

## Purpose

This Guideline provides best practice to minimise the impact of a Flu pandemic on the Group's employees and its business.

## Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) raised the level of its influenza pandemic alert to Phase 5 on 30 April 2009. The change indicates that the likelihood of a pandemic has increased and that there is evidence of significant person-to-person transmission, but it does not mean that a pandemic is inevitable. **This higher phase is a signal to the business community that actions should now be undertaken with increased urgency and at an accelerated pace.**

Many government organisations are offering advice on precautions to take and on business travel including advising against all but essential travel to Mexico.

## Action Needed

As a result of the increase in risk, this is an appropriate time to review incident/crisis management at the Group's sites around the world to ensure that it can respond to a pandemic.

Good pre-planning could also give the Group a significant business opportunity to enhance our reputation with our customers by having clear plans to manage a pandemic.

Pre planning needs to be considered to reduce the probability of infection to our employees (and their families) and to manage the impact on our business. The following actions are good practices that we recommend implementing throughout the Group.

### 1. Maintain latest information/advice

- Establish a reliable source of information to keep up to date on the current threat from your national websites The websites below also offer good information/advice:
  - The World Health Organization (WHO) ([www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/))
  - PandemicFlu.gov ([www.pandemicflu.gov/](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/))
- Assign a responsible person in each location to monitor and communicate information covering:
  - required and recommended actions for preventing the spread of the flu among employees;
  - the number of flu related absences among employees.

### 2. Employees' Personal Health

- **Travel to affected areas:**
  - **It is strongly recommended that travel to known areas of infection should be avoided.**

- If an employee has recently visited one of the countries or areas where human cases of influenza have been identified, it is important to monitor their health closely for seven days after their visit to the affected area. There is no need for isolation from other people as long as the person remains well. Symptoms of a feverish illness accompanied by sore throat, headache, muscle aches should be treated immediately. (Advise from UK National Health Service)
- **Encourage annual seasonal influenza vaccination** for appropriate employees using local public health guidelines.
- **Social Distancing:**
  - Review the need for internal meetings and attendance at external events to reduce exposure to infected people.
- **Advice to employees in affected areas:** Reinforce the need to ensure increased personal basic hygiene, such as:
  - Avoid hand-to-hand contact: Wash hands frequently; Use a tissue or handkerchief when coughing or sneezing and dispose of it immediately; avoid hand-face contact.
  - How to prepare their homes and families should a pandemic occur. (See <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/health/#families> for information on preparing homes and families.)

### 3. Managing Business Disruption

- Include managing a pandemic in your crisis/incident management. Pre plan actions to take in the event that the pandemic spreads to your geographical area– see Appendix

## Appendix

### Pre-planning issues to consider in managing business continuity during a pandemic

#### General

- **Ensure an emergency communications plan is up to date.** This plan includes identification of key contacts (with back-ups), chain of communications (including suppliers and customers), and processes for tracking and communicating business and employee status.

#### Site Facilities

- **Review hygiene facilities** (washing facilities, availability of soap, etc) at company sites and reinforce the need for highest personal hygiene standards.

#### Maintaining Business Operations

- **Identify the key elements of your daily operations and plan for scenarios that are most likely to be impacted by a widespread flu outbreak.** Consider:
  - Employee absences during a pandemic due to factors such as personal illness, family member illness, community containment measures and quarantines, school and/or business closures, and public transportation closures.
  - Mitigation of employee absenteeism: Flexible working (e.g. telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g. staggered shifts) and cross training of the workforce to cope with absenteeism.

- Raw materials, suppliers, levels of strategic stocks and logistics required to maintain business operations by location and function during a pandemic.
- Possible disruptions in third-party deliveries of goods and services.
- Possible disruption of customer operations and deliveries to them.
- Potential impact of a pandemic on company business financials.
- Circumstances under which business may be forced to close or reduce operations.
- Business functions that could be outsourced or transferred to other facilities within the organization in the event of high employee absenteeism.
- Potential impact of a pandemic on business-related travel (e.g. quarantines, border closures).
- **Review local insurance policies** including employee health and travel insurance, to determine what coverage may be necessary to mitigate the country-specific risks and effects of a pandemic. (Group insurance policies will be reviewed at Group level)

#### **External Communication**

- **Communicate your pandemic planning** with clients and vendors helping them to develop a measure of confidence in your ability to maintain business functioning and operations during an outbreak.
- **Understand national and local governments' policies and the potential impact** they may have on your business operations and emergency plans (possible quarantines, border closures, airport closures, school closures, transportation closures, capability of national and local governments to provide assistance to your company and employees, etc).

#### **Employees**

- **Evaluate need for antiviral medications** and consider maintaining stocks of vaccines, face masks etc.
- **Evaluate employee access to and availability of health care services** during a pandemic, and improve services.
- **Communicate policy on absenteeism** during a pandemic.
- **Social Distancing:** Should a pandemic occur, plan for and be prepared to initiate social distancing procedures such as:
  - Limiting employee face-to-face contact (especially within a 1-metre radius)
  - Creating allowances for staggered breaks/meals/shifts
  - Investigating the possibility of allowing employees to work from home or have flexible work schedules
  - Ensuring that employees who feel ill leave the work environment and remain home until fully recovered