

Modern slavery statement

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires large companies to publish a statement on their management of slavery in their supply chain. COWANS DIRECT LTD. is not obligated under the regulations but supports the principles therein and has therefore prepared this statement.

This statement sets out the steps that COWANS DIRECT LTD. has taken and is continuing to take to ensure that modern slavery or human trafficking is not taking place within our business or supply chain.

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, human trafficking and forced labour. COWANS DIRECT LTD. has a zero tolerance approach to any form of modern slavery. We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity and transparency in all business dealings and to putting effective systems and controls in place to safeguard against any form of modern slavery taking place within the business or our supply chain.

Our business

We supply office equipment, stationery, printers, toner cartridges, workwear and catering supplies on a business to business basis. Our staff are all long-standing employees of the company with many years' service. Our avoidance of agency staff removes the risk of inadvertent employment of forced or trafficked labour.

Our distribution using predominately our own staff rather than third party carriers not only ensures the quality of service provision but again manages the risk of slave labour.

Our high risk areas

The greatest risk therefore lies upstream within our supply chain where the goods that we distribute are manufactured. Our tier one suppliers (ie those with whom we deal directly) have been controlled and are now all based in either the UK or the EU. They are managed within a structured approach with a preferred supplier list supported by purchasing policies. This due diligence includes an online search to ensure that these companies have never been convicted of offenses relating to modern slavery. Our preferred suppliers are required to confirm that no part of their business operations contradicts this policy. Many of them have manufacturing facilities and suppliers throughout the globe including China, Africa, Far East and South America.

By managing our immediate supplier base and favouring goods produced in the UK or EU we minimise the risk of exploitation within our supply chain.

Mr Kevin Foot

MD

