

## Disaster Recovery Policy

### 1. Policy Statement

As a responsible national distributor, Alliance (“the Company”) recognises the potential repercussions of any unpredicted disruption to normal business operations for employees, customers and suppliers alike. The Company strives to coordinate any disaster response calmly and efficiently in order to minimise the impact of disruption on our customer base. In the event of regional, national or international disasters, Alliance may need to implement special measures in order to ensure that the Company’s core functions are maintained and it is the intention that this policy will support such a response. Furthermore, as a leading distributor of chemicals and hygiene products, it is imperative that the Company is prepared to operate under challenging circumstances in order to support others in their disaster recovery.

### 2. Responsibility for Disaster Responses

Alliance endeavours to prepare a response proportionate to the scale of disruption at all times. We acknowledge that the appropriate response for natural disasters and isolated events such as site fires or server failures is varied. We seek to establish a flexible response system to ensure the maintenance of business through all types of challenging eventualities as far as is reasonably possible.

In the event of a disaster which is site specific, responsibility for the disaster response lies with the branch manager with support from the Company directors, IT and Human Resources.

In the event of a disaster which threatens severe disruption to normal business operations through either scale or longevity, a disaster management team should be established. The membership of such a team would necessarily vary depending upon the specific pressures of the disaster, however it should be expected to be made up from the directors and other staff in managerial roles wherever possible.

### 3. Defining Critical and Non-critical Operations

In the event that a disaster has significant impact upon human resources, it is the responsibility of the disaster management team to assess critical and non-critical business operations in relation to the pressures of the disaster at hand. Examples of critical activities within the business include customer phone and email contact, the receiving and processing of customer orders, delivering customer goods, goods-in, picking and loading customer orders and picking and loading branch transports. Non-critical activities during a disaster response would likely include field-sales and marketing.

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Employees in non-critical activities should be re-deployed when necessary to ensure that critical business activities can be maintained. Each employee should be trained appropriately in a handful of critical tasks and assigned to roles by the disaster management team in order to ensure flexible sequential coverage and to cause minimal disruption to overall business operations. In the event that insufficient staff are available, the company will consider bringing in retirees from the business or temporary staff to be trained as quickly as possible.

#### **4. IT Systems Disaster**

IT data storage and operational services are vital to the continued operations of the Company. Particular areas of concerns are the impact of data loss and corruption from hardware failure, human error, hacking or malware. Consequently, we have data backup and restoration plans in place. Alliance uses recognised third party data storage and recovery expert Data Barracks to ensure that we have an offsite backup of all vital data for operations. This service provides a tested 2 second switch from the central Crewe system to an external Virtual Private Network (VPN), allowing for reliable continuity in business operations in the event of an IT System related disaster. Data is stored on two sites to ensure that recovery is possible in the event of total destruction of a main server.

#### **5. Site Specific Disasters**

In the event of a disaster at Crewe the site would be secured to prevent unauthorised access and national business would be switched to operate from 2 large depots, if possible, London and Glasgow in the first instance. The branch network of 12 warehouses has been designed to be large enough to cope with the event of a central disaster at Crewe, cumulatively holding more stock than the central warehouse. Glasgow and London depots are 70 000 sq. ft and would be used to support the network in the event of an ongoing disaster at Crewe. The relevant depots have ample room to accommodate necessary increases in frontline staff such as customer service personnel. Furthermore, Alliance's enterprise resource management system SPS runs across the whole company, allowing it to be accessed by employees in any location so that operations can be easily diverted between sites and resumed efficiently.

In the event of a site specific disaster at any other branch the impacted site would be secured, operations would be switched to be facilitated by the central office and warehouses at Crewe. The Crewe operation would continue to take responsibility for sales, warehousing and delivery until the branch had recovered to such an extent that it was appropriate to return to local operations.

#### **6. Employees and Disasters**

The Company is aware that in the event of a regional, national or international disaster a wide variety of types of absence are likely to occur among employees including personal and family member illness, bereavement, childcare issues and travel restrictions. Alliance seeks to be as flexible as possible with employees in order to provide all individuals with necessary support while maintaining essential business operations for the length of the disaster response period.

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A succession chain should be established among employees in order to ensure that vital business operations are maintained without interruption. Employees should be flexible throughout the period of the disaster response when called upon to assume reasonable alternative responsibilities for the duration.

As part of the Government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's National Emergency Plan, in the event of fuel shortages the Government may, under Emergency Powers, issue a scheme to limit public consumption of fuel to 15 litres per visit to a petrol station. While this should be adequate for staff to commute to work, appropriate responses will be encouraged throughout Alliance in order to help to conserve fuel in the instance of national shortages. Staff will be expected to minimise unnecessary travel in order to conserve fuel to maintain access to work as far as reasonably possible. Furthermore, utilising public transport or car sharing will be encouraged and when necessary and with approval from line-managers employees will be advised to work from home.

## **7. Supply Chain**

Alliance has actively developed relationships with a broad base of suppliers who are based at a variety of location ensuring we minimise the impact of any localised disaster on Company operations.

In the event of a national disaster the disaster management team would be responsible for ensuring that our supply base has robust continuity plans in place to maintain an uninterrupted supply of goods-in. In order to maintain stock levels, Alliance actively seeks to stock brands from market leading companies. Consequently, we are able to offer many options within each product category, ensuring we are not dependent on one source to provide our customers with functional solutions.

As part of the Government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's National Emergency Plan, in the event of fuel shortages Emergency Powers may be implemented to enable the supply of fuel to the emergency services and those utility organisations supplying vital goods for their operation. Under such circumstances the Company should expect to access fuel and continue vital supply operations.

In the event of adverse weather conditions affecting transport within the supply chain, the Company has the means within its network of conducting a coordinated response. Alliance has sufficient stock at each warehouse to meet local demand and can call operate from other branches if necessary.

## **8. Priorities during a Disaster Response**

While it cannot be assumed that one customer's delivery is more important than another's, under the extreme circumstances of severe national disasters prioritisation of our customer base would necessarily take place. The maintenance of essential supplies and services to support public health services is the core function that needs to be maintained by Alliance in the event of a national or international disaster. We would adopt the following category sector prioritisation based upon likely demand during a severe national disaster;

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- Priority 1** National Health Service and other healthcare customers
  - Priority 2** All other public sector customers
  - Priority 3** All other service-based customers
  - Priority 4** All other customers.

## 9. **Managing Customer Expectations**

In the event of a disaster, Alliance would seek to work with customers and suppliers in order to consider the most effective and mutually beneficial ways that workload could be temporarily and sustainably reduced. This could include but is not limited to the following initiatives;

Providing power and IT networks were sustained, asking non web-based customers to order online so that orders and confirmations would be automatically processed, reducing the number of customer service assistants required.

Requesting customers review their orders to remove non-essential product lines in an effort to reduce order size, meaning fewer warehouse assistants and drivers would be required.

Reducing the number of deliveries expected in a given period. This could be facilitated by suggesting customers order and hold more stock of essential lines in one order.

Alliance understands that our customers and suppliers will likely also face their own unique operational pressures in the event of severe disasters. Therefore the above initiatives are not to be relied upon but rather taken as guidance to be implemented wherever reasonably possible.

## 10. **Extent of this Policy**

This disaster recovery policy is intended for internal use and application. The disaster plan will be tested and adapted accordingly annually or each time a new depot is brought on stream. Relevant changes will be communicated to employees.

**This policy has been approved & authorised by:**



Name: Paul Bonson  
Position: Director  
Date: 1.1.23

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