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Go North East appoints two new directors

The region's largest bus operator, Go North East, has appointed Stephen King into the new role of Commercial Director and Gary Edmundson as its new Operations Director.

Stephen has been with the bus company since joining on a youth training programme, and over 20 years with the company has gained valuable experience and knowledge of commercial, retail and marketing strategies. He became the company's first Head of Marketing in 2015 and in 2016 was appointed Head of Commercial and Retail.

Responsible for spearheading a number of Go North East's successful and

award-winning marketing and ticketing initiatives, Stephen led on the recent introduction of contactless payments across its whole fleet, the industry-leading £1 fare for young people and its family-centred Big Days Out campaign. He was awarded the Leadership and Inspiration accolade at the recent UK Bus Awards in London and was named as one of the Chartered Institute of Marketing's 'North East 50 Marketing Greats' in 2017.

Gary began his career with Go North East as a minibus driver in 1988 and is celebrating 30 years with the company this year. His operational experience with the region's third largest employer over that time, spans a number of supervisory and management positions including Depot Manager, Divisional Manager and Head of Operations in which he was responsible for the company's 1,600 drivers and operational management – a position he was appointed to in 2014.

Over the past four years, Gary has been instrumental in introducing some of the company's biggest operational improvements. This included setting up and developing its service delivery centre - which monitors and manages Go North East's 650 buses in real-time improving the reliability and punctuality of its services to customers. Gary has also been responsible for the company's culture change and employee-engagement programme, Team GNE, and has several years' experience managing the company's positive relationship with Unite the Union. Gary is CIPD qualified and played a key part of the project team that delivered the bus operator's move to its £8m Riverside super depot in Gateshead.

Gary replaces current Operations Director David Curry, who is leaving the business in April after more than 30 years, to take up a similar position nearer his home in Northern Ireland.

Kevin Carr, Managing Director of Go North East, said: "The promotions of Stephen and Gary into these senior roles demonstrates the rewarding career opportunities that Go-North East offers its team members. Their extensive experience within the company, industry and region, will allow us to maintain our customer focus and competitive edge, to continue to provide excellent services to the 180,000 passengers who use our buses every day.

"Both Gary and Stephen join Paul Edwards our Finance Director and I on Go North East's executive board and we look forward to working together to achieve the company's strategic objectives."

For more information about Go North East, visit www.gonortheast.co.uk.

[Go North East website](http://www.gonortheast.co.uk)