

PRESS RELEASE May 19 2006

Travel Counsellors on course to increase turnover by £30m this year

Travel Counsellors is on course to increase sales by at least £30m or 20% this financial year (Nov 1 2005-Oct 31 2006) to £180million, compared to a 17% increase last year (Nov 1 2004-Oct 31 2005).

For the first six months of the financial year (Nov 1 2005 to April 30 2006) the company has achieved sales of £80.4million, a 24% increase on the figure for the equivalent period last year (Nov 1 2004- April 30 2005) of £64.7million. Commissions increased by 28%. The average booking price during the period increased by 6% from £1,472 to £1,559.

So far during May (May 1-17 2006) sales have been up 35% compared to the same period last year; with sales increasing by over £2 million to £8.1million, compared to sales of £6million for the same period in 2005 (May 2-18). Commission has increased by 41% compared to the same period last year. The average booking price for travel booked since the beginning of the month is £1,477 up 12% on the figure for the same period last year of £1,322.

The amount each individual Travel Counsellor is earning is also increasing. For the year May 1 2005 –April 30 2006 the company's top 100 Counsellors have seen their income increase by 13% from £29,300 to over £33,000.

The use of the company's Phenix 'wholesale' system is contributing to both the strong results and earnings growth as it allows its consultants to access net rates and then set their own mark up. Since the beginning of the year (Jan 1 – May 18 2006) Phenix has accounted for 22% of bookings. Travel Counsellors expects that by the end of the year this will increase to 50% of all bookings made being through Phenix as the company looks to develop links with a range of suppliers to enhance the product range and choice for travel counsellors within Phenix.

Managing director Steve Byrne said: "I would like to thank each and every one of our individual Travel Counsellors for their contribution to the company's success over the past six months. The way our company is set up means that we are only successful if they are successful. I am delighted to see so many travel professionals making a success of running their own travel business."

Mr Byrne added: "I am confident that our strong performance will continue, particularly now that we have the franchise agreement in place that offers owner managers and other travel professionals the opportunity to build real value in their business, employ their own staff should they wish to do so and realise the other advantages and first class support, technology and camaraderie provided by Travel Counsellors plc and our network of over 600 travel professionals."

ENDS

EDITOR'S NOTES: Travel Counsellors PLC is one of the UK's largest independent travel companies with turnover at the end of its last financial year (Oct 31 2005) of £150 million, a 17% increase year on year. Founded by chairman David Speakman in 1994 it currently has over 588 travel consultants in the UK and Ireland who work from home with the support of over 110 staff at the company's head office in Bolton, Greater Manchester. During 2005 the company expanded into Southern Ireland where it now has 19 consultants and the Netherlands, where it has seven consultants to date. Travel Counsellors places all customer money in a Trust account, administered by the Barclays Bank Trust Company, which guarantees a 100% refund in the event that a supplier collapses. Travel Counsellors was the winner of the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2003 and the winner of the technology in business category of the 2005 CBI Growing Business Awards.

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