



**Brian Ambrose, Chief Executive, George Best Belfast City Airport**



**Discusses..... 'Unprecedented times for Leaders'**

All sectors of our economy have witnessed enormous change in the past year or so and you don't need me to remind you of all the details. What hasn't changed however; is the need to create a cohort of leaders capable of managing through the challenges and demands of difficult situations.

I am less sure though, that these are unprecedented times.

The nature or origin of the problem may be different but when we consider that our parents lived through World Wars and many of us lived through 'the troubles' the case that our current economic ills are somehow extraordinarily challenging is to miss the point.

Leaders are required in every generation and when we reflect on the recent good times I am challenged with the question – "did we assume leaders will just emerge at best, or have we neglected our responsibilities at worst?"

That challenge is for us all - whether we are heading for retirement or taking on our first managerial role. Have we developed ourselves and have we developed others? Of course I am speaking about well developed, professionally competent and capable leaders at all levels in our organisations - not those who have stumbled through somehow.

Having recently been involved with forums at both local and national levels to consider this issue, it is clear that our current and emerging leadership cadre have yet to grab the need to continually challenge themselves to be better and to do better.

Some years ago I was indoctrinated with the concept that "the need to take clear determined action to build management and leadership capabilities is the primary function of all people in a leadership position". That's why I'm delighted that MLN is continuing to take a lead in promoting this agenda and why I'm committed to the M & L cause.