

PRESS RELEASE



Release date: 18 January 2010

STAGECOACH HELPS DRIVE UP ROAD SAFETY STANDARDS IN ZAMBIA

- **Transport group continues 12 month driver training project**
- **Second stint in Africa for Scottish driving instructor**

Stagecoach Group is continuing its strong partnership with international development charity Transaid by providing vital driver training for bus and coach drivers in Zambia.

The Perth-based transport group is providing funding for Stagecoach Driving Instructor Neil Rettie to spend 12 months helping to improve driving standards in Zambia as part of Transaid's Professional Driver Training Project.

Having spent three months in the Lusaka region of Zambia last year during which he trained more than 60 bus and coach drivers, Neil this week headed off for a second three-month spell in the country where he will continue to deliver a 'Safe and Skilled Driving' course to transport operators as well as working alongside the Zambian Road Transport and Safety Agency (RTSA) to help them develop and implement their curriculum.

Neil, who works for Stagecoach in the Highlands and is based in Inverness, has also assisted the Industrial Training Centre Trust (ITCT) in Zambia to deliver two defensive driver training courses in the Copperbelt region.

Neil said: "I'm looking forward to getting back to Zambia. I'll be working with some of the same companies as previously as well as some new ones, to try and help improve the driving standards of bus and coach operators.

"I am thoroughly enjoying the challenge and it's a great opportunity for me to share my skills with others. We received very positive feedback the first time round and all the drivers are very keen to learn and to improve their skills. It's so important to ensure that driving standards are high, not only to protect the drivers and their passengers but also to improve the safety of other road users."

Transaid partnered with the ITCT to form the Professional Driver Training Project in August 2008. The aim of the project is to address the huge shortage of skilled drivers through improving driver training and safety standards, in order to reduce the number of road crashes which occur in the Lusaka region. The project is being run by a consortium of Transaid member companies who have provided funding, resources and expertise. Thanks to Stagecoach's input, the project has now been extended to include bus and coach driver training.

/more

137 Euston Road London NW1 2AA
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0) 20 7387 8136
F: +44 (0) 20 7387 2669
E: info@transaid.org
W: www.transaid.org

Stagecoach helps drive up road safety standards in Zambia / page 2

Road crashes are the third highest cause of premature death in Africa after HIV/AIDS and malaria. In Zambia, the Road Transport and Safety Agency estimates that road accidents cost the country around £167million each year, which equates to around 3% of Zambia's GDP. Many accidents can often be attributed to poor driving skills and poor vehicle maintenance which Transaid's project is trying to address.

Stagecoach UK Bus Managing Director Les Warneford said: "Stagecoach has a comprehensive training programme for all our drivers and we also have first-hand experience of the difficulties involved in operating bus services in Africa. We are delighted to be able to assist Transaid and its partners in this project and we hope Neil's visits will go some way to improving road safety in Zambia."

Chris Saunders, CEO Transaid comments: "Many accidents on Zambia's roads are often a result of poor driving skills and poor vehicle maintenance. By taking a few simple steps bus and coach operators and drivers can all play their part in preventing fatalities. These accidents, which occur at an alarming rate, often result in the loss of a family breadwinner and have a huge impact on an already overburdened health service. The support that Stagecoach is giving to Transaid is absolutely critical to address these issues and we are most grateful to Stagecoach and to Neil for dedicating his time and expertise to help improve the situation."

To find out more about Transaid's work or to make a donation visit www.transaid.org

ends

Note to Editor:

Transaid (www.transaid.org) is an international development agency that aims to improve people's quality of life in the developing world by making transport more available and affordable. It was founded by Save The Children and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK) and works by sharing skills and knowledge with local people to enable them to put in place and manage efficient transport systems.

Transaid's core work includes creating transport management systems for the public sector and assisting with the provision of professional driving qualification development and the training of driver trainers. It also assists with teaching preventive vehicle maintenance management and introducing local, low cost transport solutions including its innovative bicycle ambulance. Transaid also helps promote HIV, AIDS and road safety awareness and shares its specialist knowledge with the humanitarian aid sector.

Transaid enjoys strong backing from the transport and logistics industry and the active involvement of its patron, HRH The Princess Royal.

Stagecoach Group

Stagecoach Group is a leading international public transport group, with extensive operations in the UK, United States and Canada. The company employs around 30,000 people, and operates bus, coach, rail, and tram services.

For further press information:

Chantelle Cummings at Transaid	+44 (0)20 7387 8136
Lindsay Reid at Stagecoach	+44 (0)1738 442 111
James Keeler at Garnett Keeler	+44 (0)20 8647 4467

TRAN/147/10