

# **Property Technical Guidance Note**

## **Management of Property – Construction Site Closure**

## Introduction

If due to the Government's response to the Coronavirus pandemic you have to temporarily close or reduce construction operations for a significant length of time, then it is important that sites, buildings and associated assets are secured and protected to avoid unnecessary losses either through fire, flood, theft or other related peril.

In all instances, where changes are made to the occupancy of construction sites MS Amlin must be notified of the change and this may result in additional measures being recommended (depending on specific circumstances) by us.

The impact of temporarily closing operations should be fully risk assessed by a competent individual in terms of the increased risk of fire, flood, theft or health and safety exposures and appropriate controls put in place.

The latest UK Government advice can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

HSE best practice in dealing with the health and safety aspects of coronavirus can be found at: [https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm?utm\\_source=govdelivery&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=coronavirus&utm\\_term=homeworking&utm\\_content=bulletin-19-mar-20](https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm?utm_source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_term=homeworking&utm_content=bulletin-19-mar-20), And lone working at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/lone.htm>

Latest advice from the NHS can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

## General

The fire risk and security assessments should be reviewed in light of the reduced occupancy and suitably amended by a competent individual to reflect the nature of the temporary closure and measures should be put in place to limit the risk of loss.

## Security

### General

Update your list of key holders to ensure that you have sufficient key holders that are physically able to respond to an alarm activation or Police/Fire Service request within 20 minutes.

All door/gate keys to the property should be accounted for - if any key is missing the locks should be changed immediately.

Where a site might normally benefit from manned security presence and this has been removed due to restrictions imposed by Government then MS Amlin should be informed such that alternative provisions can be agreed between both parties.

Regular external inspections of vacant sites should be made by the Insured or an authorised representative to check for damage or breaches of security (if safe to do so based upon the current Government guidance in respect of travel restrictions and social distancing measures). Depending upon guidance issued by Government a drive past inspection may still be allowed and if this is the best that can be achieved then that should be done and recorded. The inspection should be completed by a responsible person to ensure no deterioration in the controls in place or fabric of the site including any external signs of trespass or anti-social behaviour e.g. graffiti. Inspections should be recorded, retained and signed by the responsible person to evidence that they are being completed. This is critical in terms of evidencing inspections have been taking place in the event of a

claim.

If due to increasing travel restrictions and/or following a risk based assessment of the ability to comply with the social distancing measures in force it is deemed unsafe to request the responsible person can travel to construction site. Then where external/internal CCTV is present and can be remotely monitored this will be considered an acceptable alternative to physical inspections. However, records of viewing the remote feeds should be made and any concerns followed up with MS Amlin.

Any defects in security or condition must be remedied as a matter of priority.

The frequency of these inspections may range from daily to fortnightly, depending on the specific circumstances and as agreed between all parties. Typically weekly inspections will suffice but check with your usual MS Amlin contact. In completing physical inspections due consideration must be given to employees in respect of lone working and this should be recorded in a risk assessment as per normal.

### Physical Security

The following measures should be put in place to maintain the physical security of the construction site and to prevent, so far as is reasonably practical, unauthorised access:

- Sites to be fully hoarded / fenced and gates securely padlocked;
- Where the building envelope forms the construction site perimeter all openings to be secured against unauthorised entry;
- Other than those sites that have not progressed beyond ground works or where only a non-combustible structure has been erected there should be a 24 hour guarding presence or remotely monitored CCTV installation. Suitable night-time illumination to be provided. If 24 hour guarding is currently not in place then contact MS Amlin to reach agreement on whether it is necessary based upon the construction site's location, value and the percentage combustibility of the structural elements / frame. Any appointed security guard should be SIA badged and supplied from an SIA, NSI or SSAIB accredited firm. Particular care and attention is needed in respect of timber framed buildings and any property incorporating modern methods of construction, i.e. modular, SIPS etc;
- Intruder and fire alarms in temporary accommodation to be maintained operational and (if it exists) remote signaling to be maintained;
- All equipment and fittings not yet incorporated into the structure to be removed from the site or secured in steel cargo containers;
- Mobile plant to be removed from site and returned to a secure depot / yard;
- All security devices for preventing access to site buildings are to remain in full and effective operation at all times; and
- Perimeter fence security should be maintained and any damage found following routine inspection should be repaired as a matter of urgency.

## Electronic Security

Where installed, maintain in an operational state both fire and intruder alarms. Ensure alarm receiving centers, where used, are also operational and they are aware of the construction site being vacant.

Intruder alarms should be set before closure and, so far as is reasonably practical, maintained in an active and serviceable condition, including any remote connection to an off-site monitoring station.

All intruder alarm systems where installed, whether permanent or temporary, should be remotely monitored.

Where remotely monitored CCTV systems are in existence, these should be maintained, so far as is reasonably practical, in an operational state (including monitoring).

## Housekeeping

General waste bins should be emptied before closure and relocated to a secure area or compound at least 10m from buildings. If this is not possible then the waste bins must have locked lids and, where possible, secured to prevent unauthorised movement.

All waste skips to be cleared of combustible waste or removed from site.

All combustible materials to be taken out of the buildings and removed from site.

LPG, acetylene canisters and fuel bowsers to be removed from the site.

## Utilities & Services

All utilities other than those required for fire or security protection should be isolated so far as is reasonably practical to reduce the risk of loss.

Temporary and fixed electrical installations and circuits to be isolated except for essential circuits (such as those powering CCTV installations, intruder and fire alarms) at the incoming main, and the door to the compartment in which the switchgear is located should be locked. Where a supply is required for the maintenance of security or fire systems, the supply must remain live but all non-essential circuits should be isolated by the removal of the fuses / circuit breakers.

If present, the gas supply should be shut off at the incoming main. The door to the compartment in which the shut off valve is located should be kept locked.

The temporary water supply to be isolated and any commissioned water systems to be drained down and isolated at the main valve.

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