

The Go-Ahead Group strengthens senior management team

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The Go-Ahead Group has announced two appointments to strengthen its senior management team.

David Statham, who has been Managing Director of Southeastern since 2014, will be moving to a new role in the group's executive team as Go-Ahead's Strategy Director. At a pivotal time for the transport industry, he will play a key role in overseeing business strategy across rail, bus and public transport, including Go-Ahead's response to the climate crisis.

Taking on the leadership of Southeastern will be Steve White, presently Deputy CEO of Govia Thameslink Railway, who has more than two decades' experience in management across UK and international rail businesses. Both appointments will be effective from October 2021.

David Brown, Group Chief Executive, said: "These are changes that will strengthen Go-Ahead going forward as we rebuild passenger numbers following the pandemic, play a part in the restructuring the UK rail industry and proceed with plans to decarbonise our business.

"I'd like to thank David Statham for his outstanding leadership at Southeastern. Under him, Southeastern

has delivered a record breaking performance, recognised in consistently high customer satisfaction ratings. I'm delighted that he's agreed to take on such a key role for Go-Ahead.

"Steve White has helped to navigate GTR through customer experience improvements, the introduction of new fleet and through the COVID-19 pandemic. There can be nobody better qualified to build on David's great work in managing the Southeastern network."

Further biographical details of David Statham and Steve White are below.

David Statham

Having joined British Rail as a management trainee in 1992, David has nearly 30 years' experience in public transport focused on rail. He spent his formative years in passenger-focused roles, as Customer Service Strategy Manager at Great Western and managing the ScotRail franchise.

A key player in First Capital Connect's successful bid for the Great Northern and Thameslink franchise, David led on several capacity enhancements on the Great Northern route which increased peak seating capacity by over 24 per cent. He led the first stages of the transformational Thameslink programme, including the redevelopment of Blackfriars and Farringdon and the introduction of the new Electrostar rolling stock onto the network, before becoming Managing Director of FCC and delivering a range of key customer-focused strategies.

In September 2014, David joined Southeastern as Managing Director, driving a passenger-focused strategy that has delivered recording-breaking results, a significant improvement in our train service performance and best-ever levels of employee engagement.

David plays a key role on a number of cross-industry groups including leading the cross-TOC development of Flexi Seasons and is a Trustee of Women in Rail.

Steve White

Steve is a chartered engineer who has held executive appointments at London Underground, Silverlink Trains, Eurostar and Siemens PLC, handling the operation and maintenance of metro, commuter and long-distance services.

At Silverlink Trains, Steve worked as the Deputy Managing Director before joining Eurostar UK at director level, responsible for overseeing operations and engineering. At Siemens PLC, he headed up the UK Rail Service Business, providing rolling stock to eight different operators as well as leading the company's national Think Customer Programme.

At the London Underground, Steve worked as the Operations Director for the Subsurface Railway where he was responsible for 40 per cent of the underground network and led the business through a period of major change including the implementation of a new signalling system on the Metropolitan, Circle, Hammersmith and City and District Lines.

Steve joined Govia Thameslink Railway as Chief Operating Officer at the end of September 2018 and became Deputy CEO in July 2019. Here, he has been a key member of the leadership team responsible for navigating the business through successive timetable changes, customer experience improvements, restoration of stakeholder confidence and the completion of the UK's largest new fleet introduction programme.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Steve led the business response to ensure the delivery of a safe, on-time railway service for key workers. He also contributes to the national rail performance agenda through leadership of the Performance Improvement Management System (on behalf of Network Rail and train operators) and the Digital Rail Industry Council.

Photo credit: Go-Ahead Group