

COMFORTDELGRO BEEFS UP SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM TO GEAR UP FOR INTERNATIONAL TENDERS

29 August 2022 – ComfortDelGro Corp has been on an extensive global recruitment drive to beef up its bid team, specifically in the core rail, bus and taxi segments. The move is part of an aggressive expansion strategy to participate in more international tenders, with a targetted emphasis on Europe.

To this end, the Group has also created a new position to oversee its existing and upcoming businesses in Europe. The new Chief Executive Officer, Europe, Mr Damian Rowbotham, assumes the role on 1 September 2022 and will supervise the Group's extensive bus, coach, taxi and private hire operations in the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland, as well as look at new investment and tender opportunities in the continent. Mr Rowbotham, who joins the Group from Stagecoach Group plc, is no stranger to ComfortDelGro, having held the position of Group Finance Director (UK and Ireland) from 1999 to 2012.

In addition to Mr Rowbotham's appointment, the Group is also adding on experts in rail tendering and operations under its wholly-owned subsidiary, ComfortDelGro Transit Pte Ltd. These include new heads of rail operations, maintenance and customer experience.

ComfortDelGro Group Deputy CEO, Mr Cheng Siak Kian, said: "In the past two years, even as we were busy tackling the many challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been regrouping and looking at opportunities for growth. Significantly, we have started bidding for international rail franchises – something we had never done before. We have seen some success with the successful bid we put in for the Auckland rail franchise, and we are hopeful for the ongoing ones in Sydney and Paris. As we participate in more of such tenders, we have to grow our bid team which will also be instrumental in the transition should we win."

ComfortDelGro, which currently operates in seven countries, made its foray into the New Zealand land transport market with a S\$1.13 billion rail franchise contract. It was the first time a Singapore-owned transport company had been awarded a contract to operate passenger rail services beyond local shores. More significantly, the 50:50 joint venture with UGL Rail Services, an Australian rail operations and maintenance company under the engineering and construction giant, the CIMIC Group, now gives the Group an international rail network of close to 180km.

The Group has also been shortlisted in two other rail tenders – one in Paris with French transport giant RATP Group and French rolling stock giant Alstom SA to operate and maintain Lines 15, 16 and 17 of the Grand Paris Express, and the other with UGL Rail and Australian rail infrastructure specialist Coleman Rail to operate and maintain the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport line in Sydney.

For the half year ended 30 June 2022, ComfortDelGro’s overseas businesses accounted for 42.6% of total revenue of \$1.86 billion and 47.3% of total operating profit of \$175.6 million.

Group Chairman, Mr Lim Jit Poh, said the aggressive foray into the international rail scene is part of the Group’s longer-term strategy to grow beyond its traditional taxi and bus businesses.

He said: “Taxi and bus will continue to be our core businesses but we must add on new significant contributors to both the top and bottom lines for long-term survival. We started our rail operations in Singapore in 2003. With close to two decades of world-class services and experience, the time is right for us to now export our expertise overseas. But we will not do this alone. We will partner companies with strong reputes, who complement us in terms of skills, knowledge and experience. We believe that this is the way forward especially in the multidisciplinary rail industry.”

Background

ComfortDelGro is one of the world's largest land transport companies with a total fleet size of about 34,000 buses, taxis and rental vehicles. We also run 177km of light and heavy rail networks in Singapore and New Zealand. Our global operations span seven countries – Singapore, Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, China, Ireland and Malaysia.