

GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING

Tourism Transport

July 2020



Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Fáilte Ireland
National Tourism Development Authority



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NOTE: While it is acknowledged that many transport businesses provide a range of services of which tourism transport may be only one, these Guidelines have been developed with a focus on Tourism Transport services. These guidelines have been developed to address the requirements of tourism ferries, cruise boats, chauffeur driven tourism vehicles and tourism coaches.

If your business has a coffee shop or food service on board, please refer to the operational re-opening guidelines for restaurants and cafés on www.failteireland.ie.

Cruise boat operators should refer to the re-opening guidelines for self-catering on www.failteireland.ie for accommodation related aspects of their business.



Note:

This is a living document which means as Government restrictions and Public Health guidelines evolve, this document will also evolve to reflect new Government advice and changes to protocols when they emerge. All sectoral guidelines have been developed in line with the Government’s Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business and the Return to Work Safely Protocol, based on the latest health guidance available from the Department of Health and the HSE. The links to latest guidelines will be included throughout the document.

Disclaimer

The information contained within these operational re-opening guidelines can change from time to time, it should not by itself be relied upon in determining obligations or other decisions. Users of this document should independently verify any information on which they wish to rely. It is expected that all business owners and management will have familiarised themselves with the Return to Work Safely Protocol prior to re-opening and implemented all relevant requirements.

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Version	Date Changes	Changes from previous version
1.1	20.07.2020	Document published

1. Introduction: Meeting & Overcoming the COVID-19 Challenge

COVID-19 is an unprecedented challenge for the tourism sector.

Before re-opening, businesses will need to review how they work and introduce new practices and procedures to ensure everyone stays safe. As a result, Fáilte Ireland, in consultation with Sectoral Bodies, has developed operational guidelines in line with the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI).

As part of this, Fáilte Ireland has created this set of specific guidelines in consultation with the Coach Tourism & Transport Council of Ireland (CTTC) and with input from the Irish Boat Rental Association, amongst others, to support your business. You can be reassured that these recommendations are underpinned by advice made available from the HSA, HSE, FSAI, World Health Organisation (WHO) and other relevant bodies.

Businesses must follow the Return to Work Safely Protocol. The National Protocol has been developed under the aegis of the Safety Health and Welfare Act 2005. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) is the compliance body and has full powers as set out in this legislation designated in relation to the implementation of the National Protocol. Non-compliance can result in the closure of a business.

All sectoral guidelines were developed based on the following considerations, however not all considerations will be relevant to the Tourism Transport sector:

■ Restructuring operations

Tourism businesses of all types need to adapt their operations, review employee practices and consider the design of their business to provide a safe environment for customers and employees and ensure physical distancing and the prevention of the spread of COVID-19.

■ Putting dedicated resources in place

Tourism businesses must ensure that they have dedicated personnel to implement and operate a robust system that prevents the spread of COVID-19. Equally importantly, they need to put processes in place that can deal with individual and multiple cases of the disease that may occur.

■ Adapting and enhancing hygiene practices

Tourism businesses must adapt and implement enhanced procedures in general cleaning, storage and cleaning of equipment and vehicles. In particular, they should introduce and implement touchless solutions where possible.

■ Focusing on best practice in food and beverage service

Tourism businesses must follow best practices in service and physical distancing to promote health of employees and customers.

■ Food Safety and COVID-19 Safety

There are no reports of transmission of COVID-19 via food. The main mode of transmission is from person to person. Food business operators must continue to apply their food safety management systems, based on the principles of HACCP.

In addition, food business operators will be required to introduce COVID-19 safety management systems in the form of enhanced hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, staff training and health checks, as well as physical distancing. This is to protect against the transmission of the virus to or between staff, customers and other people who enter their premises. Any COVID-19 precautions must not compromise food safety.

For advice and information on food safety during COVID-19 and for food businesses re-opening, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) website is a useful resource which is regularly updated [HERE](#).

For further information on travel advice for international visitors view the Government's COVID-19 Travel Advice [HERE](#).

The physical distancing measures outlined in these guidelines are applicable between people from different households. Physical distancing does not apply to members of the same household.

These Guidelines have been created in line with the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business. This is a document that will evolve in line with the roadmap, taking into account any changes to the restrictions or physical distancing.

While we have attempted to cover all relevant issues, you must bear in mind that this is a non-exhaustive document and it may not cover all situations that you may encounter. As circumstances change, any procedures you implement must be monitored to ensure they remain up-to-date and in line with international best practice guidance and the Government's Public Health advice.

2. Business Response/Action Plan

Creating an Action Plan will help to clarify what needs to be done to overcome the threat of COVID-19 and give your employees and customers confidence that they are safe.

In developing one, the first step that business owners, management and/or operators must take is to familiarise themselves with the latest guidelines from the following sources:

- Health Services Executive (HSE)
- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Irish Government Departments
- World Health Organisation (WHO).

Information from these sources will help to shape your plan of action. You must also:

- **Complete a risk assessment** to identify what operational changes you need to make in your business.
- **Review of all standard operating procedures (SOPs)** to define and note what you are changing.
- **Create a communication plan** to inform employees and customers of what you are changing, what you need them to do and how you expect everyone to act and behave.
- **The HSA provides** templates, checklists and advice on the Return to Work Safely Protocols. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

The plan must reassure employees and customers that safeguarding their health and safety is of the utmost importance. It must also ensure that your operations continue to run in an efficient and safe manner.

Reopening templates and checklists are available on the HSA website [HERE](#).

You must review the plan regularly and amend it as new regulations, guidelines and procedures come into force. Experience and feedback will inform how appropriate and effective the plan is.

For further information on the development of your Action Plan, visit the Fáilte Ireland COVID-19 Business Supports Hub [HERE](#).

Monitoring & Supporting

A COVID-19 Response Team/Coordinator/Lead Worker must be appointed to ensure new procedures are adhered to. Adherence to this protocol will only be achieved if employers and workers have a shared responsibility to implement the measures contained in this protocol in their place of work. A collaborative approach to the implementation of the protocol is essential to achieve success and maximum buy in.

Each workplace should appoint at least one lead worker representative charged with ensuring that COVID-19 measures are strictly adhered to in their workplace. The person(s) undertaking the role must receive the necessary training and have a structured framework to follow within the organisation to be effective in preventing the spread of the virus. Employers should have regular and meaningful engagement with their worker representative, workers and/or their recognised Trade Union or other representative (including health and safety committee where it exists) about the measures being put in place to address the occupational exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace. Employers should provide COVID-19 induction training for all workers on their return.

The number of worker representatives for COVID-19 appointed should, ideally, be proportionate to the number of workers in the workplace and this person(s) should be clearly identifiable in the workplace. Employers and worker representatives will work together to ensure that all the actions in this protocol are fully adhered to in order to ensure the suppression of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Section E of the National Protocol sets out the steps for employers and workers to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

These provisions include:

- Consulting with the workplace representatives in the development of a COVID-19 response plan.
- Developing/amending policies and procedures for prompt identification and isolation of workers who may have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Developing, consulting, communicating and implementing workplace changes or policies. Specific reference is made to agreeing with workers any temporary restructuring of work patterns that may be required to implement the COVID-19 prevention measures in the workplace. There is also provision for the lead worker representative to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

Policies & Processes

Business owners and management need to review all business policies and standard operating procedures across each department to reflect operational changes. In particular, this means:

- Defining and documenting a clear plan of action in the event of a suspected case of COVID-19 among customers and/or employees.
- Defining and documenting the correct and appropriate use of

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This must be in line with the Government's Public Health advice.

- Developing/updating current policy for the care of employee uniforms to ensure they are clear on the standards of appearance/dress expected while at work.
- Reviewing and updating cancellation and refund policies in line with business requirements.

Communication

- You must share the plan with all employees prior to them returning to work. If it is updated at any time, you must make sure everyone knows what has changed.
- Providing guidelines to employees on how they must communicate the Action Plan to customers will ensure everyone gives the same message and there is no inconsistency.
- Make sure an up-to-date list of the contact information of all employees, including emergency telephone numbers, is always readily available across all departments.
- Regularly review all COVID-19 related signage and notices throughout the business including vehicles and other modes of transport to ensure they display the latest Public Health advice from Government. Signs must be placed in prominent and relevant positions, be legible and be offered in multiple languages, as appropriate.

Training

Business owners and/or management must inform all employees of the measures being adopted to manage the threat of COVID-19. Use the most appropriate training channels to do this and ensure that staff are aware that they must not attend work if they are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 such as coughing or shortness of breath. Instead, they must seek medical attention.

There is an obligation on employers to ensure that employees are aware that they must not attend work if they have symptoms. This is essential to ensure that the virus does not spread.

You must organise information briefings to cover all the basic protective measures against COVID-19 and the signs and symptoms of the disease. In particular, make sure you cover:

- Hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures
- Correct use of PPE
- Cleaning/disinfection protocols
- Employee health and what to do if feeling unwell
- Unwell customer/dealing with suspected cases/liasing with authorities.

If training is needed for specific procedures or if your business has specific requirements, it must be included in the training programme.

Cleaning & Frequency

- Ensure contact/touch surfaces such as tabletops, switches by seats, ceiling lights, temperature controls, luggage racks, handrail or arm rests, seat belt buckles, door handles and work equipment both within vehicles and on company premises are visibly clean at all times and are cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily.
- Implement modified cleaning intervals for public areas, work areas and vehicles. This applies especially for public toilet facilities and communal spaces. Cleaning must be performed at least twice per day.

Cleaning of work areas must be conducted at regular intervals. Further information on cleaning in non-healthcare settings is available from the ECDC [HERE](#) or from the Government [HERE](#).

Resources

Business owners/management should review rotas in line with The National Protocol Section E Subsection 3 which provides that full consultation on these matters is required to ensure sufficient employees are available to maintain physical distancing while completing the tasks to the required standards. Employee scheduling must ensure more time is allocated for cleaning and encourage employees to work alone if possible.

To achieve this, you should:

- Implement phased shifts
- Schedule small teams
- Keep the same team combinations where possible to limit employee interaction. This will assist should contact tracing be required.

You will also need to plan for the impact of employee absences; this may involve reallocating employees from non-essential tasks. Where appropriate, cross-training employees will help maintain staffing levels within your business. Employees who have not had close contact with a confirmed case should continue taking the usual precautions and attend work as usual.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place. You must apply the Return to Work Safely Protocol.

For more information see [HERE](#).

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

3. Employee & Customer Health

The health and safety of employees and customers is the number one priority for the owner of the Business. The following steps will help ensure everyone remains fit and well:

Face Coverings

Regulations to enforce the mandatory wearing of face coverings on public transport came into effect on 13 July 2020. The regulations provide that members of the public shall not, without reasonable excuse, travel by public transport without wearing a face covering.

See [Regulations on Face Coverings on Public Transport](#).

Government Public Health advice recommends that individuals, both drivers and passengers, wear a face covering in situations where it is not possible to achieve the recommended physical distancing of 2 metres*. Given the size of some tourism transport vehicles e.g. minivans, minibuses, chauffeur driven vehicles, it is recommended that people travelling in such vehicles should wear face coverings. This should also be followed for larger tourism transport vehicles e.g. coaches.

As part of your business risk assessment, you should determine the requirement for face coverings in all individual business activities as this may vary by vehicle type or situation. Ensure that customers are clearly informed of your policy in advance of travelling.

The Return to Work Safely Protocol states:

Make face masks available to the worker in line with Public Health advice. If masks are worn, they must be clean and they must not be shared or handled by other colleagues. Employers and employees must keep up to date with the latest Public Health advice issued in regard to masks by Gov.ie/NPHET.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing guidelines (in line with Government Public Health advice) must be incorporated into the Action Plan for each department within a business. Specific areas must also comply with mandatory capacity limits.

Customers must adhere to Government Public Health advice on physical distancing and be advised to stand away from other groups of people who are not from the same household at all times. Careful consideration needs to be given when standing in queues, when boarding and alighting vehicles, using public facilities prior to boarding the vehicle or moving around the vehicle (where appropriate).

In line with Government Public Health advice, load capacity for both public and private coaches should not exceed 50%.

Employee Physical Distancing

If you cannot arrange for employees to stay 2 metres* apart at all times, alternative protective measures must be put in place.

Minimise any direct employee contact and provide hand washing facilities, and other hand hygiene aids such as hand sanitisers, wipes, etc. Ensure these are readily accessible so employees can perform hand hygiene as soon as a task is complete.

Providing Hand Sanitisers

Hand sanitiser dispensers (touchless whenever possible), must be available for employees and customers and must be placed at all entry points to buildings and vehicles and at specific points within the public areas where required. **All hand sanitisers must have a minimum alcohol content of 60%.**

Vehicle operators must always have hand sanitiser available for their own personal use. Customers, particularly those travelling, should be encouraged to bring their own hand sanitiser with them.

Signage

You must display appropriate COVID-19 signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures throughout your business including vehicles and other modes of transport. Where feasible, television screens and monitors can communicate these in public areas of the business premises and within vehicles and other modes of transport where available.

Employee & Customer Health Concerns

When they return to work, employees must be trained on what to do if they or a customer becomes unwell. All employers and employees must follow the Return to Work Safely Protocol. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

If, as a business owner or manager, you are alerted to a suspected case of COVID-19 within your business, a clinician from a local medical centre should be contacted. The clinician will advise on the next steps. Further information is available on the HSE website.

Note: Your central office needs to have the telephone numbers of the health authorities, medical centres and public and private hospitals readily available in case a customer or employee falls ill. Vehicle operators should take the actions as outlined in the business Action Plan.

Please see HSE advice [HERE](#).

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

4. Owner & Employee Responsibilities

The effective delivery of the Action Plan depends on the professionalism, conduct and behaviour of the business owner/management and employees. Paying attention to the following issues is especially important:

Hand Hygiene

Correct hygiene and frequent handwashing with soap is vital to help combat the spread of COVID-19. Businesses need to ensure that adequate sanitary facilities are provided and that employees thoroughly and frequently clean their hands.

All employees must wash their hands frequently and as required, for a minimum of 20 seconds or use sanitiser regularly if hands are visibly clean.

Hands must be washed as often as necessary, but always in the following circumstances:

- Before starting work
- Before and after handling driving controls
- Before and after handling luggage
- Before and after handling microphone equipment
- After handling waste
- Before and after handling cleaning equipment
- After cleaning duties including sweeping/mopping, etc
- After using the toilet
- After blowing nose, sneezing or coughing
- Before eating, drinking or smoking
- After eating, drinking or smoking
- After handling money
- At the end of a shift
- Before putting on or removing PPE.

This list is not exhaustive.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information from the HSE.

COVID-19 Training

All employees need to receive training on COVID-19 safety and cleaning protocols. You must give more comprehensive training to teams in frequent customer contact; these include the reception/booking office team, vehicle operators and on-board employees, tourist guides and Security Personnel where appropriate.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Appropriate PPE must be worn by employees if required by their roles. This may include gloves, face masks, aprons etc. You must assess each section of a business to determine what is needed. Training on how to properly use, apply and dispose of all PPE is also essential.

Government Public Health advice recommends that individuals, both drivers and passengers, wear a face covering in situations where it is not possible to achieve the recommended physical distancing of 2 metres*. Given the size of some tourism transport vehicles e.g. minivans, minibuses, chauffeur driven vehicles, it is recommended that people travelling in such vehicles should wear face coverings. This should also be followed for larger tourism transport vehicles e.g. coaches.

As part of the business risk assessment consideration needs to be given to the level of PPE required for various tasks e.g. power hosing which can cause an aerosol affect.

Employee Welfare Facilities & Timekeeping

Employers and employees must follow the Return to Work Safely Protocol. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

It is also essential to display prominent signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene as well as physical distancing in all employee areas, including on vehicles.

Employee welfare facilities (such as employee areas and locker rooms) need to be re-organised to suit physical distancing measures and be frequently cleaned and disinfected. Staggered start times and break times can also be very helpful and you must review the use of clocking-in machines.

Staff meetings should be held online if possible. If physical meetings need to take place, physical distancing measures must be taken.

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Medical Kit

A medical kit must always be available at reception and on each vehicle that includes:

- Germicidal disinfectant/wipes for surface cleaning tissues.
- Face/eye masks. Note that disposable face masks can only be used once.
- Gloves (disposable).
- Protective apron (disposable).
- Biohazard disposable waste bags.

Contact Tracing

Businesses must keep records of passengers to allow for contact tracing.

Businesses do not have to keep records of every person in each party. They will be required to have the name and contact details of one person in each party e.g. the person who makes the booking. That person should be advised to keep a record of who is in their booking in case it is required for contact tracing in the future.

Details must be retained for a minimum of one month after completion of travel.

Air conditioning (where available)/Ventilation

Although COVID-19 is not transmitted by air but from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, the condition of filters must be monitored and the proper replacement rate of indoor air be maintained. Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems may have a complementary role in decreasing transmission in indoor spaces by increasing the rate of air change, decreasing recirculation of air and increasing the use of outdoor air.

Increasing the number of air exchanges per hour and supplying as much outdoor air as possible is recommended, either by natural or mechanical ventilation, depending on the setting. Increasing the number of air exchanges per hour will reduce the risk of transmission in closed spaces. Poor ventilation in confined indoor spaces is associated with increased transmission of respiratory infections.

The following should be considered:

- Direct air flow should be diverted away from groups of individuals to avoid dispersion from infected passengers and transmission of the virus.
- Where possible, leave windows lowered slightly to allow for air to ventilate naturally throughout the vehicle.
- Ensure that air conditioning filters are cleaned regularly according to manufacturer's instructions.
- When air conditioned air is used for ventilation, minimise recirculation as much as possible.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

5. Physical Distancing

The business owner or management needs to meet Public Health advice on maintaining physical distancing of 2 metres* between people. Physical distancing of 2 metres* does not apply to members of the same household.

Queuing

Any area where customers or employees queue must be clearly marked, where it is practical to do so, for appropriate physical distancing. This includes reception area and booking office, toilet facilities, public areas, and employee zones including vehicle maintenance, locker areas, staff rooms, etc.

Use visible markings to facilitate compliance with the current physical distancing advice and ensure a clear system is in place to manage passenger traffic when boarding and alighting vehicles.

On Board

Ensure that the driver or on-board personnel encourage passengers to adhere to Government Public Health advice on physical distancing when boarding, alighting and on board. This can be communicated verbally over the public address system, visually on tv screens or monitors or consider a recorded message at each stop, where appropriate. Where appropriate, consider installing a physical barrier to divide the vehicle operator's cab from the passenger area.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

Capacity on board may be restricted due to physical distancing measures. Consider highlighting available and unavailable seating on board with signage. Review outdoor areas on vehicles, where appropriate, to ensure Government Public Health advice on physical distancing is adhered to.

In line with Government Public Health advice, load capacity for both public and private coaches should not exceed 50%.

Passengers should enter and exit from separate doors where possible. For example, passengers should exit through the centre doors where possible. Where this is not possible a strict queuing system should be implemented and managed.

For roll-on/roll-off tourism ferries, consider allowing passengers to remain in their vehicles for the duration of the journey, if on an open vehicle deck.

For smaller tourism transport vehicles e.g. chauffeur driven vehicles, ensure that passengers sit as far apart as the vehicle allows to maintain physical distancing. Passengers should not sit in the front seat.

Reception Area or Booking Office

Employees should be separated from each other at workstations at the reception area or in the booking office, in accordance with Government Public Health advice. Employees should have a self-sufficient workstation where possible, with an individual computer, telephone and all ancillary equipment.

Install clear markings to ensure that contact between employees and customers is kept to a minimum and to ensure that queues adhere to physical distancing requirements. You must display signage referring to COVID-19 measures in visible locations. Physical barriers such as sneeze guards/plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Employee Areas

Physical distancing protocols that follow the Government Public Health advice must be observed in all employee areas such as shared office spaces, employee locker rooms, store rooms, canteens and other relevant facilities for all employees.

Cruise Boat Hire

To facilitate physical distancing, no employees will board a hired cruise boat when more than one person of the hiring group is on board, with the exception of the customer training/assessment when two employees will board the boat to assist with the berthing of the boat whilst under instruction. The second crew member will remain separated and on deck at all times and will take instruction as deputy to the skipper. The remaining members of the party may board once the crew have vacated the boat.

Vehicle Maintenance, Service Areas & Workshop

Physical distancing protocols must also be applied in vehicle maintenance, service areas and within the workshop.

If you cannot ensure that employees stay 2 metres* apart at all times, you must apply the Return to Work Safely Protocol. For more information see [HERE](#).

Timekeeping Facilities

If queuing takes place at the machine, have clear floor markings that illustrate the recommended physical distancing between employees. If you use clocking-in machines, a strenuous cleaning and disinfection regime must be put in place. In effect this means cleaning and disinfecting the machine regularly.



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6. Cleaning Products & Protocols

Cleaning products and protocols must be suitable and manufacturer approved for use against viruses, bacteria and similar risks.

It is important to follow manufacturer instructions with regard to dilution, application and duration of use. Business owners and managers must review cleaning and disinfection procedures within all departments and update these if any cleaning products are changed.

It is also important to work with suppliers, vendors, and distribution partners to ensure an uninterrupted supply of cleaning supplies and PPE.

Public Spaces & Communal Areas

Cleaning and disinfection must take place in all public spaces at least twice per day and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.

Particular attention must be paid to frequently touched surfaces such as reception desk and counters, door handles, toilet facilities, waiting areas and other facilities.

Office & Employee Areas

Office and employee areas must also be cleaned and disinfected at least twice per day and whenever facilities are visibly dirty. Particular attention must be paid to the staff room, locker rooms, employee bathrooms, delivery areas, shared office spaces, office equipment, canteens and other relevant facilities.

Care should also be taken to ensure that appropriate hygiene standards are also met in vehicle maintenance, service areas and within the workshop.

Vehicles

Interiors of vehicles should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice per day and whenever they are visibly dirty. Particular attention must be paid to contact/touch surfaces such as tabletops, switches by seats, ceiling lights, temperature controls, luggage racks, handrail or arm rests, door handles, seat belt buckles, seating, etc. Frequently touched on-board equipment should be visibly clean at all times and cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily e.g. tachograph, radio equipment, public address system, maintenance kits, etc.

It is important that seatbelt fabrics are not cleaned with bleach as this will affect the integrity of the fabric, and thus the safety of the seatbelt.

Refuse bins must be emptied, cleaned and disinfected at regular intervals.

Vehicle Maintenance, Service Areas & Workshop

Vehicle maintenance, service areas and workshops must include adequate sanitary and handwashing facilities to ensure that Government Public Health advice on hand hygiene is adhered to and that employees thoroughly and frequently clean their hands.

Where mechanics use their own tools, they should ensure that these are not loaned to others. Where tools are loaned, hand hygiene measures must be adhered to before and after using the loaned tools.

Where PPE is worn, employees must appropriately use, apply and dispose of all PPE. Employees must wash their hands before putting on and removing PPE.

Mechanics, body repairers or vehicle maintenance employees will require various kinds of PPE in order to stay safe while working e.g. single use nitrile gloves and face masks. See [HERE](#) for further information from HSA.

As it may not be possible to clean all touch points on machinery regularly, employees working in these areas should adhere to Government Public Health advice on hand hygiene before and after using the equipment.

Care should also be taken to ensure that appropriate hygiene standards are also met in vehicle maintenance, service areas and within the workshop.

Equipment Shared by Employees

Clean and disinfect shared equipment and tools before, during and after each shift or any time the equipment is transferred to another employee. This includes items such as phones, computers and other communication devices, keys, payment terminals, tools, safety buttons, cleaning equipment, time clocks and all other direct-contact items used. It also includes all touch points on machinery and tools used as part of vehicle maintenance and service activities and within the workshop.

Shared food and beverage equipment in employee areas (e.g. kettle, microwave, etc.) need to be cleaned and disinfected after each use. The same applies to clocking-in machines which must be accompanied by hand sanitisers and antibacterial wipes.

Additional Considerations for Cruise Boat Hire Businesses

- Consider whether footwear disinfectant trays are to be supplied outside the base office entrance to facilitate staff disinfecting their footwear on arrival at the base each morning.
- All employees should wear fresh PPE e.g. gloves, face mask on boarding a boat when it returns to base. The boat will be filled with diesel and the amount used to be informed to the base office.
- The boat will be pumped out and refilled with clean water.
- The boat will be deep cleaned and disinfected throughout and quarantined until the next hire.
- Used linen bin to be provided for returning boats. All linen will be laundered at 60 degrees or more to ensure sterilisation.
- Where used, PPE must be disposed of after each individual boat has been deep cleaned and quarantined. Fresh PPE should be used for each boat, to ensure no cross contamination occurs.
- After deep cleaning, access to boats should be limited to required personnel only until the next hire to ensure there is no possibility of any cross contamination. To ensure compliance, boats should be marked and taped.
- All life jackets will be removed and disinfected ashore.

Control of Waterborne Hazards

It is critical that businesses review the guidance on 'Control of Legionella Bacteria During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic' and review their own systems in line with this.

This guidance highlights the requirement to continue managing Legionella control to avoid the potential for Legionnaires' disease.

The following is a non-exhaustive list relevant to the tourism sector of potential sources of aerosols which may contain Legionella bacteria: wet cooling systems (for example, cooling towers and evaporative condensers); spa pools; showers, taps and toilets; machine cooling systems; spray booth water curtains; humidifiers in food cabinets; ornamental fountains and water features; dust suppression systems; horticultural misting systems, lawn sprinklers; clinical humidifiers; sprinklers and hose reels; and power hoses.

Legionnaires' disease can be fatal and hospitalisation is generally required to treat symptoms. With the health service currently dealing with a Public Health emergency, it is vital that employers take appropriate action to maintain and operate their water systems especially wet cooling systems, so far as reasonably practicable, during this Public Health emergency.

For further advice, please see HSA information [HERE](#) and HSE information [HERE](#).

7. Locations for Distribution of PPE

If required, PPE should be distributed at the following locations:

- Entry and exit points to all buildings
- Office area (if applicable)
- Vehicle Maintenance, Service Areas & Workshop
- On each vehicle

Note: Hand sanitiser should be provided in all entry and exit points of buildings including reception, offices, vehicle maintenance/ service areas and workshops, toilet facilities, etc. Hand sanitiser should also be provided on each vehicle at entry and exit points, and as required elsewhere in the vehicle. Hand sanitiser must only be used on visibly clean hands.

Vehicle operators must always have hand sanitiser available for their own personal use. Customers, particularly those travelling, should be encouraged to bring their own hand sanitiser with them.



8. Employee Uniforms

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

Consider the use of appropriate PPE for employees with cleaning responsibilities in line with the Government's Public Health advice. The policy on the care of uniforms must be updated to ensure every employee is clear on the standards of appearance and dress expected while at work.

Physical Distancing Protocol

Where a locker/changing room is provided, mark floors to indicate available and unavailable spaces that should be used when changing into work attire/PPE. It may be necessary to roster access times for access to these rooms so physical distancing takes place.

9. Suppliers of Goods & Services

Deliveries

- If possible, delivery drivers should not be allowed to enter the business (with the exception of food deliveries which adhere to HACCP¹ delivery protocols). Employees must not come in close contact with the driver.
- All food items (where food service is part of your business) must be checked in by employees with crates and boxes remaining outside the door.
- If your business provides food service please refer to the operational re-opening guidelines for Restaurants and Cafés on www.failteireland.ie



Dealing with Delivery Drivers

- Delivery personnel must use hand sanitiser if required to exit their vehicle and enter the business.
- Signage must make delivery drivers aware of 1) physical distancing when picking up deliveries and passing deliveries to employees, 2) the need to maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and 3) the need to wear clean protective clothing.
- An alcohol-based hand sanitiser must be available in the delivery area. Delivery drivers must clean their hands before passing delivery documents or goods to employees. They must also be made aware of the potential risks involved in contact transmission of COVID-19.
- Hand hygiene, in conjunction with physical distancing, is also of paramount importance.
- Disposable containers and packaging should be used to avoid the need to clean any returns. In the case of reusable containers, appropriate hygiene and cleaning protocols must be followed by employees.

¹ HACCP is in the context of food safety and re-opening only, not COVID-19 prevention

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

10. The Customer Journey

To follow the Government's Public Health advice throughout the customer journey, businesses must minimise the number of access points for arriving and departing customers. Each access point both in business premises and on vehicles must be equipped with hand sanitiser, along with signage instructing all customers to use it as they enter and leave.

Face Coverings

Regulations to enforce the mandatory wearing of face coverings on public transport came into effect on 13 July 2020. The regulations provide that members of the public shall not, without reasonable excuse, travel by public transport without wearing a face covering.

See Regulations on [Face Coverings on Public Transport](#).

Government Public Health advice recommends that individuals, both drivers and passengers, wear a face covering in situations where it is not possible to achieve the recommended physical distancing of 2 metres*. Given the size of some tourism transport vehicles e.g. minivans, minibuses, chauffeur driven vehicles, it is recommended that people travelling in such vehicles should wear face coverings. This should also be followed for larger tourism transport vehicles e.g. coaches.

As part of your business risk assessment, you should determine the requirement for face coverings in all individual business activities as this may vary by vehicle type or situation. Ensure that customers are clearly informed of your policy in advance of travelling.

The Return to Work Safely Protocol states:

Make face masks available to the worker in line with Public Health advice. If masks are worn, they must be clean and they must not be shared or handled by other colleagues. Employers and employees must keep up to date with the latest Public Health advice issued in regard to masks by Gov.ie/NPHET.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing of 2 metres* does not apply within members of the same household. Physical distancing is required between seats and individuals that are not from the same household.

Review seating on each vehicle, and highlight available and unavailable seating on board with signage, ensuring that Government Public Health advice on physical distancing is adhered to.

In line with Government Public Health advice, load capacity for both public and private coaches should not exceed 50%.

For smaller tourism transport vehicles e.g. chauffeur driven vehicles, ensure passengers do not sit in the front seats of the vehicle beside the driver or spend prolonged periods of time on board the vehicle.

Install clear markings to minimise contact between employees and customers. Queues for reception and booking office, toilet facilities, public areas, etc must all adhere to physical distancing requirements.

It is recommended that seat rotation does not take place.

Signage

You must display appropriate COVID-19 signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures throughout your business including vehicles and other modes of transport. Where feasible, television screens and monitors can communicate these in public areas of the business premises and within vehicles and other modes of transport where appropriate.

Capacity on board may be restricted due to physical distancing measures. Consider highlighting available and unavailable seating on board with signage.

Use visible markings to facilitate compliance with the current physical distancing advice and ensure a clear system is in place to manage passenger traffic when boarding and alighting vehicles.

Booking

Before customers book or arrive, your website should explain the guidelines that apply. Details should include that physical distancing must be adhered to both prior to boarding and while on board the vehicle. This information must also be outlined in public areas. You should also include your policy on the wearing of face coverings so that customers are informed in advance of travelling.

Review boarding times to allow an extended window for arrivals. This will help reduce large queues of customers arriving at peak times. Encourage just one representative of each group to approach reception while the others adhere to physical distancing measures.

Where tickets are required, it is advisable that an online or cashless sale is considered and encouraged.

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Consider offering customers welcome and safety information explaining what is expected of them when interacting with employees and other customers. Customers may also find it reassuring to read about the rigorous cleaning procedures throughout the business.

Payment

Customers should be encouraged to use card/contactless payment and pay in advance where possible.

If handling cash, employees should be provided with gloves and observe the Government's Public Health advice on hand hygiene measures.

Customer Hygiene Amenities

Hand sanitiser must be provided at public entrances and exits and at key locations throughout the business. Hand sanitiser should also be provided on each vehicle at entry and exit points, and as required elsewhere in the vehicle.

Customers should be encouraged to bring their own hand sanitiser with them.

Additional Considerations for Cruise Boat Hire Customers

- To facilitate physical distancing in cruise boat hire base buildings, consider sending copies of safety videos and skippers training tutorials to customers in advance of their booking.
- To ensure there is no overcrowding at base when waiting to board, pre-agreed time slots should be provided and adhered to by customers.
- Consider asking customers to unpack their baggage into large plastic boxes provided, and store suitcases in their own cars. These boxes can be used to bring clothes on board.
- The Irish Boat Rental Association recommend that customers have one spare berth per boat so that in the unlikely event of anyone falling ill during the cruise they can self-isolate in a single cabin. IBRA members normally rent boats to customers that have excess berth accommodation for the number in the party such as berths in the saloon space.
- If an individual within the travelling party needs medical attention, the customer will be instructed to contact the base immediately for assistance.
- Only the group leader may enter the base to pay for the diesel used or any other charges incurred during the cruise.

11. Vehicles

A review of each individual vehicle type should be conducted as part of the business risk assessment to determine the required measures to be implemented.

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

Vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected regularly. Particular emphasis must be placed on the following items and areas, and scheduled more frequently during busy periods:

- Internal and external doors (e.g. door plates, handles, releases)
- Hard surfaces (e.g. tabletops, light switches)
- Handrails
- Interior seating (e.g. arms of chairs)
- Exterior seating/benches (where relevant)
- Toilet Facilities
- Seat belt buckles
- On-board microphones/public address system

- Driving controls and touch points
- Steering wheel
- Vehicle operator cab / area (where relevant).

Interior and exterior refuse bins must be emptied, cleaned and disinfected at regular intervals.

It is important that seatbelt fabrics are not cleaned with bleach as this will affect the integrity of the fabric, and thus the safety of the seatbelt.

Leave windows and doors open to allow for air to ventilate while cleaning. Ensure the air vents in the vehicle are closed and the fans are reduced to the lowest level while cleaning takes place.

Physical Distancing Protocol

Physical distancing guidelines (in line with Government Public Health advice) must be incorporated into the Action Plan for each vehicle type. Management must use the Public Health advice to calculate the maximum number of people (including employees) allowed to enter a vehicle at any one time.

Seating and capacity must be managed to allow for the recommended physical distancing between groups of customers who are not from the same household.

Customers must be advised to stand/sit at least 2 metres* away from other groups of people who are not from the same household at all times, particularly while waiting to board the vehicle.

Air conditioning (where available)/Ventilation

Although COVID-19 is not transmitted by air but from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, the condition of filters must be monitored and the proper replacement rate of indoor air be maintained. Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems may have a complementary role in decreasing transmission in indoor spaces by increasing the rate of air change, decreasing recirculation of air and increasing the use of outdoor air.

Increasing the number of air exchanges per hour and supplying as much outdoor air as possible is recommended, either by natural or mechanical ventilation, depending on the setting. Increasing the number of air exchanges per hour will reduce the risk of transmission in closed spaces. Poor ventilation in confined indoor spaces is associated with increased transmission of respiratory infections.

The following should be considered:

- Direct air flow should be diverted away from groups of individuals to avoid dispersion from infected passengers and transmission of the virus.
- Where possible, leave windows lowered slightly to allow for air to ventilate naturally throughout the vehicle.
- Ensure that air conditioning filters are cleaned regularly according to manufacturer's instructions.
- When air conditioned air is used for ventilation, minimise recirculation as much as possible.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

Additional Consideration for Coaches

- In addition to the cleaning and disinfection protocol outlined above, it is recommended that all guides are in possession of their own microphone cover and PPE equipment.
- In line with Government Public Health advice, load capacity for both public and private coaches should not exceed 50%.

- Review seating on each vehicle, and clearly indicate which seats are available for free seating, ensuring that Government Public Health advice on physical distancing is adhered to.
- It is recommended that seat rotation does not take place.
- To limit the potential spread of the virus, the closure of all on-board toilet facilities on coaches is recommended.

Additional Considerations for Chauffeur Driven Vehicles

- For smaller tourism transport vehicles e.g. chauffeur driven vehicles, consider having your driver guide wear a mask at all times while in the vehicle.
- Driver guides should refrain from offering physical greetings to guests.
- In order to maintain physical distancing, ensure passengers do not sit in front seats of the vehicle beside the driver guide.
- Ensure that Government Public Health advice on physical distancing is adhered to by reviewing the seating on each vehicle. Where appropriate clearly indicate which seats are available for free seating.
- Ensure passengers do not spend prolonged periods of time on board the vehicle.
- Driver guides should ensure they adequately wash their hands before and after handling luggage.
- The vehicle should be deep cleaned and disinfected thoroughly between each hire.

Additional Considerations for Cruise Boat Hire Businesses

The following actions will take place when a cruise boat returns to base:

- The boat will be filled with diesel and the amount used to be informed to the base office.
- The boat will be pumped out and refilled with clean water.
- The boat will be deep cleaned and disinfected throughout between each hire.
- All linen will be laundered at 60 degrees or more to ensure sterilisation.
- All staff should wear the appropriate PPE which will be disposed of after each individual boat has been deep cleaned and quarantined.
- After deep cleaning, access to boats should be limited to required personnel only until the next hire to ensure there is no possibility of any cross contamination. To ensure compliance, boats should be marked and taped.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

- Recommend that all life jackets be removed and disinfected ashore on a scheduled basis.
- Portable equipment which may be provided on board e.g. binoculars should be removed and disinfected after each hire.

Additional Considerations for Tourism Ferries

- Review indoor and outdoor seating on each vehicle, where appropriate, and clearly indicate which seats are available for free seating, ensuring that Government Public Health advice on physical distancing is adhered to.
- If used, ensure that all life jackets are removed and disinfected ashore before being returned to the boat.
- All work areas must be cleaned and disinfected at regular intervals. Particular attention should be paid to tools, workstations, lifts and machinery controls.
- Where practical, organise work practices to reduce/eliminate transmission points.

- Where mechanics use their own tools, they should ensure that these are not loaned to others. Where tools are loaned, hand hygiene measures must be adhered to before and after using the loaned tools. Consider using separate tools for each maintenance personnel that are clearly identified.
- Cleaning materials should be provided to ensure that all tools are wiped down, where possible.
- As it may not be possible to clean all touch points on machinery regularly, employees working in these areas should adhere to Government Public Health advice on hand hygiene before and after using the equipment.
- Where PPE is worn, employees must appropriately use, apply and dispose of all PPE. Employees must wash their hands before putting on and removing PPE. Mechanics, body repairers or vehicle maintenance employees will require various kinds of PPE in order to stay safe while working e.g. single use nitrile gloves and face masks. See [HERE](#) for further information from HSA.

12. Vehicle Maintenance, Service Areas & Workshop

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

Vehicle maintenance, service areas and workshops must include handwashing facilities to ensure that Government Public Health advice on hand hygiene is adhered to.

All work areas must be cleaned and disinfected at regular intervals throughout the day. Particular attention should be paid to tools, workstations, lifts and machinery controls.

Where practical, organise work practices to reduce/eliminate transmission points.

Where mechanics use their own tools, they should ensure that these are not loaned to others. Where tools are loaned, hand hygiene measures must be adhered to before and after using the loaned tools. Consider using separate tools for each maintenance personnel that are clearly identified.

Cleaning materials should be provided to ensure that all tools are wiped down, where possible.

Where PPE is worn, employees must appropriately use, apply and dispose of all PPE. Employees must wash their hands before putting on and removing PPE. Mechanics, body repairers or vehicle

maintenance employees will require various kinds of PPE in order to stay safe while working e.g. single use nitrile gloves and face masks. See [HERE](#) for further information from HSA.

As it may not be possible to clean all touch points on machinery regularly, employees working in these areas should adhere to Government Public Health advice on hand hygiene before and after using the equipment.

Physical Distancing Protocol

Physical distancing protocols must also be applied in vehicle maintenance, service areas and workshops.

If you cannot ensure that employees stay 2 metres* apart at all times, you must apply the Return to Work Safely Protocol.

For more information see [HERE](#).

Additional Considerations

- Introduce staggered shifts where possible
- Consider cleaning all tools and equipment at changeover/at the end of each shift.

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13. Reception Area & General Offices

Appropriate COVID-19 signage must be prominently displayed outlining current physical distancing and hygiene practices in use throughout the business.

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

Cleaning and disinfection of the reception area/booking office and general offices must take place at least twice per day and whenever facilities are visibly dirty. This must place particular emphasis on frequently touched surfaces especially counters, desks, equipment, communication devices, door release buttons, etc.

Where appropriate, the sharing of office equipment should be avoided and each workstation must be self-sufficient with an individual computer, telephone and all ancillary equipment. Where shared equipment is necessary, it must be cleaned and disinfected before, during and after each shift or any time the equipment is transferred to another employee.

Physical Distancing Protocol

Physical distancing protocols that follow the Government's Public Health advice must be observed in shared office spaces, employee locker rooms and other relevant employee facilities.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

Physical barriers such as sneeze guards/plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in back of house areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Employees should have a self-sufficient workstation where possible, with an individual computer, telephone and all ancillary equipment.

Employees sharing workspaces must where possible be grouped in fixed teams that are as small as is reasonably practicable. They must consist of individuals who also work together

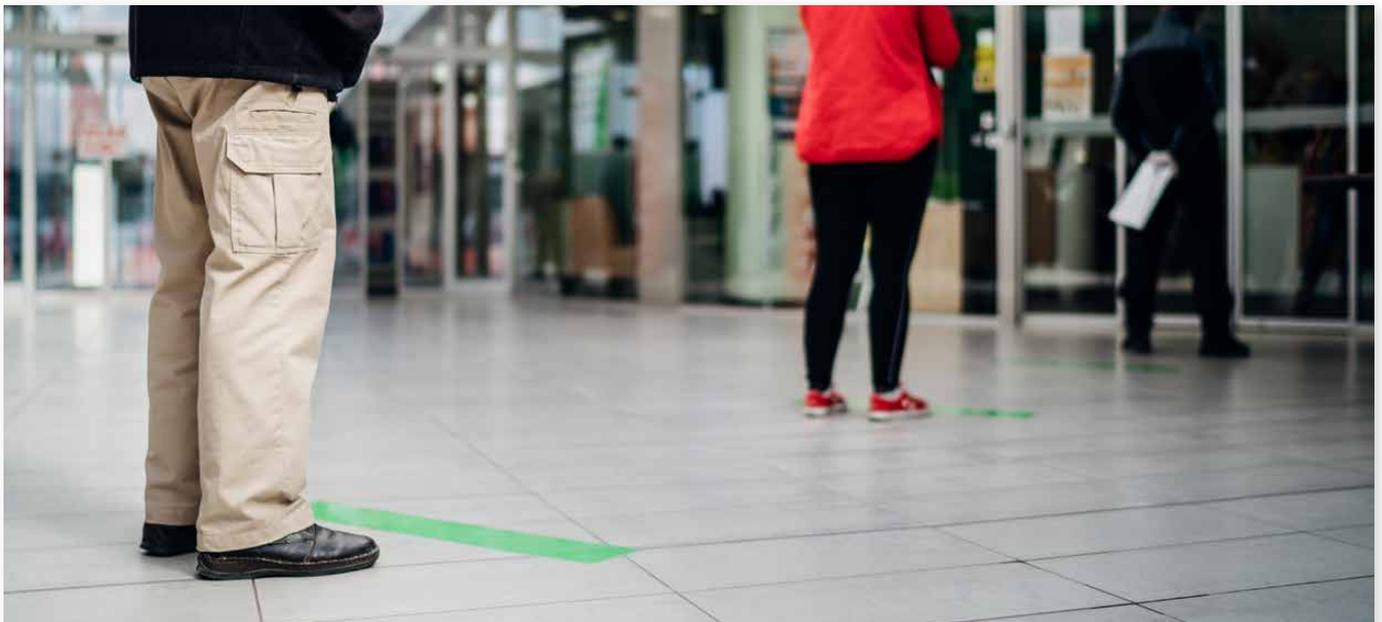
A designated employee should be stationed in the reception area or booking office, where possible, during busy periods to control physical distancing measures.

In offices where meeting/consultations take place, the physical distancing protocol is to be adhered to and entry numbers limited.

Customer Considerations

Debit/credit card machines should be moved to the front of the counter and cleaned and disinfected after each use. The use of cashless/contactless payment systems is recommended. Online payment should also be considered.

If handling cash, employees should be provided with gloves and observe the Government's Public Health advice on hand hygiene measures.



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14. Public Areas

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

The frequency of cleaning and disinfection must be increased in all public areas to at least twice daily. Particular attention must be paid to frequently touched surfaces which must be visibly clean at all times. These include reception desk and counters, door handles, toilet facilities, waiting areas and other facilities where appropriate.

The following areas must be cleaned and disinfected at least twice per day:

- Internal and external doors (e.g. door plates, handles, releases)
- Hard surfaces (e.g. tables, countertops, light switches)
- Stair handrails
- Interior seating (e.g. arms of chairs)
- Exterior seating/benches
- Public toilets
- Smoking areas
- Public amenities (e.g. internet station, ATM machine, cigarette machine, vending machine)

Interior and exterior refuse bins must also be emptied, cleaned and disinfected at regular intervals.



Physical Distancing Protocol

- Place clear markings to ensure that contact between customers and employees is kept to a minimum and to ensure that customers adhere to physical distancing requirements in all public areas.
- Display signage referring to COVID-19 physical distancing measures in visible locations (e.g. on notice boards).
- A strict queuing system and limitations on number of users within public toilet facilities should be put in place to ensure that physical distancing takes place.

Toilet Facilities

Besides the steps listed above, management must:

- Ensure regular checks are carried out to ensure the proper functioning of soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers and other similar devices.
- Repair or replace defective units.

Consider reviewing access to toilet facilities on vehicles as part of the business risk assessment.

Carpark & Outdoor Areas

All outdoor areas, grounds, vehicle storage zones and car parking areas must be kept clean and well maintained.

This means ensuring that lidded bins are available for the disposal of gloves, masks, tissues, etc. that may be contaminated.

You must ensure all rubbish bags are disposed of in an appropriate external facility such as a waste removal skip.

Dispensers

Soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers, and other similar devices must be regularly checked, cleaned and maintained. Defective units must be rapidly repaired or replaced.

The Action Plan should include installing units to dispense hand sanitiser as required throughout the business, paying particular attention to public areas, employee areas, etc. The Action Plan should also include requirements on individual vehicles.



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