



# Decision Points ... Brief

November 2008

## A MESSAGE FROM DEREK SOPER

*Chairman of The Alta Group's EMEA Region*

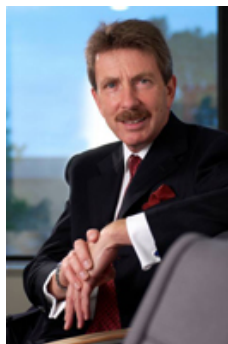
Welcome to our newsletter. As recession grips the UK, large swathes of Europe, the US and many other countries, Jeff Addison draws on his experience to offer prudent guidance for the leasing industry.

We are part way through the season of major international leasing conferences so it is timely that Alan Leesmith sets out the rationale for attending events. He also reports on the Leaseurope Annual Convention whilst Alun Richards covers the American industry conference (ELFA) and US leasing trends. Amidst all the doom and gloom, I was delighted to attend the Austrian Leasing Association's magnificent party to celebrate its 30th anniversary.

"Finance will never be the same" was the conclusion of a leading economic expert who addressed the Leaseurope convention. My message for the leasing industry is that the focus should be firmly on its traditional core strengths and that it needs to do a good job of "selling" its economic value to senior decision makers.

*With very best wishes*

## RECESSION, WHAT RECESSION?



As the economic headlines move from downturn to recession, an interesting feature of the leasing industry is that for a number of reasons, the recessionary indicators often lag the "real economy". When a recession arrives, its impact can be exaggerated and disproportionately shocking. Jeff Addison recalls the last real recession and its ramifications for leasing and identifies three basic principles to follow. To learn from Jeff's experience and read his advice, please [click here](#).

## THE CONFERENCE SEASON IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER IN TODAY'S VOLATILE CLIMATE



We are part way through the leasing industry's major, and international, conference season. Attending these events clearly brings home the global nature of our business but the big question everyone has to address at times of economic pressure is whether the cost of participating can be justified. Alan Leesmith firmly believes that we do need to find the time and justify the cost as attending conferences presents numerous opportunities. To read Alan's persuasive views, please [click here](#).

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### LEASINGLIFE'S AWARDS, GALA DINNER AND CONFERENCE

*Brussels*

*12th to 13th November 2008*

The Alta Group will sponsor the European Leasing Awards 2008 Gala Dinner on 12th November, building on last year's inaugural event for the European leasing industry, also sponsored by Alta. As sponsor of the awards dinner, Alta will donate the awards which are for success in nine categories:

- Lessor of the Year
- SME Lessor of the Year
- Vendor Lessor of the Year
- Captive of the Year
- Transaction of the Year
- Leasing Personality of the Year
- Service Provider of the Year
- Life Time Award
- The Rising Star Award.

The dinner will precede LeasingLife's conference on 13th November with the theme "Beating the Credit Squeeze". For full details of the awards dinner and the conference [click here](#).

### AELA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

*Sydney*

*13th November 2008*

Alun Richards, a Principal in Alta's EMEA Region, will be one of the two international speakers at the Australian Equipment Lessors Association's 2008 Conference. William Verhelle, Chairman of the ELFA and CEO of First American Equipment Finance, will be the other international speaker.

## LEASEUROPE ANNUAL CONVENTION – NAVIGATING THROUGH CHANGE

Early October saw some 400 delegates from 33 countries across Europe as well as the US and Canada gather in Madrid for the 2008 Leaseurope and Eurofinas Joint Annual Convention with the apt theme of *Navigating through Change*.

The Alta Group was delighted to have the opportunity to chair a lively and controversial debate - an innovative concept for the convention - on "Sales Financing – The Cornerstone of the Leasing Industry". Top-level speakers enthusiastically set out the case for and against the motion that "Sales Finance is Best Provided by the Manufacturer" and actively engaged the audience in the debate.

Alan Leesmith said: "It was an extremely busy couple of days but very rewarding in terms of meeting clients and colleagues from so many different countries. The debate was stimulating and good fun and, later that day, Alta was proud to sponsor the black tie Gala Dinner, the event's social highlight." To read Alan's reflections on the convention, please [click here](#).



## US LEASING – RETRENCHMENT IS THE NAME OF THE GAME



ELFA (the US Equipment Leasing and Finance Association) chose to hold its 47th Annual Conference in New Orleans in an effort to support the city in the aftermath of both Hurricane Katrina and the storms earlier this year. What is the current state of play in the US leasing industry? It is not surprising that the headlines are generally gloomy as most organisations focus on staying alive and preserving their capital and lending for their best customers while they try and ride out the storm. To read Alan Richards' analysis of the industry, please [click here](#).

## MORE COMPLIANCE, LESS NONSENSE



How should the leasing industry greet the increasing level of regulatory oversight: as a burden or an opportunity for strategic business change? Derek Soper hopes that in future there will be less enthusiasm for the 'esoteric' in favour of traditional asset finance products. To read Derek's thoughts on the imperative to focus on leasing's economic value and the importance of senior decision makers in banking recognising this, please [click here](#).

## RUSSIAN ASSOCIATION OF LEASING COMPANIES CONFERENCE

*Moscow*  
*26th November 2008*

Alta Principal Alun Richards will be giving a presentation on the European experience of financing leasing activities at the association's forthcoming conference. The event's theme is "Lessors' activity: the mobilisation of funds and estimation of risks". The conference's aim is to identify the main problems associated with financing and the best approach to evaluating the financial standing and creditworthiness of leasing companies. For the full programme [click here](#).

## LEASINGLIFE & THE ALTA GROUP CHARITY CHRISTMAS LUNCH

*London*  
*9th December 2008*

This year will see the resurrection of the popular LeasingLife Charity Christmas Lunch at The Institute of Directors, now a joint event with Alta and generously sponsored by CHP Consulting.

The lunch will be held at The Institute of Directors in London's Pall Mall in support of Cancer Journey, the information signposting service for anyone affected by any type of cancer – see <http://www.cancerjourney.org.uk/> The occasion will include a Charity Raffle.

The Patron of Cancer Journey is Andy Ripley, a former England and The Lions rugby international and himself a cancer patient. An all-round athlete, Andy is also a qualified yachtsman, was world veteran indoor rowing champion and champion of the World Superstars television series. We are very pleased to have Andy as our guest of honour at the lunch and look forward to his short speech.

The Trustee Board of Cancer Journey incorporates a wide range of skills and experiences and includes Derek Soper, who intends to play an active role in promoting and supporting the

## AUSTRIAN LEASING ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY IN STYLE



Derek Soper was one of more than 250 people from across Europe who gathered in Vienna to see the Austrian Leasing Association (VÖL) celebrate its 30th birthday in magnificent style. To read Derek's reflections on a memorable party to salute leasing's achievements in Austria, please [click here](#).

**Editor's Note:** Decision Points Brief is a free, quarterly newsletter published by The Alta Group. The Alta Group is a consultancy in the global equipment leasing and finance industry.

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The cost of a ticket is £75 or £700 for a table of 10. Tickets are available from Derek; please contact him on +44 (0)1444 891344 or [dereksoper@thealtagroup.eu.com](mailto:dereksoper@thealtagroup.eu.com)