



December 2020

To everyone working in the UK's construction sector

You will have seen the Prime Minister's announcement on 19th December introducing an additional Tier 4 in London, parts of the South East and the East of England. As explained in his statement, this is to combat the spread of a new variant of Covid-19. The Prime Minister outlined the detail of Tier 4, which includes asking people to stay at home unless they have a valid reason for leaving, and not moving between areas in different tiers unless for essential reasons such as work or caring responsibilities. I want to be clear that, as before, firms and tradespeople in the construction sector and its supply chain, including merchants, suppliers and product manufacturers, can continue to operate in Tier 4. I also want to re-iterate, that where it is essential to travel between tiers to get to your work or for the purposes of carrying out your work, you are able to do so.

These are unsettling times for us all, particularly over the Christmas period, and I want to reassure you that the Government appreciates the invaluable contribution your sector is making. Whether delivering on large or small construction sites, and in peoples' homes across the country, in builders' merchants, designing and project managing schemes or producing construction and mineral products, you are making a major contribution to the economy.

Since the outset of the pandemic in March, you have performed a vital role. UK manufacturing has shown great resilience in the way it has innovated and adapted, changing the way it operates on sites, finding more efficient ways of delivering its products and services, and collaborating effectively throughout.

To help ensure that it is safe for you to operate whilst carrying out your work, the Construction Leadership Council has published the Site Operating Procedures (SOP) and Branch Operating Procedures, which reflect the latest guidance from Government. The Government and devolved administrations continue to update their safe working guidance (see the links in the footnote for guidance for those working in or running factories, plants and warehouses)¹. For office-based staff there is guidance available via GOV.UK with further links to devolved administrations' guidance.²

My Ministerial team and I are in regular contact with industry leaders about the risks, issues and challenges you face. Thank you again to everyone operating in UK manufacturing. You are making a hugely valued and critical contribution to our country.

Yours sincerely,

THE RT HON ALOK SHARMA MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

¹ In England: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/factories-plants-and-warehouses>; in Wales <https://gov.wales/manufacturing-coronavirus-guidance>; in Scotland: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-manufacturing-sector-guidance/>; and in Northern Ireland: <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-guide-making-workplaces-safer-and-priority-sector-list>)
² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>