

28 April 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.

CECA industry Recovery Plan Webinar

Click [here](#) to register for a CECA webinar on the construction industry's recovery plan, which will take place on Friday 1 May 2020 at 1.45pm.

Guidance for workers

Langley, supported by the Construction Industry Council, has produced [a short video](#) that demonstrates safe and responsible guidance for workers on construction sites operating during the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic, to ensure the protection of the workforce and minimise the risk of spread of infection. This guidance advises how consistent measures on sites of all sizes can be responsibly and safely undertaken with adherence to the Government's recommendations on social distancing.

Bounce Back Loans

The new [Bounce Back Loans scheme](#), announced by the Chancellor yesterday, will allow businesses to borrow between £2,000 and £50,000 and access the cash within days. Loans will be interest free for the first 12 months, and from Monday 4 May, businesses can apply online through a short and simple form. The Government will provide lenders with a 100% guarantee for the loan and pay any fees and interest for the first 12 months. No repayments will be due during the first 12 months. The loans will be easy to apply for through a short, standardised online application. Loans should reach businesses within days – providing immediate support to those that need it as easily as possible.

The scheme will launch for applications on Monday 4 May. Firms will be able to access these loans through a network of accredited lenders. The government will work with lenders to ensure loans delivered through this scheme are advanced as quickly as possible and agree a low standardised level of interest for the remaining period of the loan. The Government is also taking additional steps on the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) to ensure that lenders have the confidence they need to process finance applications quickly, including changing the viability tests that so that all banks will need to assess is whether a business was viable pre COVID-19.

Apprenticeship programme response to COVID-19

The UK Government has updated its [guidance](#) on how its apprenticeship programme has responded to the Covid-19 crisis. This version focuses on:

- Further information on calculating wages for furloughed apprentices
- Clarification that a furloughed employee can start an apprenticeship
- Information on collecting signatures
- Additional content on flexibilities of end-point assessment
- Flexibilities for English and Maths functional skills for Intermediate (level 2) apprentices.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – Survey

A new survey has been developed by the Construction Coronavirus Task Force to help understand how the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is being used by industry. Please take five minutes to fill in the survey [here](#).

Furloughed workers - parental leave

Furloughed workers planning to take paid parental or adoption leave will be entitled to pay based on their usual earnings rather than a furloughed pay rate. Find out more [here](#).

Navigating Covid-19 Webinars

The Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE) has shared details of new episodes in its [webinar series](#), 'Navigating COVID-19.' Presented by ACE chief executive Hannah Vickers, these are open to anyone in the industry to attend. Check ACE's website regularly for updates, new guest and episode announcements.

Business Loans and finance (Wednesday 29 April 2020, 12.00pm)

ACE Advisory Board member, former banker, and ex-special advisor to the then Chancellor Alistair Darling, Geoffrey Spence joins Hannah Vickers to discuss the new financial support made available to businesses, as well as some traditional finance options.

Improving cashflow through tax credits (Wednesday 6 May, 12.00pm)

Mark Smith, Innovation Incentives Partner of ACE affiliate Ayming UK joins us to discuss how R&D tax credits can release the hidden cash trapped in your working capital, helping your business through the weeks and months ahead.

Industry feedback – Government support

The Construction Industry Coronavirus Task Force has prepared a short survey to anonymously capture feedback on use and experiences of business trying to access support provided by HMG. Please take two minutes to fill it out [here](#).

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.