5 April 2005

PRESS RELEASE

FIRSTGROUP JOINS BUS INDUSTRY'S HUMANITARIAN TSUNAMI RESPONSE, DONATING 10 BUSES AND MORE TO FOLLOW

The biggest UK bus group, FirstGroup plc, has today committed 10 buses to the bus industry's largest ever humanitarian relief appeal in response to the Boxing Day tsunami. The 10 double-deckers are FirstGroup's first tranche donation, with single deck vehicles from the company's US and UK operations still to be confirmed.

Leon Daniels, FirstGroup's Commercial Director, UK Bus, said, "Media coverage of the tsunami's devastation and subsequent earthquakes has brought home to us the need for practical help in rebuilding infrastructure in the areas worst affected.

"Despite having contributed a significant cash sum to the emergency fund immediately following the disaster, FirstGroup has realised that the **Asia Bus Response** appeal can make a real difference to the lives of many thousands of people as they rebuild their lives and communities.

"FirstGroup is pleased to join the appeal by donating mid-life vehicles that are fit for many years' work, are suited to the climate and terrain, and which would be replaced by more modern vehicles if operating in the UK."

In total some 120 buses, with spare parts to extend working lives, have been donated to **Asia Bus Response** by the UK-wide bus and coach industry. In mid-May, charity **Islamic Relief** is shipping the vehicles to Sri Lanka and Indonesia, where they will be distributed to provide vital transportation for people and supplies. Islamic Relief will also train drivers and engineers in the countries of destination and pay those people a living wage.

Last call for more buses! To donate robust, high-floor, low-tech mid-life buses fit for a few years' hard work, email info@asiabusresponse.co.uk or call Mitch de Faria on Tel 01664 561711; for spare parts, call Roger Heard on Mbl 07831 233510. Visit www.asiabusresponse.co.uk for full details.

ENDS

Further information:

Asia Bus Response media information & bus donations:
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email info@asiabusresponse.co.uk

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email wendy.manson@alexander-dennis.com

FirstGroup plc Asia Bus Response commitment:
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Editor's Notes:

Asia Bus Response is a voluntary, co-ordinating group of UK bus professionals that aims to help the UK bus industry respond appropriately and meaningfully to the tsunami disaster.

Full appeal details and a list of Asia Bus Response donors and supporters can be found at www.asiabusresponse.co.uk.