CWN results mixed

**CROWN** Resorts Limited (CWN) has released its half-year financial results for the period ending 31 Dec 2019, with the company reporting "mixed trading conditions" across its various husinesses

Normalised EBITDA for the overall business came in at \$381.3m, down 9% on the previous year, while reported EBITDA was up 14% to \$446.8m.

Revenue from the company's Australian resorts was down 5.2% to \$1,457.5m in normalised revenue, while reported EBITDA jumped 11% to \$453.9m.

An "encouraging" performance from Crown Perth saw the property experience a 5.7% boost in non-gaming revenue compared with the previous year, while overall occupancy across Crown Melbourne's three hotels hit 93%, led by Crown Towers, which came in at 94.6%, followed by Crown Metropol at 92.7%.

# Ireland marketing appeal



TOURISM Ireland (TI) yesterday welcomed key industry partners to a special update at Sydney's QT Hotel, where the organisation's New York-based Executive Vice President, Alison Metcalfe, laid out TI's marketing plans for the next three years.

The event also included a lively panel discussion featuring Metcalfe alongside Travel Daily's own Bruce Piper along with The Travel Corporation CEO John Veitch and local TI head Sofia Hansson, discussing key trends and drivers for travel to Ireland.

Metcalfe told TD Australia continued to be a key market for Ireland, with Aussies staying longer and spending more than visitors from other destinations.

Six key pillars will underpin marketing through to 2023: Built Heritage, TV & Movies, Food &

Drink, Living Culture, Views & Landscapes and the newly added Soft Adventure, reflecting the ongoing appetite of travellers for activities and experiences.

By 2023 Ireland aims to boost global visitor numbers by 7% and guest spending by 13%, with key goals including dispersal of arrivals across the island of Ireland along with sustainable marketing practices and a strong focus on digital.

The event was also attended by Ireland's Ambassador to Australia, Breandan O Caollai, who highlighted the success of the Working Holidaymaker Visa scheme in attracting young people to Australia and urged the industry to similarly encourage backpacker travel to Ireland.

He's pictured above with Metcalfe and Hansson.



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# Travel Daily

Wednesday 19th February 2020

# Travel Daily on location aboard Voyager of the Seas

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Cruiseco, which is hosting its annual conference this week.

**CRUISECO** celebrates 20 years of business this year, with members gathering aboard Royal Caribbean Int'I's *Voyager of the Seas* in Sydney today for the annual conference.

The six-night round trip cruise from Sydney takes in Hobart and Melbourne and will provide members ample opportunity to take in a comprehensive conference program.

Plenary sessions lead by senior executives from across the cruise industry are planned, together with a sponsors' exhibition, marketing clinics, hosted dinners and the annual gala dinner awards.

#### APT launches three

**APT** yesterday launched three new brochures covering its small ship cruising for 2021.

The Kimberley Cruising featuring the Coral Coast, the Small Ship Expedition Cruising, and the Small Ships Luxury Cruising Croatia with Montenegro brochures are all out now, and introduce more destinations for the company's expedition cruising product.

The season will also see APT's Lady Eleganza and Le Bellot set sail in Croatia and the Kimberley respectively.

#### Sabre MIAT deal

MIAT Mongolian Airlines has partnered with Sabre to implement the travel technology company's Market Intelligence Global Demand Data solution.

The tie-up will provide the airline with "advanced data capabilities" across commercial planning areas, including revenue management and sales.

# New ships for SeaDream



**SEADREAM** Yacht Club is still planning to build new ships, despite cancelling the construction in Dec of newbuild *SeaDream Innovation*, VP Int'l Sales Jannicke Daae Rognstad has told *TD*.

In Australia from head office in Norway ahead of the Cruiseco conference, Rognstad is visiting a number of the cruise line's partners and travel agencies, and revealed that more information on future ships would be divulged later this year.

Innovation, which was set to be the first vessel added to the fleet since 2001, was canned after SeaDream and Damen, the shipyard where the vessel was to be constructed, agreed "in good faith and with mutual understanding" not to proceed

# **EVENT's Jucy JV**

**EVENT** Hospitality & Entertainment has acquired a 50% stake in New Zealand budget accom provider Jucy Snooze, propelling the company's plans to move into the Australian market.

"Without this investment, our expansion would have been slower, but we now aim to expand the Jucy Snooze offering over the next five years to cater for the growing demand for this product offering," Jucy CEO Tim Alpe said.

"We have been wanting to move into the Australian market for some time; the locations of new hotels will be aligned with the distribution of our vehicle rental fleet, to provide a more seamless travel experience for the target market," he said.

Jucy Snooze offers capsule-style sleeping pods, along with shared, private, ensuite and family rooms.

with construction.

Rognstad also disclosed that refurbishments to *SeaDream II* would take place in Apr and May, with work on *SeaDream I* to follow next year.

"We will refurnish the staterooms, they will have a new look and feel, they will have the same shape," she said.

Rognstad is **pictured** (left) with Gate 7's Dani Marsland.

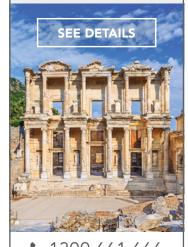
More in *Cruise Weekly* tomorrow.





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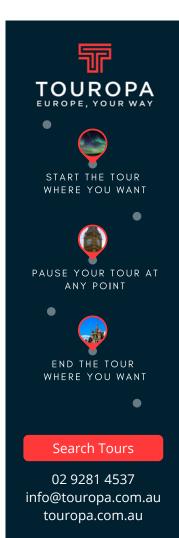


#### AA slams bed tax

THE Accommodation
Association (AA) has claimed
the Cairns Regional Council's
proposed bed tax represents
"flawed logic", instead
constituting an impost on a highvalue industry for the city.

"Far from generating income to grow tourism, a sector that represents 13.5% of Cairns total industry value add and represents 14.4% of Cairns employment...the introduction of a 'bed tax' would simply add to the cost of staying in Cairns," said Accommodation Association Chief Executive Officer Dean Long.

"Visitors already have significant taxes and charges imposed on them with airport security charges, passenger movement charges".



#### My Travel Group agents on deck



**SILVERSEA** hosted these My Travel Group agents (**pictured**) aboard its flagship *Silver Muse* in Melbourne last week.

The event was supported by Insight Vacations and Qatar Airways, and included a morning breakfast seminar, ship inspection and a three-course lunch.

*Muse* was in Sydney yesterday and more agents and industry partners were on board, along

#### Accor & Visa deal

**ACCOR** and Visa have formed a global partnership, which will create the new ALL Visa card, as part of Accor's new revamped loyalty program, ALL-Accor Live Limitless offering (*TD* 28 Nov).

The card will offer members tailored rewards based on their preferences, and will provide the ability to earn more loyalty points when staying at Accor properties, and when making purchases.

#### Visit Vic campaign

**A NEW** \$5 million campaign from Visit Victoria (VV) is set to showcase the state to Australia and the rest of the world.

The push will focus on key markets such as Europe, India, New Zealand and Vietnam, as well as the United States, where VV is exploring opportunities to put Melbourne on the global stage at conglomerative media festival South by Southwest.

with outgoing local Silversea MD Adam Armstrong, who unveiled a new dedicated brochure showcasing Silversea's expedition products in Australia, NZ, the South Pacific and Asia.

Armstrong, who is moving to Geneva to become global CEO of Contiki Holidays (*TD* 07 Feb), told *Travel Daily* his departure was still some months off, while the recruitment process for his replacement was currently at an "advanced stage".

#### **APT and Rural Aid**

**RURAL** Aid and APT Travel Group are today delivering approximately 326 hay bales to farmers in Jingellic, NSW.

A total of 27 local farms are receiving the bales, which will be delivered aboard five road trains.

The Group's Focus Travel Cambodia and Focus Travel Vietnam together raised \$3,500 for the donation.

#### Hawaii guide out

**THE** 2020 Discover Hawai'i Guide is out, a publication filled with information on each of the state's six islands.

Targeted at both travel agents and consumers, the guide details accommodation, activities, heritage sites and festivities.

The guide is free to download, and is available **HERE**, or for those wanting a hard copy, get in touch with Hawaii Tourism **HERE**.

#### THE HOME BASED ADVANTAGE

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#### Remote vs Retail



Home-based or remote working is a growing trend in Australia, with the benefits of more

flexibility, a better worklife balance, and less time commuting among the factors driving demand.

So it's no surprise that travel agents are increasingly taking up the home-based advantage.

Improvements in technology and increased consumer confidence in virtual offices have made it easier for travel agents to try remote working in recent years.

While current estimates suggest that around 10 per cent of all travel agents in Australia are home-based, it's a sector that's on the move.

In the United States the scales have already tipped, with the industry now home to more remote workers than retail workers.

A 2019 report by the American Society of Travel Advisors found that more than half (52%) of agents work as independent contractors, typically under a host agency similar to the Your Travel Centre model, or in a franchise relationship.

With so many benefits to being home-based, including more commission and less overheads, this burgeoning sector of the travel industry is expected to boom here too.

Find out more about becoming a home-based agent at:

www.join.yourtravelcentre.

Les Farrar, Managing Director, Your Travel Centre





# **Qld ups travel support**

**THE** Queensland Government has issued a \$27 million business stimulus package to Queensland businesses struggling in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

The windfall will involve \$7 million to promote Queensland to international markets and a \$4.8 million targeted tourism campaign to promote travel to Tropical North Queensland and the Gold Coast.

Qld Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk said the initiative was "the biggest and richest package of measures offered by any government in Australia" and called on the Federal Government to match the funding.

"The Morrison Government needs to get serious, acknowledge this crisis will have a significant impact on Queensland industry and step up for our business owners," she said.

Earlier in the month, losses were projected to cost the state over a billion dollars (TD 06 Feb), with The Courier Mail reporting yesterday that amount had already been reached in Brisbane due to the China travel ban alone.

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) said the measures indicate that "at the state level we have a recognition of the impacts of this crisis, not only on the industry but on the communities, who depend on the tourism dollars".

The council also reiterated its calls on the Federal Government to double its bushfire tourism relief package (TD 06 Feb), which it said have remained "unanswered".

#### **Travelport renews**

**GLOBAL** travel technology company Travelport has extended its partnerships with five airlines in the Pacific region, including Regional Express, Solomon Airlines, Air Vanuatu, Samoa Airways and Air Tahiti Nui.

Under the multi-year agreements, Travelport will continue support the airlines with its tech, allowing over 68,000 agencies worldwide to sell the airlines' content and inventory.

## New DriveAway call centre



**CAR** rental agency DriveAway recently opened its second call centre in Oct, located on the Gold Coast.

Led by Reservations Manager Deborah Stark, the office serves an enquiries hub, and features 11 reservations sales agents, with 20-25 staff members expected to be added by the end of Jun.

"With ongoing growth to the self-drive business over the years, we have had to expand our reservations team to better service enquiries," said National Industry Sales Mgr Nathan Baber.

"Already, feedback from our supporting travel partners across Australia and New Zealand has been nothing but positive and we will continue to deliver the highest level of service and support that our trade partners are used to from DriveAway.

"We continue to have an extensive experienced team based in North Sydney with a future aim to offer a 24/7 Australian-based call centre."

Pictured is the DriveAway Gold Coast team.

#### Wellness trips grow

**HEALTH** and wellness tourism trips to Asia are expected to reach 128.3m by 2022, according to a recent report by GlobalData, with Thailand a key destination.

Spa tourism was the most popular segment in Thailand, generating US\$794.7m in 2019, followed by medical tourism, which generated US\$663m.

Thailand's health and wellness tourism numbers are forecast to increase to 27.7m by 2022, up 5.6% from 2019.

#### **ACCOMMODATION**

WELCOME to Accommodation Updates, Travel Daily's Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.



The first phase of a multi-million dollar renovation to Marriott Greensboro **Downtown** has finished, transforming questrooms and suites. A contrast of modern metal and wood tones and a palette of gray, blue and purple hues have been

incorporated into the new design, while LED flat-panel Smart TVs with premium cable and movie channels, a small fridge, and a sitting area with an oversized chair have also been added to the rooms.



**QT Gold Coast** has unveiled its reinvented poolside precinct and neighbouring lawn and terrace, The Green, which can host up to 150 people. In addition to the brand-new pool and events space, there is also a new private dining room in Yamagen and 16

refurbished suites. The Green, inspired by Palm Springs, features a central bar, modgrass, a 3.5m LED screen, festoon lighting and state-of-the-art audio visual.



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# Japan's new sightseeing train



THE East Japan Railway Company (JR East) has unveiled its newest sightseeing train, Saphir Odoriko (pictured), scheduled to launch this year in the northern spring.

The train, which can carry 164 passengers, will run between Tokyo and Shimoda, a resort town situated on the south-eastern coast of the Izu Peninsula, home to one of Japan's most popular beaches, Shirahama.

The leading car, called the Premium Green, will offer wide reclining seats, which is a first for JR East trains.

#### **Accor Comms Dir**

**ACCOR** has named Claire Haigh as its new Director of Communications for the Pacific region, where she will lead communications for Accor Pacific's apartment, hotel and resorts portfolio.

Previously, Haigh was the Global Communications Director for Pernod Ricard's winemaking division for five years.

The second and third cars will have private compartments for up to six people, allowing guests to "relax in privacy and take in the coastal views from the train's large windows".

Passengers can also enjoy local noodles from the open-style onboard kitchen.

#### More Fiji Bulanaires

TOURISM Fiji (TF) has announced the next phase of its Bulanaires program, first launched last year on the International Day of Happiness (TD 20 Mar 2019).

The updated push will build upon last year's launch by honouring the "true heroes of the hospitality industry in Fiji".

Tying into TF's brand ethos of "where happiness finds you", the campaign is designed to emphasise what sets Fiji apart from other destinations, and last year kicked off by naming an inaugural list of "Bulanaires" - those who "most embody the bula spirit".

#### TNZ \$10m COVID

**TOURISM** New Zealand (TNZ) will receive a \$10 million funding boost from the NZ Government, in order to help it respond to the impact of COVID-19.

"The funding will boost the response plan...to encourage growth from other markets," said TNZ Chief Executive Stephen England-Hall, who highlighted Australia, which is the island country's largest short-haul market, as a "strong focus in the immediate future".

"Our medium- to long-term work will focus on building momentum in Japan, taking advantage of new airline routes and capacity in the US, and... build[ing] on positive market sentiment movements in the UK."

The New Zealand Government also approved a \$1 million funding package to encourage domestic tourism for areas most affected.

#### Whitsundays fund

STAGE two of the Wonders of the Whitsundays tourism campaign was launched last Thu, to help boost domestic visitor numbers to the region.

"Tourism operators are feeling the pinch due to the coronavirus... that's why we've brought forward stage two of this campaign," said Queensland Tourism Industry Development Minister, Kate lones.

The campaign, which will be delivered in partnership with Tourism Whitsundays and local businesses, follows the reopening of the InterContinental Hayman Island Resort (TD 20 Aug 2019) and Daydream Island Resort (TD 18 Jun).

Phase one of the campaign (TD 09 May) generated more than 2,000 holiday bookings and \$3.53m in sales to Whitsundays tourism operators over three months last year.

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Q3 - We all know clients want the best of the best! Let us know which of our destinations they've been after lately.







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For more information please call Sam on (02) 9119 8744 or click APPLY now.

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For more information please call Ronny on (02) 9119 8744 or click APPLY now.

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For more information please call Antony on (02) 9119 8744 or click APPLY now.

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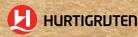


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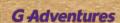




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