

An aerial photograph of a large industrial facility, likely a warehouse or distribution center, with a long, straight concrete road running alongside it. Several semi-trailers are parked in a lot on the right side of the road. The image is used as a background for the report cover.

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Slave-Free Alliance and Waitrose

HOW WAITROSE USED SLAVE-FREE ALLIANCE'S UNIQUE TRAINING RESOURCES
TO PROTECT ITS OPERATIONS AGAINST MODERN SLAVERY



SLAVE-FREE
ALLIANCE

Working Towards a
Slave-free Supply Chain

TOGETHER WITH

Waitrose

A strategic and operational partnership

SLAVE-FREE ALLIANCE CAN OFFER BESPOKE TRAINING COURSES
AND MATERIALS TO ORGANISATIONS OF ALL SIZES

Waitrose is passionate about doing business ethically and sustainably, with modern slavery prevention being no exception. By investing in Slave-Free Alliance training, Waitrose is creating a transparent environment fostering fairness and equality, and upskilling staff to identify and respond to this issue and to ensure its operations and supply chains are protected against modern slavery.

The complex supply chains that support Waitrose's business mean modern slavery infiltration is a real possibility. Organised criminals target vulnerabilities further down supply chains, trafficking human beings into forced labour to generate illegal profits from the work of others.

As part of the John Lewis Partnership, which employs more than 80,000 staff, Waitrose has extensive recruitment needs within its own operations, in addition to services such as logistics, cleaning and catering. When combined with the supply chains associated with its products, and the company's sourcing from more than 50 countries, the possible areas of vulnerability are innumerable.

Waitrose recognised that policies such as their Responsible Sourcing Code of Practice and robust audits are not always enough. To ensure it approaches every area of business responsibly, Waitrose contacted Slave-Free Alliance for on-site training and resources for over 40 distribution centre managers.

"We believe that every single person in the Waitrose & Partners supply chain – from our Partners, to the people who grow, pick, pack and make our products – should be safe, well treated and fairly rewarded for their work."

- Waitrose statement on worker welfare

"The training delivered by Slave-Free Alliance is second-to-none, and we're hoping to work together to extend these learnings across more of our sites in the near future."

Sam Ludlow-Taylor

Ethical Trade Manager, Waitrose & Partners

WAITROSE
& PARTNERS

Delivering Change

Realising the high risk their distribution centres are exposed to, through the extensive use of agency workers, particularly for seasonal peaks, Waitrose wanted to ensure their 11 distribution centres do not make an easy target for human traffickers. Slave-Free Alliance was appointed to educate managers who have reporting accountability for agency workers, equipping them to put in place preventative procurement strategies and to spot the signs of modern slavery. This training is intended to help organisations future-proof themselves against human trafficking.

There are an estimated 136,000 people trapped in modern slavery in the UK. However, awareness of the full scale of the issue is limited. To highlight the human impact of this crime, staff heard the story of a real victim who was supported by Slave-Free Alliance's parent charity, Hope for Justice, followed by case studies from the media. An informal quiz gauged knowledge and the issues discussed were then applied to Waitrose and its operations. Managers praised Slave-Free Alliance for "insightful" delivery, with one saying: "It's something we often think won't happen."

In the next module, participants had to identify indicators of slavery within a case study. The group then received further tutoring on this topic. Waitrose found this unit particularly important as,

at distribution centres, extremely tight deadlines and turnover of roles mean that there is sometimes limited employee-to-employee interaction. This makes keen observational awareness of relevant signs even more of a priority to ensure the welfare of staff.

The final third of the training focused on how to respond when a suspected victim has been identified. Discussions were held around barriers to disclosure, informing managers of the reasons why victims may be reluctant to come forward or participate in open discussions. Participants said it was extremely useful to know the correct reporting methods, to ensure the safety of victims while maintaining any evidence they may need. Managers learned that when reporting modern slavery concerns properly, victims would get the support and rehabilitation they needed, thanks to the charitable work of Hope for Justice and through remediation. The training can be shared throughout the business to drive awareness of reporting modern slavery concerns.

In a post-training survey, more than 88% rated the session as "extremely engaging" or "very engaging", and 100% rated the trainer's knowledge as "excellent" or "very good". A typical comment described the training as a "very worthwhile investment of time".





Waitrose Foundation Costa Rican Pineapples

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Working together

Slave-Free Alliance has offered ongoing strategic training to Waitrose around modern slavery prevention to reinforce some of their policies and processes, for example annual e-learning in areas such as responsible sourcing.

By engaging and informing Waitrose's workforce, and with continued support, Slave-Free Alliance is confident that Waitrose will be able to proactively identify areas of modern slavery risk and put in place mitigating actions across its UK distribution centres.

77% of businesses believe modern slavery is happening within their own supply chains*

Don't allow it to happen in yours

* Source: 'Corporate Leadership on Modern Slavery' survey, ETI/Hult International Business School, 2016

Considerations for your business

- **Modern slavery is at epidemic levels and affects legitimate businesses of all sizes.** Organised criminals are entrepreneurial, opportunistic, but also often quite strategic in how they exploit the vulnerable and profit from them.
- **Staff training initiatives** are a great place to start your modern slavery prevention efforts.
- **Our expert support can give you confidence that your business is in a strong, defensive position.** Moreover, all profits made by Slave-Free Alliance are reinvested into anti-trafficking work worldwide, through the efforts of Hope for Justice, meaning your business will be demonstrating corporate social responsibility.



“Worker welfare is at the top of the agenda for Waitrose & Partners, and that includes protecting all those who work in our supply chains against the constantly evolving threat of modern slavery. We are committed to continually raising human rights standards across our organisation and supply chain, but realise the task is too extensive to be undertaken alone. By partnering with Slave-Free Alliance, we’re able to benefit from access to experts in combatting organised crime, with practical experience of protecting organisations like ours against modern slavery and working to eradicate it from society. The training delivered by Slave-Free Alliance is second to none, and we’re hoping to work together to extend these learnings across more of our sites in the near future.”

Sam Ludlow-Taylor,
Ethical Trade Manager, Waitrose & Partners