

SAINSBURYS EXPERIENCE Coping with the Foot & Mouth Epidemic 2001

- News broke on the afternoon of 22/2/01
- BCMT (Business Continuity Management Team) activated at 4pm that same day. They used an established, well rehearsed approach in identifying the stakeholders, assessing the potential effects of the event and identification of a range of 'trigger points' where contingency plans would need to be implemented. Internal and external communications was also a key point on the agenda.
- Representation on the BCMT included key players such as Public Affairs (MAFF liaison), Trading (meat buying), Supply Chain, Retail, Sainsbury's To You (home shopping), Media Relations, Scientific Services, Marketing and the BCAT (Business Continuity Admin Team).
- Met twice daily initially then moved to daily within a week.
- Established the BCAT to gather UK wide information through 480 stores
- Customer information, store guidelines were all agreed by the BCMT and cascaded through the BCAT
- Ongoing liaison and communications took place with retail industry bodies, government agencies and the media
- For the medium-long term effects ongoing management of the issues was moved into 'business as usual' although the BCAT maintained a log of events, which was circulated to the BCMT along with all of the trading statistics.
- Daily reporting and support was provided to our Northern Ireland stores where the problems were more severe and elongated.

Many lessons had been learned from the fuel crisis in terms of data gathering, data analysis, communications (internal & external) and supporting 480 stores across the UK.

A wide range of issues had to be considered including recipe cards, magazine articles, promotions etc. We also included things like support to British farmers through various bodies e.g. NFU.

The supply to our Northern Ireland stores was the most difficult area. Whilst we were able to use meat supplies within NI and Eire, getting lorries into the country was extremely difficult. A small team of people was also sent to NI to further assist the process.

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