

Richard Cousins

1959-2017



Richard Cousins was born in Leeds in 1959. He studied maths at Sheffield University before earning a Masters degree in Operational Research from Lancaster University.

Richard's early career was spent in Operational Research and Strategic Planning with Cadbury Schweppes and BTR.

Richard joined BPB plc, the building materials company, in 1990. He had spells as Strategic Planning Manager, Group Financial Controller, Managing Director of the UK packaging businesses and President of BPB Canada.

He was appointed CEO of BPB in 2000, and was instrumental in the rapid growth of the company internationally, notably in the US where he led a strategic acquisition programme which helped to give BPB global market leadership in plasterboard, with operations in more than 40 countries and revenues of £2.5bn

Richard was appointed Group Chief Executive of Compass Group PLC in May 2006, transforming the company into a leading global organisation, trusted and respected worldwide and renowned for its great performance.

Today Compass is the world's leading food service company, operating in over 50 countries, employing more than 550,000 people and with annual revenues of £22.6bn.

Richard also served as a non-executive director of P&O plc, HBOS plc, Reckitt Benckiser Group plc and Tesco PLC.

Away from business, Richard was a keen cricketer, both as a fan and as an opening batsman for the village team.

He lost his first wife Caroline to cancer in 2015. He had two sons, William and Edward, who died with him in the accident alongside his fiancée Emma and her daughter Heather.

Richard was an extraordinary leader who has taken Compass to great heights as well as making his own distinctive mark on the world of business more generally. He was a giant of a man, literally and figuratively, whose stature was founded on his total integrity, honesty and humanity. He will be greatly missed by family, friends and colleagues.