

All show vehicle sites taken

Clear and positive message about market confidence as '100' barrier broken

By Mel Holley

This year's Coach and Bus Live show (NEC, Birmingham, 7-8 October) has broken the '100' barrier with 102 companies now taking part.

Announcing that all the major vehicle sites have now been taken, Show Director Mark Griffin says: "With 80% of space for the 2009 show already taken, exhibiting and visiting companies alike can plan ahead, secure in the knowledge that this year's show will definitely be going ahead.

"I believe this sends out a clear and positive message to the whole of the industry."

The show includes displays from many of the industry's most prominent suppliers including: ADL Plaxton, MAN, Wrights, Volvo, EvoBus, Optare, MCV, Moseley

PCV, Dawsonrentals, BASE, Mistral and Arriva Bus and Coach.

Mr Griffin adds: "While sales have held steady to the end of February, there has been a significant increase in the level of enquiries and bookings over the past month.

"I attribute this to the foresight of many suppliers who, despite the temptation to 'keep a low profile' and avoid unnecessary promotional expenditure in these difficult economic times, are prepared to take exhibition space during 2009 to capitalise on the business opportunities that lie ahead in 2010 and beyond."

Recognising the commercial challenges faced by manufacturers and operators, the show has unveiled a number of new initiatives under the umbrella brand 'Working Together'.

Foremost will be a range of vehicle displays designed to promote the very best in coach and bus manufacturing.

Other 'Working Together' initiatives include 'Workshop Live', a two-day advice centre run by industry specialists providing expert tips on how to run a coach or bus fleet more profitably and how to keep it up-to-date with the



Mark Griffin: 80% of space taken at October's Coach and Bus Live

latest services available by key suppliers.

Delighted by the bold measures, The Wright Group Managing Director Mark Nodder, said: "We're looking forward to taking part in the October show. It comes at a time when all manufacturers and suppliers are keen to look for new opportunities beyond this year."

Confederation of Passenger Transport President Ian Morgan said: "We fully appreciate just what an important role trade shows play in any marketplace, this year more than most. CPT is fully committed to supporting our exhibitors this

October."

The organisers believe it is because of 'Working Together' and other exciting features that will be introduced for the first time at Coach & Bus Live 2009, the show will attract in excess of 6,000 industry professionals from right across the UK over two days.

• With floor space selling quickly, companies who are interested in exhibiting but have yet to make a booking are urged to act promptly. Call 01926 833052, e-mail: info@coachandbuslive.com or visit www.coachandbuslive.com

Bob Pilbeam retires

CPT's long-serving and much respected Coaching Consultant, Bob Pilbeam retires this week after 15 years with the trade association.

Mr Pilbeam's career within the UK's coaching industry began in the mid-1980s, when, as a Sergeant in the Metropolitan Police, he spent 10 years running the Coach Advisory Service.

On Monday (30 March) at a retirement event attended by industry friends and colleagues, CPT Chief Executive Simon Posner said: "Bob has worked tirelessly over the years promoting the often forgotten interests of coach operators, drivers and passengers. In lobbying local authorities, towns, cities and tourist attractions he has helped to make their lives a little easier, and kept the coach very much in the minds of the decision-makers."

Steven Telling thanked Mr Pilbeam for his passion and commitment when fighting on



Bob Pilbeam: Coach champion

behalf of operators to improve coach parking, not only in London, but throughout the UK.

Although leaving the CPT, Mr Pilbeam told **routeone** that he will maintain his close contacts with the coach industry because he plans to continue working as a Blue Badge Guide.

Last year he picked up the COACH MONTHLY and CDC-sponsored Special Award for services to coach tourism.

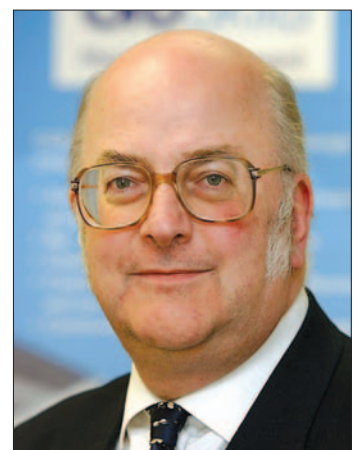
John Smith leaves GoSkills

GoSkills has re-structured its support to operators on the Driver CPC, with the result that PCV Driver Training Adviser John Smith - one of GoSkills' key people on CPC regulations - has been made redundant and left on Tuesday (31 March).

Instead, GoSkills' team of National and Regional Managers are focussing on providing support to operators. The team has been strengthened by two new posts, Head of Operations South and Head of Operations North. The team is managed by a new Director of Operations, training specialist, Ruth Exelby.

In a statement GoSkills said: "John has made a tremendous contribution to the bus and coach industries throughout his employment with GoSkills and, prior to this, with TRANSFED.

"John played a key part in driving forward GoSkills' efforts in influencing the implementation of the PCV Driver CPC, to ensure the best fit



John Smith: Redundancy

for the coach and bus industries and to ensure ongoing updates for operators in the period leading up to the introduction of the Driver CPC in September 2008."

GoSkills' work on PCV Driver CPC continues to be led by Vicki Ball, GoSkills' Director of Workforce Development.

