

THE IMPORTANCE OF SITE SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENTS AS WE BEGIN TO MOVE OUT OF THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

28 May 2020

Statement from the Scottish Road Works Commissioner:

“The past ten weeks have been challenging for all of us and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your part in ensuring that essential works continue to take place across Scotland. The essential road works that have taken place have provided continuity of necessary services during the current restrictions. Given the considered approach we have already taken, I expect that we can move forward gradually from where we currently are in line with Scottish Government guidance.

The Scottish Government has announced its plan for a gradual return to work, through a specific six phase construction plan. This guidance makes clear that employers should carry out a specific COVID-19 risk assessment, and gives advice on how this can be achieved. In terms of safe road works operations, the appropriate standard is the Safety at Street Works and Road Works, A Code of Practice 2013. Everyone on site has a responsibility to behave safely, furthermore, it is the responsibility of each organisation working in or on the road network to undertake a site specific risk assessment before works are carried out. The code requires that this risk assessment be dynamic, and updated to reflect changing circumstances during operations.

Given the current national situation and associated restrictions, it is imperative that these risk assessments are carried out for every site, regardless of size or duration. In line with the updated Scottish Government guidance, it is essential that each risk assessment makes specific provision for physical distancing, safeguarding specifically against the spread of COVID-19. This should include reference to the published Scottish Government guidance on physical distancing that can be found here: [business and physical distancing guidance](#). You may also find the following guidance useful in undertaking this activity :

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/assets/docs/talking-with-your-workers.pdf>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/assets/docs/working-safely-guide.pdf>

Risk assessments carried out should be available on site to allow any necessary updates to be made as quickly as possible. While this is normal practice on most sites, it is of particular importance during the current period, given the role of other bodies in ensuring compliance with distancing requirements, including Police Scotland and the Health and Safety Executive.

Should you wish to discuss any of the matters above please contact my office (enquiries@roadworks.scot). Thank you for your assistance during this challenging time.

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