



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**12 September 2008**

### **Travel Counsellors immediately gets to work for its XL affected customers**

Travel Counsellors has immediately put into place well rehearsed action plans following the news that XL has ceased trading.

The company's has been running reports and rehearsing contingency procedures with its head office staff ever since news of the company's financial troubles first surfaced.

A core head office team has been put in place to work from early this morning to deal with questions from both the company's Counsellors and customers.

The company, which prides itself on offering the best possible levels of personal service to its customers, was able to run detailed reports containing details of all its customers due to travel with XL's subsidiary companies which include Freedom Flights, Kosmar, XL Holidays and XL.com.

As soon as the news on XL broke, Travel Counsellors notified its agents with details of the affected customers and their booking details so that could personally get in touch with their own clients, and let them know that the company had put into place immediate plans to make them alternative arrangements..

As is the case following other recent travel failures, such as that of low cost airline Zoom and tour operator Seguro Holidays, Travel Counsellors' customers know that their money is completely protected through the Travel Counsellors Trust.

The Travel Counsellors Trust is more comprehensive in scope than the ATOL protection offered by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the scheme offered by ABTA.

This is because Travel Counsellors is one of the few travel companies in the industry to operate a financial trust, a unique financial guarantee that covers absolutely everything the customer books via their Travel Counsellor including hotels, low cost airlines, scheduled flights and car rental. It means its customers can be sure when they hear news about a travel failure, such as that of XL, that they will not have lost their money for their flights which is proving extremely reassuring in the current economic climate.

Travel Counsellors has over £21 million of customer money held in Trust on behalf of its customers, providing a financial guarantee that very few other travel agencies can match.

Comments chairman David Speakman: "More and more customers are interested in the Travel Counsellors Trust and the financial protection we offer. Unfortunately in the current economic climate there is a likelihood we may see more travel failures, so it is reassuring for our Counsellors to be able to tell their customers that their money is guaranteed."



Travel Counsellors is one of the top scoring companies in the world when it comes to customer service\*. Its agents, who have an average of 19 years travel industry experience, concentrate on providing exceptional levels of personal service. Working from home and using award winning technology they are available at a time to suit the customer – meaning unlike high street agencies they can be contacted during the evenings and at weekends.

To find your nearest personal Travel Counsellor enter your postcode at the company's website [www.travelcounsellors.co.uk](http://www.travelcounsellors.co.uk) or telephone 0800 195 8852.

### **ENDS**

\* Travel Counsellors uses the Net Promoter® Score system to measure customer satisfaction. Two weeks after booking all customers are sent a simple question 'How likely is it that you would recommend your Travel Counsellor to your friends and colleagues?' Customers can give us a score ranging from 1 to 10. Since Travel Counsellors started measuring our customers' responses in 2007 it has consistently achieved a world beating score of over 90%, far higher than that achieved by other travel companies and putting it among just a handful of companies worldwide that are rated so highly by their customers.

**About Travel Counsellors:** Travel Counsellors is the world's largest home based travel company, operating in eight countries and with turnover at the end of its last financial year (Oct 31 2007) of £212 million, a 21% increase year on year. Founded in 1994 it currently has over 900 travel consultants who work from home with the support of over 200 head office staff. The company operates in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, South Africa, Australia, the US and Canada. In the UK Travel Counsellors was the winner of the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2003-2008, the technology category of the 2005 CBI Growing Business Awards and was voted Travel Agent of the Year by readers of the Guardian, Observer and Guardian Unlimited in 2006 & 2007.