

***UPDATED* COVID-19 (coronavirus) Building and Construction Industry Advisory**

This document has been prepared as a general Toolbox Talk for building and construction workers and supervisors. It supplements but does not replace information from the government and Ministry of Health which will always be the primary source of advice in this matter. [Please see the MOH website for further information](#)



New Zealand has moved to alert level 2. Building and Construction work is continuing at level 2 health and safety requirements while the government considers moving down to level 1.

COVID-19 What it means for business in Construction and Building

With only 21 active cases and no new cases in the last six days, we have well and truly flattened the curve. Building and construction businesses are back at work. Restrictions under the new level 2 protocols have been eased to allow workers to carry out tasks that require them to work less than a metre apart if necessary. However, they're advised to maintain physical distancing wherever possible and must adhere to ongoing requirements for contract tracing. [Learn more about working at alert level 2.](#)

Our mates at [Mates in Construction \(MIC\)](#) are busy onsite and tell us that they've had a huge increase in demand for their support. MIC tell us most people are contacting them regarding: uncertainty around their future, domestic problems arising out of increased stress and layoffs. MIC are working on some guidance for businesses that takes mental health effects into account when they're restructuring. This new guidance will complement the comprehensive range of resources on the MIC website.

Working at level 2

Working at alert level 2 provides us with more freedom and flexibility than level 3 but it's important to remember that this is still not business as usual. We must stay vigilant and follow the physical distancing, enhanced hygiene and contact tracing requirements set out in the [level 2 protocols](#). Construction has performed well under levels 3 and 2. While there have been reports of some substandard behaviour, there have been no construction sites closed because of breaches of protocols. Show homes and showrooms are also open under level 2, with some restrictions. This is good news for builders, joiners and others who need to display their products to the public. Work is underway on level 1 protocols in readiness for moving down to alert level 1. While some of the current requirements for distancing and hygiene may be eased, there will still need to be vigilance and strict contact tracing.

NZCIC members working with the Construction Sector Accord

The current focus for the Construction Sector Accord(CSA) is to maintain progress on the COVID-19 response plan as well as assess and prioritise the recovery initiatives through the **Construction Sector Transformation Plan**. The Construction Sector Accord COVID-19 Forum is now meeting fortnightly. The focus of the forum is currently:

- Developing and sharing procurement guidance including advice on the ***fair risk allocation for COVID-19-related disruptions*** in new contracts. Additional work is underway to provide procurement support for the confirmed 'shovel ready' projects that are set to be announced within the next few weeks.
- Assisting Crown Infrastructure Partners and the Infrastructure Commission to identify the ***pipeline of crown infrastructure projects*** that can be bought forward into the next year. More than 2,000 projects have been put forward for consideration.
- Finding ways to support the residential sector including bolstering ***consumer confidence in the housing sector*** post-COVID-19.
- Working on ways to reduce the loss of talent, including trainees and apprentices from the sector if we see the forecasted downturn.
- Working with **local government** to ensure the Construction Sector COVID-19 Response Plan is aligned with council needs.

The CSA is reviewing the Transformation Plan developed last year and incorporating the responses to COVID-19 as appropriate. It's important to maintain the positive momentum that the Transformation Plan had built before COVID-19 struck, and ensure we don't slip back into the poor behaviour that the construction sector has experienced in previous economic crises.

For any media inquiries or if you're interested in becoming a member of the NZCIC, please contact the NZCIC Chair, Graham Burke at graham@grahamburke.co.nz or 021 249 3459.