

**TalkTalk
Business**

British Red Cross

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June Rudman, Website Administrator, British Red Cross

talktalkbusiness.co.uk/hostedcontactcentre

Call:
0800 954 5707

Lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

The challenge

Increasing flexibility
Reducing complexity

The British Red Cross needed a flexible inbound call management system to deliver telephone support lines, as part of its emergency response to major incidents and disasters.

The solution

Hosted Contact Centre

TalkTalk Business' Hosted Contact Centre provides a virtual network based solution with complete flexibility to handle any situation. Eliminating the need for any additional hardware, Hosted Contact Centre delivers advanced contact centre functionality but at a lower price than traditional systems.

The benefits

Simple and fast setup in emergency situations

A scalable solution depending on requirements

A robust and resilient emergency service

Scalable virtual contact centre to connect key personnel

Responding to emergencies

The British Red Cross is a volunteer-led humanitarian organisation that helps people in crisis, whoever and wherever they may be. Enabling vulnerable people at home and overseas to prepare for and respond to emergencies, its work focuses on emergency response, first aid training, health and social care and assisting refugees.

Part of the organisation's response to major incidents such as floods, fires, evacuations and terrorism involves the provision of telephone support lines. Staffed by trained volunteers, these lines offer practical and emotional support for people who have been affected including survivors, the bereaved and anyone in the wider community.

Flexibility requirements

Asian Tsunami in 2004, the 7/7 London bombings in 2007 and the South West summer floods in 2007, The British Red Cross used its day-to-day telephone system at its London headquarters to set up support lines. While this was sufficient, a number of limitations led to the search for a new approach.

"We could only use the telephone system at the main London location, so other British Red Cross branches around the UK couldn't join the support effort and it wasn't easy to make changes as situations evolved," explained June Rudman, Emergency Planning Officer for the British Red Cross.

"Towards the end of 7/7, for example, we exhausted the finite number of London based volunteers and had to bring in additional help from as far away as Cornwall and Scotland."

Rudman added: "Flexibility was also an issue as the 0845 numbers could only be pointed to a single, alternative telephone, not an entire location, which wasn't ideal for business continuity or when switching to an out-of-hours scenario."

The British Red Cross needed a new inbound call system which would allow a virtual support team to be set up quickly and which was easy to manage themselves, so began to explore the market been excellent."

"Hosted Contact Centre supports our strategic plan to provide more support lines wherever there's a recognised need, so we'll be using it more around the country in response to incidents."

June Rudman,
Emergency Planning Officer,
British Red Cross

Virtual system delivers scalability

The British Red Cross soon decided that TalkTalk Business' Hosted Contact Centre, a complete inbound call management solution met its requirements. "We were looking for a flexible solution which we could use with all our existing hardware as our branches across the UK use a variety of different phone systems", commented Rudman. Purely network based, Hosted Contact Centre runs on TalkTalk Business' Next Generation Network (NGN) infrastructure so did not involve any hardware upgrades, allowing the British Red Cross to experience full contact centre-type functionality.

The British Red Cross created a rigorous test scenario for Hosted Contact Centre, simulating two major simultaneous incidents of a rail crash and an earthquake. Three locations were involved to accept calls including mobiles, testing functions such as call plans, voice messaging, call waiting and the ability to select different languages and options.

As the situations developed, a second line was set-up and caller volume was increased.

Robust support lines

Bringing a high degree of flexibility to support lines is a major benefit for the British Red Cross due to the very nature of its work. The team can now tailor Hosted Contact Centre around any particular situation and make changes immediately themselves via the portal without having to rely on a third party.

"TalkTalk Business' Hosted Contact Centre gives us adaptable and scalable call handling in a cost effective package" said Rudman.

Not only can the British Red Cross now provide a more scalable and resilient national service but our regional branches will find it more straightforward to set up small-scale support lines too.

"Hosted Contact Centre supports our strategic plan to provide more support lines wherever there's a recognised need, so we'll be using it more around the country in response to incidents," concluded Rudman.