The headline says it all – we are going in the right direction. There’s no getting away from the fact that the last year has been a tough one for everyone. From the top to the bottom of the business, everyone has been under an enormous amount of pressure and has been really dedicated to working above and beyond the norm. But the good news is that, after nearly two years on our Journey, it is starting to pay off. We are making great progress.

Just a glance at the graph shows the massive progress we have made in terms of growth. Our turnover has risen 35% in the last year, a very impressive figure. We should not confuse this with profit though. Profit is not where we want it yet but this follows a growth phase and hopefully we will see the profits start to rise over the next year. This will be attributable, in some part, to our very strong pipeline - the business that we are expecting to come to fruition over the next year.

The improvements across the business are excellent and we should recognise that the Project and Business Development teams continue to bring in an impressive amount of work with new business won, on-going business retained and the movement into other areas with CSS.

This new business is then greatly supported by Mobilisation, the Service Desk and Account Managers, the Accounts team and of course the Engineers and all of you delivering the service to our customers.

There have been great strides in the development of HR with new systems and structures being put in place for the benefit of all staff and we have also made significant headway in the areas of corporate social responsibility and internal and external communications and PR.

Everyone is playing a key part in the overall growth process and the commitment and buy-in from everyone is commendable. We have an excellent team to take us into our next phase of growth, covering every discipline and every skill. The Journey continues....
The latest Comserve Group news from Mike Proctor

Welcome to the first COMMS of 2012 and, as we move towards the end of the financial year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your continued hard work and commitment. I know that everyone is working flat out at the moment and I would like to reassure you that we are very aware of this. We know there are lots of challenges out there for everyone and, at times, this can make your jobs extremely frustrating, but I can assure you that we do recognise this and we are working hard at every level to improve things.

As we have highlighted on the front page, we are making excellent progress and we have made some great strides forward winning significant contracts and many new projects this year. However, because of the nature of what we are trying to achieve and the growth we are aiming for, it will be difficult at times.

There is a great future out there for the Comserve Group and we all have a part to play in this. Every single one of you brings something different and unique to the company and it is everyone’s individual contribution combined that will ensure our future success.

All of the Directors value your opinions and views, so please feel free to approach any of us face to face, by email or phone at any time. We are all part of the same team and it is important that we talk to each other and share views and concerns. I have more recently had feedback that some of you feel that there is still a lack of communication across the company. So our focus this edition is on Internal Communications – what we do for you, how to make the best of it and what we can all do to help make the communications process work more effectively. Please do take the time to read it.

We really do know how hard everyone is working and I cannot thank you enough for this. This hard work is starting to pay off and the signs are all very good.

I know that morale is a little low at times, as in all companies, but at these times please do remember how well we are doing, the great progress we are making and that there really is a great future ahead of us.

I am very proud of everyone. Please keep up the great work.

Mike

What’s Current?

A New Avenue

London’s impressive Novikov restaurant is the first of what we hope to be many restaurants taking advantage of the Comserve Group’s great service offering. Following the success of this contract reported in January’s Winning Brief, we will be approaching other restaurants to offer high quality solutions for all their maintenance needs. We have recognized a gap in the market for such a service and feel there is a lot of business to be won out there. The offering includes a rapid response for heating, plumbing, ventilation and electrical requirements with engineers readily available and a quick response time.

We will keep you posted on this new venture.

Flexitricity - an exciting new partnership

A new partnership with ‘Flexitricity’ means we can provide reserve electricity services to the National Grid, which has the overall responsibility for the security of the national electricity supply. National Grid uses these reserve services, from time to time, to keep the electricity systems balanced.

Flexitricity is a Scottish company which partners with businesses throughout the UK to provide a low carbon source of reserve electricity to the National Grid. The word Flexitricity simply means Flexible Electricity. They look for flexibility in electricity consumption and generation, and create revenue for energy users and generators using the flexibility they find.

Comserve and Flexitricity’s reserve services are created by aggregating small standby diesel generators, opportunities for short duration load reduction and combined heat and power (CHP) generators into a much larger smart-grid system. The smart-grid capacity is called on by National Grid for short periods when the national electricity system is under stress.

More Wins for CSS

There’s been success for CSS in winning a project to upgrade the current lighting at Travel Port, Langley to a fully addressable lighting control system. This will be installed on the ground, first and second floors of the building providing energy conservation via automatic control of luminaires which utilize presence detection. The floors will be linked back to a front end PC for central point of control. Steve Lenton commented, “The new proposed energy option will reduce the customer’s electricity consumption by an average of £11,500 per year with a saving of 6.3 tonnes of CO2.”

Since the last edition of COMMS we have also been successful in winning the Francis House Mechanical & Electrical & BMS Control Strategy Upgrade Project. The project, now complete, was to reconfigure the current BMS strategy to a more controllable and energy efficient system. And for the Capital Group, phase three of the LED Lighting project has now been completed. These lighting upgrades have assisted in lowering the customer’s operational costs.
Great Contract Wins

The prestigious contract at One Reading Central c/o BNP Paribas is a manned site where we are looking after the landlord’s responsibilities whilst ensuring the tenant’s daily tasks are achieved in a comfortable environment. The building is 10 floors covering approximately 220,000 sq.ft. Two floors are currently available to let with one floor being occupied by Pegasystems and seven by a client familiar to us, Yell.com.

We also have been awarded 141 Wardour Street, for BNP Paribas.

Novikov Restaurant – 50a Berkeley Square, London – following a helping hand by the team at Novikov Restaurant – 50a Berkeley Square during the recent opening of the Novikov Restaurant next door, the Comserve Group has been appointed to assist them in their maintenance needs.

We will no longer be looking after the Irish Bank Resolution Corporation site in Stratton Street due to its sale, but are pleased to have won additional contracts at their sites in Banbury and one in Belfast named Centre Point.

The planned maintenance contracts for St Bartholomew’s - Bristol, 720 Waterside - Bristol and Chaplin House - Denham, which form part of the Scottish Widows and Halifax Life Pension portfolio were won recently. After the return of two floors back to the 1 Curzon Street landlords, the vacant space has been successfully refurbished and is now being occupied by Rathbones Brothers Plc.

Busy Start to 2012 for Projects Team

The first quarter of 2012 is proving to be as busy as the last quarter of 2011 for the Projects team, with an array of winning bids covering all aspects of work.

Validation surveys have been in abundance, a great way of generating new projects. The mobilisation of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation brought with it various direct small projects and also a larger tender bid for chiller replacement and air conditioning works.

Titan Court and Martin Lane validation also provided opportunities and there was some great work from the account managers in promoting the Project Team with their clients to again provide opportunities.

The group has now moved into office fit out with an appointment on a refurbishment of two commercial office units within the Kings Cross area. The Comserve Group was the principal contractor providing a turnkey package for all building and building services delivery, working with the client and their professional team the project was executed under CDM regulations, and delivered on time and on budget.

Projects has also recently won numerous R22 replacement works for various Law Courts which will involve chiller replacements and split air conditioning replacement. These projects are to be completed mainly during March without disruption to the operation of the courts.

Other recent wins have included:

• The Stables, London - Grosvenor Securities – We are delivering a turnkey package and fabric fit out for two commercial retail units.
• Greenwood House, Chelmsford – Capita Symonds – The Group has won AC verification works to this multi-tenanted building.
• BNP, 25 Knightsbridge, London – Boiler replacement works.
• Semta, Sheffield – Metski – AC condenser replacement works.
• Nightingale House – replacement of boiler supply fan
• Jermyn Street – chiller replacement

Don’t use emoticons i.e. smiley faces etc.

Don’t send large attachments – try and put things in the body of the email if you can or covert files to PDF format as these are smaller to attach.

Don’t use CAPITAL letters in emails – it is like shouting and is not appropriate.

Don’t ignore emails. Respond to them as quickly as possible. When you are busy or if you can’t answer someone’s question at that time, acknowledge the email and say you will get back to them. People don’t like to feel that they are being ignored and it does not convey a good corporate image.

Keep emails short and precise. Try not to cover lots of subjects and items in one email as something will always be missed if it refers to too many different subjects.

Always use the subject field so people know at a glance what your email refers to.

Always use the subject field so people know at a glance what your email refers to.

Always use the ‘out of office’ facility if you are on leave or out of the office for a length of time.

Always check your spelling and grammar – using email is just like sending a letter – especially when you are using it externally.

Always check your mail before you send it– spelling, tone, recipients and subject.
Welcome to February Winning Brief. This month we are delighted to announce not only new business but also expansion within our existing portfolios.

**IBRC**

There, so please use them.

and honest with us about the challenges and issues you are facing. The mechanisms are further.

But please remember that it must be a two way process. We need you to be open and honest with us about the challenges and issues you are facing. The mechanisms are there, so please use them.

**LET'S TALK**

**“Key to our future success is effective two way communication.”**

We may not always know what is going on 'on the front line' and that is why, over the last year, we have introduced new ways of communicating and more importantly, ways that you can communicate with us. We want to provide you with different options to express your views and concerns but we really do need you to take advantage of all of the options open to you. This focus introduces some new ideas that we are planning which will help the process further. But please remember that it must be a two way process. We need you to be open and honest with us about the challenges and issues you are facing. The mechanisms are there, so please use them.

**Answer some questions – a short survey**

Within the next month we plan to do an 'on-line' survey with a handful of questions regarding various aspects of communications and your feelings in general about the way the company is working. It will only take a few minutes and will be very simple and easy to do. Look out for an email about this and please do take the time to give us your views.

**Winning Brief**

Each month we bring you the latest news in 'Winning Brief', a summary of business won during the last month. We hope you find this a useful piece of news.

**Our Feedback Email**

Nearly a year ago in COMMS we introduced you to a new feedback mechanism – an email address that all staff can use to ask any question or raise any concern you may have. This has not been well used and, as we know that many of you have opinions and questions on a number of issues, we really would urge you to start using it. All you need to do is email your questions or concerns to staff.feedback@comserve.co.uk and we commit to responding to your questions within five working days.

**COMMS**

We produce three or four issues of COMMS each year bringing you the latest news and sharing important company information. However, we would really like to have more feedback from you and to share your hobbies and your news. Just email colette.eagles@comserve.co.uk with your contributions or with your comments on any edition of COMMS.

**Employee Forum**

Our newly formed Employee Forum has now met twice and you can read some of the feedback from those meetings on page 8 and 9. This is a great new initiative providing a regular channel of communication between employees and the senior management team.

The meetings are chaired by Mike Proctor and your Forum Reps are:

- John Everest
- Colette Eagles
- Heather Marie Goddard
- Julie Hill
- Gary Lawton
- Gita Manning
- Bob Marsh
- Kevin Salisbury
- Dewald Schipper
- Werner Schutz
- Dave Walker

Please let your Forum Reps know if there are any issues that you would like covered at the next meeting on 8 May.

**Unanswered questions?**

Text messaging.....what do you think?

We have an option to start using text messaging as a new method of communication. This would just be short messages direct to your mobile, highlighting things that you should be aware of or look out for. Do you think this would be useful?

Let us know, email colette.eagles@comserve.co.uk
### Time to Have Your Say

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>View/concern</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>There is not much training happening at the moment and more is required – some of it essential.</td>
<td>All training needs and requirements should be given to Line Managers. They will return requirements to Gita by end of March in order that provisions can be made in next financial year’s budget. Not all training requests will be honoured but we will look at each case and see what is required for each job role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Status of the Company</td>
<td>Are we ok?</td>
<td>Yes we are ok but we must all realise that with any growing business there will be financial challenges. We are definitely starting to turn the corner now. Turnover is up but we need to bear in mind that we operate solely on our own profit and therefore there will be challenging situations from time to time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoicing</td>
<td>We don’t invoice quickly enough.</td>
<td>We invoice a huge amount every month and this process happens as quickly as possible but it is an enormous task. Many of our customers don’t pay on time and this makes things harder for us. If you have any specific concerns in this area, please contact Julie Hill in the Finance team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniforms</td>
<td>Quality of uniforms recently has been very poor and the sizing irregular.</td>
<td>We are looking at new suppliers and will keep you posted on this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Site tools</td>
<td>What should each site/individual have?</td>
<td>We are investigating this further – hand tools are costed into contracts but we still need to confirm what we should be providing as a company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job interview results</td>
<td>No feedback is received after interviews have taken place.</td>
<td>This is not acceptable and we will ensure that this is not the case in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with head office</td>
<td>It is often very difficult to get hold of anyone at head office because of the way that the phones work.</td>
<td>We will look into the phone system we operate at present and see where it can be improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance &amp; Appraisals</td>
<td>What has happened to the Appraisal process?</td>
<td>All managers have now received training and the new appraisal system will start in April.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Safety</td>
<td>Toolbox Talks and training in general have not been happening.</td>
<td>The new H&amp;S Manager will be addressing these issues as a matter of priority when he joins us next month.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EMLOYEE FORUM**

Two meetings of the newly formed Employee Forum have taken place since the last edition of COMM. The forum is made up of representatives from across the company who meet to discuss issues, views and ideas which affect us all in our work. A whole host of items have been discussed at the meetings and here’s a summary of the main ones. Remember to contact one of the Forum Reps if you have anything you would like discussed at the next meeting in May. They are all listed on the article on centre pages.
Accounts Moves

Following the departure of June Braby there are some changes to the current structure of the Accounts team.

Julie Hill is now confirmed in her role as Accounts Supervisor and Emma Weeks continues in her current role. Emma Williams is now responsible for all aspects of credit control and a temp is currently with us concentrating on Purchase Ledger.

George Hill is also working with the team two days a week as an Apprentice Accounts Assistant.

Developing Young Talent

Since reporting on apprentices in the last edition of COMMS, our first business apprentice has joined the Comserve Group team.

George Hill started as an Apprentice Accounts Assistant last month and during his apprenticeship he will be trained under the supervision of a fully qualified and experienced AAT member, allowing him to learn the trade and acquire the necessary skills and techniques. He will be working two days a week at head office.

George's appointment has been made possible because of forthcoming changes to the Government’s apprenticeship scheme. From April 2012, businesses with up to 250 employees may be eligible for a £1,500 incentive if they recruit a 16-24 year old as an apprentice. The £1,500 is in addition to the training costs of the apprenticeship framework which are met in full for young people aged 16 to 18 and 50% for those aged 19 to 24.

As we mentioned in the last edition, the recruitment of apprentices can help businesses in many ways. They are a great way of harnessing fresh, new talent and once trained they provide an organisation with both practical skills and qualifications. The mixture of on and off the job learning ensures they learn the skills that work best for a business.

Training apprentices is often more cost effective than hiring skilled staff, leading to lower overall training and recruitment costs and because they are trained to deliver skills specifically suited to business needs, they also help us to develop the specialist skills we need to keep pace with the latest technology and working practices in our sector.

And, most importantly apprentices tend to be eager, motivated, flexible and loyal to the company that invested in them which hopefully leads to improved staff morale. It’s a win, win situation!

A special mention for a job well done...

For Tim Cranfield at Westferry Circus who has spent time recently covering the site supervisor role. He has done an excellent job, recognised by both the client DTZ, and our management and directors. Well done Tim.

Say Hello

We welcome the following to the Comserve Group team:

• Christopher Lambourne & Paul Harper, Resident Engineers, One Reading Central
• Ian Wicks, Site Supervisor, 15 Westferry Circus
• Richard Davidson, Engineer, 10 Old Jewry
• Greg Pessalis, Heating Engineer, Planned Maintenance
• Charlotte Harris, Administrator, head office (pictured)
• Claire Webb, PA to senior management
• Kevin Cheek, Health & Safety Manager, head office

Happy Anniversary

Congratulations to Zena Chalcraft (pictured) who celebrates 10 years with the Comserve Group and to Vicky Edwards, Bob Marsh and Garth Baileyyoopen who all celebrate five years with us. Thank you for your continued hard work and commitment.

Wave Goodbye!

And we say goodbye to:

Jim Bennett
June Braby
Mike Cochran
John Conner
Simoni Fiewerday
Johanne Fourie
Terry Herbert
and Ken Williams

Good luck in the future!

Moving around

Peter Hall has recently moved to the Projects department as Design and Build Support Administrator, reporting to Martin Terry.

A New H&S Manager joins the Group

Next Month we will welcome Kevin Cheek as our new Health and Safety Manager.

Kevin brings a wealth of experience to the Group from his current role, Safety, Health, Environment and Quality Adviser for Coffey Ltd, covering the London Region. He has been responsible for leading the business in delivering a legally compliant and consistent approach in safety, health, environment and quality risks. He is dedicated to protecting the welfare of others through the implementation and enforcement of initiatives to minimise risk, and the promotion of a safety conscious culture at all levels across the business.

Commenting on his appointment, Kevin said, “I am looking forward to carrying on all the work I am currently doing at the Comserve Group and helping the management teams deliver a safe, compliant working environment for the workforce and customers.”

Kevin joined Coffey (then Heatsave) in 1997 working in mobile operations at engineer and supervisory levels before moving into his current position as SHEQ Adviser. He has a host of H&S qualifications and training and is a technician member of IOSH.

In his spare time Kevin is a keen cricketer and is Chairman of Braintree College Cricket Club and an England and Wales Cricket Board level two qualified cricket coach. He also enjoys a game of golf and walking his dog, Gizmo.

We are delighted to have Kevin on board and wish him every success in his new role. He will be round to meet many of you over the coming months and we will hear more from him and his H&S focus in future editions of COMMS.
Could you ‘Bike2Work’?

Do you enjoy the fresh air and want to avoid all those rush hour queues whilst improving your health and fitness? Then this newly launched initiative could be for you. We have recently decided to participate in a cost neutral and ‘carbon friendly’ cycle to work initiative.

The Bike2Work Scheme is a Government backed initiative enabling employees to save up to 42% on the cost of a cycle and safety accessories for the purpose of cycling to work.

So what’s it all about? Well, by enrolling on the Bike2Work Scheme you will:

• Obtain a brand new cycle of your choice for the purposes of cycling to work.
• Use the bike for leisure purposes too.
• Make significant savings on the cost of the bike.
• Spread the cost by paying through your salary each month – no credit checks are made.
• Hire' the bike from your employer, but at the end of the 12 month scheme your employer can choose to sell the bike to you at a nominal amount (although this falls outside of the scheme and would be part of a separate arrangement).
• Be responsible for it, and keep it properly maintained and insured.
• Improve your health and fitness whilst making a significant contribution towards the reduction of both yours and the Comserve Group’s carbon footprint.

The Bike2Work Scheme is arranged in conjunction with Halfords stores where there is a fantastic range of bikes to suit all budgets and are suitable for all levels of experience - whether you are a novice or a cycling enthusiast.

For further details on the scheme, please contact Gita Manning, HR Manager.

New HR Handbook is on the way……

We haven’t had an Employee Handbook before which has included everything you need to know about working for the Comserve Group so one is currently being compiled. Included in the comprehensive new publication will be:

vehicle policy, hire car policy, personal expenses and credit cards, contacts out of normal hours, clear desk policy, appraisal reviews, poor performance, training, learning & development, revised driving policy, uniform and codes of conduct.

Look out for this over the coming months.