

Sellafield Ltd takes important first steps to prepare for phased restart of highest priority work

Having successfully 'ramped down' operations at the Sellafield site by pausing reprocessing work and construction work on major projects to focus on the key services to keep the site safe and secure, the business has built confidence in its ability for key workers to begin some of the most important high hazard and risk reduction work again.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic escalated, the number of people working on the Sellafield site has been less than a fifth of 'normal' operations, with approximately 1,500 key workers still going to work on site.

By agreeing a small number of packages of work which can start again, it will add approximately 120 people to this number, with a further circa 120 people starting to attend off-site offices mainly in Warrington to access specialist equipment and software.

It will be a cautious, limited, phased restart of work over the coming weeks using 'lead and learn' principles on specific work packages to build understanding on helping people safely return to work.

Detailed risk assessments have determined how many people can safely work in every location being used, taking into account factors such as social distancing, PPE requirements, operational procedures and a huge range of other considerations around people being able to get to work safely and stay safe and comfortable once there.

Reprocessing operations are still paused, but we are preparing to start work on reducing some of our highest hazards.

A small amount of construction work will be beginning on BEPPS-DIF, a new facility needed to accept waste from one of our highest hazard legacy waste silos.

All of the work can also all be stopped quickly if necessary, for example if a second wave of Covid-19 impacts on the availability of key workers.

The decision has been taken to begin phasing in new work while the national lockdown continues because on the balance of risk, it's the safest thing to do. Thousands of other Sellafield Ltd employees will continue with their existing arrangements of working remotely where possible.

We have always said we will only progressively restart certain operations when safe to do so. The excellent preparation and risk analysis work we have done so far has given us the confidence to be able to restart the most important work which is of national

interest. Safety is in our DNA. If any organisation can work safely around Covid-19, we can," said Sellafield Ltd's Chief Executive Martin Chown.

We've thought long and hard about the questions 'Can we? Should we? Will we?' before restarting any piece of work. But we also have to be aware of the risks involved in not restarting more work – every day of delay caused by the pandemic is another day further in the future where a nuclear incident could in theory happen.

I am incredibly proud of every single individual in our organisation and our supply chain, who has kept the site safe and secure through this crisis. Our key workers are doing a vital job and it's a major step forward to be able to start cautiously building up the number of people delivering our critical mission," said Martin.

COVID-19: mitigating impacts on Gypsy and Traveller communities

Lord Greenhalgh, Communities Minister, has written to local authority chief executives to highlight that some members of Gypsy and Traveller communities are likely to be particularly vulnerable to COVID-19, and may need support in accessing basic facilities such as water, sanitation and waste disposal, to enable them to adhere to public health guidelines around self-isolation and social distancing during the outbreak.

GAD's clients share their views of our service

News story

Clients have responded positively to the work and projects undertaken by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD).



Client survey findings out now

Clients have responded positively to the work and projects undertaken by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD). The findings are set out in the newly published [annual client feedback survey 2019 to 2020](#).

GAD's role is to meet the UK public sector's needs for actuarial advice, supporting effective decision-making and robust financial reporting.

Survey results

GAD received survey responses from 61 of our clients. We asked how we rated for being highly valued and 85% of respondents gave us a score of at least 8 out of 10. Respondents provided further feedback on all aspects of our service and our wider engagement.

A sample of comments from survey recipients refer to GAD as 'interesting', 'innovative' and 'considered'.

Recent changes

We have invested in our technology to continue meeting evolving client needs and to modernise the way we work.

Over the past year we have:

- improved efficiency, consistency and quality assurance by transferring calculation processes to our central actuarial services team
- embraced new technology for data visualisation to help us communicate insights in a more engaging and interactive way
- updated our communications approach including creating and posting on our new blog site [Actuaries in government](#)

Looking ahead

The Government Actuary Martin Clarke said: "These results show we are well received by clients who responded. The survey also reflects the hard work and commitment of colleagues who continue to work closely with clients and to develop effective and engaging ways of delivering work and projects."

The survey results and pointers for improvements mean we'll continue to focus on delivering high-quality actuarial expertise to our clients, providing them

value for money.

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[Forensic Science Regulator newsletter: number 34](#)

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

[Treasury cut taxes to reduce PPE costs](#)

News story

From tomorrow (1 May 2020), PPE purchased by care homes, businesses, charities and individuals to protect against Covid-19 will be free from VAT for a three-month period.



- a zero-rate of VAT will apply to sales of personal protective equipment (PPE) for Covid-19 from 1 May 2020 until 31 July 2020
- move will save care homes and businesses more than £100 million
- comes after import duty also removed from PPE

VAT on essential personal protective equipment (PPE) for Covid-19 will be temporarily scrapped saving more than £100 million for care homes and businesses dealing with the coronavirus outbreak, the government has announced.

From tomorrow (1 May 2020), PPE purchased by care homes, businesses, charities and individuals to protect against Covid-19 will be free from VAT for a three-month period.

Ministers have already removed import duties from PPE to ensure more essential equipment can get to the front line quicker.

The government has acted as soon as possible to bring the measure into force. EU law governing VAT – which the UK is bound to until the end of the transitional period – requires the UK to charge VAT on the equipment.

The government is acting under an exceptional basis allowed by EU rules during health emergencies. The European Commission recently indicated support for member states to introduce temporary VAT reliefs to mitigate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The move will particularly benefit care providers, who are often unable to reclaim the 20% VAT they incur on their purchases.

The government is providing the NHS with the funding necessary to purchase PPE and has committed to providing extra funding to ensure the NHS has whatever it needs to tackle Covid-19.

The government has already acted to speed up PPE supply, harnessing the power of UK industry, scouring the world for new stocks, and creating a giant distribution network to send PPE to keyworkers around the country.

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