



Loss prevention standards

Measures to Manage People and Operations following Reinstatement after a Shutdown

Guidance on how to reduce risk when re-engaging employees following the reinstatement of premises, plant or processes.

Introduction

This Loss Prevention Standard contains guidance on how to reduce risks to employees when you are planning to reinstate or reopen buildings, premises or process equipment following a period of shut down or mothballing.

It is not possible to provide detailed steps for every type of premises or workplace, but instead the following guidance seeks to support general principles that can be applied to the majority of situations.

Such circumstances should be managed using your management of change procedures with a documented reinstatement plan derived and demonstrably followed. A checklist is provided as an appendix to this Loss Prevention Standard to aid you and provide evidence of the steps you have taken.

This document is part of a series of Aviva Loss Prevention Standards aimed at the reinstatement of premises, plant and operations and should be read in conjunction with the other standards in the series which include:

[Measures to Reinststate Plant, Equipment and Processes](#)

[Measures to Reinststate Buildings, Premises and the Work Environment](#)

Planning

It's critical to plan in detail how you will manage risks to employees following reinstatement. What needs to be considered depends very much on your workforce and the scope of work they will be undertaking. However, within your plans you may need to include the following issues/factors:

How Employees will be Returning to Work and Changes to their Working Conditions and Practices

- Full time/part time?
- Staggered hours?
- Shift patterns?
- To normally occupied premises or partially occupied premises?
- Changes to workplace layouts, plant configuration and any new/changed installations?
- Changes to working practices and procedures?
- Changes to risk management policies and processes?
- Changes to risk control strategies?
- Any new facilities to accommodate changes in working practices, e.g. additional staff changing/welfare facilities, hand washing stations, toilets and lockers?

You should consider developing a detailed plan to document the steps you are planning to take to manage risks to employees following reinstatement. This should be a part of or sit alongside any other plans made for the reinstatement of buildings, premises, plant and equipment.

Scheduling of Return to Work and Phased Reoccupation

Where a phased reinstatement of premises or buildings is being considered, it is important to also consider the impacts of the phased approach, particularly where "skeleton staffing" levels will be utilised in some areas or at particular times. Your plans should accommodate and seek to minimise risks from lone working, reduced supervision and absence of key personnel (e.g. first aiders) wherever possible.

Staffing

When preparing a staffing plan to operate the reinstated process/plant/premises, it's worth considering whether you will have available all the necessary employees and support staff? Some may no longer be available or be unable to work for medical, financial or other reasons such as secondment to volunteer organisations. Also consider whether you need to engage with recruitment agencies or contractors to fulfil any shortages in staff.

Consulting and Notifying Employees

You should build in sufficient time into your reinstatement plans to allow for meaningful consultation with your workforce and their representatives. It's important that concerns are addressed and ideas to assist safe reinstatement are adopted where possible.

Consider how employees will be notified about any return to work and what will be expected of them? Within any communications you may want to consider letting them know:

- Date of return to work
- Shift patterns and any staggered hours
- Changes in roles, responsibilities
- Any training or preparation they can take prior to returning
- What training they can expect upon their return to work

Additional Facilities

Identifying any new or additional facilities that are needed is also important. This could include for example, additional toilets, changing rooms and welfare facilities. It's helpful to identify what's needed, where and when they can be sourced/installed and incorporate this into the plan.

Risk Assessments, Operating Procedures and Employee Training Packages

You should plan to review and if necessary, update any risk assessments, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), employee training packages for the reinstated operations, processes and plant. You should satisfy yourself that any changes introduced, or the period of shutdown have not resulted in new risks or a deterioration in the performance of existing risk control strategies.

Emergency Procedures

You should plan to review and if necessary, update emergency procedures to reflect the reinstatement and changes made. This may need to reflect the introduction of new hazards, altered configurations and layouts or the loss or absence of key personnel/response equipment (e.g. skeleton staffing practices).

Security

You may also need to plan for the re-introduction of security arrangements that reflect the renewed activity at the premises. This could include the:

- Reintroduction of security guarding or a gatehouse operation for access control to the premises

- Re-programming and reinstatement of building/site access control systems
- Need for staff security searches, taking into account any restrictions relating to social distancing and restrictions on personal interaction. For example, in an ongoing pandemic situation, it may be inappropriate to resume random staff search operations
- Need for additional security measures/guarding to deter any acts of violence towards employees

Restarting Operations

Restarting operations brings a number of additional challenges and it shouldn't be assumed that employees can simply pick up where they left off, particularly if the shutdown has been for a prolonged period. Whilst we can't provide best practice advice or cover every risk, exposure or hazard, for all the areas that may need to be reviewed when re-starting operations, some of the main areas of focus are noted below.

Staff Training/Briefings

Checking that employees understand and remember correct working procedures and safety rules is essential. This can be achieved through the delivery of appropriate briefings, toolbox talks and where required, refresher training programmes.

Where new risks have been introduced or new working practices developed, appropriate training programmes for all affected employees needs to be implemented.

Where a site has been closed due to a pandemic and employees have been furloughed, they can and are permitted to undertake employee training whilst furloughed such as the completion of online training materials.

Where new employees have been recruited or temporary labour has been sourced, it's important that normal procedures for employee induction and training are followed.

Core Risk Management Procedures

As well as staff training arrangements, it's important that normally operated procedures for risk management are re-instated as soon as possible. Examples include (not exhaustive):

- Risk assessments
- Maintenance programmes
- Selection and management of contractors
- Permit to work systems
- Programmes of workplace cleaning and sanitising
- Accident/Incident/Near Miss reporting and investigation
- Arrangement for safety inspections and audits
- Review of policies and procedures
- Programmes for employee support and mental health wellbeing

Such activities form the essential components of a safety management system and early reinstatement of this system is a crucial part of accident/incident prevention and is also a core need for claims defensibility.

Again, refresher training on these processes may be necessary for key individuals who are expected to fulfil nominated roles within the various procedures.

Key Roles

You need to ensure that you have enough people present to fulfil key roles when required. This can be a challenge when reinstatement plans require "skeleton staffing" levels or a phased/staggered working pattern. It can be helpful to compile a list of what roles and functions you need present to permit safe operation and check that employee rosters ensure these roles are fulfilled when required.

Key roles to consider include (not exhaustive):

- COVID – 19 Representative
- First aider(s)/appointed persons
- Fire marshal(s)
- Incident controller/duty manager
- Permit to work issuer
- Keyholder for periods when the site is unoccupied

Other roles may also be deemed essential for specific businesses and for specific items of process plant. Checking those fulfilling these roles have received appropriate training is also important.

Working Practices

Restarting operations may not necessarily mean resuming previously operated working practices. Your risk assessments of any changes made during reinstatement or indeed changes in legal requirements or risk management guidance, may well have resulted in the need to adapt or adopt new working practices.

This can be a key risk as employees familiar with old ways of working may experience lapses or simply revert to old work practices out of habit. This can particularly be an issue if new ways of working are perceived to be more difficult to comply with.

Provision of high-quality instruction, mentoring and supervision are instrumental in helping employees comply with new or changed working practices and this should be factored into your plans for staffing/supervision and training.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Reviewing the need for PPE as part of your risk assessment review and securing appropriate stocks of any required items should be part of your plan to restart operations. Where possible, take opportunities to reduce dependence on PPE to keep employees safe at work, by eliminating risk or through engineering controls. When PPE remains necessary, check you are able to source and replenish stocks of appropriate items and also consider the need to provide a refresher training programme for employees instructing them how to safely don/doff the PPE, decontaminate it, store it, maintain it or dispose of it.

Risks Associated with Reinstatement of Processes Plant, Equipment and Premises

It's vital that you review risks associated with the re-instatement of process plant, equipment that is put back into use and any risks to employees where mothballed buildings and premises are put back into use. These issues are covered in detail within the following Aviva Loss Prevention Standards and appropriate plans to manage these risks should be developed and implemented:

- Measures to Reinstatement Plant, Equipment and Processes
- Measures to Reinstatement Buildings, Premises and the Work Environment

Restarting Following a Pandemic

Resuming operations during or following a pandemic brings a number of specific challenges for each organisation. Risks will be distinctly unique to the premises and processes operated. However, the following are some of the additional considerations which you may need to consider within your plans and risk assessments to reinstate buildings and premises following a pandemic.

Social Distancing and Infection Control – It's important that you check and follow Government [Return to Work Safely Protocol](#). Consider how they can be applied to your workplace. You may need to adjust the working environment, develop/devise new working practices and alter employee working patterns to comply with these guidelines and to create lower risks for employees whilst at work and on their journeys to and from work.

Note: For advice from the Devolved Governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland see Sources and Useful Links section later in this document.

Procedures for Reporting Ill Health – Your employees should be provided with clear guidelines on the steps they should take if they feel ill whilst at work and at home. These should be unambiguous and in line with Government [Return to Work Safely Protocol](#).

Restricting Visitors – Until the risk of spread of the pathogen subsides, limiting and restricting who is allowed to access the workplace is an important risk control measure, and persons within the workplace should only be those essential for its continued and safe operation. You can make good use of video-conferencing tools where other stakeholders are wishing to view/review site operations.

Contractors – You may still need to utilise sub-contractors for key tasks, including cleaning and maintenance. It is important that you check and review the contractor's arrangements and protocols for reducing the risk of spread of the pathogen whilst on your premises. These details should be provided to you within the risk assessments and method statements before attending site

Washing/Cleaning/Laundry – You may need to review your provision of facilities for hand washing and cleaning, ensuring there are a sufficient number of appropriately sited hand washing facilities that are kept well stocked with soaps, hand cleaners, sanitisers, hand drying equipment and where appropriate moisturisers. Knee operated or automated taps as well as automated soap dispensers can reduce risks of cross contamination. Reminders of correct hand washing techniques can also be helpful. Resources to help you promote good hand hygiene can be found in the Sources and Useful Links section later in this document.

Ensuring that work surfaces, including floors are regularly cleaned and sanitised is especially important. Where workstations are having to be shared (e.g. by employees on different shifts), it is important this is done between each use.

Careful consideration is required where workwear is required to be laundered. In such circumstances, it is recommended that where available you follow advice specific to your sector provided by [Health Service Executive](#) or advice is sought from your specialist laundry services provider.

PPE - During a pandemic, supplies of PPE may have been diverted to support national efforts for infection control. This may mean you are unable to source items of PPE that you normally provide for your workers. If you are unable to source suitable PPE and your risk assessment shows this is necessary for effective risk control, you should explore other options and engineering controls to reduce risk. Be wary of any temporary relaxation of PPE requirements without being able to adequately demonstrate that risks are reduced to an acceptable level by other means. If you are unable to do this, review whether it is appropriate to restart your operations.

Temporary Relaxation of Statutory Obligations -

In some circumstances, national governments may relax statutory obligations for a short-defined period to help businesses reduce risks of spread of infection during a pandemic. However, you should not assume statutory obligations have been relaxed unless you have had this confirmed from an authoritative source. It's always best to check with the relevant enforcing authorities:

Information and advice from the Health and Safety Authority can be found [here](#).

Information and advice from the Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Testing can be found [here](#).

Where this is the case you should note on your risk assessments details of the relaxation and its expiry date. Scheduling the date of expiry within future work plans can help you ensure that your business remains fully compliant.

Residual Homeworkers – Some employees may be required to continue working from home. It's important that these employees are not overlooked within work plans and that risks to the continued health, safety and wellbeing are assessed and managed. Further guidance can be found with the Health and Safety Authority [Homeworking](#).

Mental Health and Wellbeing – Loss of loved ones, anxiety over catching an infection or risk of loss of employment and the additional pressures of working that maybe experienced during a pandemic can be very detrimental to an employee's mental health and wellbeing. It's especially important that employees feel supported during a crisis of this nature. Encourage employees to be honest about their feelings and where possible put in place mechanisms by which employees can access support services. These do not need to be privately provided wellbeing and mental health services and can be publicly available services provided by the HSE and various charities. Work Positive is a FREE State and stakeholder supported psychosocial risk management. [Work Positive](#) is a completely confidential psychosocial risk management process. It involves a 'whole workforce' approach which can be rolled out over a three to six month period and be re-used every few years. Click [here to register/login](#)

Checklist

A generic Measures to Manage People and Operations Following Reinstatement After a Shutdown Checklist is presented in Appendix 1 which can be tailored to your own organisation.

Sources and Useful Links

Sources and Useful Links

Government, HSA and HSE advice should be followed and they can be found at:

Ireland Gov [Roadmap to ReOpening Society & Business](#)

Ireland Gov. [Return to Work Safely Protocol](#)

Agency Supports to Irish business during the Covid19 pandemic [Here](#)

Covid-19 [Advice for Employers & Employee Health & Safety Authority](#)

HSE Covid-19 Update latest Information [Here](#)

Securing Building Sites [Garda Advice Here](#)

NSAI Covid-19 [Workplace protection & Improvement Guide](#) [Here](#)

Resources for help promote good hygiene practices can be found at:

[How to wash your hands](#) – Health Service Executive

[Face Masks and Gloves](#) – Health Service Executive

Additional Information

Relevant Aviva Loss Prevention Standards include:

Aviva Ireland Covid-19 Initiatives [Here](#)

Aviva Ireland Covid-19 Other Loss Prevention Standards [Here](#)

Appendix 1- Measures to Manage People and Operations following Reinstatement after a Shutdown

Location		
Date		
Completed by (name and signature)	Name:	Signature:

	Planning	Y/N	Comments
1.	Have you prepared a staffing plan with a supporting schedule of actions to support your reinstatement plans?		
2.	Have you ensured risks associated with a phased return or reduced staffing levels are being appropriately managed, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoiding, minimising lone working? • Reduced supervision? • Ensuring key roles are fulfilled? 		
3.	Have you consulted employees or their representatives about any changes to the workplace or working practices that are planned?		
4.	Have you communicated the following information to new/returning employees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of return to work/start date? • Shift patterns and any staggered hours? • Changes in roles, responsibilities? • Any training or preparation they can take prior to returning? • What training they can expect upon their return to work? 		
5.	Have you identified any additional facilities that maybe needed to permit reinstatement and resumption of operations?		
6.	Have you planned to review and update risk assessments, operating procedures & employee training packages?		
7.	Have you planned to review and update emergency procedures?		
8.	Have you planned to review security measures that will be necessary during and after reinstatement?		

	Restarting Operations	Y/N	Comments
9.	Have all employees received appropriate briefings and training (including newly recruited and temporary employees)?		
10.	Have you restarted safety management systems with appropriately trained personnel to implement them?		
11.	<p>Will there be a sufficient number of appropriately trained people to fulfil key roles when required, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aider(s)/appointed persons? • Fire marshal(s)? • Incident controller/duty manager? • Permit to work issuer? • Keyholder for periods when the site is unoccupied? 		
12.	Have you provided adequate supervision of employees, taking into account new or altered working practices and procedures?		
13.	Have you reviewed PPE needs and available stocks including arrangements for replenishment?		
14.	Have you provided a refresher training programme for employees instructing them how to safely don/doff the PPE, decontaminate it, store it, maintain it or dispose of it?		
15.	<p>Have you reviewed and addressed risks associated with the reinstatement of process plant and equipment that is put back into use and any risks to employees where mothballed buildings and premises are put back into use?</p> <p>Refer to the following Aviva Loss Prevention Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to reinstate plant, equipment and processes • Measures to reinstate buildings, premises and the work environment 		

	Reinstatement Following a Pandemic (additional considerations)	Y/N	Comments
16.	Have you been able to fully implement Government guidelines relating to social distancing, infection control and the shielding/protection of vulnerable persons?		
17.	Have you established and communicated to employees' procedures and protocols they must follow should they feel ill at work or at home?		
18.	Have you made arrangements for the cleaning and sanitisation of the workplace in accordance with Government guidelines?		
19.	Have you prohibited unnecessary visitors to the workplace and established alternative arrangements such as video conferencing for stakeholders wishing to speak with employees and to view the premises and processes?		
20.	Have you checked that contractors working at your site are able to fully comply with social distancing and other infection control procedures?		
21.	Is there adequate provision of suitably designed facilities for hand washing and cleaning, with a sufficient number of appropriately sited hand washing facilities that are kept well stocked with soaps, hand cleaners, sanitisers and where appropriate moisturisers?		
22.	Have you identified and put in place procedures to minimise risks of spread of contamination/infection from any contaminated workwear?		
23.	Are you able to maintain supplies of appropriately specified PPE?		
24.	Have you implemented a system to ensure you manage any temporary relaxation of statutory obligations so that you remain legally compliant?		

	Reinstatement Following a Pandemic (additional considerations)	Y/N	Comments
25.	Have you assessed risks to employees who remain as homeworkers, with adequate risk controls demonstrably implemented?		
26.	Have you ensured employees know how to access services that provide support for mental health and wellbeing?		
27.	Additional comments:		

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