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PRESS RELEASE



NATIONAL EXPRESS GROUP PLEDGES VEHICLES FROM UK & USA TO TSUNAMI BUS APPEAL

The Asia Bus Response appeal, providing infrastructural help to the areas of Sri Lanka and Indonesia worst hit by the recent tsunami, has taken a new turn as National Express Group pledges vehicles from Travel West Midlands and from its US operations.

Nicola Marsden, Director of Group Communications, said, "National Express is delighted to have found a practical way to assist in rebuilding the infrastructure and the livelihoods of those communities that were affected by the tragic events in Asia.

"As the disaster has a global perspective, we are particularly pleased that our North American companies are also able to help, with the donation of 10 buses which we believe will be suitable for use within the region.

"Transport is a vital component of all communities but in this particular situation the need for equipment couldn't be more pressing or more worthwhile."

In Birmingham, Travel West Midlands Divisional Corporate Affairs Director, Phil Bateman, commented, "We are very pleased to be able to announce that Travel West Midlands, part of the National Express Group Bus Division, is to release 6 Metro buses from their regular duties here in the West Midlands to provide help and support to the communities that have suffered so badly from the tsunami.

"Our Metro buses have proven to be the 'workhorse' of our fleet, and we know that these vehicles, with their reliability, will help to provide much-needed cohesion and mobility to communities and populations that now require help in rebuilding lives, business and their own local economy."

To donate robust, high-floor, low-tech mid-life buses that are fit for a few years' hard work, and to pledge spares and equipment, email info@asiabusresponse.co.uk or call Mitch de Faria on Tel 01664 561711; for local authority co-ordination, email Andrew Varley at Lancashire County Council, andrew.varley@env.lancscc.gov.uk Tel 01772 263336. Visit www.asiabusresponse.co.uk for full details.

ENDS

Further information:

Asia Bus Response media information & bus donations:

Mitch de Faria, The Event Makers

Tel 01664 561711 Fax 01664 859276 Mbl 07957 200277

email info@asiabusresponse.co.uk

Asia Bus Response local authorities co-ordination:

Andrew Varley, Lancashire County Council

Tel 01772 533336 Mbl 07887 831127

email andrew.varley@env.lancscc.gov.uk

Islamic Relief Abdul Aziz Rajab-Ali

Tel 020 8498 2095 Mbl 07900 470994

email abdul.aziz@islamic-relief.org.uk

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.

As well as providing vital transportation for people and supplies in the devastated areas, donated buses will be used to reskill drivers and engineers, and development agency, **Islamic Relief**, will then pay those people a living wage.

Donor companies are responsible for getting their buses to a UK departure point to be announced. Buses, parts and equipment will be shipped and distributed by **Islamic Relief**. The charity is also co-ordinating and sourcing funding for shipping, taxes and registrations. www.islamic-relief.org.uk Islamic Relief is not linked to The Islamic Relief Agency.

A full list of Asia Bus Response donors and supporters can be found at www.asiabusresponse.co.uk.