

SeaLink's new coo

ANTHONY Hayes has stepped into the newly-created role of chief operating officer of SeaLink Travel Group, effective immediately.

Hayes was most recently ceo of Fantasea Cruising, a position he started in late last year.

He told **CW** his departure was "very amicable", with the opportunity at SeaLink "too good to refuse".

"Fantasea is in a very good position and the leadership team there is humming, so it was something I couldn't say no to," he said, highlighting "many growth possibilities and opportunities for expansion" within the company.

SeaLink ceo and md Jeff Ellison said Hayes would work to enhance synergies and build closer working relationships between Sealinks' businesses, trade partners and staff.

Coral Expeditions orders newbuild

CORAL Expeditions has signed a deal with shipbuilder Vard for a new-build expedition cruise ship due to be delivered in mid-2019.

The 120-passenger vessel will be the line's fourth expedition ship and will be Australian flagged and crewed.

It will be specially designed for small ship expedition cruises to remote and exotic destinations in the Asia-Pacific region.

The vessel will join the Coral Expeditions fleet exploring the Kimberley region, Cape York and Arnhem Land, Papua New Guinea, the Spice Islands, Indonesia and the South Pacific.

Coral Expeditions has promised the new ship will have a modern Australian-designed interior with "the colours and textures of tropical Queensland".

Accom will range from 17m² outside staterooms to 43m² suites with outside-facing bathrooms



and the ship will be equipped with a gym and active stabilisers.

It will also have two "Xplorer" tenders mounted on hydraulic platforms, a natural light-filled lecture lounge for daily presentations, facilities to host scientific research missions, a dining room which seats all guests at one time, all outside-facing cabins and multiple bars.

Delivery is scheduled from Vard

Vung Tau in Vietnam in 1Q 2019 and bookings for the ship will open next month.

Coral Expeditions said it intends to follow the new ship with another vessel.

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CRUISE

WEEKLY

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Learn why Cuba is so hot right now and who's sailing there in the September issue of *travelBulletin*.

ACA in Thai spirits



A LAVISH gala dinner at the Sunshine Coasts' top Thai venue, Spirit House, capped off a successful Australian Cruise Association (ACA) conference and AGM last week.

Attendees representing all facets of the cruise industry including national and international cruise executives and representatives from the supply side of the sector took the opportunity to indulge and network throughout the night.

The evening, sponsored by Abercrombie & Kent, was abuzz

with chatter following the news revealed earlier in the day of the location for the 2018 conference in Broome, WA.

Pictured at the gala dinner are: Steve Odell, svp and md APAC NCLH; Sarina Bratton, chairman APAC Ponant; Tony Coates, director sales & marketing Brisbane Riverview Hotel and Stephen Rivera, senior shore excursion executive InterCruises.

MEANWHILE, ACA awarded Visit Victoria executive Chris White life membership during its conference.

Update on Irma

HURRICANE Irma has been downgraded to a tropical storm after forcing cancellations on lines sailing in the Caribbean this week.

Norwegian Cruise Line's *Norwegian Escape* is sailing at full capacity with approx 4,000 displaced guests and all of the ship's upcoming Eastern Caribbean sailings until Nov will be altered to a Western Caribbean itinerary.

Royal Caribbean has dispatched ships to St. Thomas and St. Maarten and stands ready to assist Key West.

Departures in the area have been cancelled by Carnival Cruise Line and MSC Cruises.

CLIA new report

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) has reported a 55% growth in cruise passengers across the Asia region, according to its 2017 *Asia Cruise Trends* study.

The report showed a total of 3.1 million Asians took a cruise in 2016, 2.1 million of whom were from mainland China.

China's cruise market grew by 99% last year, which cemented its place as the fastest growing source of passengers in the world.

There were 10,196 cruise operating days in Asia scheduled for 2017, up 137% from 2013 when there were only 4,307 operating days.

Silversea firms order



SILVERSEA Cruises and Fincantieri have inked a contract worth approximately \$463m for a new cruise ship.

Due to be delivered in 2020, the new ship has been tentatively named *Silver Moon* and will be a sister of *Silver Muse*, launched 19 Apr (**CW** 20 Apr).

The 596-passenger vessel will be the cruise line's 10th ship and is promised to "raise the bar in the ultra-luxury segment with a wealth of enhancements to the on board experience, while satisfying the uncompromising requirements for comfort, service, and quality of the world's most discerning travellers".

It will feature "Green Star 3 Design", meaning it will be designed, built and equipped to prevent air and water pollution and built to minimise noise levels measured on the ship.

Manfredi Lefebvre d'Ovidio,

chairman of Silversea, commented: "Based on the high praise *Silver Muse* has earned with our guests, we are eager to build on our flagship's success and move forward with a sister ship, which will bring us closer to fulfilling my father's dream of a 12-ship fleet".

Last month ceo Roberto Martinoli told **CW** while he was in Sydney that the line was working on "real, final contracts" for newbuild vessels and hinted an announcement might be made soon (**CW** 31 Aug).

Silver Muse is **pictured**.

MEANWHILE, Silversea has rehired Christian Sauleau as exec vp of fleet operations.

Sauleau will report to Martinoli and has an extensive career in luxury travel, including nearly 20 years with Silversea.

He will be based in Silversea's Monaco office.

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ACA & CLIA tie-up

THE Australian Cruise Association (ACA) announced a collaboration with Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia at its annual conference on the Sunshine Coast last week.

ACA ceo Jill Abel said "over the past 12 months we've talked about the collaboration and better working relationship with CLIA".

As part of the closer ties, both industry bodies will release a joint economic impact study in a few weeks, which will avoid any contrary findings or duplication from producing separate studies.

MEANWHILE the ACA named Broome as the location for its 2018 conference, to be held 12-14 Sep.

TM helps PTMs specialise



THE cruise industry was well represented at TravelManagers' conference in Darwin last week.

Just under 400 delegates arrived in the Northern Territory on Thu for three days of sessions, networking and social events.

Executive gm Michael Gazal highlighted the individuality of the National Partnership Office's (NPO) partnerships with each personal travel manager (PTM) and emphasised the large amount of specialisation in the network.

"Having different departments and specialists within the business then allows those PTMs to have

specialisation, be it in corporate, cruise, family, high-end, generic, air specialists and training," Gazal told *Cruise Weekly*.

"It's looking at every part of the business and saying what can we provide that's going to either pass on best practice or help encourage it," he said.

Pictured at the Mindil Beach Sunset Markets are: Mark Rheinbay, RCL Cruises; Lance Dye, Carnival Cruise Line; Peter McCormack, RCL Cruises; Chris Hill, Norwegian Cruise Line; Jim Petritsis, Travel The World and Michael Gazal, TravelManagers.

iExpedition debuts

A SPECIALISED booking system for Polar Cruises has surfaced, promising to bring together "Australia's largest selection of Polar cruises".

The website, iExpedition.com, is described as being "designed for retail consumers and travel agents in mind".

It features a search engine with the ability to set the parameters of destination, time frame, length and price.

Users can also create wish lists, request reservations and book cabins online.

The portal lists more than 600 different expedition departures to Antarctica and the Arctic regions across 40 vessels.

Cruise Calendar

This week's port calls of cruise ships at various destinations around Australia.

SYDNEY	
<i>Carnival Spirit</i>	12 Sep
<i>Pacific Explorer</i>	17 Sep
BRISBANE	
<i>Pacific Aria</i>	15 Sep
<i>Pacific Dawn</i>	16 Sep
<i>Sun Princess</i>	17 Sep
CAIRNS	
<i>Pacific Eden</i>	12 Sep
DARWIN	
<i>Sea Princess</i>	12 Sep
<i>Coral Expeditions 1</i>	14 Sep

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THOMSON Cruises is offering an Electric Sunset 80s cruise on board *TUI Discovery*.

The three-night adults only "music fuelled" cruise will depart from Newcastle, UK on 01 Sep 2018 and sail party goes across the North Sea and back.

Passengers will be taken back to the 80s with the retro tunes being pumped out by DJ Sara Cox and special guest appearances by Carol Decker of T'Pau and Trevor Nelson.

The ship will dock in Amsterdam & Zeebrugge before finishing in Southampton.

Prices for the departure start from £449 per person and include all food and drinks.