



## It's no joke!

**BE** careful, very careful, where you post your jokes, especially if it's on Twitter, Facebook or any other social medial site.



The eyes of the world are on you, as one 14 year old girl found out.

The Dutch girl tweeted a terror threat to American Airlines, claiming to be an al-Qaeda member planning "something really big" as a "joke" but got her own taste of terror when she was arrested.

Rather than the American organisation investigating the threat, Rotterdam police detained the girl as a result of its own reconnaissance.

According to the Dutch news service *BNO News*, American Airlines said that it "takes these threats very seriously" and would inform the FBI of the exchange.

The girl then panicked, and sent a series of tweets trying to explain her prank had gone wrong.

"I was joking and it was my friend not me, take her IP address not mine," she wrote.

"I'm so scared I'm just a 14-year-old white girl I'm not a terrorist."

"At American, the safety of our passengers and crew is our top priority," an AA spokesperson said.

"We take security matters very seriously."

Her "joke" and the way in which she defended herself became a viral hit on the internet, and she was sent a large number of abusive messages on social media.

The girl later suspended her account. *Jill*

## Easter rates close outlets?

**A TOURISM** Accommodation Australia (TAA) survey found 67% of hoteliers said they would close outlets or reduce services over the Easter and ANZAC Day holiday period due to penalty rates.

The survey, conducted online over the first two weeks of April, had 225 respondents from TAA's membership and found that, of those operating outlets on Good Friday and Easter Monday, 13% expected to make a profit, 54% to make a loss and 23% to break even, with 10% saying they would not operate outlets on those days.

Services affected included restaurant services, room services and housekeeping and bars.

Of the respondents, 83% said the cost of penalty rates was driving this decision to alter procedures.

TAA managing director Rodger Powell said current employees were not earning penalty rates because venues were closed.

"If penalty rates were dropped or lowered to a point where hotels could service guests and still make a profit, then hotels would employ more people to cover the jobs on those days with no disadvantage to existing employees."

Accommodation Association of Australia (AAA) ceo Richard Munro said the AAA concurred with the findings and said this was the feedback it was getting

from its own members.

Munro said the AAA had made a submission to the Fair Work Commission asking for a review of the rates' percentages, since having five public holidays in a short period of time, such as Easter and ANZAC day, was "devastating" to a small to medium enterprise's cash flow.

The United Voice Union said criticism of wages in the industry was an attack on the Australian way of life.

Assistant national secretary Sharron Caddie said long weekends were an important part of Australian society and workers needed to be compensated for giving this up.

"The accommodation industry has great difficulty attracting and retaining staff: the work is very demanding and is low paid."

A Department of Employment spokesperson said the Fair Work Commission had responsibility for setting award wages and conditions, such as penalty rates.

"The Government has committed to an independent review of the workplace relations framework by the Productivity Commission.

"The details of this review will be announced shortly."

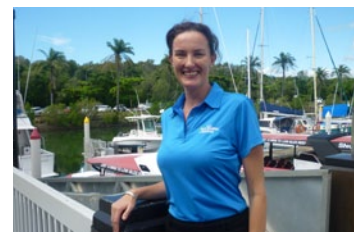
### Happy Easter all!

**BEN** will return on 23 Apr.

We wish you all a happy Easter and hope you enjoy the break!

## PDD's new EO

**TARA** Bennett has been appointed as executive officer of Tourism Port Douglas and Daintree (PDD).



PDD chairman Tony Baker said Bennett had a "comprehensive" understanding of the positioning and potential of the region.

Bennett has worked for TPDD since 2007 and most recently held the role of business development executive.

Prior to this Bennett worked in other hospitality service and management roles.

## A NEW RYDGES ON THE BLOCK



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### Five pages today

**BEN** has three pages of editorial plus a full page from: (*click*)

- BridgeClimb Sydney
- Mantra Lorne



# business events news

16th April 2014

## A cavalcade of Ferraris



**SYDNEY** Exhibition Centre @ Glebe Island (SEC@GI) was a fitting marshalling point on Saturday when more than 120 Ferraris landed on Glebe Island – a former car receiving terminal.

The Ferrari Racing Days 'Road to Sydney' cavalcade saw Ferrari

owners and their drivers arrive at the venue's car park from 7am and depart from 8am, travelling to Sydney Motorsport Park via the Sydney Harbour Bridge under escort by NSW Police.

The event was coordinated by Destination NSW, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, and Ferrari, to celebrate the Australian Ferrari Racing Days event.

Eventsource executive producer and the event organiser Kevin Buckley said SEC@GI provided the "perfect" location, as a venue with the size, capabilities and with a team that understood events to assist with the logistics and planning of the event.

SEC@GI general manager Malu Barrios said the event had been another demonstration of the venue's versatility to host events of all types, as well as the exhibitions for which it was constructed.

The venue has hosted a number of events since its launch in Feb.

## Sofitel's sky-high offer

A **NEW** luxury meeting offer for conference and meeting planners to experience the Sofitel Gold Coast Broadbeach's exclusive 'sky high' meeting venue, twentythree, is available from \$140 per person.

The new venue, located on the hotel's 23rd floor, has a range of upscale inclusions and a private concierge available to assist with errands during the meeting or event.

The twentythree delegate offer complements Sofitel Gold Coast Broadbeach's current conference incentive with Virgin Australia, which offers meeting planners who book and pay for 10 conference packages (accommodation, day delegate arrangements and flights) an 11th delegate package for free.

Delegates will also receive complimentary room upgrades for VIPs and a cocktail party including canapés and a selection of beverages.

The 11th bonus package also includes access to Virgin Australia's 'The Lounge' for an extra special incentive experience.

Bookings for both offers must be made by 28 Feb 2015 for business held to 31 Mar 2015.

Contact 07 5570 0396 or email [h0454-sb3@sofitel.com](mailto:h0454-sb3@sofitel.com) for more information.

## Branson buys Mont Rochelle

**THE** latest addition to the already eclectic portfolio of Sir Richard Branson's luxury Virgin Limited Edition's retreats has been announced as the Mont Rochelle Hotel and Mountain Vineyard in South Africa.

The property, with a history dating as far back as 1688, boasts a unique hilltop setting in a private 39 ha vineyard.

Following Mont Rochelle's final purchase proceedings, the hotel will close to undergo refurbishment with a planned re-opening in August.

## Eat for a good cause!

Spice up your team building day or work social with a delicious suburban Taste Food Tour!

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[www.tastefoodtours.org.au](http://www.tastefoodtours.org.au)

# TASTE

Taste is a social enterprise, our profits are invested into community initiatives.

## Pickford Vic PCO



**ASN** Events Pty Ltd executive director Mike Pickford has been appointed as Victorian councillor of the PCO Association.

Part of Pickford's role will be to facilitate several networking activities in Melbourne throughout the year, to allow members to discuss issues of relevance and share experiences on industry matters.

Pickford takes over from Suzanne Hart, who was a foundation councillor of the association and has served since 2007.

Recognising Hart's contribution to the PCO council, and to the association, she has been named a life member.

## MEA closing 18 May

**APPLICATIONS** close on 18 Apr for the Meetings and Events Association (MEA) Scene Change FlyMEA Scholarship.

There are four scholarships, worth \$2000 each and covering flights, accommodation, registration and transfers to the conference that runs from 14 to 17 May; learn more at [www.scenechange.com.au/flymea](http://www.scenechange.com.au/flymea).



**IF** you go down to Sydney's Q Station today, you are sure of a big surprise, for not only do they run regular ghost tours at this historic and most haunted Quarantine site, they also run Paranormal Investigation Nights on a bi-monthly basis.

Back in the 1830s to 1984, passengers and crew from migrant ships suspected of contagious diseases were off-loaded here, many succumbing to their illness, so the Station has evolved into a rich hunting ground for ghostly encounters.

You can take the Extreme Ghost Tour on the first Friday of each month, or for those so inclined, there's the bi-monthly Ghostly Sleepover on the third Friday of each month – 10pm to 8am.

On this, you work alongside paranormal investigators from Eastern States Paranormal (ESP), using their techniques and equipment.

You learn how to use the equipment correctly and how to avoid the pitfalls of false indicators.

For \$155 per person, you get the tour, free use of ghost hunting equipment, accommodation in a haunted building, late supper, tea and coffee and Continental breakfast to go.

You need to bring your own sleeping bag, sleeping mat and toiletries and be over 18.

If you dare, the next available investigation night is on 09 Aug.

## Hot Events Jobs!

- ▶ **Event & Incentive Executive**  
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## Manly shines in the rain



**THE** weather may have been less than perfect last weekend.

But moments of sunshine, a roaring surf, the iconic Manly pine trees and the combined efforts of the Novotel Manly Pacific, Sebel Manly Beach and the Q Station Manly, ensured a group of event planners had a luminous Manly experience.

Enticed to the famill by a replica surfboard invitation (see Jill's Column, **BEN** 14 Apr), the day ahead was designed for them to see and experience some of Manly's best meeting, event and activity options.

Starting with check in to the Novotel Manly Beach and a site inspection of the expansive conference floor with its surf outlook that was refurbished in 2011, it was on to the Q Station Manly to look at the

significant heritage and environmental landmarks of the Sydney Harbour National Park at North Head, and the beautifully refurbished accommodation.

Following lunch, Be Challenged – an interactive team building and team events company - brushed up the artistic skills of the group in a giant canvas painting co-operation, which proved to be a major hit (pictured above).

Drinks that evening at the Novotel's bar on the beach, Charlie Bar, were followed by dinner in the buzz of Manly Wine at Sebel Manly Beach.

Here too was a range of outstanding rooms and beach suites available for private functions and parties.

Check out Be Challenged's video by **CLICKING HERE**.

## Bunnies and bikes

**CROWN** Perth's partnership and support of the Salvation Army's Easter Appeal has seen some of the hotel's Table Games teams participate in a community orientated team-building exercise through Crown's Leadership Development Program coordinated by Crown College.

As part of their development course, the staff demonstrated team-building skills by completing a bike building initiative which involved them working together on the building process, assembling the bikes.

They have now chosen to donate the bikes to The Salvos, who will in turn pass them on to families this Easter.

In addition, staff will present the Easter eggs and bike donations to The Salvation Army at a special event at Crown Perth today.

## Cloud 9 reopens

**CLOUD** 9 reopened on Saturday under new management.

Closed for five months after an order by the Attorney General of Fiji, the floating venue had its soft launch in a new location at Ro Ro Reef in Vanua Malolo waters, about 15 minutes sail from Musket Cove.



Previously a silent partner, now general manager and owner, Bar'el Wachtel said issues related to the closure had been remedied.

These had been political in nature, involving the previous manager and adherence to new surfing laws, as well as a relationship between local landowners, he said.

The venue would host a 'Skeptics of the Septics' event on 18 Apr for a presentation and a chance to ask questions about its environmental practices, since much had been made of its environmental impact, Wachtel said.

This included Cloud 9's denial of any allegations that it was polluting the environment at the time of its closure.

Wachtel said no rubbish would remain out at Ro Ro, as all waste would be removed in bags or a tank and disposed of on the mainland or with the aid of contractors from the Vanua of Malolo.

He said the venue had been working closely with the Vanua of Malolo to make the event re-opening happen with the "utmost respect" for the community and environment.

Wachtel said the venue was open for group bookings.

An official launch event was to be confirmed, depending on the schedules of dignitaries, he said.

## Hot Chile airfares

**LAN** Airlines, with seven flights per week from Sydney to Santiago, Chile, has some low season airfares that start from \$1,499 including all taxes and surcharges.

The route offered onward connections through LAN & TAM to more than 115 destinations throughout South America, LAN said.

Bookings must be made by 27 Apr, for travel between 15 May and 31 Aug.

For more information visit [www.lan.com](http://www.lan.com).

## The 2 week decision

**FOR** just two weeks, when you book a group at Fraser Place Melbourne with 15 or more rooms, you'll be rewarded with a \$100 Myer gift voucher.

The Fraser Place Melbourne offer is only available for bookings made before 30 Apr.

To be eligible for the reward, the group booking must have a minimum value of \$3,000.

To book, email [louise.osborne@frasershospitality.com](mailto:louise.osborne@frasershospitality.com).

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