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To Scotland's Construction Sector

25 February 2021

To everyone working in Scotland's construction sector,

We are continuing to vaccinate increasing numbers of the population and are gradually creating the headroom to ease protective measures. However, the position remains fragile, and the headroom limited. Even a small, premature easing of restrictions could cause COVID-19 cases to start rising rapidly again, so our approach will be gradual and cautious.

For now we remain under the new national lockdown restrictions announced by First Minister on 5 January to help us control and push back against the spread of a new variant of COVID-19.

As the Minister responsible for Scotland's construction sector during the COVID-19 pandemic, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all businesses, federations, trade unions and workers in the construction sector and its supply chain for your dedication and perseverance in making sure construction work is being carried out safely during the pandemic.

The Scottish Government values the crucial contribution the construction sector is making, and recognises the steps you have all taken to protect workers, and comply with the regulations and guidance in place. Every one of us has a role to play in suppressing the virus, and ensuring we follow public health advice, and I am grateful for your continued efforts to do so.

However, there has recently been a rise in the numbers of cases reported on site so there is absolutely no room for complacency. You must regularly reinforce safety messaging and revisit the guidance available to ensure that you are fully complying.

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All employers have a duty to ensure employees are safe at work. Construction sites can have operatives from many firms working together. It is really important that guidance is followed by all workers at all times – contractors must communicate, co-operate and co-ordinate to ensure the ongoing health and safety of everyone concerned.

I want construction work to continue safely in Scotland, that is only possible if we all follow the guidance and work together to protect each other.

To help ensure that it is safe for you to operate whilst carrying out your work, Construction Scotland published Site Operating Guidance: <https://bit.ly/3idS63U>. This was augmented in January with advice on further measures to address areas of concern, particularly vehicle sharing and the use of face coverings [Construction Scotland | Industry Leadership Group | Working on site during the COVID-19 pandemic: Construction Guidance \(Advance addendum\) \(cs-ic.org\)](#).

The CICV Forum have also produced guidance to the industry on safe working practices, which can be found here: [Guidance - CICV Forum](#). All these documents reflect the latest guidance from Government. In addition, the Scottish Government's own guidance for the construction sector can be found here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-construction-sector-guidance/>.

The Construction Scotland Innovation Centre with the help of the CICV Forum have produced "Be COVID Smart", an immersive training and awareness programme to support COVID-19 safe learning and working in construction.

Please make yourself familiar with, and use, this resource as the safety of your workforce, customers and our wider communities is depended on your continued compliance with all relevant regulations and guidance. It can be accessed from the following link: <https://www.cs-ic.org/innovationcentre/future-skills/be-covid-smart/>

Thank you again to everyone in Scotland's construction sector for working together to keep everyone safe.

Kind regards



KEVIN STEWART

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