NATIONAL PROTOCOL – SUPPORTING GUIDANCE

Introduction

For resources workers, commuting for work should be recognised as essential under state and territory laws. Along with a strong residential workforce in regions, drive in drive out (DIDO), fly in fly out (FIFO) and bus in bus out (BIBO) is essential to mining activities. DIDO, FIFO and BIBO will continue to operate with strict adherence to these national principles and protocols.

Scope

The Resources Sector National COVID-19 Response Protocols provide commitments to protect and support the minerals workforce, supplier partners and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities during the pandemic.

The protocols reinforce and operate concurrently with public health advice and have been written in consultation with all peak state and territory representative mining bodies and with the cooperation of the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association.

Mining companies commit to developing and sustaining robust COVID-19 management plans. The plans are based on the best government and medical advice and are designed to adapt with developments of that advice from the nation's public health officials.

All management plans will reference the official advice contained within the National Guidelines developed in consultation with the Communicable Diseases Network Australia and endorsed by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee.

Companies will also follow the directions of state and territory medical authorities as these directions are provided and updated. This information is dynamic and will be monitored continuously to keep up with any changes. Accordingly, management plans will change with the advice at:
https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cdna-song-novel-coronavirus.htm

This guidance aims to assist minerals companies to implement the protocols relating to the prevention and management of COVID-19 in the workforce and the communities located near sites. It is to inform rather than prescribe a company's response.

Risk assessment

Where protocols cannot be practically implemented, a risk assessment process should be undertaken to determine alternate or supplementary controls that could be introduced to meet the intent of the social distancing and hygiene guidelines. Each site will have specific circumstances that require fit for purpose management.

A decision tree is available on the MCA website for companies to use:
https://minerals.org.au/sites/default/files/COVID-19%20Company%20Decision%20Tree.pdf

Normal health and safety responsibilities and management of all other hazards continues to apply.

Structure

This guidance includes a range of supporting actions that may assist in the implementation of each element of the protocol.

Examples are also included to illustrate protocol application, and links to specific templates are provided for companies to refer to when developing their own specific processes to operationalise the national protocols.

The specific company examples provided are sourced from the diverse range of mining operations across the nation, and what is undertaken on one site may not be suitable for another site.

A protocol checklist can be found at: https://minerals.org.au/resources-managing-covid-19

Primary health and safety advice

All management plans will reference the official advice contained within the National Guidelines developed in consultation with the Communicable Diseases Network Australia and endorsed by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee.

Companies will also follow the directions of state and territory medical authorities as these directions are provided and updated. This information is dynamic and will be monitored continuously to keep up with any changes. Accordingly, management plans will change as necessary with the advice at: https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cdna-song-novel-coronavirus.htm

TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

Testing arrangements and equipment are changing and evolving. Individual responsibility – monitoring health (including temperature and potential symptoms of themselves and those they live with), social distancing and self-isolation in the event of contacting sources of infection – is the starting point for all Australians. Companies will work to support individuals to exercise this responsibility.

> **Protocol**
>
> Workers will be required to declare that they have been fit and well for the last seven days; that they have not undertaken any high-risk activities (such as overseas travel or contact with infected persons), and that they undertake to notify the company if they become unwell or anyone that they live with becomes unwell.
>
> These provisions are not dissimilar to practices required by immigration authorities or the Red Cross blood donation service.

Practice

A number of companies and state and territory governments have developed templates. These templates require employers to ask employees a series of health and travel questions:

- Have you travelled overseas in the last 14 days?
- Have you been:
    - In close contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the previous 14 days?
    - In close contact with anyone suspected of having COVID-19 within the last 14 days? (CDNA Close Contact definition pages 12-13 https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cdna-song-novel-coronavirus.htm)
- Have you or any family member in your household been unwell or experienced COVID-19 related symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat and fatigue in the last 14 days?

Additional questions companies may ask:

- Do you use a CPAP machine?
- Is someone you live with at high risk to respiratory infections?
- Are you recovering from an illness that may make you vulnerable to COVID-19?

If testing equipment is available (IR thermometer or digital oral thermometer), take the temperature of each person attending site prior to departure if FIFO or at the start of a shift. An example guide on temperature screening has been developed by SACOME based on advice from Sitemed which conducts testing for a number of member companies.

If the recorded temperature is above 37.5º Celsius or 38.0º Celsius (companies may have slightly differing thresholds) they are likely to have a fever and should follow the most up to date government guidelines on symptoms of COVID-19.

An online screening tool provided by the Australian Government can be provided to employees to undertake a self-assessment prior to presenting for a shift if they are feeling unwell.

https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/healthdirect-coronavirus-covid-19-symptom-checker

States and territories may also have local screening tools, for example
https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-self-assessment for people who live in or are visiting Victoria.

Example templates

CMEWA Health Declaration form:

https://cmewesternaustralia-
my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/r_cobai_cmewa_com/EbIcqToGgI9Bl_PAL8Vje_8BlOkBqO9BIpttUlg9
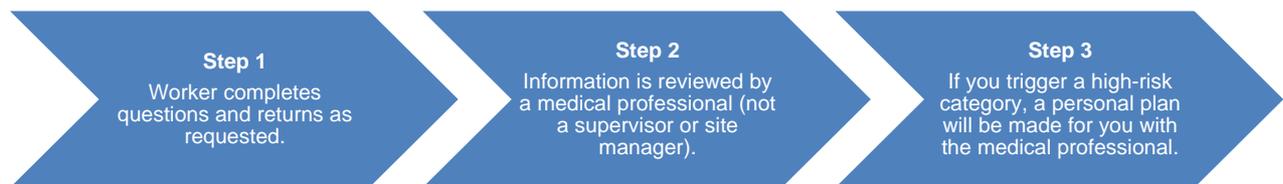Ufy9sw?e=LK7164

Queensland Health:

http://cdn-au.mailsnd.com/88732/oi9O5x9yyM8Nh6_lEznJKvofBrOCKCRGNnDssmcAbOg/2285683.pdf

This link provides examples of templates that can be customised:

https://www.jotform.com/form-templates/coronavirus-self-declaration-form

You may choose to establish a three-step process like the below:

Step 1 Worker completes questions and returns as requested.	**Step 2** Information is reviewed by a medical professional (not a supervisor or site manager).	**Step 3** If you trigger a high-risk category, a personal plan will be made for you with the medical professional.

If employees become unwell whilst on site, send them home if possible or back to camp. Continue to monitor.

Company examples

- All personnel required to complete a screening questionnaire and temperature assessment prior to boarding a plane from their point of hire

- All personnel are temperature screened on arrival at site

- Exclusion of any passengers from travelling to site who exhibit a temperature above 38.0º and/or COVID-19-like symptoms or risk factors (i.e. cold and/or flu like symptoms).

Protocol

Companies will work with public health authorities seeking to establish a 'care point' for rapid screening processes to greatly reduce the risk of an infected, asymptomatic individual from flying to another jurisdiction or to a remote location. This will be done to avoid an unnecessary burden on the public health system and will complement broader public health efforts.

Practice

Company examples

- As testing kits become more reliable, some companies may be able to procure COVID-19 test kits

- Company facilities and equipment can be made available e.g. vacant/unused company accommodation camps available as treatment or isolation centres (ideally to be run by public health authorities or NGOs)

- Engage with regional and local health authorities and medical facilities them and offer to support their work:
    - Offer access to suppliers
    - Assist with procurement (if necessary) and transportation of medical supplies
- Setting up a home-based care response function to help alleviate pressure on local health services.

Protocol

Beyond these actions, companies will pursue best practice health and hygiene checks for flights and at the mine site.

Practice

The Department of Health website has advice on good health and hygiene: https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/good-hygiene-for-coronavirus-covid-19

See also World Health Organisation: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/advice-for-workplace-clean-19-03-2020.pdf

Additional actions companies can do on site include:

- Convert doors to foot open rather than hand opening
- Any doors that do not need to remain shut for safety and security reasons can be propped open
- Provide hand washing or sanitising facilities at carparks prior to site entrance
- Provide individual tea/coffee making facilities for plant crew and heavy equipment drivers to reduce the need to enter a crib room.

Posters that can be downloaded for display on site can be found at: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public

Companies continue to work with state/territory airports, regional airports and airlines to ensure appropriate social distancing and hygiene practices.

Company examples include:

- Implementing stringent pre-check procedures for all FIFO personnel before boarding flights. These include: employee health questionnaires, travel declarations and temperature checks (subject to availability)
- Place signs, floor markers and barriers in all the key areas (check-in, security, departure/arrival gates, baggage collection, taxi/car pickup queues) to assist with social distancing
- Stagger the through flow of persons in each key area and only board sections of the plane at a time
- Remove all seating in terminal, food and beverage and waiting areas in line with Federal Government directions
- Increase support workers at airports such as security, airport information officers etc. to enforce social distancing and assist with movement of passengers through key areas
- Passengers to sit in formations that maximise social distancing

- Demonstrable cleaning regimes before loading passengers

- Provide resources to enable cleaning of seats and arm rests in transit if required

- If employees are moving from commercial to charter flights, facilitate separation of mine workers from general public at airports.

An example of current controls for an airline can be found at: https://cmewesternaustralia-my.sharepoint.com/:p:/g/personal/r_cobai_cmewa_com/EbI3dQcNmENDrKfxxvOxXsUBCYmyeBc6olzIlxlj0E9Yaw?rtime=n5nAknjX10g

> **Protocol**
>
> Companies will work with each other and their key suppliers and through industry associations to pool resources at critical transfer points – specifically commercial airports, charter airports and regional centres.
>
> This includes access to nurses, para-medical staff, equipment for measuring temperature and, as technology improves, infection testing facilities.

Practice

Company examples

- Work cooperatively to identify and manage business-critical products and services including to build and share inventory with communities and other businesses where volumes are available

- Identify key products and global and domestic supply lines which may present risks to the Australian resource sector and essential supplier companies and work cooperatively to identify and manage key risks

- Health, hygiene and safety products, particularly critical products where supply is needed to protect workforces and communities by reducing the risk of disease transmission and by reducing harm to workers conducting normal activities in the course of the operation. This includes, for example:

  - PPE, consumables and systems to test for and limit the exposure to COVID-19

  - PPE such as P2 masks required to safely enter certain mines and operations

- Machinery and equipment parts and consumables, lubricants, fire suppression materials and tyres, all required to repair and maintain mining's operating equipment to safe standards:

  - Where possible, and with sensitivity to avoid demand shocks similar to those experienced in retail sectors due to panic buying, inventory on hand of non-perishable consumables and parts should be deepened

  - Further, alternative suppliers should be identified early and engaged.

> **Protocol**
>
> Companies will continue discussions with airlines on establishment for resources employee/contractor only commercial flights (i.e.no other travellers) as well as examining increased charter flights in the medium term.

Practice

Company examples:

- Companies have moved to restrict movement of employees on commercial flights as far as possible

- Companies continue to engage with charter companies to secure flights for employees to regional airports

- To prevent community transmission, members of the public are no longer able to purchase seats on company-organised charter flights

  - A list of air charter companies with available aircraft – including Basic Aviation Risk (BAR) Standard Program (BARS) accreditation – is available here: https://minerals.org.au/resources-managing-covid-19

  - MCA supported the establishment of BARS for the Australian mining industry in 2010 through our work with the Flight Safety Foundation

> **Protocol**
>
> Safety messages on charter flights can be expanded to include virus health and hygiene.

Practice

Company examples:

- Following routine air safety message, pilots/first officers should reinforce social distancing and hygiene messages, including request to remain forward facing at all times

- Demonstrable cleaning regimes before loading passengers

- Hand wash stations or hand sanitiser for passengers' use immediately before boarding.

> **Protocol**
>
> Companies will implement social distancing in line with medical recommendations for both ground and air transport. Social distancing will be applied on flights.

Practice

The Department of Health advice on social distancing can be found here: https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/social-distancing-for-coronavirus-covid-19

Company examples:

- Buses with 2 seat, aisle, 2 seat configuration – 1 person per 2 seats alternating each row

- Plane seating similar to buses (where the aircraft allows i.e. taking into account aircraft weight distribution requirements) as directed by the airlines

- Company policy that employees adhere to seating arrangements at all times and face forward for duration of trip

- Regular cleaning and sanitation of aircraft before and after each flight

- Bus driver to clean down hard surfaces between trip

- Closed charter service to employees and contractors only to both manage numbers as well as avoid community contact

- When transiting (from interstate or across regional boundaries) any personal interaction must be essential only and not involve broader community contact. For example, this may include toilet stops, refuelling and fatigue breaks with social distancing observed at all times

- Where practicable, redesign vehicle park-up areas to separate crews

- Require multiple vehicle trips to enable social distancing

- Bus travel shall be limited to one person for every two seats – physically taped off seats to stop people sitting near one another

- Avoid having two people in the cab of vehicles and equipment where possible (i.e. drills, excavators, trucks):
  - Where more than one person is in a vehicle, travel time should be limited to 15 minutes or less
  - If two people travel in a light vehicle together, the passenger should occupy the rear seat

- Where social distancing cannot be achieved in a vehicle, it is recommended that respirators be worn.

Protocol

Non-essential work will be reduced (with working from home arrangements and split teams across the sector).

Practice

Company examples:

- Non-critical projects have been suspended and respective contractors are being demobilised from site

- Some exploration activities have ceased and some projects have been placed on care and maintenance to minimise travel

- Heritage surveys have been halted

- Non-essential face-to-face team meetings have been suspended

- Where maintenance activities are not critical to the safe operation of equipment, these activities are reviewed and/or deferred

- Critical roles and corporate teams have moved to split shifts to avoid contact.

> **Protocol**
>
> Companies will undertake to examine reduction of interstate FIFO.

Practice

Company examples

- Identify personnel performing critical tasks that must be performed on-site and cannot be done remotely

- Identify personnel perform critical tasks that can be performed remotely

- Essential travel includes rostered fly in/fly out travel, and domestic air travel that is location specific and time critical:

    - Location-specific means that the task cannot be completed unless the person is physically at the travel destination

    - Time critical means that the task cannot be delayed or deferred without significant business impact.

- To facilitate possible backfill and manning up levels due to shift arrangement changes, companies will where possible undertake local recruitment drives to enable access to appropriate skills through this operating period

- Identify onsite personnel with ability to step up and cover incapacitated persons or those unable to FIFO

- Investigate option of engaging previous employees who held key roles to cover onsite requirements in needed

- Companies may consult with the workforce and offer interstate FIFO critical personnel option of temporary relocation to state/territory, region or site.

> **Protocol**
>
> Companies will keep track of workers travelling to site and what tasks they are performing. High-level information can be accessed by dedicated contact officers within companies.

Practice

Company examples:

- To allow contact tracing, all employees, contractors, caterers and cleaners are to provide contact details (mobile telephone number, email, and address) where they are staying:

    - It should be clearly stated that their details will be shared with local public health authorities if anyone on site becomes ill with a suspected infection

    - Anyone who does not agree to this condition cannot enter site

    - Retain the names and contact details of all participants for at least one month. This will help public health authorities trace people who may have been exposed to COVID-19

    - Known areas patient visited (i.e. workstation, quarantine area, dry mess, accommodation) are sanitised.

- Maintain a permanent desk arrangement – cease dynamic working

- Allocate plant and vehicles to the same people each shift to minimise chance of secondary contamination
- Where possible, consistent work teams are used to avoid mixing people up across jobs and across the shift and swing.

Protocol

Longer shift cycles will be used to minimise travel frequency and to stagger arrival and departure of different teams (this will be done with due regard to other issues such as fatigue).

Practice

Company examples:

- Shift rosters have been extended for 14+ days, in alignment with the standard COVID-19 quarantine duration
- Moved to extended rosters (e.g. 2-and-2) to minimise the number of people cycling through site
- Investigate and determine the logistics and compliance requirements to change rosters, including contractual requirements, legalities, enterprise agreements, consultation requirements, leave entitlements; wage/salary impact on personnel etc.
- Develop draft roster based on alternative roster scenarios which would integrate with other contractors and mining/processing operation
- Protocols are in place to regularly review and manage risks associated with fatigue and general wellbeing given the changing work arrangements
- Opportunities for DIDO workers to remain on-site for an extended period thereby reducing risks associated with their transit to and from the mine.

Protocol

Within camps movement of workers will be staggered – such as meal times, access to facilities etc. – to minimise contact.

Implement specific controls around social distancing in camp accommodation (mess hall seating etc.)

Practice

Company examples:

- Reconfiguration of dry mess area to support social distancing (reduced capacity)
    - Floor markings and barriers for visual cues to support social distancing
- Hand washing facilities prior to entry to mess
- Reduced tables and chairs (2 x seats to a table)
- Dedicated mess times for separate crews
- Dedicated kitchen staff to handle and serve food
- Disposable single use cutlery, cups and single use condiments
- Sanitiser on each table

- Contactless payment for extras

- Self-serve of food is no longer allowed in the dry mess with additional personnel employed to distribute food and crib accordingly

- Additional resources being procured to provide dedicated provision of take-away meals

- Employee accommodation self-contained with bathroom

- Gym, pool, and wet mess have been closed to help minimise risks

Good examples of company social distancing can be found here:
https://www.qrc.org.au/community/qldresourcescovidprotocolsinaction/

Protocol

Companies will support state and territory governments' efforts to deploy testing facilities for the virus in major resources regions.

Practice

Company examples:

- As testing kits become more reliable, some companies may be able to procure COVID-19 test kits

- Additional onsite medical staff

- External medical practitioners available for advice and direction

- Paid health professionals to undertake airport screening of whole communities to reduce pressure on medical services.

SAFETY AT WORK

Workplace health and safety education, training and procedures are integrated into mining workplaces. Companies are integrating COVID-19 related health and hygiene education, training and practices into standard operations.

All principal contractor groups are included in site-wide information and updates on the COVID-19 pandemic.


Protocol

Senior managers and health and safety officers addressing crews locally at shift change meetings with updated information regarding COVID-19.

Practice

Company examples:

- Site leadership teams continue to operate with daily updates and education on the management of COVID-19 in line with educating the workforce into taking accountability for ensuring health of the mine site

- Companies have established specific intranet sites for COVID-19 containing all information for sites to access, e.g.
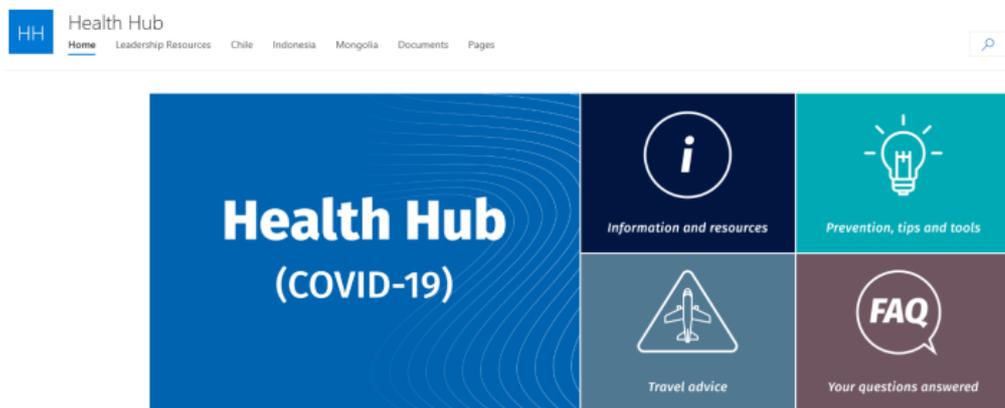
- Regular review of information at https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert

- Develop regular communications and platforms, including health alerts, fact sheets, videos, webinars and monitor the Australian COVID-19 official websites:

  – State/Territory Departments of Health https://www.health.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/local-state-and-territory-health-departments

  – CDNA https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-cdna-index.htm

  – World Health Organisation https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

- Specific information on health, hygiene and other workplace controls is integrated into site induction plans, education programs and pre-start meetings – for direct employees, contractors and suppliers – leveraging existing face-to-face, technology enabled or paper-based methods

- Monitor the local contact tracing information e.g. https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/current-status/current-status-and-contact-tracing-alerts#contact-tracing and https://healthywa.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Coronavirus/Locations-visited-by-confirmed-cases and recommend staff stay up to date in their jurisdictions (home or work) to identify if they may have been exposed

- BHP's social distancing toolkit https://www.qrc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/20200318_MinAU_COVID19-Social-Distancing-Toolkit-Minerals-Australia-1.pdf

- Industry associations are releasing daily information to assist companies and key community stakeholders in staying informed as to the latest government advice:

    – Minerals Council of Australia COVID-19 updates https://minerals.org.au/covid-19

- Avoid mass toolbox/pre-start meetings. Group size for toolbox and pre-start meetings must be based on the available space and the ability to maintain a distance of 1.5 metres between participants and a floor area of 4m2 per person.

    – Example tool box talk

Slide 1 **Business position**	– The health and safety of our people is our absolute priority – The business has a dedicated COVID-19 Steering Committee to lead the business response and manage potential impacts for our people and our business – A Health Hub has been developed for you to provide information and resources, advice, tips and tools
Slide 2 **Coronavirus what is it?**	– Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus – Symptoms range from a mild cough to pneumonia – Some people recover easily, others may get very sick very quickly
Slide 3 **How is it spread?**	– COVID-19 is most likely to spread from person-to-person through: – Direct close contact with a confirmed infection – Close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes; or – Touching objects or surfaces (such as door knobs or tables) contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection, and then touching your mouth or face.
Slide 4 **Routine prevention activities**	– Diligent use of normal personal hygiene measures: – Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water – Cover coughs and sneezes – Use hand sanitiser if you are unable to wash your hands – Dispose of tissues in a lidded bin – Clean your work environment – Wipe down common touch surfaces with disinfectant – If you are unwell, do not attend work – If you are concerned about your health, seek medical advice
Slide 5 **Should I wear a face mask?**	– You do not need to wear a mask if you are healthy – Wear a mask if you are coughing or sneezing – Wear a mask if you are taking care of a person with suspected COVID-19

Slide 6 **Business protocol – what should I do?**	– Declare – if you plan to travel to another country, please complete the Self-Declaration Travel Form and provide to your manager
	– Follow – group protocol and routine prevention activities
	– Report – if you have been working at a \<insert company\> work location and suspect or confirm you have COVID-19, please inform your line manager as soon as possible
	– Notify – notification of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases must be sent
	– Respond – if an event of a suspect or confirmed case occurs, your managers will follow the agreed Group and business Protocols.
Slide 7 **Business protocol – travel advice**	– Read – Business Travel Advice which outlines changes to:
	– Domestic Travel
	– International Travel
	– Personal Travel
	– Declare – if you plan to travel to another country, please complete the Self-Declaration Travel Form and provide to your manager
	– Email – if you need advice prior to travel
	– Check the Health Hub for updates
Slide 8 **Who needs to isolate?**	– International traveller recently arrived in your country who has no symptoms but is required by authorities to self-quarantine
	– Person with an exposure risk and has symptoms of respiratory infection or illness
	– Person who has been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19
	– Person has been tested for COVID-19 and instructed by their doctor to isolate until results are known.

Protocol

All employees exercising social distancing while awaiting transport to site.

Practice

Company examples:

- Established mandatory social distancing measures to limit close contact with individuals whilst on site

- Use line markers and barriers as visual aids

- Actively manage bottleneck queues to optimise 1.5 m separation

COVID-19: Social distancing at work

Wash your hands regularly with soap and water

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects

Keep your distance 4m² indoors and 1.5m outdoors

Limit face-to-face contact to less than 15 minutes

Keep 2m distance between people in meeting rooms

Consider off-peak travel on public transport

Speak up if you notice someone is unwell

Stay home if you feel unwell or are experiencing symptoms

Call ahead of time to book an appointment with your doctor

Where can I get further information at work?
The Health Hub • Your COVID Coordinator

Protocol

Residential workforces using their own vehicles to get to site. No sharing of company vehicles in transit by residential workforce. Site travelling (passenger vehicles) to have reference to health and medical guidelines on contact limits.

Practice

Company examples:

- No carpooling to site in personal or company vehicles unless impractical and then limited to persons per vehicle
- On site vehicles:
  - Single cab light vehicles – 1 person allowed
  - Dual cab vehicles – formations that extend the distance between people such as 2 persons sitting diagonally.
- Transportation to and from site each day should be restricted: when transiting to and from site each day as part of a residential operation, the intent should be to leave home, drive straight to work, work the shift, and then return straight home, thereby eliminating or minimising broader community contact
- Minimise passengers or do extra trips
- If appropriate, provide a fresh air source when driving with passengers.

Protocol

Vehicles cleaned between use by different groups.

Practice

Company examples:

- Provide hand washing facilities at carparks prior site entrance

- Where possible allocate plant and vehicles (including underground transport) to the same people each shift to minimise chance of secondary contamination

- Provide sanitiser sprays and instruct employees to clean all vehicle parts that receive human contact

- Activate additional cleaning regimes for communal spaces/vehicles.

The Queensland Government provides the following advice for cleaning of hard surfaces (https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/industry/resources-and-fact-sheets-for-industry/covid-19-cleaning-and-disinfection-recommendations

---

Protocol

Ensure that village cleaning meets applicable Australian Standards using suitably trained staff and consumables.

Practice

Department of Health Coronavirus (COVID-19) Environmental cleaning and disinfection principles for health and residential care facilities has useful advice including how to prepare cleaning solutions. It also provides advice on cleaning when managing persons suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19: https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-environmental-cleaning-and-disinfection-principles-for-health-and-residential-care-facilities

The Department of Health website provides training of key personnel in Infection Control: https://www.health.gov.au/funnelback/search?query=infection%20control%20training

This is a valuable tool for any ERT/health professionals and /or safety personnel to complete. In addition site cleaners could do this training as a mandatory requirement for their roles. It is online training (approx. 30 mins) and a record of attainment/completion is issued for training records.

Company examples:

- Disinfecting must be undertaken by cleaners who are experienced in disinfection processes. Cleaners must wear all appropriate PPE while cleaning activities are completed. Normal work may resume once the area has been cleaned

- Accommodation, kitchens, dining facilities, common areas, change rooms, toilets, showers, linen, drink fountains and vending machines should be cleaned industrially and the frequency of this cleaning should increase.

Protocol

Extensive workplace hygiene practices – hand washing, social distancing, ban on non-essential travel and meetings, physical separation of teams and shift change over.

Practice

Company examples

- Use of Trigger Action Response Plans which detail a certain set of conditions (or "triggers") and a set of actions which mine managers and supervisors must follow when those trigger events occur. A generic TARP can be found here: https://minerals.org.au/sites/default/files/COVID-19%20Generic%20TARP%20Guidance%20for%20Operational%20Assets_Mar%202020%20-%20Copy.xlsx

- Minimise the use of shared tools. Where used, tools are to be cleaned regularly

- For meetings that are required to take place in a room:
  - Meeting rooms to be cleaned prior to and subsequent to each meeting
  - Each meeting room has been measured and the maximum number of occupants to allow for 4 m^2 per person signposted on each room
  - Room limits are to be strictly followed and participants are required to be seated / stand with recommended separation in mind
  - meetings are to be scheduled for no longer than 1 hr 30 min. Any meeting exceeding this limit should be suspended and continued via other means or at a later time
  - Meeting attendance should be aligned as close as practical to business continuity requirements of separating personnel with common skillsets as practical.

- In-vehicle operator training modified to reduce the number and duration of training sessions, without sacrificing safety outcomes:
  - Where practicable use training simulators or remote training via in-cab camera systems
  - Where face to face training is required, use masks as needed.

- Where tasks require working in pairs or small teams on essential safety activities, revert to social distancing controls between each task to reduce exposure

- Where possible, consistent work teams are used to avoid mixing people up across jobs and across the shift and swing

- Limit the number of workers in confined areas such as hoists and elevators at any one time.

> **Protocol**
>
> Extensive distribution of hand sanitisers backed with workplace education campaign.

Practice

Washing hands with soap is considered to be the most effective way to practice good hand hygiene during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hand sanitisers can play an important role in keeping hands as free from harmful microorganisms as possible https://www.tga.gov.au/hand-sanitisers-and-covid-19

On 28 March 2020, specified hand sanitiser formulations were excluded from TGA regulation as long as they only contain particular ingredients in particular quantities in the final formulation and comply with certain manufacturing practices, advertisement and labelling conditions.

The formulations are based on advice by the World Health Organization and similar decisions by the US Food and Drug Administration. The final formulation of the hand sanitiser must contain only the following ingredients:

- "EITHER ethanol 80% v/v (pharmacopoeial grade or food standard grade) OR isopropyl alcohol 75% v/v (pharmacopoeial grade) in an aqueous solution

- Ssterile distilled water or boiled cold water

- Glycerol 1.45% v/v (pharmacopoeial grade)

- hydrogen peroxide 0.125% v/v (pharmacopoeial grade)

- Does not contain any other active or inactive ingredients, including colours, fragrances or emollients."

Company examples

- Hand sanitiser is in extremely short supply. Where possible provide additional hand washing facilities throughout site, focusing on high volume areas

- Place advice on proper use of hand sanitiser in each location it is available https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science-hand-sanitizer.html and https://www.hha.org.au/component/jdownloads/send/5-local-implementation/75-poster-who-1?Itemid=0

- Where possible provide disinfecting sprays for staff to use on door handles, tables etc. Detergent solution (as per manufacturer's instructions) or detergent/disinfectant wipes can be used (so long as mechanical cleaning is achieved).

Protocol

Vulnerable employees working from home.

Practice

Company examples:

- Ensure that employee information regarding risks is treated confidentiality at all times.

- Higher risk personnel are either given additional job specific controls to implement, are to work from home or alternate arrangements are made

- Consider requiring employees over 60+ to stay away from the workplace:

    - Provide home-based alternative duties will be provided where possible

- Employees 60 or older with a chronic disease are required to stay away from the workplace https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/advice-for-people-at-risk-of-coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-older-people

- Employees younger than 60 but with a chronic disease should be assessed for suitability to remain in the workplace through a health screen.

- Employees who are in the first trimester of their pregnancy and other pregnant employees (who have medical advice that they are at risk) are required to stay away from the workplace:

    - Home-based alternative duties will be provided where possible.

- Other pregnant employees who remain uncomfortable about staying in the workplace are encouraged to speak to their line leader to explore home-based alternative duties

- Based on current epidemiology, resources companies maintain a list of workers that fit into highest risk categories as identified by the Chief Health Officer or their delegate (i.e. high risk age and underlying health issues) and work with affected workers on arrangements established to protect them.

- The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 50 and older with one or more chronic medical conditions. Advice is available at https://www.health.gov.au/news/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc-advice-to-national-cabinet-on-30-march-2020.

- Arrangements should be made directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and contractors.

- It may be appropriate to seek advice from a local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health service. Further advice for Indigenous Australians can be found here https://www.naccho.org.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-advisory-group-on-covid-19/

- In addition, people at any age with significant immunosuppression are considered at risk of serious illness from COVID-19.

- Sites have identified high risk personnel (based on medical record reviews) and arrangements are in place to reduce exposure from attendance to operational sites:

  - If, following the risk assessment, sufficient and adequate controls can be put in place to protect them, then leaders can plan for their continued work on site.

Protocol

Physical separation between teams at worksites (workplaces, meals etc.), while travelling, and between shift (at change over).

Practice

Company examples:

- Stagger shift times and crib times to minimise interaction of employees

- Provide individual tea/coffee making facilities for plant crew and heavy equipment drivers to reduce the need to enter a crib room

- Conduct pre-start meetings outdoors or via video/teleconference or use app-based technology

- Mandatory 2m distance between employees engaging one another

- Suspending training in vehicles and trucks

- Dispersion of personnel in common spaces such as crib rooms and muster areas based on staggered starting times and crib times to limit social interaction and provide space for social distancing

- Minimal number of employees allowed at site entry at once

- Defined site entry and exit points

- Where possible organise personnel into smaller groups to minimise the number of contacts and support tracing in the event a person contracts COVID-19

- Roster and shift changes will be implemented to avoid interaction between day and night shift teams and face-to-face handovers

- Organise workforce into distinct groups and 'block rosters' to limit 'interaction.

Protocol

Must have the ability to isolate suspected and confirmed cases and special evacuation arrangements.

Practice

Safe Work Australia information on what to do if a worker has a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection: https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/what-do-if-worker-has-covid-19-infographic#picModal

Company examples:

- Identify section of site or camp that will be used for isolation – restrict access to section only to medical personnel

- Lock down specific pre-designated isolation rooms to be used in case employees become ill while at work (including FIFO considerations)

- If someone on site becomes unwell, a light vehicle has been equipped with plastic around the driver seating position – velcro-attached to the ceiling of the cab and providing a safer alternative to transport someone to medical from site if necessary

- All self-isolations are conducted in personal homes or medical facilities. Persons coming in contact with confirmed cases or deemed showing symptoms as per the decision matrix are not permitted to remain in camp. Personal transport (if available) is the preferred option, symptoms permitting otherwise transport will be arranged

- Camp rooms from confirmed cases to be isolated until cleaned as per guidelines

- Communicate to personnel by use of prestart communications, text messages and intranet

Protocol

Workers with specific or legislative safety roles kept separated where safety permits.

Practice

Company examples

- Restrict numbers of personnel on site by categorising critical versus non-critical operational activities

  - Physically separate critical staff

  - Where practical, provide total separation of FIFO from residential workers.

- Develop resourcing plans to ensure critical roles can be covered in the event of a positive COVID-19 case

- Confirm availability of local and/or remote alternatives for critical roles

- Maintain and back up all business information and working files so that content is accessible to alternates and other staff members

- Ensure ERTs are available in the event of a safety incident on site.

> **Protocol**
>
> Distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Practice

Company examples:

- Determine minimum PPE requirements across the site, focus on critical roles where PPE use is mandatory

- Workforce trained and instructed in the appropriate use of infection control PPE that they may be required to use

- Where social distancing cannot be achieved i.e. in a vehicle, it is recommended that N5, P2 masks (or if specifically required respirators) be worn as applicable

- In addition to site operational requirements for PPE, supply suitable PPE to:
  - Kitchen staff (hair net, respirator, gloves while preparing food
  - Site entry/security
  - Persons undertaking temperature screening
  - Transport drivers
  - Cleaners.

- All companies continue to consider the implications on broader public health when sourcing equipment such as this to ensure implementing risk mitigation measures for their own workforces do not unnecessarily draw on resources from the public health sector at this challenging time

- Industry is being proactive at identifying possible alternate providers

- Maintain discrete PPE packs for any ERT & medical staff to use if treating anyone with a cough or fever as a precaution, similar to what is currently being practiced at GP clinics
  - This could include 2 P2/N95 face masks, a disposable gown, nitrile gloves and eye PPE

> **Protocol**
>
> Increased cleaning and sanitising of sites, multiple times per shift for high use areas such as crib rooms and ablution facilities.

Practice

Company examples:

- Regularly wiping down shared items such as telephones, computer keyboards and mice, desks, chairs, cabinets, printers, elevator buttons, door handles, vending machines, handrails, as well as shared contact areas (seats, controls, arm rests, etc.) in mobile plant, light vehicles, buses, etc. with sanitizing wipes or a mild bleach solution

- All sites and offices must maintain sufficient supplies of hand sanitiser, soap, detergent, disinfectant wipes and face masks (P2, P3 or N95 masks)

- Cleaner should wear gloves and use alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after wearing gloves. Gloves and hand sanitiser should be made available throughout the work site. Workers should be trained to clean down plant or equipment immediately after use

- Adjustments to cleaning regimes must be based on risk, such as how often the area is used and how often a surface may be touched. It is important to note that some governments in affected or potentially affected areas have prepared advisory guidelines for workplace cleaning regimes. Where these guidelines exist, they must be implemented.

Protocol

Dedicated cleaning staff undertaking specific activities such as providing special attention to wiping down hard surfaces.

Practice

Company examples:

- Additional cleaning staff procured for site

- Disinfecting must be undertaken by cleaners who are experienced in disinfection processes. Cleaners must wear all appropriate PPE while cleaning activities are completed. Normal work may resume once the area has been cleaned.

Protocol

Promote use of new or existing hotline services for reporting of anomalies.

Practice

Company examples:

- If possible create a supplementary role on site. This role (COVID-19 Coordinator) is responsible for monitoring the health and wellbeing of workers in relation to COVID-19

- Use existing phone/email processes reporting for any incident on site.

- The below infographic provides advice what to do if have symptoms:

COVID-19: Know the symptoms

Fever

Cough

Fatigue

Sore throat

Shortness of breath

What should I do if I have symptoms?

It's important we stop the spread of illnesses that cause respiratory symptoms, including COVID-19 (coronavirus).

- **If you have symptoms, do not come to work.**

- **Notify** your Line Manager or a COVID Coordinator.

- **Call** the **coronavirus health hotline** on **1800 020 080**.
  They will advise you if you should go to a clinic or your GP (ensure you call ahead of your visit)

Where can I get further information at work?
The Health Hub • Your COVID Coordinator

- Safe Work Australia has information on what to do if a worker has a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection: https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/what-do-if-worker-has-covid-19-infographic#picModal

---

Protocol

Companies will also voluntarily assist local communities with equipment, particularly personal protective equipment (PPE).

Practice

Public health services are the authority and should take the lead wherever possible.

Industry has resources and capabilities that local public service providers may not have e.g. vehicles, communications channels, access to resources, medical specialists etc.

Company examples:

- Understand what community services depend upon the mine and what mine activities depend on communities and put in place plans to protect these essential activities

- Engage with regional and local health authorities and medical facilities them and offer to support their work:
    - Offer access to suppliers
    - Assist with procurement (if necessary) and transportation of medical supplies.

- Identify any local disaster/coordination management groups and offer assistance:
    - Offer support including coordination expertise
    - Procurement and transport of food and other supplies.

- Identify if there is a cluster of vulnerable people in surrounding communities e.g. Indigenous, retirement/aged support facilities and check if they have sufficient resources to ensure good hygiene and access to medications to treat existing conditions

- Where relevant, support schools, childcare facilities and public toilets with toilet paper, adequate hand washing facilities and additional cleaning

- Consider what support can be provided to workers in the healthcare system and other essential service providers e.g. food packages for them and their families, accommodation close to their place of work or transport

- Company facilities and equipment can be made available e.g. vacant/unused company accommodation camps available as treatment or isolation centres (ideally to be run by public health authorities or NGOs)

- Provide emotional and mental health support. Those involved in the response will be operating in difficult and stressful conditions. Offer access to company counselling resources, or organise relevant local groups like faith groups to be there to support those in need (NB this support may need to be provided long after the crisis has passed)

- Setting up a home-based care response function, to help alleviate pressure on local health services.

- Some companies have purchased rapid-response (15 minutes) coronavirus test kits, which could also be made available to communities

- Sites can facilitate community CareFlight or RFDS evacuations for all acute or potentially acute presentations in the region.

- A COVID-19 Community Engagement Checklist to encourage best practice when engaging and communicating with communities has been developed.

  – This checklist provides community engagement suggestions to support an effective COVID-19 Management Plan and is relevant for all management plan phases, including development and implementation.

IN THE EVENT OF AN INCIDENT

Companies undertake to notify authorities of any COVID-19 illness (as per their state/territory requirements) where there is a risk of further transmission in the workplace or where it is believed transmission occurred in the workplace, such as where company health care workers are managing suspected and proven cases or close work contacts of known cases.

Rapid information sharing is vital for the health of the entire community.

- Provision of self-isolation or quarantine medical facilities
- Isolation and case tracking in the event of incidents:
  - Individual states/territories will have particular regional areas where industry will work with governments to provide appropriate response for individuals who are infected.
- Protocols can be developed with CareFlight/RFDS and charter operators for safe removal of staff.

Companies will continue to review their contingency plans in light of new information and with reference to the National Guidelines developed in consultation with the Communicable Diseases Network Australia and endorsed by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee.

Practice

Company examples:

- Trained health professionals present on sites with additional offsite advice available 24/7
- Health professionals equipped to manage the initial stages of situations where a suspected COVID-19 case presents:
  - Contingencies for the continuing availability of health professionals will be in place.
- Workers who have COVID-19 like symptoms are likely to be anxious and should be treated with empathy, courtesy and respect
- Consent to release information or discuss medical management should be sought from all workers who meet the definition of a confirmed case, a probable case, a suspect case and a close contact.

Confirmed cases

- Identified off-site – managed by the relevant state/territory Department of Health
- Identified on-site
  - If the worker is clinically well with no significant respiratory compromise and it is safe to do so, the worker may be quarantined at the mine. Advice on non-inpatient care is here https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/interim-advice-on-non-inpatient-care-of-persons-with-suspected-or-confirmed-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-including-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe.pdf
  - If quarantined on-site, the worker should be reviewed by site medical services on a daily basis and contact the medical services if there is any deterioration in symptoms
  - If that the worker is clinically unwell – meets medical emergency criteria, requires oxygen supplementation or requires other invasive support – acute medical retrieval is to be arranged
  - Hospital to be contacted to ensure appropriate acute medical support is available
    - Following the identification of a suspect case at the Mine, contact tracing needs to be performed. Close contacts are to be identified and recorded, and environmental cleaning

will need to be performed of high-risk area prior to other workers returning to the high-risk area.

Probable cases

- Off-site: not to return to the mine until they meet the criteria for release from quarantine

- On-site: should be managed the same way as confirmed cases.

Suspect sases

- Off-site: not to return to the mine until they meet the criteria for release from quarantine

- On-site:

  – The worker is to be immediately quarantined if clinically well (may be required to be quarantined at the mine for the duration of the quarantine period)

  – Testing is to be performed as per government requirements

  – Relevant authority notified of the suspect case

  – If quarantined on-site, the worker is to be reviewed by site medical services on a daily basis and contact the medical services if there is any deterioration in symptoms

  – If the worker is clinically unwell – i.e. meets the sepsis criteria or medical emergency criteria, requires oxygen or other invasive support – acute medical retrieval is to be arranged

  – Testing may not be indicated if the suspect case is to be retrieved

  – Following the identification of a suspect case at the mine, contact tracing needs to be performed. Close contacts are to be identified and recorded, and environmental cleaning will need to be performed of high-risk area prior to other workers returning to the high-risk area.

Close contacts

- Close contacts identified on-site should self-isolate. They can be returned to their home as soon as possible if they are asymptomatic. Social distancing is to be employed at all points of transfer when returning the worker to their point of origin

- They must seek immediate medical advice if they experience any symptoms

- Close contacts identified on-site may return to normal work once the result of the suspect case is known and if they remain asymptomatic

- If any respiratory infection symptoms were experienced during the 14-day period, the person is not to return to work until the symptoms have resolved (without medication) and a medical certificate authorising a return to work is provided

- Individuals who may have had casual contact with a confirmed case should be provided with a briefing on COVID-19, and a detailed factsheet. They should be encouraged to vigilantly monitor their health for 14 days from the casual contact and exercise good hygiene and social distancing, while they continue to work.

Following 14 days self-quarantine

- The process for coming out of self-quarantine differs depending on the reasons for going into self-quarantine

- If you are returning from overseas:

  – If, at the end of 14 days you remain well, you have passed the time limit beyond which you would have fallen ill after being exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19). You can cease

quarantine. You do not require a medical certificate to enable you to return to other activities. In the absence of symptoms, note there is no medical test available to predict whether you will become unwell.

- If you self-quarantined after coming into contact with a confirmed or suspected case of coronavirus (COVID-19):

  - If, at the end of 14 days, you remain well, you have passed the time limit beyond which you would have fallen ill after being exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19). You can cease self-quarantine. No medical certificate is required to enable you to return to other activities.

- If you were a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19):

  - You cannot end isolation until you meet the relevant state/territory requirements.

- If you are feeling unwell

  - If, at the end of 14 days, you are unwell with respiratory symptoms, you must stay in self-quarantine. The 24 hour Commonwealth Department of Health COVID-19 hotline number is 1800 020 080.

CRITICAL SUPPLIERS AND CONTRACTORS

Mining operations rely on an array of specialists and suppliers, some of whom are integral to daily operations and some who have less frequent engagement with the site. This includes explosives, drill and blasting providers, maintenance workers, equipment technicians who deploy specialised equipment or development projects (such as shifting long wall operations or preparing new seams).

Related workers may provide ongoing maintenance of allied services (health, electricity, water, and emergency response capabilities).

All the above protocols and practices would apply to these workers, including health declarations. Contractor employees travelling to site must undergo the same screening and health checks as employees. Companies should proactively seek undertakings from suppliers and contractors on their health and hygiene practices and controls.

Many related providers such as transport companies operate crews from company and private accommodation. These companies have begun implementing their own programs for health and hygiene education, social distancing and health checks, and changing crew operations and rostering. Mining companies should seek to share site-specific safety updates with regular contractors.

Suppliers and contractors – particular rail companies – work across borders. Transhipping operators do not have physical contact at transfer points. Freight movement must remain an essential service for mining to continue to operate.

Mining companies will work with suppliers to promote protocols relating to Indigenous communities.

Industry associations should serve as a point of contact to help coordinate company and supplier efforts.

Protocols for essential resource companies and their supply chains

The definition of essential resources companies and essential supply chain companies does not mean they take precedence over other sectors such as the health sector in the sourcing and securing of inputs and logistics.

Instead, it means that resources and supply chain companies:

- Work cooperatively to identify and manage business-critical products and services including to build and share inventory with communities and other businesses where volumes are available

- Identify key products and global and domestic supply lines which may present risks to the Australian resource sector and essential supplier companies and work cooperatively to identify and manage key risks.

The mitigation and management of these risks ensures that the resources sector is able to continue to support the health and safety of the workforce and communities, as well as the sustainability of the economy, supply chains and essential service inputs. Managing supply risks documents can be found here and provide a practical guide to resources companies to ensure supply risks to business critical services and products are identified, assessed and managed.

It includes a linked template letter that mining operators may use if suppliers seek or require confirmation of their "essential status" to the mining and resources industry.

Through these actions, governments can recognise the role of the industry and its supply chains in supporting the integrity of an essential industry, essential supply chains and through them the health, safety and sustainability of communities and the economy.

How can safety and quality and reliability of the products be confirmed?

- At a minimum the specifications of the products companies are sourcing should be the same as those previously sourced

- For products that are new as a procurement line item and being sourced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, products specifications should at a minimum be the same as those set out for the Australian health system

- Information can be checked on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) and at the TGA Coronavirus (COVID-19): Information on medicines and medical devices page.

Companies should proactively seek undertakings from suppliers on their health and hygiene practices and controls

- A communications/coordination point is identified facilitate cooperation

- Both parties should share and work through management plans to ensure a common understanding of the procedures in each plan and clarify/adjust any gaps or risks:

    – Ideally this requirement should be flagged as early as possible.