



Reflections on responses to the COVID-19 epidemic: occupational hygiene

Prof. Cas J Badenhorst, SAIOH

SAIOH & National COVID-19 Response

- SAIOH members represented the occupational hygiene discipline on the National Department of Health led COVID-19 Occupational Health Outbreak Response team referred to as the OHS COVID-19 team.
- SAIOH Occupational Hygienists led the initial workplace risk assessments at Government Laboratory facilities, hospitals, quarantine facilities, etc.
- Development of the Department of Health COVID-19 Risk Assessment Guideline and risk assessment templates
- Contribute to and participated in the launch of the Hazardous Biological Agent Regulations of the DoEL
- Support role post Level 5 lock-down... airports, fitness industry, theatres and cinemas, etc.

SAIOH & National COVID-19 Response

- Assisted in the training and awareness of Covid-19 and its prevention, by participating in COVID related Webinars, from early 2020 to date, in conjunction with the NIOH, Saioosh, DoEL and the WHWB.
- SAIOH Position Papers re the spread potential and social distancing of the virus; and effectiveness of sanitising sprays at building entrances.
- Department of Health COVID-19 Building ventilation in non-healthcare settings guideline and held a dedicated Webinar on Ventilation as a Control remedy re COVID-19.
- Communicating all the available, and new communications, guides, etc. on COVID-19 from the WHO, ILO and NICD, to all the SAIOH members and stakeholders

COVID-19 risk assessment reflections

Objectives

- To identify and assess the potential risk of the SARS-CoV-2 transmission in the workplace.
- To identify control measures (or the absence thereof/opportunities to strengthen controls) and assess their effectiveness in ensuring that controls are in place to ensure:-
 - The health and safety of employees in the workplace / whilst at work;
 - Where the possibility of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 exists that this is prevented or measures are in place to minimize exposure; and
 - Employees take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and that of other persons / colleagues who may be affected by their failure to do so.
- Identify jobs, task and activities that would require vaccination as a control for access.



COVID-19 risk assessment reflections

- 3 levels of risk assessment
 - Worker
 - H&S Practitioner
 - Employer



Worker COVID-19 Risk Assessment

(Document prepared by the Risk Assessment Group within the Occupational Health and Safety Workstream of the National Department of Health – Covid-19 Response)

Please note: This is an interim guide that may be updated as the outbreak in South Africa intensifies, to guide additional workforce preserving strategies; Version 1, 17 April 2020

How to use this Guide?

- Use the questions below to assess if it is safe to start work.
- If you answer NO to any of the questions, report this immediately to your supervisor, who will help to identify a practicable and reasonable solution.

Always practise these controls in your workplace	
1. Social distancing must be at least 1.5 metre away from any other person in any circumstance.	
2. Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser after contact with any person or after contact with frequently touched surfaces e. g. phones, door handles etc.	
3. Cough in the fold of the elbow or in a tissue which you discard in a bin and wash your hands.	
4. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.	
Employee training and awareness	
I have received training on COVID-19 and the virus causing it, how the virus is spread, the symptoms of the disease and how I can protect myself against infection.	<input type="checkbox"/> GO <input type="checkbox"/> STOP
I am trained and familiar with the COVID-19 protocols in my workplace.	<input type="checkbox"/> GO <input type="checkbox"/> STOP
I know the protocol of self-isolate at my home or at a quarantine site should I become ill with symptoms of COVID-19.	<input type="checkbox"/> GO <input type="checkbox"/> STOP
I know the protocol to report should I become ill with symptoms of COVID-19.	<input type="checkbox"/> GO <input type="checkbox"/> STOP

COVID-19 Walk-through risk assessment summary of non-compliance				
Requirement	Finding	Recommendation	Responsible person	Due date

No	Requirement	Status			Comments
		Yes	No	NA	
1.	Basic education & awareness campaigns				
1.1	Staff COVID-19 education/communication programme				
1.2	Contractor staff COVID-19 education/communication programme				
1.3	PPE donning and doffing training programme				
1.4	Health status self-monitoring and reporting /or questionnaire for employees				
2.	Hygiene / cleaning measures				
2.1	Work surfaces are decontaminated with appropriate disinfectants at appropriate intervals				
2.2	Equipment are decontaminated before and after use				
2.3	Hand washing basin is present (located near room exit)				
2.4	Soap and paper towel or once off use material towel available at handwashing basin				
2.5	Hand washing procedure is done, on entering the workplace, after removing PPE, and before leaving the workplace) and at various other times during the course of the day e.g. use of ablutions, etc.				
2.6	There is a procedure for surface decontamination and spills				
2.7	Spill kits are provided and maintained (only where required)				

COVID-19 Risk Assessment Report								
Site:		Sector*:		Date:				
Department:			Risk Assessor:		Name & Surname	Signature		
Work Area/s:			Employer Representative:		Name & Surname	Signature		
Occupations in Area:			Health & Safety Representative:		Name & Surname	Signature		
Risk Assessment								
Source of Hazard	Route of exposure	Activities & tasks	Existing Control Measures	Control effectiveness	Risk classification	Additional Controls Required	Responsible person(s)	Due Date/s
Department of Employment and Labour Exposure Risk Classification								
Low Exposure Risk Lower exposure risk (caution) jobs are those that do not require contact with people known to be or suspected of being infected with SARS-CoV-2, nor frequent close contact with (i.e. within 2 meter of) the general public.		Medium Exposure Risk Medium exposure risk jobs include those that require frequent and/or close contact with (i.e. within 2 meters of) people who may be infected with SARS-CoV-2, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients.		High Exposure Risk High exposure risk jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19.		Very High Exposure Risk Very high exposure risk jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19 during specific medical, postmortem, or laboratory procedures.		

*Mining, Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, Manufacturing, Service

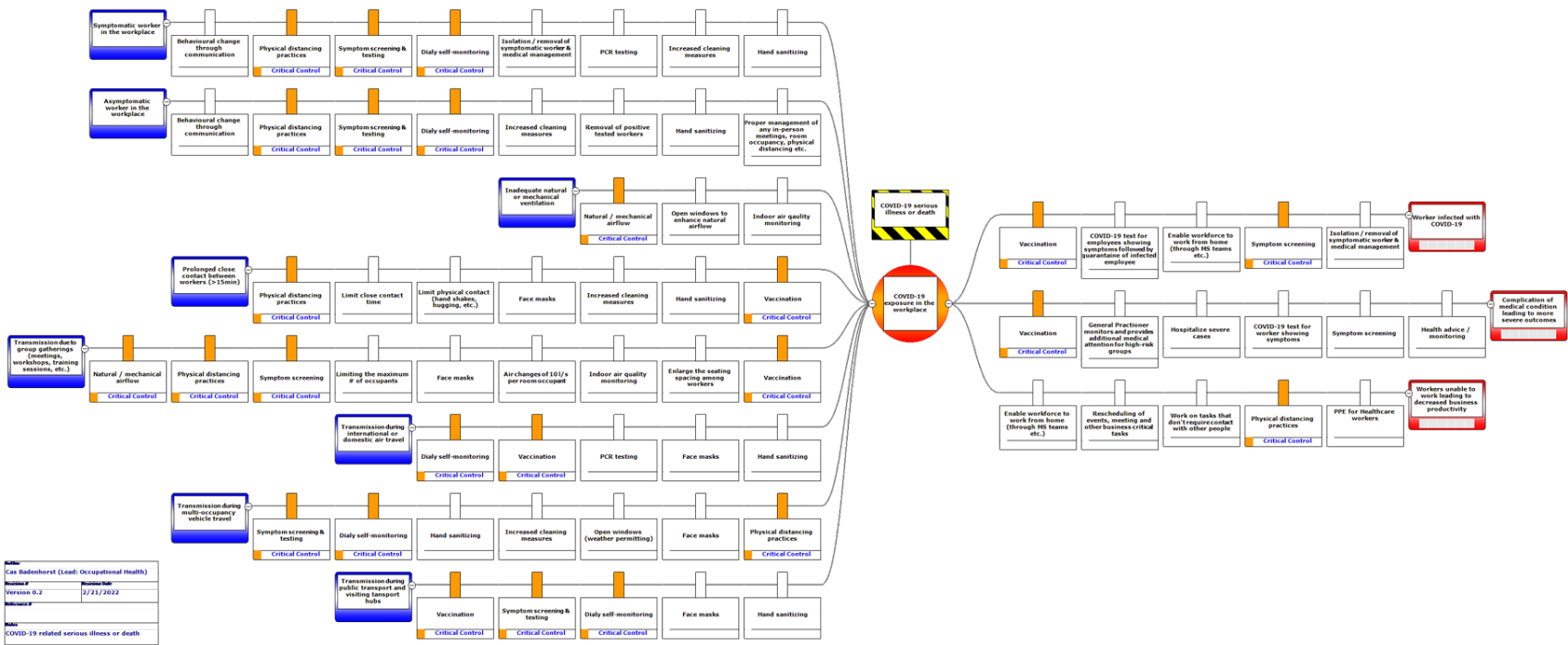
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Name and Signature of CEO / Designated person _____

Date _____

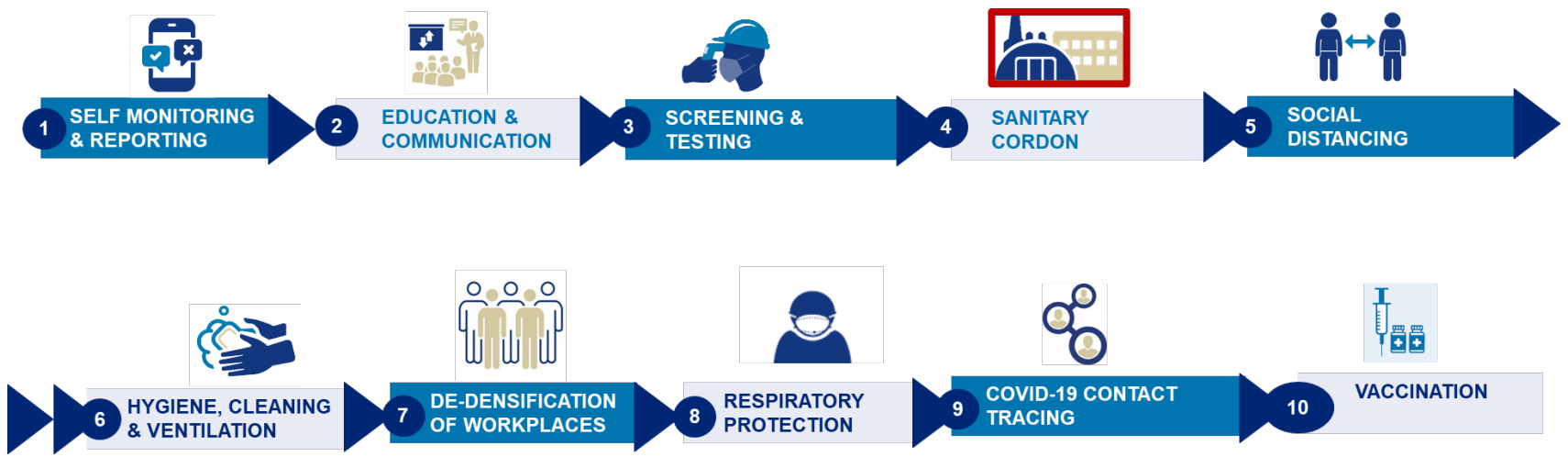


COVID-19 workplace control reflections



Case Badenhorst (Lead: Occupational Health)
 Version: 6.2
 12/11/2022
 COVID-19 related serious illness or death

COVID-19 workplace control reflections



COVID-19 pivot for occupational hygiene

- Biological hazards in the workplace
- Hazard identification and risk assessment
- Control design, monitoring and management
- Respiratory protection selection, application and maintenance
- Vulnerable workers
- Collaboration
- Technology applications