

# Go-Ahead Group plc : Successful six months for Go-Ahead as focus on high quality services continues

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Transport operator Go-Ahead today reported a good set of trading results for the first half of the company's financial year. The company said that in the six months to December 31 2012 its bus and rail divisions had performed well.

David Brown, Go-Ahead's Group Chief Executive said:

"I am pleased to report a good set of results for the first half of the financial year. The bus division performed very well in the period, despite significant fuel cost headwinds. The deregulated operations continue to benefit from our effective localised management structure and we have made good progress with our marketing plans. Our regulated business remains sector-leading, driven by our ability to provide high quality and cost efficient services for Transport for London. These good results underpin my confidence in our ability to achieve our target of £100m bus operating profit by 2015/16.

"Overall, our rail business performed robustly, delivering solid revenue growth in the first half. We remain committed to operating in the UK rail market and welcome the key recommendations set out in the Government's review of rail franchising carried out by Richard Brown. We remain on the shortlist to bid for the Thameslink franchise and we urge the Department for Transport to begin the tender process within the coming months to ensure that the Thameslink programme is delivered on schedule."

Successes over the last six months in Go-Ahead's five key areas of responsibility include:

## Safety

Southeastern stations Lewisham, Woolwich and Hither Green became the UK's first CitySafe railway stations. The stations will display signage to highlight to commuters and young people that it is a CitySafe station able to offer a place of safety to young people who feel in danger. The company has pledged to report 100% of crime incidents to the Police. As part of the scheme, volunteers and students will make regular visits to the stations, getting to know staff and working with them to address any recurring issues.

## Environment

Go-Ahead achieved the Carbon Trust Standard for the third time, after continuing to take action on carbon emissions. The company has now achieved a 14% reduction in CO2 emissions per passenger journey since 2007/08, and is aiming to achieve a 20% reduction by 2015.

Go-Ahead attained highly commended in the first Sir Mervyn Pedelty Award launched by FTSE Group to recognise companies which have made the most significant improvements around sustainability in recent years. The awarding committee said Go-Ahead demonstrated strong environmental performance, had a serious approach to social responsibility and governance and had set itself apart in its sector through a clear demonstration of integrating environmental and social performance into corporate strategy.

Go-Ahead won the innovation category at the Low Carbon Champion Awards for its ground-breaking partnership with Williams Hybrid Power to develop bus flywheel technology with the potential to reduce fuel consumption by 20%.

Go-Ahead's hybrid bus fleet continued to grow, ensuring the company has the largest proportion of hybrid buses in its fleet, with 134 in service and a further 18 due in April. Go-Ahead became the first operator in England to run buses on bio methane fuel, following the delivery of 13 'MAN EcoCity' gas buses and will become the first operator to run two purely electric 12 meter single deck vehicles in London, following an agreement between Go-Ahead, BYD China and Transport for London.

Southern received the National Transport Award for a range of carbon reduction initiatives, including installing regenerative braking on its 377 train fleet, saving 17% of traction power. In addition, station travel plans have encouraged passengers to bus, cycle and walk to stations.

## Passengers

Go-Ahead, in partnership with Passenger Focus, published new research into the future of transport. The research explored potential social, economic and technological changes over the next 15 years and how these might influence passenger use of, and relationships with, transport. Insights gained through research and expert roundtable discussions were translated into future passenger needs and implications, including the advent of the "always on" society. Read the research at <http://www.go-ahead.com/sustainability/future-of-transport>.

The Group continued to lead the way in using advanced customer relationship marketing (CRM) techniques to deliver an integrated marketing strategy targeting almost three million bus and rail passengers. Go-Ahead uses a single customer view (SCV) database that brings together customer information on bus and rail passengers. The database enables products and services to be marketed in a more personalised way and gives access to much greater insight into what customers want from their bus and rail services.

Southeastern achieved its best every score in the independent National Passenger Survey, with an 84% passenger satisfaction rate. The company also achieved record punctuality, and carried more passengers than ever before, successfully transporting over 12 million people during the London 2012 Games.

Go-Ahead bus companies achieved an 89 per cent passenger satisfaction score after Passenger Focus surveyed nearly 6,600 passengers at 11 of Go-Ahead's bus companies operating outside of London. Konectbus achieved the highest satisfaction score with an impressive 97%. Oxford Bus Company, Go North East, Bluestar and Metrobus all scored 90% or higher. All the other bus companies scored at least 82%. Passenger Focus will carry out the 2013 survey in the Spring.

Carousel Buses signed a Qualifying Agreement with Arriva and Buckinghamshire Council for the Chesham to High Wycombe corridor, which enables the two operators to co-ordinate timings and frequencies for the benefit of customers. Both operators will also accept each other's tickets. The agreement is similar to the Qualifying Agreement which was negotiated as part of the Partnership Agreement in Oxford between Oxford Bus Company, Stagecoach Oxford and Oxfordshire County Council which has successfully delivered similar benefits.

Oxford Bus Company, which won Express Coach Operator of the Year at the UK Bus Awards, introduced separate wheelchair and buggy spaces on buses, following consultation with passenger user groups.

London Midland launched Project 110, delivering faster trains and quicker journeys from stations on the Trent Valley line to Euston. A new hourly non-stop service from Milton Keynes to Euston was also introduced taking 35 minutes instead of 45 minutes.

## Staff

Southeastern became the first and only UK train operator to be awarded Investor in People (IiP) Champion status, making the business a role model for other companies seeking to understand how IiP can improve the way a company is managed and operates and engages and develops its staff.

Plymouth Citybus was awarded IiP accreditation for the first time, demonstrating its commitment to improving the business through its people.

Go-Ahead's 7,000 bus staff working outside London participated in a staff engagement survey for the first time.

#### Community and economic impact

Go-Ahead championed the importance of the bus to the UK economy and its role in reinvigorating and connecting local communities by backing a new five-point plan for growth launched by Greener Journeys . The plan calls for measures to help bus travel boost long-term economic growth by linking communities to give people greater mobility and access to employment. As part of the Greener Journeys' initiative, Go-Ahead supported Bus for Jobs, a nationwide campaign providing unemployed jobseekers free bus journeys across the country in January.

Go South Coast and Oxford Bus Company launched the "key benefits" scheme which offers bus users discounts at local businesses when using "the key" smartcard. The loyalty scheme encourages the use of greener modes of transport and helps support local economies.

In an industry first, Brighton and Hove opened a new travel shop with integrated IT systems which combine the purchase of bus tickets with National Express coach tickets and tickets for any train journey. The expanded shop is in the heart of the city centre and has 11 counter positions all selling bus tickets, express coach and train tickets.

Plymouth Citybus introduced Chatterbus, the company's information centre on wheels which travels around Plymouth regularly to enable the management team to meet with passengers to discuss local bus services.

Ends

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