

31 May 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

BCA'S HEIGHTENED ENFORCEMENT STANCE AND PILOT OF ANTIGEN RAPID TESTS (ART) AT WORKSITES

Since the start of Phase 2 (Heightened Alert) COVID-19 situation, BCA has stepped up inspections and enforcement actions at worksites. We are also working with the construction sector to progressively implement additional safe management measures and controls. This is aimed at reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission to the construction workforce, while helping the industry to keep construction works going as much as possible. Please refer to the two circulars:

- a. **Reminder on Safe Management Measures Compliance and BCA's Heightened Enforcement Stance at Worksites**
- b. **Piloting of Antigen Rapid Tests (ART) at Worksites for the Construction Sector**

2. We urge firms to keep tight controls at worksites and remain agile in adapting and implementing enhanced measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the construction workforce.

3. Please disseminate the contents of the following two circulars to your members. Do subscribe to BCA's Telegram Channel – t.me/BCASingapore for latest updates, and refer to the BCA Website – www1.bca.gov.sg/COVID-19 for further information. If you require any clarifications, please write to us via [BCA's online feedback form](#). As we anticipate a surge in queries, we seek your understanding that there may be some delays in our replies. Thank you.

31 May 2021

CIRCULAR A

**REMINDER TO INDUSTRY ON SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES COMPLIANCE
AND BCA'S HEIGHTENED ENFORCEMENT STANCE AT WORKSITES**

Heightened Enforcement Action Against Worksites with Breach in SMM

Since Phase 2 Heightened Alert (P2HA) commenced on 16 May 2021, the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) has conducted checks at over 1,200 worksites. BCA has so far taken enforcement actions against more than 65 permitted enterprises (i.e. companies that have been approved to resume work) for flouting SMM in the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Control Order) Regulations 2020.

2. BCA would like to highlight two major non-compliances that have been observed since P2HA:

a) Failure to deploy SafeEntry or ensure SafeEntry check-in at worksite entrances:

BCA found that there were main contractors who allowed workers/visitors into their worksites without performing a SafeEntry check-in at the site entrances. Stop Work Orders (SWO) were issued to 26 permitted enterprises for not performing SafeEntry check-in for their workers/visitors. Out of these cases, two sites allowed COVID-positive workers to enter, adding unnecessary risk of the site workforce being exposed to potential COVID-19 infection.

b) Failure to escort and supervise workers/ visitors who perform work at multiple sites:

BCA found that there were main contractors who have not been escorting and supervising their roving workers/ visitors throughout the duration that they were at the worksites.

3. BCA takes a serious view of any failure to comply with SMM, which increases the risk of COVID-19 transmission at worksites. As such non-compliances can undermine the efforts and good work of the rest of the industry in combating the COVID-19 spread, BCA will heighten our enforcement stance against permitted enterprises which are found to be non-compliant with COVID-19 laws. This includes the issuance of longer SWO, composition fine up to \$2,000 or prosecution of such non-compliant permitted enterprises.

Worksites to Defer Non-Essential Services

4. During the current heightened alert period, permitted enterprises are encouraged to defer non-essential services at their worksites, to minimise the number of visitors. Services such as food delivery, vending machine servicing and non-urgent inspections should be kept outside the site boundaries from the main workforce to minimise the risk of spread of COVID-19 at worksites. Permitted enterprises are also encouraged to adopt the following good practices:

- a) Deliveries loading/unloading to be carried out by on-site workers and not delivery personnel, where possible. Should contactless delivery and invoicing be unavailable, businesses should consider other alternatives to avoid physical contact (e.g. having a box/ tray where delivery personnel can drop off the items/invoices).
- b) As an interim measure in view of the current COVID-19 situation, the Qualified Person (Supervision) can review the site supervision requirements for their projects and consider deploying remote site supervision for building works, where suitable.

Ensuring Our Worksites Remain Safe

5. Permitted enterprises are to comply with the following requirements to further mitigate the risk of spread of COVID-19 at worksites:

- a) All permitted enterprises must have a system (including record keeping) in place to ensure that all visitors and workers approved by BCA to work, before entering the worksite, have undergone at least one swab test and tested negative for COVID-19 in the last 14 days, unless they are recovered workers who have yet to pass 270 days from their date of symptoms onset or detection of infection.
- b) Where feasible, plan for workers/ visitors who operate for short durations at site and who may visit multiple sites (e.g. roving sub-contractors, deliverers, service providers) to carry out their site visits and tasks outside the work hours of the main workforce (including during off hours i.e. at night/weekends or before work times). If this is not feasible, these workers/ visitors shall wear unique visual identifier throughout the duration of the visit and only work in their designated zones as demarcated by the permitted enterprise. They must be under the close supervision of a Safe Management Officer/Safe Distancing Officer at all times to ensure compliance with the worksite SMM. In addition, roving sub-contractors performing construction work at worksites should be at least 2m from other segregated teams of workers on site.
- c) Ensure that all personnel perform SafeEntry check-in using a TraceTogether App or TraceTogether/BluePass (BP) Token at worksite for contact tracing purposes. Permitted enterprises must check the AccessCode colour of all workers and visitors prior to entry into the worksites and ensure that they only allow AccessCode “Green” workers to enter the worksite.
- d) All permitted enterprises must ensure that cross-border delivery personnel entering the worksite have undergone Antigen Rapid Test and tested negative for COVID-19. These personnel are to show their coloured

wristbands issued at the checkpoints prior to entry into the worksite. In addition, deliveries should be scheduled in a staggered manner and any interaction be kept minimal. Delivery personnel, including drivers and operators (e.g. crane, excavator) should stay within the vehicle/cabin and communicate with workers through digital devices.

6. Personnel attending to emergency incidents at worksites (e.g. structural emergencies, critical repairs, medical/police response) can enter the worksite even if they have not undergone at least 1 swab test and tested negative for COVID-19 in the last 14 days. However, they must comply with the SMM at the worksite and are strongly encouraged to undergo swabbing after visiting the worksite within 24 hours of entry.

Working Together and Keeping Safe

7. In this period of heightened alert, we seek the cooperation of the industry to ensure strict compliance with SMM and keep tighter controls at worksites to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission and resurgence of COVID-19 cases which can disrupt work progress. Let us keep our worksites safe together.

Yours faithfully

DARREN LIM
GROUP DIRECTOR
AUDIT AND INSPECTION GROUP
for COMMISSIONER OF BUILDING CONTROL

31 May 2021

CIRCULAR B

PILOTING OF ANTIGEN RAPID TESTS (ART) AT WORKSITES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

The Construction, Marine, and Processing (CMP) sectors had earlier stepped up its safe management measures, including requiring anyone entering construction worksites and supply works premises to undergo Rostered Routine Testing (RRT), and audit and inspection.

2. The RRT regime works well as a surveillance tool when incidence rate is low to identify cases early, isolate and contain the spread of COVID-19. The current safe management measures implemented at dormitories have also been assessed to be effective in managing and reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission and ensuring the health of workers. However, in view of the evolving COVID-19 situation, additional risk mitigating measures are required for the workforce not residing in the dormitories. This will further reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission to the CMP worksites.

3. The Building and Construction Authority (BCA), Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and Minister of Health (MOH) are working with selected worksites to pilot the use of Antigen Rapid Test (ART) to screen personnel who are not residing in dormitories (i.e. those residing in HDB and private residential properties) when they enter worksites. The ART frequency for the pilot is broadly once every 3 days on top of 14-day RRT¹. Worksites will have workers administer the test kits through self-swabs. Each employer will appoint trained personnel as supervisors to ensure proper Infection Prevention Controls, SMMs, and the correct use of the test kits. Some worksites will also designate and train specific personnel who administer the swabs for their colleagues.

¹ For workers not vaccinated: ART once every 3 days on top of 14-day RRT, or one ART per week in between the existing 7-day RRT; For vaccinated workers: One additional ART within 14-day RRT / 7-day RRT cycle.

4. BCA is currently engaging worksites on this pilot initiative and these worksites will be commencing their ART operation progressively. As we ramp up ART supplies, more sites will be progressively included. We will provide more details on the ART requirements and implementation when ready, including the necessary training and preparation required.

5. Besides implementing ART at worksites, firms are encouraged to review the accommodation of their workers where necessary and segregate their workers as much as possible (e.g. site and non-site workers to be segregated in different rooms/dwelling units), to reduce any risks of transmission. Contractors who would like to consider re-housing their workers at the dormitories may refer to the list of Purpose-Built Dormitories at: <https://go.gov.sg/bca-mom-dorm-list>. Meanwhile, as there are still incidences of COVID-19 cases in the community, firms are encouraged to minimise the need for personnel to access worksite and prioritise access for core work activities.

6. With the evolving COVID-19 situation, we urge firms to remain agile in adapting and implementing enhanced safe management measures and controls to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the construction workforce. BCA will continue to work closely with the sector to avoid disruptions to the construction projects and works, by keeping safe management measures robust, and enhancing them when required.

Yours faithfully

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COMMISSIONER OF BUILDING CONTROL
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