Message

From: Chris Hall [chris.hall@cabinetoffice.gov.uk]
on behalf of Chris Hall <chris.hall@cabinetoffice.gov.uk> [chris.hall@cabinetoffice.gov.uk]
Sent: 26/04/2020 20:38:30
To: Nixon, Allan [Allan.Nixon@dhsc.gov.uk]
Subject: Re: PPE supplier

All good and we really appreciate the support we are getting from Matt and the political team

We are definitely turning the corner and this situation can only get better

Have a good evening

Regards

Chris

On Sun, 26 Apr 2020 at 14:10, Nixon, Allan <Allan.Nixon@dhsc.gov.uk> wrote:

> Thanks Chris. Mammoth effort from you and your newly established team, and really appreciate the note setting this out.
>
> Will keep trying to insulate you and your team from things like this unless absolutely necessary (problem was this one came direct from Matt and he'd asked for an answer on it!). I've spoken to him and hes happy – as is the MP!
>
> Thanks again for all your doing.
>
> Best,
>
> Allan
>
> **From:** Chris Hall <chris.hall@cabinetoffice.gov.uk>
> **Sent:** 25 April 2020 15:52
> **To:** Nixon, Allan <Allan.Nixon@dhsc.gov.uk>
> **Subject:** Re: PPE supplier

Or lucky! A company name like IM is hard to find in a database of now 9000 cases, and the case worker was diligent enough to put a full record of her dealings on the register. I think this is a case of lag - letter written before contact made

there's a more general point that I'd be grateful was reflected in briefings to ministers and our general press approach. We have been incredibly successful in sourcing PPE - and placed a huge number of orders in a few weeks. I personally was involved in closing a £20m order for masks yesterday and others will have made similar progress. These orders are placed for equipment that must meet rigid clinical standards, with (reasonably) reputable companies and satisfy public sector standards of rigour and accountability. All this by a buying organisation that did not exist 4 weeks ago and now consists of nearly 500 people.

We have also been incredibly successful in mobilising support from business with over 9000 offers of help, from companies all over the world. Some of these are UK companies repurposing, some from traders with established relationships with the Chinese manufacturers that dominate the market, and some from experienced PPE suppliers in other markets like the US, Australia and Europe.

We have also attracted interest from fraudsters, chancers who see the millions being spent, businessmen whose normal activity has been disrupted by Coronavirus, and fantasists. 20+ people approached us from all over the world with an offer of 20m,30m or 80m 3M 1860/N95 masks sitting in a warehouse in Heathrow, ready for immediate purchase. Many of the people that approached us were genuinely trying to help, but behind them were others with less transparent motives. We were sent videos of the German/Danish/Ruritanian Minister of Health signing contracts for 10m of these, but remember there were still 20m left - be quick or they might be gone tomorrow! I eventually sent a photograph of some of the boxes to 3M and they confirmed that the batch in question was produced 10 years ago. The product has a shelf life of 5 years.

So my buyers are valiantly processing these thousands of opportunities and sifting out the viable from the less viable. One gentleman offered me equipment that he later admitted came from a less than reputable source - the fact that it was 10% of market price might have given it away. When after two weeks and many phone calls I suggested we terminate the relationship he threatened to go to Piers Morgan with the story.

So please don't believe the stories in the press - we are buying millions of items for the NHS and a planeload leaves China every day. There is a lot of unhappiness from disappointed suppliers, some of whom are completely genuine but buried in the noise.

Best Regards

Chris

Thanks

Chris

On Sat, 25 Apr 2020 at 15:34, Nixon, Allan <Allan.Nixon@dhsc.gov.uk> wrote:

> Brilliant - thanks so much Chris.
>
> Allan
>
> Allan Nixon
>
> Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Chris Hall <chris.hall@cabinetoffice.gov.uk>
> **Sent:** Saturday, April 25, 2020 3:27:19 PM
> **To:** Nixon, Allan <Allan.Nixon@dhsc.gov.uk>
> **Subject:** PPE supplier
>
> Allan
>
> The case worker involved is having a much served day off, but I can see from her diligent notes that she contacted this gentleman on Thurs 23/4 and Friday 24/4. I tried to call the supplier to confirm but he did not pick up. Please reassure the MP concerned that this is in hand.
>
> We are setting up a special route for this type of enquiry, and will let you and Private Office know directly
>
> Regards

Chris

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Chris Hall
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