London 2012 Olympics and Paralympic Games

During the year, we continued to build on our sponsorship strategy for London 2012. Olympic hero Sir Chris Hoy launched our Great Britons Programme which offers free flights to help British talent realise their potential. We flew the British and Irish Lions to South Africa for the Lions Rugby Tour and we are proud to be backing the bid to stage the FIFA World Cup in England in 2018.

Measuring our community investment

We continue to be a member of both the London Benchmarking Group (LBG) and Business in the Community (BitC). The LBG’s model is used to assess our total contribution to the community.

Our partnership with UNICEF, Change for Good, raised £1.3 million from on-board donations in the year to 31 March 2010.

Some 3,330 retired and current employees donated over £600,000 directly from their payroll to their chosen charities through our Giving Scheme during the year.

BitC reported our total direct and in-kind donations for 2009/10 at £5 million (2008/09: £5.4 million). Of these, direct charitable donations amounted to £190,000 (2008/09: £444,000).

The workplace

We are continuing to make big changes to the way we run our business so that we can achieve our strategy of becoming the leading global premium airline.

Our main aim is to develop a customer focused, high performing culture that offers rewards for great individual performance but also recognises different people in the business have different needs in terms of benefits, training and development.

At the year end our manpower equivalent was a total of 36,832 across our operations. This is a reduction of some 3,800 since March 2009, all on voluntary terms.

We completed the restructuring of our management staff at the beginning of 2009. We now have a leaner, more agile organisation, but we have also improved governance and accountability in the business.

Having the right leaders with the right support and motivation is essential if we are to create a high performance culture. High performance leadership means that our managers can engage with and involve their people in achieving world-class levels of productivity.

We are now exploring new ways to boost efficiency and achieve greater value for customers across the rest of the business, with a particular focus on further improving employee engagement. Colleague surveys will now run quarterly and include an engagement index that managers are expected to track and take action on.

The latest survey showed that 60 per cent of our people feel generally well informed about the Company, with more than 90 per cent aware of the financial situation. Face-to-face communication has been more important than ever this year; we run regular briefings across the Company so that as many people as possible can meet, question and share ideas.

1 At Heathrow we use hybrid Linde super electric tugs. We operate a large fleet of electric vehicles and continue to be a member of the Heathrow Clean Vehicle Programme to further improve the environmental performance of our ground fleet.

2 We have an extensive education programme for children and young people at our Community Learning Centre at Heathrow, which has welcomed over 58,000 learners since it opened in 1999.
with senior and line managers. Live online forums have also played their part in encouraging wider dialogue and understanding. Other communication channels include a personalised intranet, mobile SMS messaging, video and a range of Company-wide and local newsletters.

Employee relations
The challenging financial and operating environment we faced during the year meant we had to make some fundamental changes to the way we work to manage our way through recession. Many thousands of colleagues responded fantastically to this challenge, including working temporarily for no pay, working part-time or taking unpaid leave.

We continue to work towards resolving the cabin crew dispute and, longer term, we want to work with the unions to create a new and modern framework for industrial relations within British Airways.

We tabled proposed changes to some of our key employment policies during the year. We will continue to work with our colleagues and their representatives to introduce these changes as soon as possible.

Reward
We recognise how important reward is in making British Airways a great business to work for. We are committed to creating an environment where our colleagues feel valued and are recognised fairly for the individual contribution they make.

One of our key aims is to provide total reward packages which encourage high performance and outstanding customer service throughout the business. To support this aim, we continually look for better ways to communicate with colleagues about the rewards we offer. We want to offer them real flexibility and the ability to choose benefits that suit them, including in their pension arrangements.

Training and development
We carried out 173,000 days of training during the year. This included some 9,000 days of training for cabin crew – twice as many as in 2008/09 – designed to make sure they have the skills to offer our customers the very highest levels of service.

Our training team also put huge resources into training volunteer cabin crew to CAA standards during the year as we prepared for the threat of industrial action. The large number of courses we ran meant we were able to keep a high proportion of our customers flying during the cabin crew strike, a remarkable achievement.

Our Leadership and Talent strategy is a critical part of our efforts to become the leading global premium airline. Leadership development continues and is being rolled out more widely in the airline to make sure we embed cultural change and put a real emphasis on the importance of our managers listening and acting on feedback.

There is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ where training and development is concerned. Different people have different needs. During the year we therefore began developing a new approach. Our aim is to create a learning culture where individuals have the right support, resources and motivation to take responsibility for their own personal development.

We continue to attract and develop talent at all levels. Last year this included taking 100 people on to new Engineering Apprenticeship programmes and hiring 20 graduates to our Graduate Recruitment programme which now totals 50 in the business.
Diversity

We are proud to be a business that welcomes and nurtures differences. Diversity and inclusion are a way of life for us.

Our diversity initiatives are all about dignity and respect. They are designed to promote good relationships between colleagues, irrespective of their background, religion or culture.

We continue to focus on developing our Dignity at Work strategy to reduce harassment and bullying in the workplace. We have appointed and trained harassment advisors, drawn from across the business, in response to colleagues’ requests for people they can approach confidentially about any issues they may have. The advisors act as a listening ear and provide practical advice and guidance. Our intention is to adopt a more informal approach to resolving potential conflicts using internal mediators.

As a responsible company, we take disability very seriously. We welcome applications from people with disabilities as we aim to employ the most talented people and we support individuals with disabilities in reaching their full potential by making reasonable adjustments for them in the workplace.

We introduced a Building Ability strategy to identify and promote the needs of disabled customers and colleagues. We constantly look at how we can improve the journey experience for disabled customers.

All frontline employees are trained in disability awareness to increase their knowledge about disabled customers and employees.

Overall, our Dignity at Work strategy involves training, communications and workshops across the business. All departments have targets to achieve and all employees must complete the online ‘Expect Respect’ training course.

The marketplace

Customer

We listen carefully to our customers because it is our best guarantee that we will invest in the products and services they value most. Their feedback and opinions have a huge bearing on our strategy to become the leading global premium airline with a sustainable future.

But it’s also vital that we listen to their wider concerns. They expect us to be a highly responsible business with an active CR programme. For that reason, we are embedding our One Destination programme into every aspect of our products in a visible and high profile way.

Premium service

We aim to provide a premium service to all our customers at every touch point, providing comfort, convenience and reliability. Our people play a crucial role in delivering the upgraded customer experience we want everyone who travels with us to enjoy.

In keeping with the best companies in the hospitality sector, we are investing in an extensive training programme for our customer-facing colleagues to support this.

The service we provide on the ground at our main hub, Heathrow, is highly valued by our customers. In 2009 we consolidated our Heathrow operations by completing the final moves out of Terminal 4 into Terminal 3 and Terminal 5, thereby offering a smoother travel experience, extensive facilities and consistently high levels of punctuality.

Our new premium lounges at Terminal 3, which we share with our one world partners, are proving as popular as those in Terminal 5.

On-board experience

Our long-term commitment to offering premium products valued by our customers saw two important launches...