

Pandemic Response Statement

BOC takes the potential risk of a pandemic very seriously, both in our responsibility to our own people and in the need to maintain continuity of supply for customers.

BOC is a Linde company and as part of a global organisation we benefit from the support of specialist teams who are responsible for monitoring the status of any pandemic and co-ordinating BOC's response. The principle arrangements are:

Pandemic Global Advisory Team

A high level, multi-functional steering group which is charged with producing specific plans for reducing the spread of any pandemic within business facilities and between staff. Linde's continuity plan covers communications, containment activities, crisis management and maintenance of essential business activities. The working party also plays a vital role in monitoring global health developments, taking direction from groups such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), government websites in the UK and Ireland, as well as networking with similar global business organisations to ensure Linde maintains 'best practice'.

Regional Pandemic Coordinator

Each region of Linde, including the UK & Ireland, has appointed a regional pandemic coordinator who is responsible for liaising with the pandemic global advisory team and communicating measures and controls with the UK & Ireland leadership team. This individual is responsible for maintaining a pandemic plan as well as ensuring consistent, accurate and timely communications. The coordinator will ensure the relevant business areas maintain and regularly review their continuity plans.

At a local or functional level, line managers are accountable for implementing measures advised by the pandemic response plan and ensuring the local business continuity plan is followed.

UK & Ireland operations

BOC recognises the biggest risk to providing an assured supply to customers relates to a potential significant reduction of internal BOC resources (staff, fuel, cylinders, etc.) due to high levels of sickness and/or precautionary isolation regimes. As the leading industrial, special and medical gases supplier in the UK and Ireland, we have an extensive and robust infrastructure that will ensure we can maintain ongoing supplies. For example, in the event of a temporary branch closure we can call on emergency supplies from the many other branches in our UK and Ireland network.

We also have manpower flexibility including filling and distribution capacity. Our standard practice is for our cylinder filling branches to operate on a five-day activity cycle. However, our workforce manning arrangements can be quickly scaled to operate a seven day week, significantly increasing our ability to meet potential increased demand, or mitigate shortfalls.

We operate a policy of continuous review of our business continuity plans to ensure we are fully prepared should there be a pandemic. If such a situation arises, we remain confident that BOC will be able to maintain essential gas supplies within the UK and Ireland.