COVID 19

A guide on returning business operations
to the new normal

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About BEAMA

BEAMA is the UK trade association for manufacturers and providers of energy infrastructure technologies and systems. We represent more than 200 companies, from start-ups and SMEs to large multinationals. Our member's products ensure low carbon energy and environmental services are delivered safely, securely and efficiently to UK homes, businesses, transport and grid networks. We support our members in ensuring that the UK has a strong electrotechnical industry that is recognised as an essential part of modern society and brings invaluable economic, social and environmental benefits.

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Introduction

BEAMA manufacturers have all been significantly affected by Government restrictions resulting from COVID-19, directly covering many aspects of company business. In addition, the restrictions placed on other parts of the supply chain such as customers, distributors, contractors and component and materials suppliers, as well as behaviour changes for consumers, have further restricted 'normal' business operations.

All parts of the industry are planning a return to a 'new normal' method of business operations, this set of guidelines covers manufacturers' range of activities. Guidance from Government covering 8 business operations was published on the 11th May. This industry specific guide is consistent with this official documentation but is tailored from a company perspective. References are also made to other guidelines from the installation and distribution chain.

These guidelines are based on industry Best Practice and current Government advice and if followed will help companies become COVID-Secure, the term favoured by Government

These are for information only and should be used as a guide for the development of Company specific advice. Each companies' operations are different, and although this set of guidelines is appropriate for all members, each company needs to reflect specific situations in their company guidance and rules.

As the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic develops, new and amended advice will develop from Government and other stakeholders. This BEAMA guide will be amended in the light of these developments. It is important that companies ensure that their resultant policies reflect the current BEAMA guidance.

Guidance Scope

The guidance covers all the main business operations of the manufacturing company members of BEAMA:

- Factories: Safe procedures for all workers, if they need to be in person in the company's factory.
- Offices: Safe procedures for office workers, if they are needed in person to attend the office.
- Field operations: Company employees attending off site locations
- Sales: Company employees operating in a sales environment
- Project and construction sites: Company employees operating on a construction site.
- Residential premises: Company employees or agents visiting residential buildings

Dr Howard Porter,
BEAMA CEO

Section 1 General Principles

Businesses must take a risk-based approach to safe working and carry out careful risk assessments for the return to work of all their operations. General principles that have already been applied during the pandemic phase continue to be important in the recovery phase because they prevent a repeated increase of infections.

1. Where business requirements allow, employees should work from home
2. Employees who have received a positive test or who have COVID-19 symptoms must not be at work and must adhere to NHS advice
3. Employees feeling unwell – in particular with high temperature and/or new continuous cough or other potential COVID-19 symptoms, according to most recent NHS advice, must not be at work and must adhere to NHS advice
4. If business operations do not allow home working, the full set of guidelines for the office, factory, logistics or field operations should be followed.
5. If in the workplace, maintain physical/social distancing (>2m) wherever possible and use suitable protection if not possible.
6. Stipulate individual hygiene rules:
   - no handshakes or other greeting habits involving physical contact,
   - cough/sneeze in elbow,
   - single-use paper tissues,
   - regular hand-washing (water and soap for >20 s)
   - hand disinfection if hand-washing is not possible
   - no touching of eyes/mouth/nose with hands.
7. Collective hygiene:
   - enhanced cleaning regimes, with more frequent cleaning of all areas and particularly of 'hot spots'/common touch points.
8. Go home if you feel unwell or if you have potential COVID-19 symptoms.
9. Go home if you've had physical contact or prolonged close proximity with a confirmed or presumed COVID-19 positive person.
10. Wear personal protective equipment where defined by local risk assessment

Testing and tracing apps

The availability of both testing and contact tracing apps is under development by the Government. Companies should advise employees to use whatever Government facilities are available in particular if they have symptoms. This advice will be updated in future versions of the Guide to reflect Government advice and the availability of testing and tracking services.

Example 'Return to work' employee questionnaire

<u>**RETURN TO WORK QUESTIONNAIRE**</u>

1. Have you been diagnosed with or had symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, shortness-of-breath, cough)?   (Yes / No)

2. Have you been in contact with anyone that has tested positive or had symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 14 days? (Yes / No)

If you answered No to both questions, please save and exit. You are cleared to return to a company site. If you become symptomatic at any time, please do not come to the site and contact your manager immediately.

(If the answer to #1 is Yes then…have employee answer these additional questions.)

     a.   Have you been, or did you spend at least 14-days in self-quarantine? (yes/no)

     b.   Have you been symptom-free, including fever-free without the use of medications for at least 72 hours? (yes/no)

If you answered Yes to both questions, please save and exit. You are cleared to return to a company site. If you become symptomatic at any time, please do not come to the site and contact your manager immediately.

(If the answer to either is No, then tell them: You are not eligible to return to a company site at this time. Once you have completed at least 14-days in self-quarantine, are symptom-free including no fever without medicine for at least 72 hours, or test negative for COVID-19, please continue to work remotely. Contact your manager to let them know you are not cleared to return to the site at this time.)

(If the answer to #2 is Yes, then…have employee answer these additional questions.)

     a.   Have you been, or did you spend at least 14-days in self-quarantine? (yes/no)

     b.   Have you been symptom-free, including fever-free without the use of medications for at least 72 hours? (yes/no)

If you answered Yes to both questions, please save and exit. You are cleared to return to a company site. If you become symptomatic at any time, please do not come to the site and contact your manager immediately.

(If the answer to either is No, then tell them: You are not eligible to return to a company site at this time. Once you have completed at least 14-days in self-quarantine, are symptom-free including no fever without medicine for at least 72 hours, or test negative for COVID-19, please continue to work remotely. Contact your manager to let them know you are not cleared to return to the site at this time.

Section 2: Company Management

Senior managers need to ensure that a wide range of new procedures are put in place and maintained. The following set of guidelines are suggested, but are not exhaustive, and some may not be appropriate in all company environments.

1   Prior to reopening/increasing on-site presence

Office/factory management team to regularly meet – every day suggested – prior to reopening

Carry out a deep clean of the premises in line with industry advice and ensure that HVAC services are tested for any contaminates built up during non-use.

2   Once reopened

- determine business-critical roles and associated employees who can work on-site.
- understand which of their employees are vulnerable due to age and/or chronic illness, adhering to Data Privacy and HR rules. Those employees should continue working from home, or if unable to do so, be redeployed or placed on sick leave.
- consider the following factors when identifying employees who can work on-site:
  - o Employees with constraints on working from home (e.g. due to poor infrastructure, wellbeing, lone working considerations etc.);
  - o Employees with constraints on office-based work (e.g. caring responsibilities).
- introduce and maintain social distancing between employees (>2m) working on-site.
- consider the following example working practices on site depending on the size and occupancy level of your site:
  - o where possible, split teams into 2 sub-teams, ideally with a maximum of 50% of team in the workplace;
  - o no more than 30% of the total office should be at work at any one time;
  - o flexible work hours, rotation, staggered start/finish (breaks/lunch), distribution to office areas with lower occupancy, avoiding F2F seating, occupy only every second/third desk or row (depending on configuration);
  - o set up rota for teams to be present in the office and on what days;
  - o controls on pedestrian routes, bottlenecks, enclosed kitchenettes/toilets/changing facilities/corridors/stairs/reception or security desks.
- ensure site coordinators display markings/signage/posters/notice boards displaying guidelines.
- ensure all staff are kept up to date with company policies by reliable recorded communications.
- ensure all sites to have adequate First Aid and Fire Marshal provision from Day 1.

3   In the case of an infection detected or suspected in the company premises

- The affected staff and anyone they have come into contact with to immediately leave the premises and sent home.
- A two-week isolation period applicable for affected staff and advised to be tested.
- The return to work questionnaire used for all affected staff before a return to company premises.
- Company to repeat the deep cleaning and disinfectant measures in all affected areas.
- Re-assure unaffected staff members by clearly outlining measures taken.

Section 3: Other business functions

There are a range of generic business functions that need consideration.

Office areas in all occupied company premises

The company premises will always have common areas, irrespective of office, factory or warehouse.

- Meeting rooms/ break out spaces to remain closed or repurposed for individual use unless large enough to allow for full social distancing during any meetings.

- Revised COVID-19 Site Rules to be created for all areas.

- No hot desking at any site.

- Toilet Usage Rules - Social distancing to be maintained.

- Lifts only to be used by individual persons whenever possible and regularly disinfected.

- No face to face meetings unless full social distancing can be maintained.

- No Customer visits or tours.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Surface cleaning and disinfection of areas like floors, desks, tables, door/window handles, switches (such as lights, A/C), and handrails are important measures for maintaining high hygiene standards.

- Cleaning and disinfection procedures being practiced in the mitigation/protection phase should continue.

- Hand hygiene procedures being practiced in the mitigation/protection phase should continue.

- Company showers either put out of use or subject to frequent deep cleaning when their use is deemed essential.

- Plans should be reviewed with cleaning service providers and adjusted if necessary.

- Deep cleaning and disinfection should be considered in all cases, but essential in the event of a COVID-19 case or presumed case.

Travel

- Business domestic travel to be subject to risk assessment and Management approval

- International travel to be subject to risk assessment and Senior Management approval.

- Always favour digital alternatives to face to face meetings.

- Social distancing to be maintained when traveling in company cars on business including no car sharing in company vehicles

- Social distancing should be maintained to and from place of work. Car sharing should only be undertaken if from the same household.

Reception and Visitors

- Health declaration to remain in place at all sites.

- Reception desks to be fitted with Perspex Screens / Shields.

- Consider methods for health monitoring at larger sites subject to suitable consents and data protection regulations.

- Reception floors to have clear social distancing marking and lines established.

- Hand Washing / Sanitiser made available at all times.

- Only essential contractor visits permitted.

- All contractors subject to thorough examination by use of questionnaire similar to the employee questionnaire.

- All contractors to be advised of company policies, rules for access and any PPE requirements.

Catering and vending

- All vending machines to be deep cleaned and serviced prior to returning to operation.

- All vending areas to have exclusion zone established clearly showing 2m distancing around machine. Where multiple machines (same) are situated next to each other – only single machines to be returned to service.

- Catering facilities only to be provided where full social distancing can be maintained and infection risks mitigated.

- Any areas provided for the consumption of food must be arranged in line with required 2m social distancing.

- Consider and mitigate risks of any company food offerings, e.g. loose fresh fruit.

Section 4: Specific workplace guidance

Part 1: Manufacturing/Industrial settings – including warehouses

The number of employees in manufacturing/industrial settings must be kept to a level that ensures social distancing via technical and/or organisational measures as identified in local risk assessment. When social distancing cannot be ensured, additional control measures (e.g. PPE) must be considered. Regular cleaning and disinfection (where required) of operating areas must be performed (for example, machinery, tools, equipment used by several employees) in order to maintain high hygiene standards

- The existing local measures/restrictions already introduced must continue to be observed.

- All measures/restrictions (e.g. splitting of shifts, rotation) must be continuously monitored and evaluated and then adjusted if necessary.

- Cleaning and disinfection plans for items including machinery, tools, equipment used by several employees must be established and implemented as per local risk assessment

- Maintain social distancing between employees (>2m) working on-site. If not possible, use of appropriate PPE and other mitigations should be considered.

- Consider:
    o Flexible work hours, rotation, staggered start/finish (breaks/lunch), distribution to shop floor/office areas with lower occupancy, avoiding face to face seating, occupy only every second desk or row.

    o Controls on pedestrian routes, bottlenecks, enclosed kitchenettes/toilets/changing facilities/corridors/stairs/reception or security desks.

- Desk sharing must be avoided. The same desk must not be shared by two individuals in the same workday.

- Desk cleaning prior to use by the next person must be ensured.

- Plan with Facilities/Maintenance Managers regarding increased cleaning/sanitation regimes.

Part 2: Office Workplaces

- The number of employees in offices must be kept to a level that allows effective social distancing. Returning to the office must be based on local risk assessment to ensure that increased occupancy does not compromise COVID-19 principles and increase infections.

- Managers will determine business-critical roles and associated employees who can work on-site. Other employees to continue working from home wherever possible.

- Managers understand which of their employees are vulnerable due to age and/or chronic illness. Those employees should continue working from home.

- Maintain social distancing between employees (>2m) working on-site. Consider:
    o Flexible work hours, rotation, staggered start/finish (breaks/lunch), distribution to office areas with lower occupancy, avoiding F2F seating, occupy only every second/third desk or row (depending on configuration).

- Controls on pedestrian routes, bottlenecks, enclosed kitchenettes/toilets/changing facilities/corridors/stairs/reception or security desks.

- Desk sharing must be avoided. The same desk must not be shared by two individuals in the same workday.

- Desk cleaning prior to use by the next person must be ensured by changes to office cleaning policy.

- Plan with Facilities Managers regarding increased cleaning/sanitation regimes.

Part 3: Field Service

Employees working in Field Service can be exposed to increased infection risk while working at customer locations. In addition, exposure can occur during required business travel and in accommodation.

- Adequate controls must be identified by local documented risk assessment prior to undertaking work, in line with all Government guidelines.

- Customer-required control measures and plans must be considered prior to site visit and communicated to engineers.

- Field service engineers to complete point-of-work risk assessment upon arrival at customer location.

- Existing control measures (e.g. wearing PPE) must be continuously monitored and adjusted (as appropriate) as required (e.g. change in UK regulation/HSE advice).

- Risk assessment must consider social distancing when planning travel and accommodation (including fatigue risk if accommodation not available).

- Overnight accommodation, if allowed by company, available and taken:

    o Only individual room to be used

    o No use of communal spaces, bars, gyms

    o Consideration of any food availability in accommodation

- Food outlets if open need to be used with caution.

Part 4: Sales

Employees working in Sales can be exposed to increased infection risk when meeting customers. In addition, exposure can occur during required business travel and in accommodation.

- Evaluate the need for travel to a customer in the first place, explore other avenues of communication.

- Business travel must be evaluated in line with UK social distancing requirements (>2m)

- If the decision is made to travel, travel-related precautionary measures need to be determined by risk assessment.

- Further considerations needed if site is outside the UK.

- Customer-required control measures must be considered prior to visit.

- Customer requirements must always be followed unless they do not meet UK regulatory and/or company requirements.

Part 5: Projects/Construction sites

Guidance for company employee working on construction sites should follow the guidance from the Construction Leadership Council www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk

Section 5: Work in residential properties

Many companies have operators that either need to visit residential properties or liaise with other companies who do so. The guidelines for safe operation in these situations are unique as in many cases the customer is a householder with no professional understanding of the current Government or industry guidance. Therefore, there needs to be additional consideration for the health and vulnerability of the householder or residents.

The guidance here should be followed and integrated into a company policy for work in residential properties.

- Observe self-isolation in accordance with NHS guidance and company policy.

- Do not carry out work in or visit a household where a member is self-isolating or is being shielded UNLESS the work is required due to an emergency causing a direct safety risk.

- Where it is necessary to visit and carry out work in a household with a person in a vulnerable group, make prior arrangements to ensure you will not be in the same room as the vulnerable person.

- Ask householder to open front door, having established identity and reason for visit, and then keep 2m distancing before entering.

- Ask householder to open internal doors to minimise surface contacts.

- No handshakes or other physical contact.

- Do not ask for or accept any food or drink from householder.

- Take all reasonable steps to avoid need to request use of household toilet facilities except for handwashing purposes.

- Wash hands in recommended manner and duration frequently and on entering and leaving. Use hand sanitiser when handwashing is not readily available

- Maintain 2m distance from all members of the household whenever possible. Where this is not possible, ensure time within 2m is limited to 15 minutes at most. Wash or sanitise hands before and after such proximity.

- Each worker to use a separate set of tools or to have tools deep-cleaned between uses.

- Worker to travel to customer sites separately whenever possible. When this is not possible, keep the maximum distancing possible.

- Where it is necessary to work in teams, keep the same team membership as far as is reasonably possible.

- Remove all waste, materials and equipment at the end of the household visit.

- Clean and disinfect the area and equipment worked on and any equipment installed.

For a visual guide for all electrical installations use the video from the ECA:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-J-2vJoMFg

Section 6: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Face Coverings

Following Government advice, PPE that is issued and used in the workplace for existing (non COVID-19 related) safety reasons should continue to be used. Except in a medical context, use of additional PPE or face coverings is not generally advised and should certainly not be seen as a substitute for hygiene or social distancing measures.

- Wearing face coverings or PPE never diminishes the need to adhere to the COVID-19 basic principles (social distancing, respiratory and hand hygiene).

- Applicable regulatory and customer requirements must always be followed

- Follow a risk-based approach in determining the usefulness of face coverings.

If a worker wishes to use a face covering in the workplace or local risk assessment recommends their use the following steps must be followed:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it

- when wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands

- change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it

- continue to wash your hands regularly

- change and wash your face covering daily

- if the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions; if it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste

- practise social distancing wherever possible.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about BEAMA, please
visit www.beama.org.uk

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