

KEY EQUIPMENT FINANCE INTERNATIONAL INC.

UK becomes centre of Key's International operations

John Evans, Managing Director, International Operations at Key Equipment Finance International ("KEFI") is the new incumbent at Key's offices in Ascot, from where he oversees KEFI's Asia Pacific, Canadian and European operations, and reports directly to Adam D. Warner in the US, president of Key Equipment Finance. The European operation comprises Northern, Central and Southern regions, and in essence its organisation has not changed since before Evans' arrival. What has changed is that there has been a high level restructuring within Key on a global plane, whereby the previous three lines of business, Global Vendor, Express (Key's US small ticket operation), and Commercial (business loans and finance), were amalgamated to increase customer service levels.

Evans has held several senior positions of responsibility across Key's worldwide organisation. Prior to relocating to the UK, he held the managing director and executive vice president position in the company's Asia Pacific business, located in Sydney, Australia, the latter a market that he sums up as over-banked, but under-serviced, with a well developed broker market. He says he enjoyed this P & L role, as it was a step forward from his previous assignment, which was eighteen months of integrating Key's



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acquisition of Amex Business Finance, a small-ticket business of some 600 people, into Key's US operations.

Evans joined Key in the UK in 1997, as European portfolio manager, just after the UK Leasetec operation was acquired by Key. His first expatriate move was to Key's worldwide headquarters in Superior, Colorado, in 2002, as SVP Global Finance and Treasury at the time of Sarbanes-Oxley.

This led on to the role of SVP Integration and Technology, and the Amex integration.

Today, Evans feels that Key is exceptionally well placed to serve its global marketplace, with short lines of communication, a global customer focus and great people and technology, so it can get things done for customers very speedily and efficiently. With regard to the overall marketplace he recognises the psychological fall-out, with banks hoarding capital, uncertainty of counterparties' true exposures and, crucially, any underlying recessionary economic factors. He feels that Key's strengths are that it knows its vendors and the equipment extremely well, it is a residual player, so is more a true lessor than one dependent on tax breaks or accounting treatments.

As a Brit himself, who started his leasing career with Declease and Forward Trust, he has some interesting views on today's UK leasing scene. Coming back, he says, he is pleased to see that most of the old vibrancy is still present in the business, and he sees a lot of staff movement and a diffusion of knowledge happening between the finance and the leasing industries. He adds that the UK still has great people, and is pleased that the good things about the UK leasing industry have not gone stale.