

## Avatar Management Services Inc.

Prior to the acquisition by FirstGroup PLC, Laidlaw Transit Inc operated some 32,000 school buses in the USA with more than 36,000 employees, 450 locations and revenue of around \$1.3bn. Providing safe transportation for more than 2 million students to and from school is a significant responsibility and one in which we took very seriously. In order to provide the highest level of care we used the services of Avatar Management Services Inc. This relationship exceeded 15 years.

The Laidlaw operations represented the consolidation of many acquisitions, and as a result, the business units were often following the policies, procedures and practices of the acquired company. Our goal was to both standardize these numerous practices and to continually increase this standard over time. Avatar was instrumental in assisting us review the many policies, procedures and practices and recommending a single direction of best practices. This was an ongoing program of continuous standardization and continuous improvement.

Avatar created our recruitment program, hiring and selection program, safety leadership program and all the required driver training programs to enable us to deliver safe business practices. We understood that the removal of unsafe behaviors by every driver, and throughout our operations, was fundamental to our business objectives. The combination of Management commitment and Avatar's expertise resulted in a reduction in accident frequency rates in excess of 28% with actual loss savings exceeding \$12m per annum over the most recent six years.

Avatar focus on people, and how to improve what they do. This includes job education, skills training, and all the support processes to ensure the required changes are effective. I recommend their services to any company who seeks to significantly improve their safety practices.

Wayne Nishimura



Director, Insurance Services  
FirstGroup America  
Tel: 630-857-7524

Email: [Wayne.Nishimura@firstgroup.com](mailto:Wayne.Nishimura@firstgroup.com)