

Pandemic Response Plans

Flu Pandemic

The H1N1 influenza virus is now a global pandemic requiring infection control measures to mitigate the risk to life and requiring response plans to maintain operational continuity.

All JIG Joint Ventures are requested to prepare or update an existing business continuity response plan to include a flu pandemic scenario. This response plan should be approved by the JV Board or Management Committee.

This Bulletin is intended to provide some general guidance. However, site specific response plans will need to reflect the scope, size and complexity of the JV.

Developing A Pandemic Response Plan To Aid Business Continuity

The measures that need to be considered to reduce the spread of a flu virus within the work environment fall into three broad categories:

Individual behaviour: Actions taken by individuals to restrict the spread of the flu virus

Environmental: Actions taken within the work environment to reduce the spread of the flu virus

Organisational: Actions taken to modify behaviour and working practices to help reduce the spread of the flu virus

The most effective measures will be those that are easy to accommodate, implement and interpret.

The following checklist is an example of points to consider when developing the plan for a JV

Individual Behaviour

- Encourage proper hand hygiene.
- Encourage proper respiratory hygiene.
- Minimise close contact with other people.
- Consider asking individuals with symptoms consistent with the illness to wear a face mask.

Environmental

- Provide the workforce with information about pandemic flu which is appropriate to the stage of alert (e.g. signs and symptoms of the illness and modes of transmission). This should be based on information from Local Health Authorities.
- Review additional measures to reduce the risk of infection, such as more frequent cleaning of premises, and ensure that the resources to achieve these will be available.
- Provide sufficient and accessible means for reducing the spread of infection (e.g. provision of hand washing facilities or hand-hygiene products).
- Minimise exposure to soft furnishings and other objects that could potentially become contaminated and are difficult to clean.

Organisational

- Identify a pandemic coordinator and/or team with defined roles and responsibilities for preparedness and response planning.
- Disseminate information to employees about your pandemic preparedness and response plan for the JV, including their roles in this plan.
- Set up authorities and procedures for activating and terminating the response plan, for amending operations (e.g. reduced activities in affected areas), and for key knowledge sharing (this should include nominating deputies for key employees in advance, in case of absence).
- Identify the critical activities undertaken by the JV which would need to continue during a pandemic and the employees and other inputs that support those activities (e.g. suppliers, contractor services/products, logistics, process controls and security). Consider how internal resources could be re-allocated to ensure those activities are maintained.
- Assess the need for continued face to face contact with third parties and consider plans to modify the frequency and/or type of face-to-face contact among employees and between employees and third parties.
- Discuss with your suppliers/contractors whether they have robust Business Continuity plans in place – your organisation is only as good as those on whom it depends.
- Consider preparing an additional pool of workers to undertake key tasks and provide training where appropriate (e.g. contractors, cross-train employees, retirees and temporary workers).

- Guided by advice issued by Local Authorities, forecast and plan for estimated numbers of employee absences during a pandemic. Absences could result from personal illness, family member illness, bereavement or possible disruption to other sectors, for example the closure of nurseries and schools or reduced public transport.
- Guided by advice issued by Local Authorities, establish policies for employees who are suspected as being ill, or become ill, at the workplace (e.g. infection control response and sick leave policies).
- Guided by advice issued by Local Authorities, establish policies for sick-leave absences unique to a pandemic, including policies on when a previously ill person is no longer infectious and can return to work (i.e. when they are no longer showing symptoms and feel better) and agreeing these with staff representative bodies.
- Establish policies for flexible working arrangements (e.g. working from home) and flexible work hours (e.g. staggered shifts).
- Initiate a clear and focussed dialogue with the Airport Authority to ensure that the plan is aligned to the expected levels of service required and to address any issues related to changing work practices and security (eg. security passes for new/temporary personnel)
- Ensure that all listed contact details for personnel and key third parties are checked for accuracy

Testing and Review

When the plan has been prepared or updated, an exercise should be conducted to test its effectiveness. It should also be revised periodically to take account of new advice and guidance from Local Authorities and other trusted parties.

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