



COVID19 – Update on the Ark-H Contingency Plans

As you know from our previous communication on this topic, Ark-H has, for some time, been taking precautions relating to coronavirus. Given that Ark-H is accredited to ISO22301 for Business Continuity Management, we already have robust processes in place to attempt to deal with the ramifications of pandemics on business and particularly on businesses such as ours. Therefore, we have begun the pre-invocation processes at Ark-H, with meetings of the Incident Management Teams and the development of some (as yet) limited contingency planning.

Ark-H is an entirely manual operation and therefore we are acutely conscious of the fact that the spread of this disease, and any resulting Government-recommended restrictions on movement, could have a serious impact for our business. Having said that, we are also aware of the need to avoid panic and overreaction, on the part of management, staff or clients.

The first thing we did, some two weeks ago, was to contact the Department of Health for guidance on the handling of container traffic coming to Ark-H from overseas – we were advised that this was not high risk, since it was deemed that the virus would not survive the journey.

The further steps we have taken over the past week have been to:

- Contact all clients and company contacts requesting them not to visit Ark-H if they have been in any of the Government-indicated high risk areas within the last 14 days
- Provide all staff with access to Government guidelines on how to prevent flu and follow best practice
- Locate posters and health advice notices throughout our facility (including on the intranet)

- Distribute anti-bacterial wipes and wash materials to all staff and in all areas of the business

We have also spoken to our key staff, production teams and staff agencies to discuss the possible need to provide wider cover (particularly for staff absence) and to consider extending shift patterns, if necessary, to increase output from smaller teams. As yet we have not had to action any particular plans in this respect.

We are keeping close contact with our partners, particularly our delivery partners, most of whom are involved in much wider international movements than we are, to monitor their plans and predictions; our ability to maintain 'business as usual' will, as you will appreciate, be heavily dependent on theirs. Clients may be reassured by the following statement published on the FedEx site:

*FedEx is adhering to all regulations and guidelines from government authorities related to containment of COVID-19. These work and travel restrictions may affect shipments inbound and outbound to and from impacted areas, as well as shipments moving within those areas. ... We are closely monitoring guidance by the World Health Organization and other public health organizations, and taking proper health precautions where warranted. **To read the full statement [click here](#).***

We have had queries, largely from staff and also from some clients, asking what Ark-H plans to do in the event of a Government 'lock-down' and the answer, of course, is that we will follow Government guidelines.

In the event, hopefully unlikely, that the economic and social impact of this disease results in the levels of infection that worst-case scenarios predicate, then we will have no choice but to potentially suspend operations. However, as a supplier of services at quite a low point in the supply chain, we anticipate that our clients would have suffered from those business impacts *before* we do.

I hope it goes without saying that here at Ark-H we will do all we can to provide support to our valued clients base, in so far as such support does not endanger the health and well-being of our staff or community.

If you would like further information please don't hesitate to get in touch with your main Ark-H contacts who will, if necessary, refer you to other areas of the organisation.



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