Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Introduction

Connect Group PLC ("Connect Group") is committed to preventing acts of modern slavery and human trafficking from occurring within each business within the Group and their respective supply chains, and seeks to impose those same high standards on its suppliers. We take a zero-tolerance approach to non-ethical practices and we are committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all our business dealings and supply chain relationships, wherever we operate, implementing and enforcing effective systems to uphold ethical standards and to combat modern slavery and human trafficking.

Connect Group’s Role in the Supply Chain

Connect Group is a leading specialist distributor operating in large and diverse markets, primarily in the United Kingdom but with increasing prominence internationally. The Group has three separate divisions, connecting suppliers to customers in an efficient, knowledgeable and service oriented way:


  **Smiths News** is the UK’s largest newspaper and magazine wholesaling business with an approximate 55 per cent. market share. It distributes newspapers and magazines on behalf of the majority of the major national publishers as well as a large number of regional publishers. It serves approximately 30,000 customers across England and Wales, including large general retailers as well as smaller independent newsagents delivering approximately 40 million newspapers and 11 million magazines weekly. Pass My Parcel, a wholly-owned 'click and collect' delivery service, operated by the Smiths News business, has a network of over 3,000 parcel shops and clients which include Amazon and ASOS.

  **Dawson Media Direct** is an international media direct business supplying newspapers, magazines, inflight entertainment technology and content to over 80 airlines in 50 countries.

- **Connect Parcel Freight** – Tuffnells Parcels Express Limited is a leading provider of next-day B2B delivery of mixed freight/parcel consignments, specialising in items of irregular dimension and weight, examples of which include bulky furnishings, building materials and automotive parts. Tuffnells offers distribution coverage throughout the UK through a network of depots, providing over 10 million deliveries per annum, through a wide range of services to over 4,200 largely ‘SME’ customers.

- **Connect Books** - Combining a number of recognised brands in print and digital bookselling across four customer focused business units; Bertrams Books (Wholesale), Dawson Books (UK & Export Libraries), International Libraries (including Erasmus, and Houtschild), and Wordery (Consumer Retail). The division serves over 8,200 customers in approximately 100 countries, with over
200,000 in stock titles and access to over a further ten million consumer and twenty million academic titles.

Connect Group employs over 6,000 people worldwide and has business operations in 10 countries, principally through (i) Connect Books (for the sale of electronic and printed books to consumers, universities and market place traders) and (ii) its international media business, Dawson Media Direct Limited.

Connect Group has a global annual turnover of c£1.8bn. To find out more about the nature of our business, please see www.connectgroupplc.com.

Policies

As part of our commitment to combating modern slavery, we have the following policies within our organisation:

- Ethical Trading Policy;
- One Team Policy;
- Right to Work Recruitment Guide;
- Anti-Bribery Policy;
- Anti-Fraud Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy; and
- Agency Workers Regulations Policy.

We also make sure that our suppliers are aware of our key policies and Code of Business Conduct, and encourage them to adhere to the same high standards. These policies have been developed and adopted by Connect Group in order to ensure that we conduct all business in an honest and ethical manner.

Due Diligence

As part of Connect Group’s efforts to monitor and reduce the risk of slavery and human trafficking occurring within our supply chains, where we source products from overseas we will periodically undertake supplier audits, whether conducted internally or through external agencies together with checking supplier references with external third parties in order to combat any modern slavery risk.

Our procedures are designed to establish, assess and monitor areas of potential risk of slavery and human trafficking occurring in our businesses and their respective supply chains; put in place measures as appropriate to reduce this risk and provide adequate protection for whistle-blowers.

In particular, we have reviewed, amongst others, our relationships with both recruitment agencies for the supply of permanent and temporary resource and our relationships with independent service providers (ISPs) who provide composite delivery services across the Group and we will continue to look to audit the capability of these agencies and the ISPs against our key policies and Code of Business Conduct, together with checking references, in order to combat any modern slavery risk and promote compliance with an individual’s right to work in the relevant jurisdiction.

Risk and Compliance

Connect Group periodically evaluates and reviews the nature and extent of its exposure to the risk of modern slavery occurring in its supply chain by means of a risk assessment exercise conducted by senior management within each business division.

Given the nature of the goods being acquired and the identity of those suppliers (whom are considered to be reputable blue-chip companies) we do not consider that the Group’s
businesses operate in high risk sectors or locations. That said, before we commence dealing with a new supplier we look to audit their practices, policies and procedures with an increasing focus on the suppliers’ ethical trading standards. Further, we provide a copy of our Ethical Trading Policy to each supplier and expect to introduce contractual protections in our dealings with such suppliers to reinforce those ethical standards. Accordingly, we seek to ensure that all our suppliers adhere to our ethical standards and anti-slavery policies and enforce a strict code of compliance and do not tolerate slavery and human trafficking within our supply chains. For example, if we find evidence of a failure to comply with our policies we will seek to terminate our relationship with the relevant supplier.

Training

Where appropriate, we look to educate our staff to recognise the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in our business and supply chains. Through such education programmes and ad hoc monitoring of suppliers, employees are encouraged to identify and report any potential breaches of this anti-slavery and human trafficking policy (or any other Group policy).

We are pleased that our employees understand the benefits of stringent measures to tackle slavery and human trafficking, as well as the consequences of failing to eradicate slavery and human trafficking from our business and supply chains.

Concluding Remarks

This statement has been approved by the Connect Group PLC Board of Directors and is made in accordance with Section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes Connect Group’s modern slavery and human trafficking statement for the current financial year in which it is written.

Gary Kennedy
Chairman
June 2017