



Opal readiness for Coronavirus Update 19/03/2020

Our crisis management committee continue to meet every other day, please see below our current update on our activity.

Operational Resilience

Having split the departments and management teams into Green, Red and Yellow teams we are moving into our next contingency phase and splitting the teams between homeworking and office based. Office based staff will continue to adhere to the current protocols and preventative activity including social distancing within the office space

Homeworking

OPAL already has homeworking capability for a number of staff. Additional laptops are being configured in line with OPAL's Security and IT Policies by IT Operations before they are allowed offsite.

The laptops will have full disc encryption and installed antivirus and Bitlocker.

All local user accounts, mass storage devices via USB and DVD drive are being disabled to prevent users from changing the Proxy settings which will force internet access through OPAL's network URL filtering and Firewalls. By doing this, the users can only use the internet from the laptops when there is an active VPN connection to OPAL's network.

No other applications will be installed so access to emails, documents and Opal's in-house administration terminals will be made through the VPN connection to the users office PC.

All printing will be "Print to file" to enable documents to be printed centrally at Head Office.

A number of staff who do not require back office systems can get access to work email via their own home device. They do not have access to network, data and systems.

Our telephone system is being configured for remote access allowing the call handlers to take calls from their home. The call recording system and the reporting system will continue to be in operation.

Work on the configuration of the laptops and telephones is ongoing to enable more staff to work from home in the coming days and next week.

We are today carrying out further live homeworking testing by senior members of the teams. Feedback is that all is going well however it is reported that systems are slower than they are in the office environment. This was expected with current climate with all companies around the country adopting the homeworking approach.

Processing Controls

During this period all policy alterations will be authorised by the administrator carrying out the process which will require them to second authorise the transaction. Alterations are usually authorised by an independent second user. To ensure we have a full audit trail a system report will be produced and sent to Operations Managers which will detail the individual who has carried out the 2nd authorisation and transaction it relates to. Sample checks will be carried out on a daily basis by management to monitor this activity.

Where possible we will be moving from wet signature to digital signatures when approving telegraphic transfers and bank credit payments.



Call and business Volumes and SLAs updates

Currently we are not experiencing any issues to report. We are within SLAs and on track for monthly SLAs in March.

We are maintaining “BAU” processing for your customers and financial advisers

However as we move teams to home working, we continue to use our best endeavours to meet SLAs. We will continue to monitor this as update you should we experience any change.

Contingency plans for later stages.

Following the implementation of homeworking our next phase for operation resilience is to split the remaining office based staff between our Head office in St Albans and our Disaster Recovery site in Hemel Hempstead.

A further update will be provided next week.

If you have any further queries please contact the following:

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