

30 March 2020

Briefing Note

CECA Member Briefing:

Covid-19: CECA update

Introduction

This short briefing has been prepared on behalf of the UK construction sector to brief companies and individuals on the ongoing repercussions of the Covid-19 coronavirus for our sector. This briefing will be delivered daily by CECA over the coming weeks – if you would like further information, or to input your views, contact CECA chief executive Alasdair Reisner on 07977151912 or e-mail alasdairreisner@ceca.co.uk.

[Support the fight against Coronavirus](#)

The UK Government has asked industry to offer support to those fighting coronavirus. If your business can offer support in any of the following circumstances:

- Protective equipment for healthcare workers, such as masks, gowns, and sanitiser;
- Hotel rooms;
- Transport and logistics, for moving goods or people;
- Manufacturing equipment;
- Warehouse or office space, for medical use or storage;
- Expert advice or consultancy on IT, manufacturing, construction, project management, procurement, or engineering;
- Social care or childcare;
- Community support.

Please use [this link](#) to offer your help.

[Covid-19 Webinars](#)

ACE has announced a new online webinar series to help its members and the wider industry through the coronavirus crisis. Hosted by ACE chief executive Hannah Vickers, Navigating COVID-19 covers the major issues currently facing our industry including finance, people, communications and procurement.

Attendees will have the opportunity to ask virtual questions to the panel of experts on specific announcements, such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme or Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme. The webinars are open to anyone with an interest in the topics covered. Sign-up now to upcoming webinars through the links below:

[Support for your SME and Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme \(31.03.20, 1.30pm\)](#)

We welcome [Brian Berry](#), FMB, to explore what the crisis means for SMEs. A TBA Partner at Beale & Co joins us to explore the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in more detail. Special guest [Fergus Harradence](#), BEIS, is on hand to help answer any questions.

[Procurement \(02.04.20, 12.00pm\)](#)

[Sam Ulyatt](#) and [John Welch](#) of Crown Commercial Service, part of the Cabinet Office, explore the recent procurement policy notices and what they mean for the construction sector. [Alasdair Reisner](#) of CECA joins to explore how contractors can support the supply chain during the crisis.

People in a Pandemic (07.04.20, 12.00pm)

Exploring the HR and people issues raised by the crisis such as remote working, staff morale and more. Panellists TBA soon.

Communicating in a Crisis (09.04.20, 1.30pm)

With special guest [Andy Walker](#), editor of *Infrastructure Intelligence*, we will explore the steps you need to take to communicate effectively externally, internally and with stakeholders and clients. [Stuart Young](#), BEIS joins us to help answer any questions.

Find out more and replay previous episodes [here](#).

HM Revenue & Customs Webinar

HM Revenue & Customs are to run a webinar on 'Covid-19 - helping employers to support employees.' This webinar will cover the Covid-19 Job Retention Scheme; furloughed workers; Statutory Sick Pay; and support available to employers for outstanding payments to HMRC. For more information and to choose a date and time, click [here](#).

Self-employment Income Support Scheme

The Self-employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) will support self-employed individuals (including members of partnerships) whose income has been negatively impacted by COVID-19. The scheme will provide a grant to self-employed individuals or partnerships, worth 80% of their profits up to a cap of £2,500 per month. The business support website provides [more information](#) and [FAQs](#).

Job retention scheme

[Guidance for employers](#) on the coronavirus (COVID-19) Job Retention Scheme has now been published. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is a temporary scheme open to all UK employers for at least three months starting from 1 March 2020. We expect the scheme to be up and running by the end of April. It is designed to support employers whose operations have been severely affected by coronavirus (COVID-19).

Employers can use a portal to claim for 80% of furloughed employees' (employees on a leave of absence) usual monthly wage costs, up to £2,500 a month, plus the associated Employer National Insurance contributions and minimum automatic enrolment employer pension contributions on that wage. Employers can use this scheme anytime during this period.

The scheme is open to all UK employers that had created and started a PAYE payroll scheme on 28 February 2020.

Insolvency

To support companies facing severe financial challenges the UK Government has announced changes to insolvency, adding new restructuring tools that mirror the USA's Chapter 11 procedure. This includes:

- A moratorium for companies giving them breathing space for from creditors enforcing their debts for a period of time whilst they seek a rescue or restructure;
- Protection of their supplies to enable them to continue trading during the moratorium; and;
- A new restructuring plan, binding creditors to that plan.

The proposals will also include key safeguards for creditors and suppliers to ensure they are paid, while existing laws against fraudulent trading and the threat of director disqualification will continue to act as an effective deterrent against reckless misuse of these new measures. Further details of the plan are expected this week.

Wrongful trading provisions

The Government will also temporarily suspend the wrongful trading provisions to give company directors greater confidence to use their best endeavours to continue to trade during this pandemic emergency, without the threat of personal liability, should the company ultimately fall into insolvency.

The proposals will also include key safeguards for creditors and suppliers to ensure they are paid, while existing laws against fraudulent trading and the threat of director disqualification will continue to act as an effective deterrent against reckless misuse of these new measures.

In addition, while laws against fraudulent trading and director misconduct will continue to provide a deterrent against poor practices, wrongful trading provisions in the Insolvency Act will be temporarily suspended specifically to give confidence to directors to continue trading without the threat of personal liability, should the company ultimately fall into insolvency. Find out more [here](#).

[New advice to support mental health during coronavirus outbreak](#)

People struggling with their mental health during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak will be offered additional online support and practical guidance from the Government to help them cope. For more information click [here](#).

[CECA Employment Briefing - Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#)

Read CECA's Employment Briefing on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme [here](#). Please note this briefing will be updated as further information becomes available.

[CECA Employment Briefing - Coronavirus](#)

Read CECA's Employment Briefing on the impacts of Covid-19 [here](#).

[CECA Training & Development Update](#)

Read CECA's Training & Development Update in reference to coronavirus [here](#).